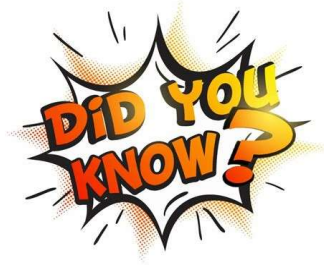


IDHA March Presidents Message



Did you know that March 23, 2021 is the American Diabetes Association *Diabetes Alert Day*? It is always the 4th Tuesday in March and is a one-day “wake up call” that is meant to focus on the seriousness of diabetes. Nearly 1 in 5 adults are unaware that they have this disease, and it affects roughly 10.5% of the U.S. population. Also, **did you know** that diabetes is a risk factor for periodontal disease, and effective January 1, 2018 the American Dental Association introduced two CDT (Current Dental Terminology) codes for monitoring and documenting patient blood glucose and HbA1C levels? Procedures reported with these codes can help dental providers better manage patients with medical comorbidities by assessing their condition chairside, and the findings from these procedures can help to plan oral care treatment and referrals to physicians as needed.

Next, **did you know** your Illinois Dental Hygienists’ Association (IDHA) is hard at work to increase the scope of practice for the Public Health Dental Hygienist (PHDH)? Illinois PHDH’s have a passion to provide preventive oral health care to all Illinoisans in underserved populations! **Did you know** there are a shortage of dentists in non-urban areas and very few dentists who accept Medicaid? And **did you know** that our current IL Dental Practice Act requires that all new patients and patients that have not had a dental exam in the last 12 months, must have a dental exam *before* preventive oral healthcare services can be rendered? This law, that most dentists currently ignore in their practices, is a huge barrier to oral health care for those who are unable to afford or physically go to a dental office. Currently, the IDHA has introduced three bills in Legislation (***HB 3068, HB 3087 and SB 2561***) that will allow the Public Health Dental Hygienist to provide preventive oral health care services, *prior to the dentist’s exam*, in prisons, in mobile dental vans and in nursing homes.

This month’s Hygiene Herald contains links to the Fact Sheets for our current House and Senate Bills and instructions for how to contact your IL district representative to ask for their support of these bills. ***Please*** take the time to help your professional association in gaining support for increasing the dental hygiene scope of practice in IL to include additional settings for which the PHDH can provide preventive oral health services in. If you can pass this information on to at least one colleague or fellow friendly hygienist, asking them to do the same, it would really make a difference in Legislation to gain more support.

Did you know, the leadership team at the IDHA appreciates your membership? Well now you do!

Respectfully,
Sherri

Sherri S Foran, RDH, BSDH, MPA, PHDH
President 2020-21
Illinois Dental Hygienist Association

