

FLORIDA ACADEMY OF PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY
Spring 2009 Newsletter

From your President:

Ray Klein use to say to me, "when you are president of an organization, they use you, and then they lose you." When I think of it, in the FAPD, we lose you, and then we use you. It is all the "losers" for the past many years that I have noticed working hard in our society and just will not go away. They stay and stay, and continue to observe and advice the new leaders on their shift. I will not begin to list each name who helped me this year and made me feel important. We have had a good year. Perhaps the highlight of this year was the rebirth of our continued educational program this past fall. It was a great success. We have continued to be an active voice in the political arena through our representative, John Grant, our executive secretary Bob Primosch and past president Jim McIlwain formed a committee to checked my grammar and spelling before any document when out. We have continued to monitor the Medicaid program to the best interest of treating the patient and we have continued to promote the society to potential new young members. This should continue to be the number one project as we move forward. I hope you will let me become a loser. Thank you for trusting in me and letting me step from the rank and file for only a moment in time as your leader. God bless. Again, I thank you for the privilege of letting me represent this great organization.

Respectfully submitted
Howard Schneider

From your Legislative Advocate:

The 2009 regular session of the Florida Legislature has concluded and a reduced budget has been adopted. Even with the infusion of federal stimulus funds, there is insufficient income to cover government spending at previous levels, thus resulting in massive cuts.

But, there were some bright spots. Both chambers of the Florida Legislature unanimously passed Senate Bill 918 which will remove barriers to help children get and keep KidCare coverage. This important legislation will now go to the Governor.

A huge infusion of federal cash due to the stimulus package has resulted in an overall increase in health care spending in this year's budget and

kept intact some high profile health care programs that were set to expire. Nearly \$3 billion in additional federal money - most of it coming due to an increased federal Medicaid matching rate - was pumped into health care and human services programs. Additionally, state lawmakers agreed to collect nearly \$1 billion from increasing the taxes on cigarettes by about \$1 a pack.

The state's Medicaid program will grow from roughly \$16 billion overall to just under \$18 billion and there will be enough money to pay for the increasing Medicaid caseload. Florida will be serving an estimated 2.5 million people in the Medicaid program in the coming year. However, while additional funds were allocated for increased recipients, provider fees were not.

This is the third legislative session since we filed the litigation against the state and so far both the legislative and executive branches have been rather oblivious to it. The discovery process has been arduous and so far, we have taken more than 125 depositions and examined over a million separate items of evidence.

The case is set for trial in Miami this coming August. On May 12, a mediation session was held in Miami. I appeared on behalf of FAPD and we spent nearly eight hours trying to resolve primarily the non monetary issues of the litigation and made some progress. Our evidence is compelling.

Since the filing of our litigation three years ago, the problem in Florida has only gotten worse and now our state ranks dead last in the nation in the percentage of eligible children who receive Medicaid dental care and while dental utilization rates for Medicaid children is increasing nationally, it is falling in Florida, and dentist participation will continue to decline if the reimbursement remains under provider costs. Though children comprise more than half of Florida's Medicaid enrollees, expenditure on children comprise less than a fifth of the Medicaid budget. We are optimistic as we prepare for trial.

Thank you all for the honor of being your legislative voice in Tallahassee.

Respectfully submitted

John Grant

Annual Business Luncheon Meeting: FNDC Meeting, Orlando, FL,
Friday June 19, 2009