

TO: Dentist Participants in the Diamond Plan
FROM: Billy Tarpley, Executive Director
DATE: November 29, 2018
RE: *Arkansas Diamond Plan Update*

The purpose of this letter is to provide Arkansas dentists with an update on the Diamond Plan (DP) deferred compensation program. At this point in time, ASDA must advise that contributions to the DP for the 2018 fiscal year likely will not occur in 2018. Also, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) has only recently provided approval for the DP to continue under the current managed care setting. We are hopeful that the state will be ready to fund the DP accounts in 2019, but as of this writing the process by which that would happen is not in place. This is a matter of extreme frustration.

During our Medicaid Seminar on June 22, 2018 the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) led us to believe that the first payment into the DP for services rendered through the managed care system would be made in August or September. That did not happen. Obviously, these plans should have been finalized months ago.

Since June 22, ASDA has continuously and proactively maintained contact with DHS via phone, email and face-to-face discussions to work toward a quick and favorable outcome. We have also hosted meetings at the ASDA office with representatives from all entities involved in the DP to share information and facilitate an agreement. But in each case, DHS was not prepared to move forward in a timely manner.

Therefore, please consider the advice shared in an email/fax on October 15. ASDA suggests the following:

- File all the claims you currently have. Set aside income equal to your DP contribution, and, most importantly, consult your CPA or tax advisor because it will be taxable.
- Continue to schedule Medicaid patients through the end of the year to ensure adequate income to equal to your DP contribution.
- Continue to watch your e-mail. ASDA will notify you as soon as possible when an update becomes available about the Diamond Plan.
- Please continue to be a Medicaid provider. This issue will be resolved at some point.

ASDA knows how important the DP is to Medicaid providers, and we are working diligently on your behalf to seek an acceptable outcome at the earliest possible time. Please note that we appreciate the support from Governor Hutchinson's office to bring this matter to a close, as well as MCNA and Delta Dental.

DHS gives us every reason to be positive about the potential outcome, but dentists should make plans now to protect their DP income equivalent for the 2018 calendar year.