



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **New Delta Dental Web Site Educates Americans of Oral Health Care Reform**

Oak Brook, Ill. (March 25, 2009) – Delta Dental Plans Association, the leading, national dental benefits carrier, has launched a Web site ([www.advanceoralhealth.com](http://www.advanceoralhealth.com)) to educate the public, regulators, lawmakers and policymakers about the importance of including dental benefits in health care reform.

“Delta Dental is committed to advancing the effort to include greater access to affordable dental care in overall health care reform,” says Janis Oshensky, vice president of dental relations and public policy for Delta Dental Plans Association. “More than 130 million Americans lack dental benefits coverage. As a result, they are nearly half as likely to visit a dentist at least once annually as those with coverage. This endangers not only their oral health, but as studies increasingly show it endangers their overall health as well.”

The site includes information about the effects of poor oral health, the connection between oral and overall health, the significant differences between medical and dental benefits and the importance of preventive dental treatment.

“Preventive treatment and proper oral health are essential to general health and well-being,” says Oshensky. “Poor oral health and untreated oral diseases can adversely affect the most basic human needs, including the ability to maintain proper nutrition, communicate, attend school or go to work.”

For policy and lawmakers, the site includes five policy implications to consider when developing health care reform proposals. Following are three of the five policy implications:

1. Legislative actions that add to the cost of administering dental benefits or hinder the development of lower cost alternative plan designs will have the unintended effect of reducing the number of Americans with access to affordable dental coverage, thereby reducing access to affordable dental care and diminishing public oral health.

2. Dental carriers should be encouraged in their efforts to develop and enforce competitive fee arrangements, equitable reimbursement and dental policies and innovative plan designs to ensure necessary and appropriate care in accordance with group contracts and high professional standards.
3. Dental coverage should not be neglected in the debate over how to provide health care to all Americans.

To view all five policy implications and sign up to receive e-mail updates about relevant health care information, please visit [www.advanceoralhealth.com](http://www.advanceoralhealth.com).

The not-for-profit Delta Dental Plans Association ([www.deltadental.com](http://www.deltadental.com)) based in Oak Brook, Ill., is the leading national network of 39 independent dental service corporations specializing in providing dental benefits programs to 51 million Americans in more than 93,000 employee groups throughout the country.

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