

bitingedge

bitingedge 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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Ameritas Group / 475 Fallbrook Blvd. / Lincoln, NE 68521



McGraham earns NADP Star Award

Our very own Amie McGraham, regional vice president - provider networks, is the recipient of the National Association of Dental Plans (NADP) Star Award for her many contributions to NADP's Communications Committee and Professional

Relations Council Content Workgroup. In September, McGraham was honored at NADP's 20th Annual Conference in Orlando, Fla., for her editorial contributions and development of articles for the ADA News Top Ten series and white papers based on NADP's 2007 consumer survey. The NADP board established this volunteer recognition award in 2000. Star Award recipients are chosen each year to recognize individuals who make unique or special volunteer contributions to meet NADP's goals. To date, only 44 individuals have received this award.

We congratulate Amie McGraham on her well-deserved award. We're proud of the way she represents the spirit and enthusiasm of Ameritas Group!

online provider directory news

We'd like you to know that we are currently making enhancements to our online provider directory tool, [Find A Provider](#). We expect the enhancements to be completed later this year. Please watch the quarterly *Biting Edge* newsletter for more information.

which plan is which?

Because Ameritas offers many different plan designs to meet the needs of various business groups, it's important to obtain current benefits information for each of your patients. And we can help!

Customer service representative Call 800.487.5553 to speak with a customer service representative Monday through Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to Midnight, and Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Central Time. One of our representatives will be happy to provide the plan information you need, and/or fax a general summary of benefits to you.

Automated voice response Call 800.487.5553 and opt to listen to our automated voice response system to verify patient eligibility and obtain general benefit information 24/7.

Online Visit our website at ameritasgroup.com [firstameritasgroup.com in New York] and create a [Secure Provider Account](#) by following these steps:

- Select [Provider](#)
- Under [Secure Provider Access](#), select [Set Up a New Account](#)
- Complete [New User Registration](#)

Tip: You also may verify patient eligibility and obtain a general summary of benefits online without creating an account. Just select [Provider](#) and click on [Verify Patient Benefits](#).

However, by setting up an account (you only need to do this once) and logging into our site, you gain access to the entire provider portal where you can quickly verify patient benefits, view dental and/or orthodontic claims for the past 24 months for each insured family you've served, print benefit statements, receive payment amounts and check dates for processed claims, and get full access to our Resource Center.

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. Maurice Kersenbrock ***Ameritas VIP Award Winner***



From left: Stacie Alden, Terri Ruzicka, DR. MAURICE KERSENBROCK, Mary Miller, Amie Dawson

Located in O'Neill, Neb., Dr. Maurice Kersenbrock has been a network provider since August 2001. His outlook is best summed up with two of his favorite quotes. The first is from the movie *Chariots of Fire*: "I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. And when

I run I feel His pleasure." Dr. Kersenbrock was blessed with good eyes, steady hands and a clear mind, and he believes that it's his responsibility to care for his patients. The second quote came from one of his dental school professors upon graduation: "There are four P's to dentistry — Pain (does it hurt?), Personality, Price and Performance." He notes that these words of wisdom have served him well.

As far as winning the VIP Award, Dr. Kersenbrock gives much of the credit to his staff. They make the office a welcoming and soothing place. The doctor also involves his four children in his practice by allowing them to take turns helping with duties such as painting and cleaning. Active at St. Patrick's Parish and St. Mary's School where he coaches the girl's basketball team, he is a member of the Arch Bishop's Committee for Development, Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce. He also is a Nebraska Dental Association member.

Dr. Seyed Ghorshi ***Ameritas VIP Award Winner***



Dr. Seyed Ghorshi in Charlotte, N.C., has been a member of our network since March 2006. He runs Ghorshi Family Dentistry, a general practice emphasizing family and cosmetic dentistry. His service philosophy revolves around providing comprehensive care that addresses each patient's concerns. Each dental procedure is completed in a pleasant, relaxing atmosphere. And, he invests in the newest technologies and treats patients like family.

Dr. Ghorshi believes he was selected as a VIP Award winner because of his warm personality and because he spends time with his patients to make sure he understands their needs. In addition, he is actively involved in his community's Reach Out and Give Kids A Smile programs.

Dr. Sousan Amiri ***Accepted award on behalf of Dr. Ghorshi***



From left: Sabrina Keller, DR. SOUSAN AMIRI, Courtney Martin, Amy Branch

Dr. Sousan Amiri, also located in Charlotte, N.C., has been a network provider since August 2008. Her service philosophy is simple — patients and their needs come first. She gives the best possible care to her patients and strives to make them comfortable. In addition, everyone in

the office treats others as they would want to be treated. They truly care and are concerned about their patients. Many of the office associates contribute to their communities and support the military. Dr. Amiri is a member of the American Dental Association, North Carolina Dental Society and Charlotte Dental Society.

Dr. Amit Patel ***Ameritas VIP Award Winner***



West Cary Dental in Cary, N.C., is home to Dr. Amit Patel, who has been a network provider since February 2007. He approaches every patient with the expectation of cultivating a long-term patient/dentist relationship. Dr. Patel knows his reputation depends on how well his treatments, recommendations and advice hold up over time. He is not looking to simply solve immediate problems and send patients out the door. He's focused on helping patients achieve a high level of maintainable oral

health. Why was he selected as a VIP Award winner? Dr. Patel believes it's because he's honest, caring and hard working. He pays attention to detail. From treatment decisions to home care maintenance, he considers his patients his most valuable partners. Every effort is made to provide patients with the information they need to make informed decisions. He believes patient education is the cornerstone of maintainable oral health. Dr. Patel says he welcomes all patients and is committed to delivering optimal dental care in a safe and friendly environment. In addition, he donates his time to local church groups and educates children on the importance of dental health.

Provider Rewards Program survey news

Thank you to those who took time to complete the survey. We appreciate your feedback! And, congratulations to Dr. Roy Soriano of Victorville, Calif., for submitting his survey by April 18 and winning the \$100 gift card to amazon.com in a random drawing!

We believe that the ability to offer our network providers discounts on products and services through our rewards program differentiates us in the industry. These discounts are the type of value-added perks we strive to deliver to help reward our providers for participating in our network.

Survey results showed that the top three vendor discounts used by our providers are electronic claims, spore testing and OSHA supplies/products. We also learned that survey respondents are interested in quality online educational training programs, so we're on the lookout for vendor opportunities. Amie McGraham, regional vice president - provider networks, negotiated one of our newest vendor relationships, the Staples Business Advantage program, which she believes is an industry first. We are always looking for exclusive partnerships that will save our providers money.

In addition to Staples, we've added two other new vendors to assist with practice needs. You may now receive discounts when purchasing DigiDentist's Dental Wizard® patient education DVD and Web-link products in English and/or Spanish. We're also fortunate to be partners with Drake WorldWide, an organization that offers our providers competitive prices on crowns and bridges. Dental lab work handled by Drake conforms to all FDA and regulatory requirements.

Do you have additional feedback regarding our Provider Rewards Program? If so, please share it with your provider network representative or contact Amie McGraham by emailing amcgraham@ameritas.com or by calling toll free 800.455.1540.

outsourcing lab work: is it safe?

With reports of trace lead contamination being found in dental crowns manufactured overseas, consumers are questioning the safety of their dental work and asking where it's made. To address public safety concerns, the American Dental Association (ADA) is working with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The FDA regulates materials used to create dental crowns and bridges, and the CDC offers expertise regarding lead exposure.

Paul Reed of Drake WorldWide explains, "As the media continues to push the lead contamination issue, clinicians are going to need to partner with laboratories that can provide the security of good manufacturing practices and quality audit systems. Unfortunately, not all domestic or foreign laboratories are mandated to adhere to stringent third-party quality audit systems like the Dental Appliance Manufacturers Audit Scheme (DAMAS) or International Organization for Standardization (ISO)."

Drake WorldWide is one of our Provider Rewards Program vendors and represents the partnership between Drake Precision Dental Laboratory in the U.S. and Dentsply Prident in China. Drake Precision Dental Laboratory is one of 42 DAMAS Certified Dental Labs in North America and has been recognized in the top one percent of dental laboratories in North America for achieving third-party accreditation for quality assurance. The standards required by DAMAS closely reflect the FDA's Quality System/Good Manufacturing Practice specifications, which are required of all dental laboratories using overseas production.

Dentsply, unlike other offshore operations, guarantees that all materials used to produce dental prostheses including crowns and bridges sold through their organization conform to all FDA and regulatory requirements. Dentsply Prident is an ISO 9001: 2000 certified manufacturer. This standard is an emerging global standard for product and process quality adopted by 91 countries that comprise the ISO. In addition, Dentsply can trace raw materials through their lot and case numbers, and they only sell to U.S. dental laboratories.

To assure safety, find out before you begin doing business with a lab — either foreign or domestic — if all sources of dental material are actively regulated and certified. Demand contamination-free lab work. Labs that are certified will be happy to share their credentials. This way, when patients ask about the safety of their dental restoration work, you can answer knowledgeably with confidence.

Note: We realize that outsourcing is not for everyone. But if you decide to look into it, we encourage you to consult with these industry organizations: American Dental Association, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, National Association of Dental Laboratories. You also can contact Paul Reed of Drake WorldWide at 800.214.0522.

certificate holder for malpractice insurance

There is some type of paperwork associated with almost everything we do — especially when it comes to credentialing and recredentialing our network providers. Some of our providers find that by making us a certificate holder for their malpractice insurance, they do not need to submit current certificates. That's because your malpractice insurance certificate holder will automatically do that for you. This will eliminate certificate requests being sent to your office, and your staff having to locate the certificate, photocopy and submit it. By making us your malpractice insurance certificate holder, you'll have less to worry about, so you can spend more time doing what you do best — caring for your patients. For more information, call our provider relations team at 800.755.8844.

Correction Alex Gasca's email address is agasca@ameritas.com.