

Town Hall update: Transparency is here to stay

Think of the last big online purchase you made — ordering that new TV, those great shoes or even a new car. Easily accessing prices, product reviews and other information creates a new buying experience. Our dental plans are subject to the same transparency; purchasers easily can compare our dentist fees to those of our competitors.

“The world is changing around us, and we must change with it in order to succeed,” said President and CEO **Gary Radine** at recent Town Hall meetings.

While purchasers always have considered price, transparency brought on by the Internet makes it much easier to comparison shop. Mr. Radine noted, “Purchasers are under pressure to obtain more for less, regardless of quality. Recently we lost a major purchaser and its 78,000 enrollees strictly because our dental costs are higher than a competitor’s. Purchasers can look at our ‘net effective discount’ – what we pay for claims in and out of network – and compare that to competitors in this new age of transparency.”

While other dental benefits carriers are in the same situation with regard to transparency, they don’t have the type of relationship with their network dentists that we have. “Being responsive to our dentist stakeholders is what makes us unique, yet a problem arises if that isn’t balanced with sometimes competing needs of other

August 1, 2014: In this issue

[Town Hall update: Transparency is here to stay](#)

[2014 biometric measurements must be completed by August 30](#)

[2014 all-employee survey launches August 5](#)

[Mark your calendars: Employee Appreciation 2014](#)

[Our enterprise is an American Heart Association 2014 Fit-Friendly Worksite](#)

[Let’s talk trash! \(How could you “refuse”?\)](#)

[Compliance Corner: BAA renewals due by September 22](#)

[Fast Fact: Preventive care study](#)

[Take *The Source* pulse survey!](#)

[DDC, DDIC and Mid-Atlantic news](#)

“Isn’t it funny how day by day nothing changes, but when you look back, everything is different ...”

– C.S. Lewis

stakeholders,” he explained.

Future plans include expanding our presence on the state and federal health care exchanges, where we gained well more than 200,000 new enrollees last year. Because of the popularity of our DeltaCare[®] USA product, we intend to expand our offerings with a new HMO product under the Dentegra brand. Mr. Radine characterized our philosophy for these new markets as they develop as “it is better to be at the table than on the menu.” That means if our company doesn’t participate, others will — to our long-term detriment.

Other new plans include encouraging dental practices to use the new Provider Tools. This is an online option that makes filing claims, monitoring claim status and receiving payment much faster and reduces our paper use. Mr. Radine stressed, “It is a changing, even rushing world, and leading companies need to adapt products and rush along with it. Sometimes that means changing ourselves faster than we would think, to adapt to new ways in which our market wants to go. Are we prepared for this challenge?” According to Mr. Radine, the answer is yes. “We will stay positive and ethical and move forward with what we have to do to stay successful,” he said.

2014 biometric measurements must be completed by August 30

There is still time for all benefits-eligible employees and their spouses/domestic partners – regardless of medical plan participation – to register for biometric measurements, which must be completed by **August 30**.

Offsite registration is still open at my.blueprintforwellness.com. (Registration already has closed for onsite measurements.) You may choose to have your measurements done by your personal physician; however, you will be responsible for any out-of-

pocket costs associated with doing so. The physician form is available on the [LiveWell communications](#) page on the portal.

Biometric measurements provide vital information on basic health indicators that can help identify serious illnesses such as heart disease, strokes and diabetes. Measurements include blood pressure, cholesterol, waist circumference, body mass index, glucose levels and Cotinine (nicotine).

Please refer to [the May 30 memo](#) from **Elise Pomerantz-Watzka** on the Wellness section of the portal for detailed information, including dates, registration information and incentives.

Note: When you register with Quest Diagnostics, you must use the New Participant Box to create a new password — even if you are a returning participant.

2014 all-employee survey launches August 5

Our 2014 all-employee survey will launch **Tuesday, August 5.**

Last year's survey garnered more than 2,100 responses, giving us valuable insight into Delta Dental employees' feelings about the company — the understanding of and confidence with company goals and enterprise changes as well as perceptions and ideas about teamwork, trust, communication and the workplace environment. It also helped us identify some prominent themes that we have addressed this year in various ways, including increased communications, training and other enterprise or division-specific recognition initiatives like the Step Up program.

This year's survey will be open through the end of August. It is anonymous and shouldn't take long to complete — about 15 minutes. Your feedback helps us

not only to figure out what we are doing well, but also what we need to improve. Please contact employeecoms@delta.org with any questions.

Mark your calendars: Employee Appreciation 2014

Employee Appreciation 2014 is coming up next month — Delta Dental's way of celebrating you, the people whose dedication and hard work is the heart of the company.

As in years past, there will be food, drinks and entertainment, and this year, there will be some raffle drawings that you won't want to miss! Times and dates are as follows:

Alpharetta: New date TBD soon

Cerritos: Wednesday, August 13, from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Mechanicsburg: Thursday, August 21

- One Delta: 12 p.m. – 2 p.m.
- Ritter Road: 12 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Rancho Cordova: Thursday, August 14, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

San Francisco: Wednesday, August 20, from 11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

You will receive location-specific information, including food, drink, entertainment and dates for field office celebrations, in upcoming communications.

Supervisors will coordinate attendance times directly with employees. We look forward to celebrating with you!

Our enterprise is an American Heart Association 2014 Fit-Friendly Worksite

Delta Dental is committed to providing physical activity and wellness opportunities for our employees. We have been recognized as a 2014 Gold level recipient of the American Heart Association's Fit-Friendly Worksites recognition program.

Fit-Friendly Worksites are recognized by the American Heart Association as employers who go above and beyond when it comes to their employees' health. As a Gold level award recipient we have been recognized for the importance and implementation of a comprehensive set of wellness initiatives and promoting a healthy workplace for our employees.

Let's talk trash! (How could you "refuse"?)

Reuse? Recycle? Throw away? And, in some locations, compost?

Sorting trash may seem like a chore to some people; to others, it's second nature. But even those well-practiced in waste diversion occasionally are confused about how to dispose of everyday items. Some of us at *The Source* considered a few of those things we run across that make us go "hmmm," and we've come up with **a challenge for you, too!** Read on and look for the challenge question at the end for a chance to win a prize!



Q. Coffee cup and lid

A. Good news, bad news on this one. The plastic lid goes in the **recycle** bin, but the cup goes in **compost or landfill**. Just because it “looks like paper” doesn’t mean it’s recyclable. Most paper cups are made from cardboard with a thin layer of plastic tightly attached to the cup. This keeps the drink warm and prevents the cardboard from becoming soggy. But it also makes the cup non-recyclable. Fifty billion cups in the U.S. end up in landfills every year — enough that if placed end to end, they would go to the moon and back roughly five times.

Zero waste alternative: Use the new Delta Dental **Step Up and Go Green** ceramic tumbler that can be used for both hot and cold beverages. You recently should have received your tumbler as a token of appreciation for our shared commitment to sustainability — so go forth and help sustain!

Q. The plastic cords around the printing paper boxes

A. Landfill. They’re plastic, but unless they contain the letters 1-7 and the recycling logo, you can be pretty sure

that they are not recyclable.

Zero waste alternative: Try not to use paper. It's possible — just ask Actuarial!

Q. Ziploc® bag.

A. Trick question! Ziploc and any other type of plastic bags are **landfill** unless you take them back to the grocery store for recycling. You can recycle these bags only at grocery stores and large retailers that accept plastic bags, wrap and film for recycling, such as Target and Walmart. Check with your local retailer to make sure they accept plastic bags for recycling.

Zero waste alternative: Bring your snacks and sandwiches in reusable containers.

Q. Energy bar wrapper

A. Landfill. No matter how nutritious your snack bar is, the wrapper most likely is trash and not compostable or recyclable. To the landfill it goes.

Zero waste alternative: Make your own snack bars at home in a pan and put them in a reusable plastic container.

Q. Tic Tac® box

A. Recyclable. The box is so small that it seems it should just go in the trash, but it's quite recyclable.

Zero waste alternative: Some chewing gums are in all paper, which may mean less impact on the environment. Or brush your teeth if you can instead of popping a mint. A tube of toothpaste lasts longer than a box of Tic Tacs; no one ever ate an entire tube of toothpaste in one

afternoon (that we know of — and please don't try this).

Q. Miso instant soup package

A. Landfill. Convenience has a price. While those individual serving packets are handy, neither the single-serving packet nor the package can be recycled.

Zero waste alternative: Use a multi-serving recyclable jar of miso soup mix. You'll save money and the environment. Better yet, make your own miso soup and bring it in an insulated or reusable container.

Q. Plastic bag from Banana Republic that contained a new t-shirt

A. Aha! Trick question again. Soft plastics generally are landfill, but this one has a "4" and a recycle logo. So where does it go? Not in your at-home or at-office recycling bin, in spite of the logo. Although you can recycle plastic bags and film packaging if they are #2 and #4 plastic, you have to take them to the grocery store bin just like the Ziploc bag. (Repurposing clothing is pretty easy, though. The old t-shirt that the new shirt replaced was relegated to the giveaway bag for the Church of the Holey T-Shirts.)

Zero waste alternative: If the shirt had been purchased in the store and not online, there would be no plastic wrapper, and you could simply put your new purchase in your reusable shopping bag. Unfortunately, this particular shirt is only available online. Tsk, tsk. (Props for repurposing the old holey shirt, though – it also would make a great addition to the household rag bag.)

Q. Microwave popcorn bag.

A. Another convenience creating **landfill**. Neither the

clear plastic wrap nor the bag can be recycled. The popcorn bag contains perfluorinated carbons (pfc); these are not known to degrade by any natural processes.

Zero waste alternative: Use a hot air popcorn popper – no paper, no pfcs. Second best alternative is to use a recyclable paper bag in the microwave to pop those corn kernels and then add a seasoning of your choice such as salt and pepper, smoked paprika and parsley, or a cool ranch topping (2 tablespoons powdered buttermilk, 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, 2 teaspoons dried dill, and 1 teaspoon popcorn salt or 2 teaspoons kosher salt). You'll save money, calories and the environment while expanding your epicurean horizons.

Q. Cereal box with liner bag.

A. Another good news, bad news item. **Recycle** the box, but the bag is lined with plastic (like most sugar and sugar substitute packets), so it has to go in the **landfill**.

Zero waste alternative: Buy the biggest box or bag of cereal possible and transfer it into reusable containers — it will stay fresh longer. You can also reuse the liner to store other food items or cut it open along the seam and use it as you would wax paper.

Remember, not every location in our enterprise has the same waste diversion receptacles; all have recycling of some sort (some are mixed, others require separation of bottles and cans from paper). San Francisco has composting, with Rancho Cordova soon to follow. See the below chart for what's what at each location, and if you are unsure, contact your local Facilities department for guidance.

And thanks for caring about the environment! It's a dirty job, but someone's gotta do it!

Now, for the challenge: Write to

employeecomm@delta.org with the correct method to dispose of toothpaste tubes. First five correct answers win a prize!

Summary of waste diversion methods, by enterprise location

Location	Recycling	Compost	Other
SF	Yes	Yes	Batteries, CDs, cell phones, pens
RC	Yes	In process with café operator	Batteries, cell phones, pens
Cerritos	Yes	No	n/a
Alpharetta	Yes	No	Batteries, cell phones, pens
Ritter Road/One Delta	Yes	No	Pens

For more information, check out:

[10 tips for staying waste-free at work](#) (article by earth911.com)

San Francisco-based [Recology](#)

Also, don't forget to Step Up and Go Green! Send your green-friendly tips to goinggreen@delta.org



Compliance Corner: BAA renewals due by September 22

The enterprise is in the process of renewing Business Associate Agreements (BAAs) with our groups, brokers and vendors to meet the deadline required by federal regulations. We completed the first phase late last year, and we're about to launch the second phase, which requires BAAs signed before January 25, 2013, to be revised by September 22, 2014.

Throughout the enterprise, coordinators from every division will be identifying, taking inventory of and issuing updated agreements to any entities who have not signed one. To simplify this large undertaking, Delta Dental has implemented a single approach for all three entity types, along with a set of tools that can be found on the [OOC Portal BAA page](#):

- a standard, enterprise BAA that can be used for all entities, regardless of whether Delta Dental is the Covered Entity or Business Associate
- a single [BAA database](#) to record essential information and terms about each signed agreement, which replaces the various other data systems used until now
- a single [SharePoint repository](#) for scanned copies of executed BAAs that allows all members of the company to view the existing BAA
- other tools such as cover letters, data collection inventories and FAQs to facilitate the process

Questions? Contact [Diane Thomas](#) at ext. 1179 in Rancho Cordova.

Fast Fact: Preventive care study

Advocating for preventive care is an important part of our mission. Delta Dental's most recent Preventive Dental Care Study of 90 million dental claims showed that many high-risk children and adults are not getting the care they need. For example, 70% of high-risk children didn't receive the two annual fluoride treatments covered by most plans.

See our new [infographic poster](#) highlighting these statistics and promoting the importance of dentist visits and at-home hygiene habits.

Take *The Source* pulse survey!

We'd love to get your feedback about our publication. This short, anonymous survey should take five minutes (or less) to complete — and it will give us valuable insight about what's working and what possibly could be improved. [Take the survey here](#) — and thank you!

[Back to top](#)

[DDC, DDIC and Mid-Atlantic news](#)

California

- San Francisco Relay for Life events
- J.P. Morgan Corporate Challenge®
- *Source* editorial board

DDIC

- *Source* editorial board

Mid-Atlantic

- Harrisburg Mile
- *Source* editorial board

Editor: Michelle Wagner

Managing editor: Elizabeth Risberg

Executive editor: Jeff Album

To submit story ideas or to ask a question, please email employeecommms@delta.org. You may also contact one of the above editors or a member of the editorial board below.

The Source is published by the Public Affairs department with assistance from:

Kathleen Brennan, Terri Chapman, Deran Conkling, Meagan Davis, Cheryl Frank Dutton, Amy Gottlieb, Melanie Haughton, Ashley Koontz, Maureen Knoll, Winnie Lee, Tracy Pederson, Cheryl Pinochi, Elise Pomerantz-Watzka, Sandy Silva, Michelle Simone, Jeannine Rucker, John Stratigopoulos and Teri Turner