



Dentists See Insurance Companies as Enemies: The Wealthy Dentist Survey Results

Nine out of ten dentists see dental insurance companies as enemies rather than allies, according to a survey conducted by The Wealthy Dentist. In the eyes of the average dentist, insurance companies exist solely to turn a profit and have little or no interest in actually helping patients or doctors. However, insurance does bring patients in, and few dental practices have the option of not dealing with insurance companies.

Tiburon, CA, April 21, 2007 --(PR.com)-- In a recent poll of dentists, the overwhelming majority saw [dental insurance](#) companies as foes rather than friends. Conducted by The Wealthy Dentist, the survey showed 89% percent of dentists feeling that insurance companies are in the business of looking out for themselves, not patients or doctors. A mere 11% saw dental insurance companies as allies, expanding dentists' practices and serving as an important marketing source for new patients.

Specialists voiced even more negative reactions to insurance companies than general dentists. Fully 100% of the specialists who voted in this Wealthy Dentist poll saw insurance companies as enemies, as opposed to 88% of general dentists. While most insurance companies will pay for basic preventative care without a fuss, more expensive procedures are less likely to be approved by insurance administrators. The specialized care offered by oral surgeons, periodontists, orthodontists and other specialists may be less likely to be covered by insurance.

To most dentists, profits seem to be the insurance industry's only motivation. "Insurance companies are in the business of collecting premiums and denying claims. Anything they pay is because they are legally obligated to do so," commented a New York prosthodontist. A Utah dentist deemed them "thieves without masks or guns."

"Dental insurance companies could care less about the patient or doctor," complained a Colorado prosthodontist. "It's all about bringing in more from the premiums than paying out for the services!" A New Hampshire dentist agreed, saying: "They don't care if your teeth fall out, just as long as they make a profit."

Some dentists did acknowledge the benefits of insurance. "It has helped immensely in growing our practice," wrote a Florida dentist. A Georgia dentist added, "Patients with dental insurance are much more likely to agree to a treatment plan." An Illinois dentist summed up the dilemma: "Insurance brings people into the office, but the difference between expectations and reality make them foes."

"Insurance companies are an unnatural intrusion into the purest relationship between two unrelated humans: care giver and receiver," said a Pennsylvania dentist. An Illinois doctor agreed: "They make it impossible to keep a decent doctor-patient relationship by constantly downgrading services." A California dentist railed, "They reduce my fees and compromise my relationship with patients."

Dentists also feel that dental insurance can be bad for patients. "Insurance companies do their clients a



disservice by paying for only the cheap stuff and telling patients that dentist fees are above usual and customary... usual and customary for whom?" asked an Illinois dentist. "If they would only let the patients know what their allowance is," moaned a Pennsylvania dental hygienist. "Insurance companies should pay out up to their maximum they promise without any limitations," wrote an Illinois dentist. "That would be the ethical thing to do!"

"There is nothing good about the current system of healthcare insurance," commented one California resident with 30 years of experience in the dental field. A Florida periodontist agreed: "Insurance companies siphon off money that employers and patients spend for dental care. They can be of no use in their current configuration." Wrote one Oregon dentist, "Dentistry needs to wake up and go on strike for better benefits to the patient and easier billings for the dentists."

Dentists are eager for alternative solutions. "A better way to provide for future expenses is to use a direct reimbursement model where more dollars end up providing care and not lining the pockets of the do-nothing insurance companies," wrote a Minnesota dentist. "We make them billions and they do nothing for us," complained a dentist from Indiana. "They make our lives miserable. They could do it right if they wanted to."

"Insurance companies actually seem to cost a practice money," commented a practice administrator from Pennsylvania. "The hours staff must spend on the phone with them is ridiculous. They seem to go out of their way to avoid paying claims, and they make it so difficult to follow up with them that I think they just hope eventually you give up." A Texas dentist agreed, saying "It now averages five hours of my time per week at the typewriter!"

"Insurance should not be forcing business decisions on my practice," said a Florida orthodontist. "My patients demand I accept insurance assignments. At first I refused, but I lost more than half my patients to other practitioners accepting insurance. I finally gave in... I had no apparent viable alternative."

"The results of this survey amaze me," said The Wealthy Dentist founder Jim Du Molin, a [dental management](#) consultant who has worked closely with dentists for many years. "Dentists have always had a difficult relationship with insurance companies, but I hadn't realized it was this bad. When nine out of ten dentists see insurance companies as enemies, you know there's a problem with the whole industry."

For additional information on this and other Wealthy Dentist surveys, visit www.thewealthydentist.com/survey.

About The Wealthy Dentist:

The Wealthy Dentist is a dental marketing and practice management resource featuring dental consultant Jim Du Molin. The site's weekly surveys and dental newsletters are viewed by thousands of dentists across the United States and Canada. The Wealthy Dentist is a sister company of the Internet Dental Alliance, Inc. (www.internetdentalalliance.com). IDA is the largest provider of dental internet marketing websites, email patient newsletters and dental directories in North America.



<http://www.thewealthydentist.com>

Contact:

Jim Du Molin

<http://www.thewealthydentist.com/contactinfo.htm>

415-435-2820

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Contact Information:

The Wealthy Dentist

Julia Frey

415-435-2820

press@drs1.com

www.thewealthydentist.com

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