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Report says 1 in 5 children lacks access to care Ö PEW

By Fred Michmershuizen, Online Editor

A recent report from the Pew Center on the States paints a sad picture about the oral health of many children in the United States.

The report, "The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children," says that millions of disadvantaged children do not have access to adequate dental care.

"Millions of disadvantaged children suffer from sub-par dental health and access to care," the

report states. "This is a national epidemic with sobering consequences that can affect kids throughout their childhoods and well into their adult lives.

"A 'simple cavity' can snowball into a lifetime of challenges," the report states. "Children with severe dental problems are more likely to grow up to be adults with severe dental problems, impairing their ability to work productively and maintain gainful employment."

Leaders of two of the nation's

associations leading dental weighed in with their opinions on the report.

"We welcome the Pew organization to our longstanding fight to improve the lives of American children by helping more of them enjoy the good oral health that too many of them now lack," said Dr. Ron Tankersley, president of the American Dental Association (ADA).

"Pew's presenting its informa-

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The Cost of Delay



(Photo/Pew Center)

Murder fugitive found by dentist after 40 years

By Daniel Zimmermann, Dental Tribune International Group Editor

An oral surgeon from Bellevue, Wash., has been helping authorities to identify a fugitive who murdered his grandfather almost 60 years ago. Dr. Clem C. Pellett, who is currently listed as one of the top dentists in oral and maxillofacial surgery in the Puget Sound area near Seattle, tracked down 78-year-old Frank Dryman in Arizona with the help of private detectives.

Dryman was immediately arrested and is expected to return to Montana State Prison where he had

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Texas hosts the AACD annual meeting





→ See pages 14A, 15A

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News

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tion in the form of a report card makes it easy for anyone to understand that too many kids in too many states are suffering. And we face huge challenges in changing that."

"We don't agree with everything in the report," Tankersley continued. "But certainly, it highlights some of the major policy areas that the ADA and state dental societies have advocated for years - things like increased Medicaid funding, school sealant programs and community water fluoridation.

"It also highlights the urgent need for reliable routine data collection so that policies are well informed and kids are not left suffering."

Dr. David F. Halpern, president of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD), offered similar sentiments.

"With more than 51 million school hours lost each year because of dental-related illness, the way in which states ensure that children have access to oral health care services is clearly an issue that deserves the devotion and dedication necessary to reach a solution so no child suffers needlessly from dental pain," Halpern said.

The Pew Center report is not all grim. It states that a number of cost-effective improvements can be made.

"By making targeted invest-

'The AGD is opposed to any promotion or support of an independent midlevel dental provider,' said Dr. David F. Halpern, president of the AGD.



ments in effective policy approaches, states can help eliminate the pain, missed school hours and long-term health and economic consequences of untreated dental disease among kids," the report says.

"Although a handful of states are leading the way in breaking down these barriers, every state must do more to put proven policies in place to ensure dental health and access to care for America's children."

"The report does omit some policy areas that we believe are equally important to improving children's access to care," Tankersley said. "For instance, some states have innovative programs — like student loan forgiveness and tax incentives - to help dentists establish practices in underserved areas or practice in com-





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munity health centers.

"And when it comes to fixing Medicaid, money is a huge issue, but it isn't the only issue. Patients and parents need oral-health education to help them take care of themselves and their families to prevent disease.

"Many of them need additional services, like transportation, in order to be able to get to dental appointments.

"If Medicaid did a better job of these things, treatment costs would decrease because we would be preventing more disease and treating less.'

It is also the AGD position that improvements in Medicaid reimbursements to meet the costs of service to the public, and expansions in water fluoridation and sealant programs, are needed.

The AGD is opposed to independent dental providers who have not graduated from dental schools performing irreversible procedures for the very reason that a provider who has not met the minimum educational requirements in dentistry might be a danger to the patient if he or she is providing the primary care.

According to the AGD, accessibility without quality echoes the "something is better than nothing" approach to care, which does not ultimately serve the public need.

Both the ADA and the AGD have worked with state and federal agencies, dental schools and other organizations to promote public funding, volunteerism and loan forgiveness for dental students working in underserved areas.

"The ADA and state dental societies have a long history as the nation's leading advocates for oral health," Tankersley continued. "ADA members donated some \$2.16 billion in free care to disadvantaged children and adults, both as individuals and through such rograms as Give Kids A Smile and

"But we're the first to admit that we can't do this alone, and charity is no substitute for an effective, equitable oral-health delivery system.

"We're grateful for assistance from the Pew Center and others who are willing to lend a hand in what undoubtedly will remain a long, tough fight." DT

DENTAL TRIBUNE

Publisher & Chairman **Torsten Oemus**

t.oemus@dental-tribune.com

Vice President Global Sales Peter Witteczek p.witteczek@dental-tribune.com

Chief Operating Officer Eric Seid

e.seid@dental-tribune.comGroup Editor & Designer

Robin Goodman r.goodman@dental-tribune.com

Editor in Chief Dental Tribune Dr. David L. Hoexter d.hoexter@dental-tribune.com

Managing Editor/Designer Implant Tribune & Endo Tribune Sierra Rendon

s.rendon@dental-tribune.com

Managing Editor/Designer Ortho Tribune & Show Dailies Kristine Colker

k.colker@dental-tribune.com **Online** Editor

Fred Michmershuizen f.michmershuizen@dental-tribune.com

Product & Account Manager Mark Eisen m.eisen@dental-tribune.com

Marketing Manager Anna Wlodarczyk a.wlodarczyk@dental-tribune.com

Sales & Marketing Assistant Lorrie Young

l.young@dental-tribune.comC.E. Manager

Julia E. Wehkamp j.wehkamp@dental-tribune.com

Dental Tribune America, LLC 213 West 35th Street, Suite 801 New York, NY 10001 Tel.: (212) 244-7181 Fax: (212) 244-7185

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NYU dental professor receives \$1.2 million to study bones and teeth

By Fred Michmershuizen, Online Editor

Dr. Timothy Bromage, a New York University College of Dentistry professor whose research on the microanatomical structure of ancestral human teeth and bones is recognized with having established the modern fields of human evolution growth, development and life history, has received the 2010 Max Planck Research Award.

The award, chosen by a joint Max Planck Society and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation selection committee, includes a stipend of approximately \$1.2 million (750,000 euros), which will enable Bromage and Dr. Friedemann Schrenk of the Senckenberg Research Institute to collaborate on the microanatomical study of bones and teeth, and to research the link between metabolic states, growth rates, life spans and biological features such as sex and body size.

A portion of the award will be dedicated to training junior scientists in the United States and Germany to assist on this research.

"Dr. Bromage has fundamentally altered the field of human evolution by prompting paradigm shifts in morphology, fieldwork and experimental biology, thereby establishing the modern field of growth, development, and life history in paleoanthropology,"



Dr. Timothy Bromage is an expert on the microanatomical structure of ancestral human teeth and bones. (Photo/NYU College of Dentistry)

said Dr. Charles N. Bertolami, dean of the NYU College of Dentistry, upon announcement of the award.

Bromage is a professor of basic science and craniofacial biology and of biomaterials and biomimetics at the NYU College of Dentistry. The award selection committee cited his research with showing a relationship between bone and tooth microstructure and body size, metabolic rate, age and other biological features.

According to the NYU College of Dentistry, Bromage was the first to use biologically based principles of craniofacial development to reconstruct early hominid skulls. His computer-generated reconstruction of a 1.9-millionyear-old skull originally discovered in Kenya in 1972 by renowned paleontologist and archeologist Richard





Leakey showed that *Homo rudolfensis*, modern man's earliest-known close ancestor, looked more apelike than previously believed.

Bromage's reconstruction had a surprisingly smaller brain and more distinctly protruding jaw than the reconstruction that Leakey assembled by hand, suggesting that early humans had features approaching those commonly associated with more apelike members of the hominid family living as long as 4 million years ago.

In human evolution fieldwork, Bromage's 1992 discovery of a 2.4-million-year-old jaw in Malawi unearthed the oldest known remains of the genus *Homo*. The discovery, made in collaboration with Schrenk, director of paleoanthropology at the Senckenberg Research Institute in Frankfurt, Germany, marked the first time that scientists discovered an early human fossil outside of established early human sites in eastern and southern Africa.

In experimental biology approaches to human evolution research, Bromage discovered a new biological clock, or long-term rhythm, which controls many metabolic functions.

Bromage discovered the new rhythm while observing incremental growth lines in tooth enamel, which appear much like the annual rings on a tree. He also observed a related pattern of incremental growth in skeletal bone tissue — the first time such an incremental rhythm has ever been observed in bone.

The findings suggest that the same biological rhythm that controls incremental tooth and bone growth also affects bone and body size and many metabolic processes, including heart and respiration rates.

"The rhythm affects an organism's overall pace of life and its life span," Bromage said. "So a rat that grows teeth and bone in one-eighth the time of a human also lives faster and dies younger."

The Max Planck Research Award is presented jointly by The Max Planck Society, which promotes basic scientific research at top international levels, and by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, which promotes collaboration between scientists in Germany and other countries.

> (Source: NYU College of Dentistry) (Front Page Photo/ Pixelbrat, Dreamstime.com)



served 15 years for killing Clarence Pellett back in 1951. He had been out on parole for three years before he disappeared in 1969.

Local authorities told local news station Channel 5 that he was found in Arizona City, where he ran a wedding chatpel and went by the alias of Victor Houston.





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The secret tool: patient questionnaire

A powerful way to find out exactly what your patients want so you can boost your income and patient base

By Dr. Bhavna Doshi, United Kingdom

Have you ever thought of what it would be like if you could discover the hidden pains your patients go through daily because of their teeth?

The kind of deep-rooted pain patients often don't mention and occasionally don't realise they are even suffering with. These pains may be so deeply embedded that it never occurs to them they may have a way out. Many patients regularly suffer from cosmetically debilitating features of their mouths. Most of these patients often suffer silently because they believe that there are no solutions to their problems or think they can't afford it.

They think having their mouths completely, once-and-for-all "fixed" is something that is for the rich and famous.

My experience with treating "Extreme Makeover UK" patients has confirmed my thoughts of how much people suffer in silence with negative beliefs.

Uncovering hidden pains

The tool to help diagnose the required and much needed dentistry for patients is the patient questionnaire. This may sound simple, yet its effects are immeasurable. It can be designed to be as intricate or simple as you want.

For example, it can contain a series of beautiful photographs of the applications of cosmetic

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dentistry.

This can be your work or that of others — it simply visualises the possibilities for the patient. But more importantly, it must contain thought-provoking questions that allow your patients to focus on their cosmetic concerns.

The questionnaire should be strategically designed to root out the major concerns patients may have. It forms part of a discovery process between you and your patients in making your patients aware of their fears, wants, desires and needs.

It can form part of a beautiful patient-friendly package. This means there is no work for you to do except have an informative discussion with your patients about their response to the questions.

What should you ask?

Simple thought-provoking questions need to be mentioned in the questionnaire. It needs to be used as a regular tool in your practice.

Every practice member must understand its significance and be able to talk to the patient about its importance in discovering his/her needs and the overall evaluation process.

Sample questions

• Do you have any concerns in your mouth?

• If you had a magic wand and could change something in your mouth, what would you change?

• What do you like about your mouth and smile?

• What don't you like about your mouth and smile?

• What is the most important thing to you about your mouth and smile?

• Are there any aspects of dentistry you have been thinking about that you would like to discuss?

Maximising performance

Sit down (in a preferably nonclinical environment) with the patient for a consultation. Systematically go through each question on the card and ask why the patient gave that particular answer.

Use the pleasing photographs of the various smiles and cosmetic work you may have done in the past to ask what the patient is looking for in a nice smile.

If you could have extra-oral and intra-oral photographs taken beforehand of your patient, this would really optimise and visually reinforce your solutions to the patient.

For example, if you had a photograph of a markedly deteriorating restoration in an anterior tooth, it would be easier to justify the need for a new, cosmetically-improved

Sample patient questions

- Do you have any concerns in your mouth?
- If you had a magic wand and could change something in your mouth, what would you change?
- What do you like about your mouth and smile?
- What don't you like about your mouth and smile?
- What is the most important thing to you about your mouth and smile?
- Are there any aspects of dentistry you have been thinking about that you would like to discuss?

and protective restoration on that tooth. Especially if this was a concern the patient expressed in his/ her answers to the questionnaire.

You will find after this discovery process that you will be able to advise a lot more than you would have initially. This process allows you to better understand your patients so that you can take better care of them. It helps to build a rapport and a long-term relationship of trust and faith.

Many times patients require an authoritative person who would simply listen to them. This act alone, if sincere, is enough to build trust for patient loyalty. It also is a major factor in influencing patients to accept treatment recommendations.

Income ge neration

This patient questionnaire would allow you to generate more revenues because it would act like an extra activity in marketing your practice or you.

It is a well-known fact in the marketing arena that the more activities you perform, the greater the number of potential customers you are likely to attract. This methodology is a simple but extremely effective system to acquire new revenue sources.

It can be applied to both existing patients and new patients alike.

The process itself is one of discovery, and other aspects of dentistry can come to light as a result of this investigative procedure. The more comprehensive the dentistry you provide your patients, the more dentistry you do, hence the more income you generate.

Patients that have developed a good relationship with you as a result of being listened to will be happy customers of the services you provide. Happy customers are more likely to refer other income-generating patients like themselves.

Don't underestimate this tool

The patient questionnaire is a dynamic marketing tool. It can promote your work and develop your practice by giving you the ability to grow and generate income.

It is a diagnostic tool to help you and your patients on the road to discovering your patients' needs and requirements.

The closer you are to meeting those needs and requirements, the greater is the likelihood that your patients will accept your treatment recommendations.

This in turn will allow you to promote your dentistry and generate more income.

Uncover the successful and effortless nature of this tool by simply using it to unveil the hidden dentistry. DT

About the author



name and address.

a senior dentist at The Perfect Smile Studios, www.the perfectsmileacademy. co.uk. She has a special interest and focus on practice productivity, mar-

keting and growth strategies. If you have enjoyed this article and would like a free leaflet on "Cost-effective Marketing for Dental Practices," then e-mail Doshi at bhavna@unlimited

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8A Financial Matters

Changes and opportunities for health-care practitioners' finances

By Keith Drayer

There are many areas that can bring small and large changes to a practice's income as well as the individual health-care practitioner. Outlined below are a few of the changes and opportunities.

The practice's finances

An area to take advantage of is the 2010 IRS Section 179 Tax Code that

allows business owners to lower their taxable income by acquiring eligible property (such as dental equipment, technology and off-the-shelf software). What makes the 2010 Section 179 benefit important is that in the year 2011, this generous allowance will come down to \$25,000.

As more and more dentists embrace equipment and technology, such as all-tissue lasers, comprehensive scanning, designing and milling



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CAD/CAM systems and cone-beam dentistry, this benefit can be applied to lower the buyer's taxable income. These investments make a practice more efficient, productive and profitable.

One of the key areas we suggest dentists to focus on each year is their current fee schedule. Too many dentists leave thousands of dollars in the hands of insurance companies every month because of an unbalanced fee schedule.

We recommend that dentists set/ balance their fees into the proper percentiles for their particular zip code. This will not only help to maximize the coverage of insurance the employer has purchased for the employee, but it will also be the best way to increase profitability.

While this is not tax advice, as individual circumstances apply, dentists should find out more about Section 199, a benefit for domestic manufacturing. A dentist could qualify for a deduction of 9 percent of the lesser of "Qualified Production Activities Income (QPI)," or taxable income from milling activities.

Dentists may significantly reduce their tax bill on domestic production activities as a result of the previous American Jobs Creation Act. This deduction is permanent and should be explored.

Personal finances

Most people have multiple credit cards. The odds of unused credit cards being canceled should not be discounted.

Many of us keep extra, unused credit cards for a "rainy day" (often in a fireproof box, hidden in our home or off-site at a bank-rented vault).

Additionally, many people have taken a retailer's credit card, as they were making a purchase, for the instant 10 percent one-time rebate, which was the incentive for taking that credit card. What has changed in the new era is two-fold.

Financial institutions incur a marginal cost for providing credit. Thus, many lenders are still reducing assets and/or being selective about whom they are renewing.

Canceling unused cards has been happening over the last year and a half and is not ending.

The credit-card consumers holding onto credit cards for a rainy day could mean "the flu" for lenders. Lenders are worried that the person who has not used a card in more than a year is taking out their card because of worst-case scenarios (recent unemployment, need to raise funds for a called in home equity line, etc.).

To protect your credit card lines, you may want to use your cards in intervals (every six to nine months).

Finances and partnerships

A change in today's lending environment affects partnerships. Before the financial crisis hit, many lenders needed one partner or 50 percent of ownership to have decent credit.

"Decent" is defined differently among different lenders, but a FICO score of 675 could have helped a health-care practitioner on an application-only loan (which means providing your name, address, social security, license number) to obtain approximately \$250,000.

In today's lending environment, all owners are scrutinized. Thus, if one partner or an owner with more than a 20 percent stake has weak credit (FICO below 675), then that could be a detriment for the practice obtaining financing.

It's prudent to be proactive in finding out your partner's credit before you obtain financing. This is a surprise you want to avoid. **DT**



Keith Drayer is vice president of Henry Schein Financial Services (HSFS).

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Phoenix-1 Ops-5 Equipped, GR \$515K+, 5 Working Days #12113

N Scottsdale-General Dentist Seeking Practice Purchase Opportunity #12109

Urban Tucson-6 Ops - 4 Equipped, 1 Hygiene, GR \$900K 12112

Tucson-1,800 active patients, GR \$850K, Asking \$650K #12116

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CALIFORNIA

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#14302 Fresno-5 Ops, 1,500 sq. fr., GR \$1,064,500 #14250

Greater Auburn Area-4 Ops, 1,800 sq. ft., GR \$763K #14304

Madera-7 Ops, GR \$1,921,467 #14283

Modesto-12 Ops, GR \$1,097,000, Same location for 10 years #14289

Modesto-5 Ops, GR \$884K w/adj. net income of \$346K #14308

N California Wine Country-1 Ops, 1,500 sq. ft., GR \$958K. #14296

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Redding-5 Ops, 2,200 sq. ft., GR \$1 Million #14293 Yuba City-5 Ops, 4 days hyg, 1,800 sq. fr. #14273 CONTACT: Dr. Thomas Wagner @ 916-812-3255

Rancho Margarita-4 Ops, 1,200 sq. fr., Take over lease #14301 CONTACT: Thinh Tran @ 949-555-8308

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Middle Cape Cod-6 Ops, GR \$900K, Sale price \$677K #30124

Boston-2 Ops, 1 Hygiene, GR \$302K #30125 Middlesex County-7 Ops, GR Mid \$500K #30120 New Bedford Area-8 Ops, \$628K #30119 CONTACT: Alex Litvak @ 617-240-2582

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Marlboro-Associate positions available #39102 Mercer City-3 Ops, Good Location, Turn Key, GR \$191K #39112 CONTACT: Sharon Mascetti @ 484-788-4071

NEW YORK

Brooklyn--- 3 Ops (1 Fully equipped), GR \$175K #41113 Woodstock-2 Ops, Building also available for sale, GR \$600K #41112

CONTACT: Dr. Don Cohen @ 845+460-3034

Syracuse-4 Ops, 1,800 sq. fr., GR over \$700K #41107 CONTACT: Marty Hare @ 315-263-1313

New York City-Specialty Practice, 3 Ops, GR \$502K #41109 CONTACT: Richard Zalkin @ 631-831-6924

NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte-7 Ops - 5 Equipped #42142 Foothills-5 Ops #42122

Near Pinchurst-Dental emerg clinic, 5 Ops, GR in 2007 \$373K #42134

New Hanover City-A practice on the coast, Growing Area #42145

Raleigh, Cary, Durham-Doctor looking to purchase #42127 CONTACT: Barbara Hardee Parker @ 919-848-1555

OHIO

Medina-Associate to buy 1/3, rest of practice in future. #44150 North Central-GR 619K, 4 Ops, Well Established #44159 North Central-GR 700K, 5 Ops, Well Established #44157 CONTACT: Dr. Don Moorhead @ 440-825-8037

PENNSYLVANIA

Northeast of Pittsburgh-3 Ops, Victorian Mansion GR \$1.2+ Million #47140 CONTACT: Dan Slain @ 412-855-0357

Lackawanna County-4 Ops, 1 Hygiene, GR \$515K #47138 Chester County-High End Office, 4 Op's, Digital, FFS + a few PPO's #47141

Philadelphia County (NE)-4 Ops, GR \$500K+, Est 25 years #47142

CONTACT: Sharon Mascetti @ 484-788-4071

RHODE ISLAND

Southern Rhode Island-I Ops, GR \$750K, Sale \$486K #48102 CONTACT: Dr. Peter Goldberg @ 617-680-2950

SOUTH CAROLINA

HHI-Dentist seeking to purchase a practice producing \$500K a year #49105 CONTACT: Scott Carringer @ 704-814-4796

Columbia-7 Ops, 2,200 sq. ft., GR \$678K #49102

CONTACT: Jim Cole @ 404-513-1573

TENNESSEE

Elizabethon-GR \$333K #51107 Memphis—Large profitable practice GR \$2 Million + #51112 Suburban Memphis-Leading Practice in Area GR \$1 Million #51113 CONTACT: George Lane @ 865-414-1527

TEXAS

Houston Area-GR \$1.1 Million wiadj. net income over \$500K #52103 CONTACT: Deanna Wright @ 800-730-8885

VIRGINIA

Greater Roanoke Valley-2,500 sq. ft., GR \$942K updated equipment #55111 CONTACT: Bob Anderson @ 804-640-2373