

The **Dental Update** is a provider newsletter that contains up-to-date information about Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (BCBSNE) for health care providers. It is published by the Health Network Management Services department (HNS).

If you are a contracting BCBSNE health care provider, this newsletter serves as an amendment to your agreement and amends your contractual relationship with us. We encourage you to file every issue of the Dental Update within your BCBSNE Policies and Procedures manual and reference it often. You may also view the current manual in the Provider section at [NebraskaBlue.com/Providers](http://NebraskaBlue.com/Providers).

As a service for Blue Cross and Blue Shield members, this newsletter is also available to non-participating Nebraska providers.

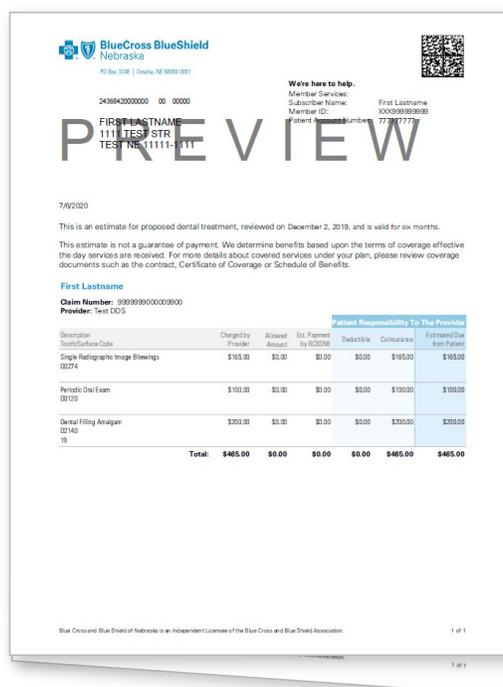
Each issue is published online in the Provider section at [NebraskaBlue.com/Providers](http://NebraskaBlue.com/Providers).

For permission to reprint material published in the Dental Update, email Loraine Miller, at [Lorraine.Miller@NebraskaBlue.com](mailto:Lorraine.Miller@NebraskaBlue.com).

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

## What's New

### COMING SOON: A New Look to Dental Pretreatment Estimate Letters



The new dental pretreatment estimate letters will look similar to the Explanation of Benefits documents our members receive.

## In this issue

A New Look to Dental Pre-treatment Estimate Letters	1
Opioids and Dentistry	2
Where to Submit Dental Claims	3

FEATURED:

# Opioids and Dentistry

Abuse of prescription opioids continues to be a national epidemic and public health issue. Opioid pain relievers are commonly prescribed following surgery or injury, or for health conditions such as cancer or pain associated with conditions such as toothache or an abscess.

While opioids can be effective treatment for managing chronic pain and other conditions when properly administered, they carry significant risk when misused or abused. Regular monitoring and identification of early risk factors is critical to recognizing patients who are most at-risk for prescription drug abuse issues and those who need treatment.

Commitment across the healthcare industry is needed to effectively fight prescription opioid abuse.



**Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the United States.<sup>1</sup>**

## What you can do

Dentists have a significant role in ensuring appropriate prescription opioids use. Dental providers are the leading prescribers of opioids for teenagers. The largest increase in dental prescriptions from 2010 to 2015 occurred in 11- to 18-year-olds.<sup>2</sup>

The American Dental Association has adopted two statements addressing opioid prescribing: Statement on the Use of Opioids in the Treatment of Dental Pain<sup>3</sup> and Statement on Provision of Dental Treatment for Patients with Substance Use Disorders.<sup>4</sup>

### These statements outline opioid management considerations including the importance of:

- Registering with and using a prescription drug monitoring program
- Discussions with patients regarding their responsibilities for preventing misuse, abuse, storage and disposal of prescription opioids
- Consideration of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory analgesics as the first-line therapy for acute pain management
- Consideration of coordination with other treating doctors, including pain specialists when prescribing opioids for management of chronic orofacial pain
- Encouragement to seek consultation with the patient's physician when the patient has a history of alcoholism or other substance use disorder

<sup>1</sup> American Society of Addiction Medicine website. Opioid Addiction 2016 Facts & Figures. Available at: [asam.org](http://asam.org).

<sup>2</sup> Journal of the American Dental Association. Opioid prescribing practices from 2010 through 2015 among dentists in the United States. Available at [http://jada.ada.org/article/S0002-8177\(18\)30009-6/fulltext](http://jada.ada.org/article/S0002-8177(18)30009-6/fulltext).

<sup>3</sup> American Dental Association. Statement on the use of opioids in the treatment of dental pain. Available at: <http://www.ada.org/en/about-the-ada/ada-positions-policies-and-statements/statement-on-opioids-dental-pain>.

<sup>4</sup> American Dental Association. Statement on Provision of Dental Treatment for Patients with Substance Use Disorders.

Available at: <http://www.ada.org/en/about-the-ada/ada-positions-policies-and-statements/provision-of-dental-treatment-for-patients-with-substance-abuse>

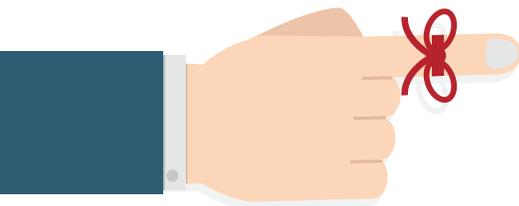
## REMINDERS:



### Where to Submit Dental Claims



When determining where to submit dental claims, please make sure to check both the front and back of the member's ID card. It's important to make sure you submit the claim to the correct plan so there are no delays in processing and payment of the claim.



## REMINDER

**Medicare Advantage** has its own Update newsletter from BCBSNE, published on opposite months of this Update. Read the **Medicare Advantage** newsletter.