

biting edge

biting edge is a quarterly publication produced by Ameritas Group, a division of Ameritas Life Insurance Corp., for dental professionals who take part in our Participating Provider Organization network.

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who's who



Meet Nancy Dalessio. She joined UNIFI Companies in March 2008 as senior vice president and chief information officer and is located in the Ameritas home office in Lincoln, Neb. UNIFI Companies is comprised of Ameritas Life Insurance Corp., Acacia Life Insurance Company, The Union Central Life Insurance Company and affiliated companies.

"It's been rewarding to help deliver innovative technology solutions that move UNIFI and its businesses toward their goals. We strive to excel at translating business strategy into effective and efficient IT action. This means our IT associates are becoming more than just experts with computer hardware and software, they are critical business partners who help drive technological innovation in alignment with business." In addition, Dalessio said she enjoys being part of the UNIFI team and facing challenges with passion and a positive attitude. *"I'm glad to be part of this organization."*

With nearly 35 years of experience in the technology industry, Dalessio was partner/owner of an executive business and technology consulting firm for almost 10 years before joining UNIFI Companies. Before that, she worked for a major insurance company in Massachusetts for nearly 25 years where she held various leadership positions including senior vice president and executive officer of information systems and technology, and vice president and project manager of corporate merger.

A member of Phi Beta Kappa, she graduated magna cum laude from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst with a Bachelor of Science degree. She is certified to teach physics, chemistry and biology for secondary schools in Massachusetts, and spent two years teaching algebra and mathematics and substitute teaching at Birchland Park Junior High before entering the business world.

She and her husband, Bob Kocher, both work for UNIFI Companies and reside in Lincoln. They have one grown daughter, Astrid, and twin grandchildren, Ingrid and Eamon.

fun fact

At the time of his inauguration, George Washington had only one remaining tooth. Though at various times he did wear dentures made of ivory, lead and cow, hippopotamus and human teeth (some of them his own), he never had wooden teeth.

Nonetheless, his horses certainly benefited from their master's mistake: On Washington's orders, each of his six white steeds had its teeth brushed every morning.

source: anecdote.com

VIP showcase

Congratulations to our VIP Award winners! The quarterly VIP Awards (Very Important Provider) recognize our PPO dentists and specialists for providing outstanding service to their patients. Ameritas and First Ameritas PPO dental plan members cast votes for their favorite provider. The PPO doctors who receive the most nomination points win. Nomination ballots are mailed monthly, along with a customer feedback survey, to plan members who had a claim submitted that month. VIP showcase winners receive a custom VIP plaque and a beautiful gift basket. Be recognized for a job well done by the people who matter most — your patients.

Dr. Vincent Guerra



Dr. Vincent Guerra joined our provider network in August 2003 and is located in Jupiter, Fla. Over the years, he has worked to build Jupiter Dental Care into a practice that exceeds patient expectations through trust and personal service. He brings patients the best that dentistry has to offer by keeping himself and his staff informed and trained on the newest advances and techniques.

Guerra's service philosophy revolves around providing quality care without compromising efficiency along the way. His top priorities are patient satisfaction and comfort. He believes his patients chose him as a VIP award winner because he is honest and performs quality work. Everyone on his staff agrees he is a great dentist and a terrific employer. Guerra is a member of the American Dental Association and Florida Dental Association.

Dr. Benjamin Aitken

Dr. Benjamin Aitken joined our provider network in June 2004 and is part of Family 1st Dental Associates in Wausa, Neb. Formed in 1999, Family 1st Dental Associates has offices in 26 locations throughout rural Nebraska and western Iowa.

Aitken's service philosophy parallels that of the Family 1st Dental Associates mantra: "Where Your Family Comes First!" He believes in putting patients and their families' needs first, and treats his patients with the same level of personal attention and



From left: Christa Eggers, Velda Mowery, Wendy Ketelsen, Cheryl Eickhoff, DR. BENJAMIN AITKEN, Christy Waldow (not pictured)

professional care that he would extend to his own family. He is committed to providing excellent dentistry, and small towns are no exception. By explaining each patient's treatment options, and using educational video and dental x-rays as needed, Aitken finds that interactive communication enhances the patient's dental experience.

He believes his patients selected him as a VIP winner because of his customer service priorities and commitment to family. He would like to thank all of his Family 1st Dental family members for this award — both his patients and staff. In addition, he is committee chair for the Upper Missouri Chapter of Ducks Unlimited.

electronic claims conserve paper, get paid quicker

Through our automated claims processing system, we can adjudicate electronic claims the same business day received, and send a check within seven business days. (Please note: Some claims require further handling, and in these cases processing can average three to five business days.)

As an incentive, we pay a portion of the clearinghouse transaction fee for our PPO network providers. Learn more by visiting ameritasgroup.com (in New York, firstameritasgroup.com), ez2000dental.com and/or ndedic.org. For e-claims, the Ameritas payer ID is 47009; the First Ameritas payer ID is 72630. Also send x-rays and attachments electronically via National Electronic Attachment, Inc. Contact NEA at 800.782.5150 or visit nea-fast.com for more information.

Still not fast enough? Speed up your payments even more by signing up for electronic funds transfer/EFT and electronic explanation of payment statements/eEOPs. To sign up, visit our website and sign into your secure provider account. If you haven't had a chance to set up an account yet, now is the time. Why wait? Automate today!

Submit dental-related articles to the editor at lmcpersonlouch@ameritas.com.

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finding homes for furry friends in Phoenix

This summer, Ameritas Group and Bright Now! Dental volunteers teamed up to help homeless pets in Phoenix, Ariz., find new homes through the Frames for Friends project. This community outreach project was developed by the Scottsdale-based Lost Our Home Pet Foundation (LOHPF), a nonprofit organization founded by real estate professionals to help dogs and cats left behind during home foreclosures.



A "Frames for Friends" pet adoption slide featuring Bug.

Through Frames for Friends, rescued pets ready for adoption are featured on 15-inch digital photo frames in various dental, medical and veterinary offices. This way, patients get a chance to see the rescued dogs and cats displayed in a full-color digital slide presentation. As a result, many pets have found new homes.

In support of this project, Ameritas and Bright Now! Dental volunteers installed digital photo frames in eight Phoenix-area Bright Now! Dental offices, making Bright Now! Dental the first health care offices in the nation to display these frames.

Amie McGraham, regional vice president of provider networks for Ameritas Group in Phoenix, was instrumental in making this Frames for Friends community project a reality. A lifelong animal advocate, she is an active LOHPF and Best Friends Animal Society (BFAS) volunteer. BFAS helped promote Frames for Friends on its website, and may be most widely known for its work in helping rehabilitate 22 dogs formerly owned by NFL player Michael Vick as featured on the National Geographic series *Dogtown*.

"Promoting animal welfare through volunteering at the national and local levels has been a way for me to give something back to the community. Our commitment to this project, along with the combined community outreach effort with Bright Now!, has brought a unique approach to helping homeless animals in Phoenix, the nation's number three city in foreclosed homes," notes McGraham.



Maureen O'Brien (left), Bright Now! business development manager, and Amie McGraham show off their blue wristbands that say "Smiles For Everyone," Bright Now!'s official tagline.

In addition to teaming up on the Frames for Friends project, Bright Now! Dental and Ameritas Group associates enjoy a professional working relationship. With more than 300 dental offices nationwide, Bright Now! Dental has been part of the Ameritas dental provider network for more than five years. Bright Now! Dental director of market operations for Arizona, Suzann Harms, has a vested interest in animal welfare as the proud owner of Scoop, a dog rescued from a puppy mill. In fact, many Bright Now! Dental office associates have adopted pets. This project was featured in Bright Now! Dental's employee newsletter along with a contest to generate LOHPF adoption referrals.

tips for expediting paper claims

To speed the processing of paper claims, we scan them into our computer imaging system. This provides enhanced customer service by allowing quick claim retrieval and increases our ability to identify and correct submission or processing discrepancies. Make sure your paper claims scan in clearly by following the tips below.

Do:

- Submit clear, legible claim forms.
- Include the treating dentist's name, address and TIN or SSN.
- Identify the relationship of the patient to the member, along with both the patient's and member's dates of birth.
- Submit complete member info including full street address, ZIP code.
- Include student status if applicable, full or part time, name of college.
- If other insurance, specify if dental or medical.
- Use fresh ribbon/ink in your printer.
- Use a black ink or black felt-tip pen.
- Use original claim forms or superbills.

Avoid:

- Dark copies or claims on color paper. They scan in dark and unreadable.
- Highlighting. Highlighted areas scan in dark and unreadable.
- Poor-quality, dot-matrix printed claims.
- Color ink, fine-point pens or pencils.
- Photocopied claims or superbill carbons.

Also provide this information as applicable:

• Supporting Documentation — For a list of Current Dental Terminology ©American Dental Association procedure codes that we request supporting documentation for, please visit ameritasgroup.com (in New York, firstameritasgroup.com), select Provider, Resource Center, then under Frequently Asked Questions select the flyer link. The flyer is called "supporting documentation" (GR5994). The procedures listed include radiographs, surgical notes and periodontal charting to determine benefits. As a reminder, all documents need to be dated and legible, duplicate films need to be labeled left and right, and all original radiographs will be returned.

• Prosthesis (Initial or Replacement) — If the crown, bridge, or partial or complete denture is a replacement, please note the prior placement date. If it is initial and an extraction is not listed on the claim, please include the date the tooth was extracted.

• Tooth Numbers/Letters — Site-specific information is required such as tooth number, letter, quadrant or arch using the Universal/National Tooth Numbering System.