

# Teledentistry

## Advancing New Dental Homes





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APPLE TREE DENTAL

*Disclosure: I do not have any financial affiliations or conflicts of interests to disclose.*

# Apple Tree Dental

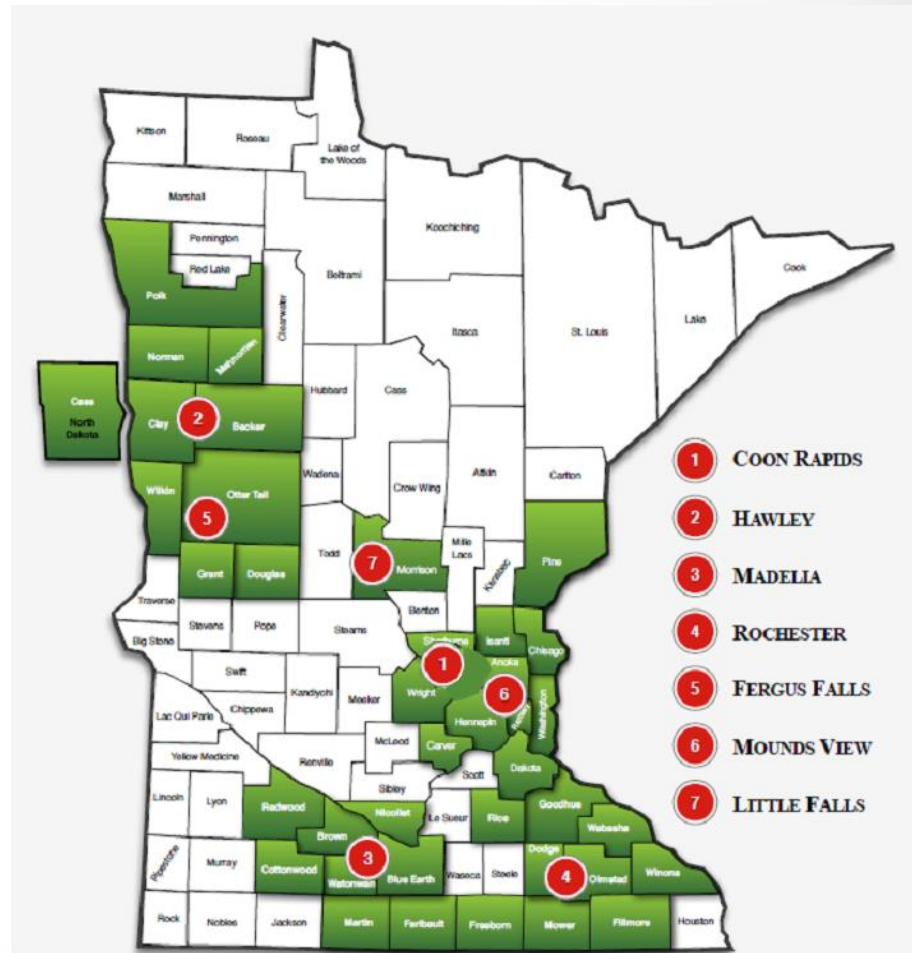
- The mission of Apple Tree is to improve the oral health of all people, including those with special dental access needs who face barriers to care.
- Apple Tree's staff works to achieve its mission by delivering education, prevention, and restorative dental services to vulnerable populations and by providing leadership and innovation to transform the health care system.



APPLE TREE DENTAL

# Apple Tree Dental

- 7 Centers for Dental Health in Minnesota
- 145 Community Sites statewide
- Low income children and families
- Adults with disabilities
- Seniors and elders in Long Term Care
- Urban and Rural communities
- Approximately 83% Medicaid



# Teledentistry in Minnesota

Apple Tree Dental's Experience

# What is Teledentistry?

- Teledentistry is the delivery of dental care services or consultations while the patient is at an originating site and the dentist is at a distant site.
- Teledentistry, according to the ADA's Comprehensive Policy Statement on Teledentistry, refers to the use of telehealth systems and methodologies in dentistry.
- Teledentistry can include patient care and education delivery using, but not limited to, the following modalities:



# Teledentistry Modalities

- Live video (synchronous): Live, two-way interaction between a person (patient, caregiver, or provider) and a provider using audiovisual telecommunications technology.
- **Store-and-forward (asynchronous):** Transmission of recorded health information (for example, radiographs, photographs, video, digital impressions and photomicrographs of patients) through a secure electronic communications system to a practitioner, who uses the information to evaluate a patient's condition or render a service outside of a real-time or live interaction.
- Remote patient monitoring (RPM): Personal health and medical data collection from an individual in one location via electronic communication technologies, which is transmitted.

# Originating Sites

The originating site is the location of an eligible Minnesota Health Care Program (MHCP) recipient at the time of service which is being furnished via a telecommunication system.

Authorized originating sites are:

- Health care facility
- Long Term Care facility
- Public health agency or institution
- Public or private school authority
- Private non-profit or charitable organization
- Social Services agency or program
- Residential setting in the presence of licensed healthcare providers.



# Originating Sites Dental Providers

Affiliate practice or originator within Minnesota Board of Dentistry defined scope of practice must be present at originating site.

- Dentist
- Advanced Dental Therapist
- Dental Therapist
- Dental Hygienist
- Licensed Dental Assistant
- Other Licensed Health Care Professionals

# Teledentistry Benefits

- Access to teledentistry may enhance early diagnosis, facilitate timely treatment of oral diseases, reduce isolation of practitioners through communication with peers and specialists, and improve access to specialist care.
- Teledentistry may also lead to a greater utilization of relatively low-cost preventive interventions and may result in future cost savings by avoiding more costly dental diseases and emergencies.



# Teledentistry Benefits

**Teledentistry can help overcome:**

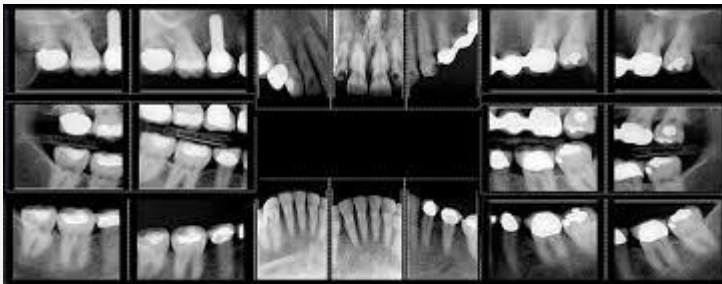
**Rural/Geographic Barriers:** Remote locations and small communities may not support a full time provider or bricks and mortar facility.

**Physical/Behavioral Barriers:** Frail elders can be examined and treated at Long Term Care facilities, Head Start Children and group home residents can be treated in familiar locations with support staff and peers for a more positive experience and greater likelihood of a successful dental visit.

**Financial Barriers:** Onsite care eliminates the “hidden co-pay” (missing work, transportation costs etc..) of travel to a separate appointment.

**Workforce Barriers:** Teledentistry extends the reach of dentists and supports top of licensure practice and more timely access to dental care.

# Teledentistry Resources



# Teledentistry in Minnesota

- Effective January 1, 2016 Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP) allows payment for teledentistry services. Payment is allowed for interactive audio and video telecommunications that permit both real-time and “store and forward” communication between the distant site dentist or practitioner and the member.
- **“Store and forward”** is when the electronic transmission of medical information through secure transmissions lacks direct or dedicated connections and is stored in an intermediary device before being transmitted to the final destination. The services must be of sufficient audio and visual fidelity and clarity as to be functionally equivalent to a face-to-face encounter. Reimbursement for teledentistry is the same as face-to-face encounters and only a distant site can bill for services.
- To be eligible for reimbursement, providers must self-attest that they meet all of the conditions of the MHCP telemedicine policy by completing the Provider Assurance Statement for Telemedicine.

# Teledentistry at Apple Tree Dental

- Clinical Dental Innovation Grant (2002)
- Head Start Innovation Grant (2004)
- Basic Screening Survey Project (2006)
- Eldercare Dental Benefits Project (2007)
- EHR Incentive Program (2013-present)
- **Little Falls Outreach Clinic (2017)**
- **North Metro Pediatrics (2018)**
- **Madelia Center Project (2018)**

# Little Falls Outreach

- Morrison County, MN was an incredibly underserved area. Limited access to Oral Health Care Services.
- Patients were travelling long distances to find access to dental care.
- Low percentage of dental claims for those on medical assistance.
- Increased Emergency department usage for dental pain.
- Morrison County, St. Gabriel's Hospital and Apple Tree Dental partnered to create an Oral Health outreach program to help increase access to Oral Health Care in Morrison County.

# Little Falls Outreach

St. Gabriel's Hospital designated a space in their Family Medical Center for Apple Tree Dental to provide Oral health care services for Morrison County's underserved population.



Apple Tree's Mobile Dental Office ... Working with A-dec, the nation's leading dental equipment manufacturer, Apple Tree has created the most advanced mobile dental offices in the world.



# Little Falls Outreach

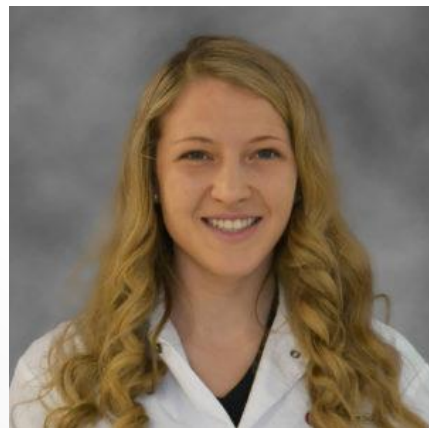
- Apple Tree Dental started a dental outreach clinic inside St. Gabriel's Hospital/ Family Medical Center using our Mobile Dental Office.
- A team including a dentist, dental therapist and collaborative practice hygienist started by providing dental services 2 days per month which quickly increased to once per week.
- The unmet need for oral health care was enormous , the waiting list for an initial exam quickly grew to 4-5 months.
- This prompted Apple Tree Dental to start utilizing teledentistry, which allowed more rapid intake of patients on a waiting list.

# Little Falls Outreach : How did we use Teledentistry?

- Apple Tree Dental has a collaborative practice dental hygienist who is employed full time (5 days per week) at our Little Falls Location.
- We worked together to complete as many teledentistry initial exams as possible in the early stages of the outreach program.
- She completed intraoral images, radiographs and basic screenings for patients and then used our cloud based electronic health record to **store and forward** patient information.
- I was able to complete a Teledentistry initial exam to develop diagnoses, prognosis and treatment plan for patients.
- A community care coordinator would contact the patient to inform them that dental treatment has been recommended, and scheduled them for the treatment on the first available day a dentist or advanced dental therapist was present at the outreach program.

# Little Falls Outreach

- Outcomes: Apple Tree Dental was able to help decrease the unmet oral health care needs in Morrison County.
- Decreased emergency room visits at St. Gabriel's Hospital.
- The outreach program was such a success that we were able to establish a permanent Center for Dental Health at St. Gabriel's Hospital.
- Teledentistry was used to support the program until we were able to recruit a full time dental team.



# Little Falls Outreach



## Integrating dental care into primary care produces results

Victoria Ortman is one of many area residents being served at the Apple Tree Dental clinic, located on the CHI St. Gabriel's Health campus. Thanks to a collaborative effort with Family Medical Center, many people who used to have to travel great distances to access oral health care services no longer have to do so.

A lot goes into producing a great apple. Years of genetics, cultivating a particular variety's characteristics to bring out its best qualities. This selective breeding process not only incorporates the desired qualities like color and taste, but also seeks to offset climate issues like growing season.

Such a planned approach usually produces the best outcomes. In January 2017, Family Medical Center (FMC) teamed up with Apple Tree Dental on a Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) grant to improve access to oral health care and integrate oral health assessment, prevention, and referral into patient visits at FMC, which is part of CHI St. Gabriel's Health.

**Victoria Ortman**, a Pierz native, is one person taking advantage of the improved access.

"I can't believe I found care like this," says Victoria. "Everyone working together to care for me has been wonderful."

This integrated approach to health care is nothing new at the medical center. An MDH-certified medical home, FMC has been focused on patient-centered care for the past several years. This approach places an emphasis whole-person care, rather than care based solely on a specific diagnosis or condition.

The mouth can sometimes be overlooked in patients, but good oral health is essential for overall health as well. Poor dental health

has been linked to diabetes, heart disease, respiratory illness, weakened immune system, and many more conditions.

Family Medical Center providers have taken steps to ensure dental needs are addressed, especially in patients with chronic conditions, like Victoria, who was able to access the dental care she desperately needed. After her oral health needs were identified in the clinic, she was referred to Apple Tree Dental for care.

"I hadn't been to the dentist in over a decade," says Victoria. "I was worried about my teeth, but finding oral health care has been an issue."

Victoria appreciates the convenience of being able to access oral health care close to home.

"Having Apple Tree Dental right here in Little Falls, on the same campus as the clinic, has been great," says Victoria. "It's a dental clinic with high standards and the atmosphere and staff are really positive."

Victoria says the communication between the clinic and dental office enhances the collaboration. "My care coordinator knows about the dental treatments I'm receiving," says Victoria. "That helps in planning my overall care."

Victoria has come to enjoy her medical and dental visits. "I always feel cared for like family," she says. "Every time I walk in, I'm greeted with a big smile."

As a result of the whole-person care she is receiving, Victoria says her health outlook has improved greatly, spurred by a renewed sense of hope about her ongoing health needs.

"It's ironic, but there's an apple tree in my yard that in recent years has looked lifeless, but it surprised me this year by producing a bountiful crop of apples," says Victoria. "That the tree produced apples this year is symbolic of the hope I now feel for my health, thanks to the care I'm getting at CHI St. Gabriel's Health and Apple Tree Dental."

Sometimes you just have to look through a lot of varieties to find the right apple.



**Annette Brown**, clinic care coordinator for Apple Tree Dental, staffs the clinic Monday through Friday. Clinic hours for oral health patients are Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

People interested in making an appointment at the Apple Tree Dental clinic, which has openings Thursdays and Fridays, can call 320-631-5653.

"I hadn't been to a dentist in **over a decade**, I was worried about my teeth, but finding oral health care has been an issue."

"Having Apple Tree Dental right here in Little Falls, on the same campus as the clinic, has been great."

"My care coordinator knows about the dental treatment I'm receiving"  
"That helps in planning my overall care."

# Madelia Program

- Madelia is one of Apple Tree Dental's Rural Centers for Dental Health. DDS Recruitment has been a challenge.
- Current workforce is 1 dentist, 2 dental therapists, 1 dental hygienist.
- This is a busy, rural dental program, with high patient volume.
- The demand was more than one DDS could support.
- Apple Tree decided to utilize teledentistry to help meet the demand and support their dental team.

# Madelia Program

- The Madelia Center for Dental Health purchased intraoral cameras with grant funds.
- Staff training about teledentistry use and application was provided.
- The focus of teledentistry in this environment is to provide recall examinations for children and adults with low to moderate oral health risk factors.
- Staff was trained to recognize which patients have high dental needs, urgent needs, dental anxiety, or language barriers. Dental exams are performed by the DDS onsite for these patients.
- Patients (adults and children) with less urgent dental needs or stable oral health utilize teledentistry.
- Dental Therapists and Dental hygienists use basic screening information, intraoral images and radiographs with our cloud based EHR and store and forward teledentistry method to send patient information/findings.



# Madelia Program

- A DDS with more availability in our Twin Cities program can provide a teledentistry exam remotely. Exam findings, treatment plans and a message to the patient are provided.
- A Care coordinator calls patient to discuss exam findings, treatment recommendations, and schedules the patient appropriately.
- Good patient acceptance



# Madelia Program

- Relieves pressure on DDS in Madelia to provide so many exams daily, and allows her additional time to focus on working at the top of licensure.
- Decreases long wait lists for patients
- Helps Dental Therapists and Dental Hygienists work efficiently





# North Metro Pediatrics

- North Metro Pediatrics (NMP) is a pediatric primary care clinic established and run by nurse practitioners.
- NMP reached out to Apple Tree Dental because they indicated that their patients' greatest need was dental services. They collaborated with us on several grants and we were able to create an integrated medical/dental model using space in their clinic and our mobile dental equipment.

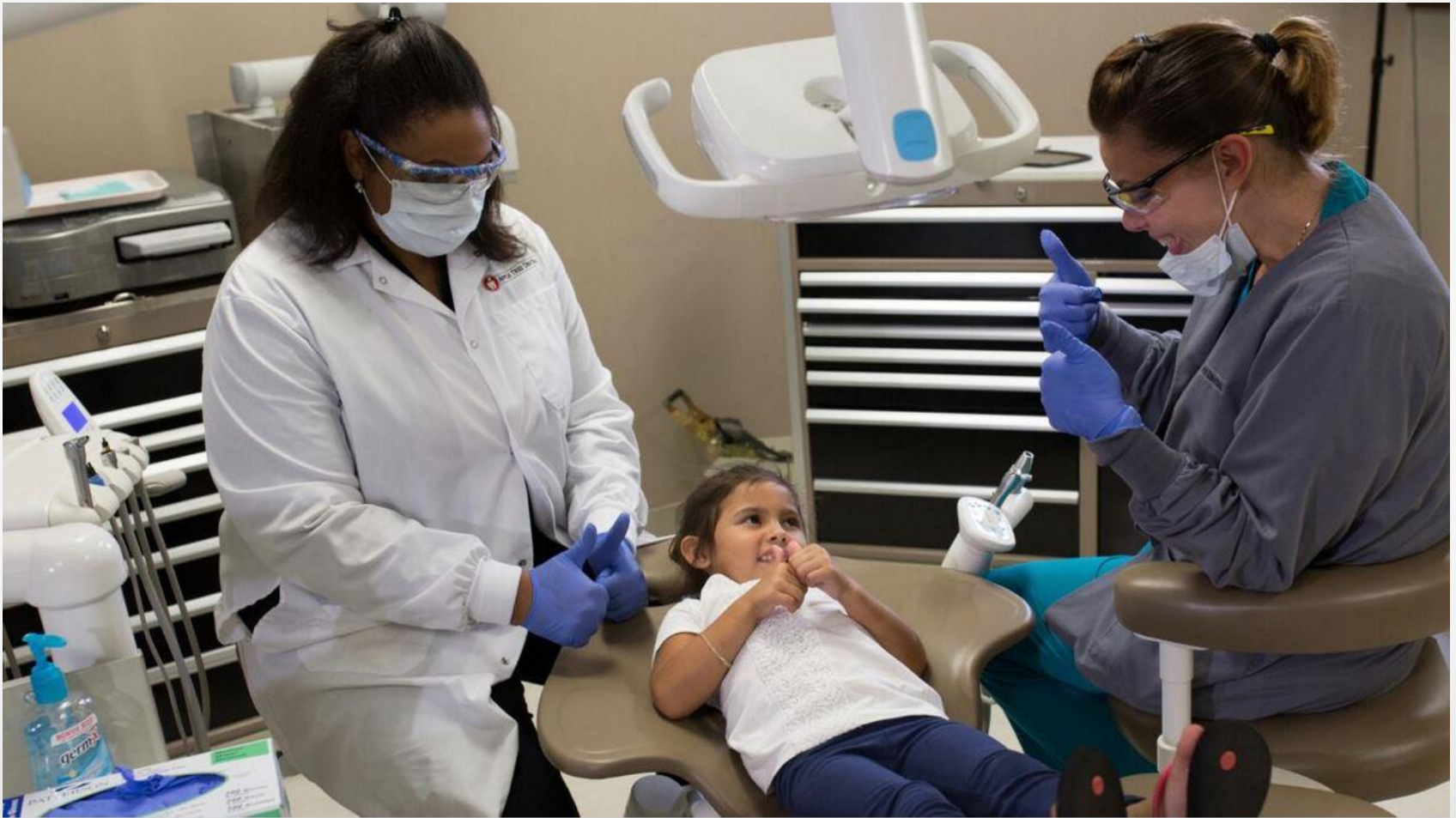


# North Metro Pediatrics

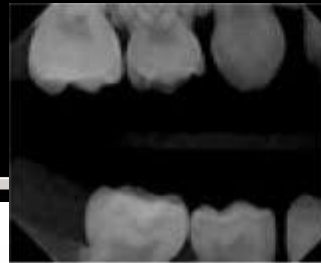
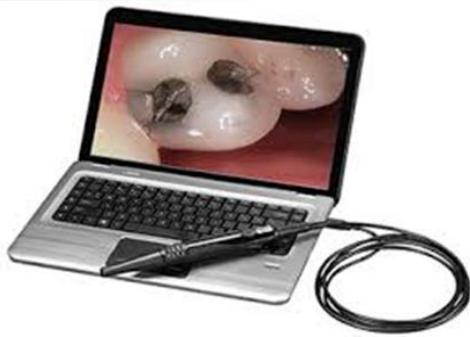
- Our key dental team member in this model is an Advanced Dental therapist who is dual licensed as a Licensed Dental Hygienist.
- Children are able to be seen for preventive care, or comprehensive dental treatment on the same day as their well child visits or any other time at their primary medical home.
- Our Advanced Dental Therapist utilizes our mobile dental office and teledentistry (store and forward model) for new patients. Intraoral images, radiographs and patient findings are forwarded to a DDS to complete an initial exam remotely.
- DDS will complete a teledentistry initial exam remotely, providing diagnosis, prognosis and treatment plan.
- Patients are scheduled back with Advanced Dental Therapist at NMP for treatment and the ADT can perform recall exams moving forward.



# North Metro Pediatrics



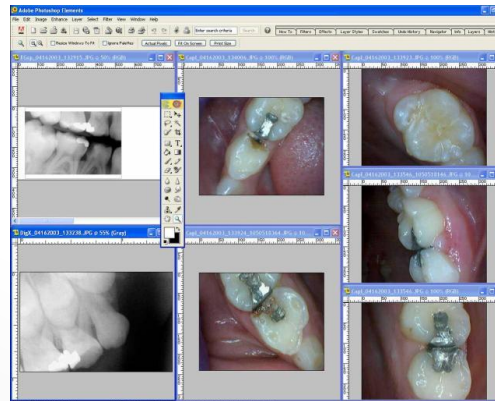
# North Metro Pediatrics



Toolbox Open Patients Teeth BIC Calibration

# Commonly used CDT codes for Teledentistry

- CDT Codes to be billed by dental provider at **Originating site**/ Store and Forward.
- **D9996- Teledentistry- asynchronous; information stored and forwarded to dentist for subsequent review.** Reported in addition to other procedures (e.g.,diagnostic) delivered to the patient on the date of service.
- **D0350- 2D oral/facial photographic image obtained intra-orally or extra-orally**



# Commonly used CDT codes for Teledentistry

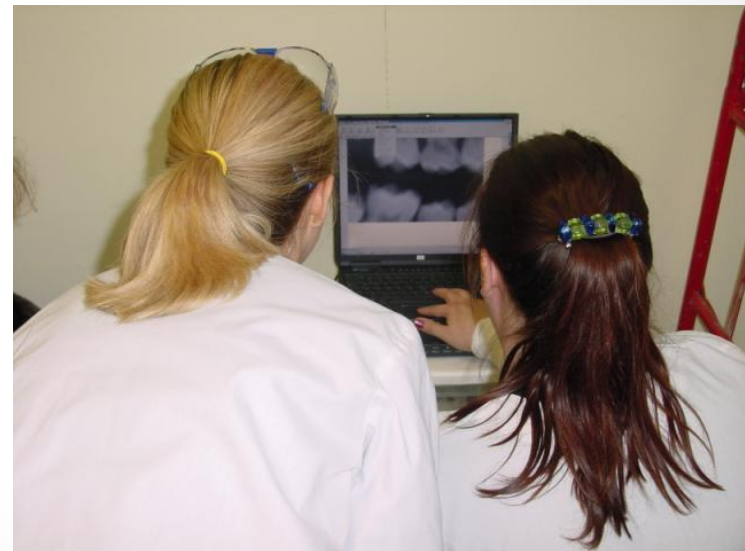
- **D9995- Teledentistry- synchronous;** real time encounter. Reported in addition to other procedures delivered to the patient on the date of service (e.g. BWX,PA's)
- Health plans in Minnesota require that radiographs are billed out at the time of the teledentistry exam.

## Examples

D0274- Bitewings- 4 radiographic images

D0272- Bitewings- 2 radiographic images

D0330- Panoramic radiographic images



# Teledentistry Documentation Requirements

As a condition of payment, each occurrence of teledentistry services must include the following documentation in the patient's dental record.

- The type of service provided
- The time the services began and the time the service ended.
- A description of the provider's basis for determining that teledentistry is an appropriate and effective means for delivering services to the recipient.
- The mode of transmission of the teledentistry service.
- The location of the originating and distant site.

## Example of documentation language

*Tele-dentistry services are appropriate and effective for patients participating in Apple Tree's comprehensive, on-site dental services programs. Teledentistry provided at: Madelia Clinic; Time patient seated: 4:22pm, Time patient dismissed: 4:59pm*

# Limitations on Teledentistry Services

The Following limitations apply:

- Payment for teledentistry services is limited to three per week per recipient.
- Payment will be made only one reading or interpretation for diagnostic tests such as radiographs, lab tests and diagnostic assessment. (D9995 Code)
- Payment is not available to providers for sending materials (D9996 Code)
- Out of State coverage policy applies to service provided via teledentistry.
- Consultations performed by providers who are not located in Minnesota and contiguous counties, require authorization prior to the service being provided.



# Questions and Answers

## Contact Information

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# Thank You



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