



# Dentistry

## IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Allied Staff

### Bridging Generational Gaps in a Dental Office:

### Tips for Creating a Harmonious Environment

By Mary Wolf, MS, LPC-MH



Over the years, I've had the privilege of coaching dental professionals across various generations, helping them understand one another better and create a culture of collaboration and wellbeing. What starts as frustration with a colleague's perceived shortcomings eventually leads to an "aha" moment—recognizing and appreciating the strengths that each generation contributes. The key is shifting from seeing generational differences as obstacles to embracing them as opportunities to enrich the workplace.

#### Working in a Multi-Generational Dental Office Setting:

- 1. Acknowledge the Value of Each Generation:** When you view each generation's strengths, instead of focusing on perceived flaws, you begin to see how they complement each other in the workplace.
- 2. Avoid Stereotyping:** Generational stereotypes can quickly breed division. Instead, focus on specific behaviors that can be discussed and improved upon.
- 3. Communicate Openly and Respectfully:** Open and respectful communication is key. Different generations may have different communication preferences.
- 4. Create Space for Feedback:** Encourage a culture of feedback that includes everyone, regardless of their age or tenure. When feedback flows freely and is valued, it bridges generational gaps and strengthens relationships.
- 5. Leverage Each Generation's Strengths:** Take advantage of the diverse skill sets each generation brings to the table. You can build a more well-rounded, efficient team by recognizing and utilizing these strengths.
- 6. Foster an Inclusive Work Environment:** Encourage an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued, regardless of age. Be proactive in creating opportunities for team-building, knowledge-sharing, and mentorship.

**Educate on Generational Differences:** Providing training on generational diversity can increase awareness and empathy among staff, paving the way for improved relationships and better collaboration.

By focusing on shared values and respecting the unique contributions of each generation, dental office teams can create a rich, collaborative culture that fosters wellbeing and success. I partnered with SDDA to develop the Be Well program. Reach out if you want to discuss how generational differences affect your clinic further. The Be Well program offers three free and confidential coaching or counseling sessions with me regarding any topic, whether personal or professional. Mary Wolf, MS, LPC-MH, BCC [mwolf@veriteepartners.com](mailto:mwolf@veriteepartners.com) 605-940-3868.

#### Generational Values

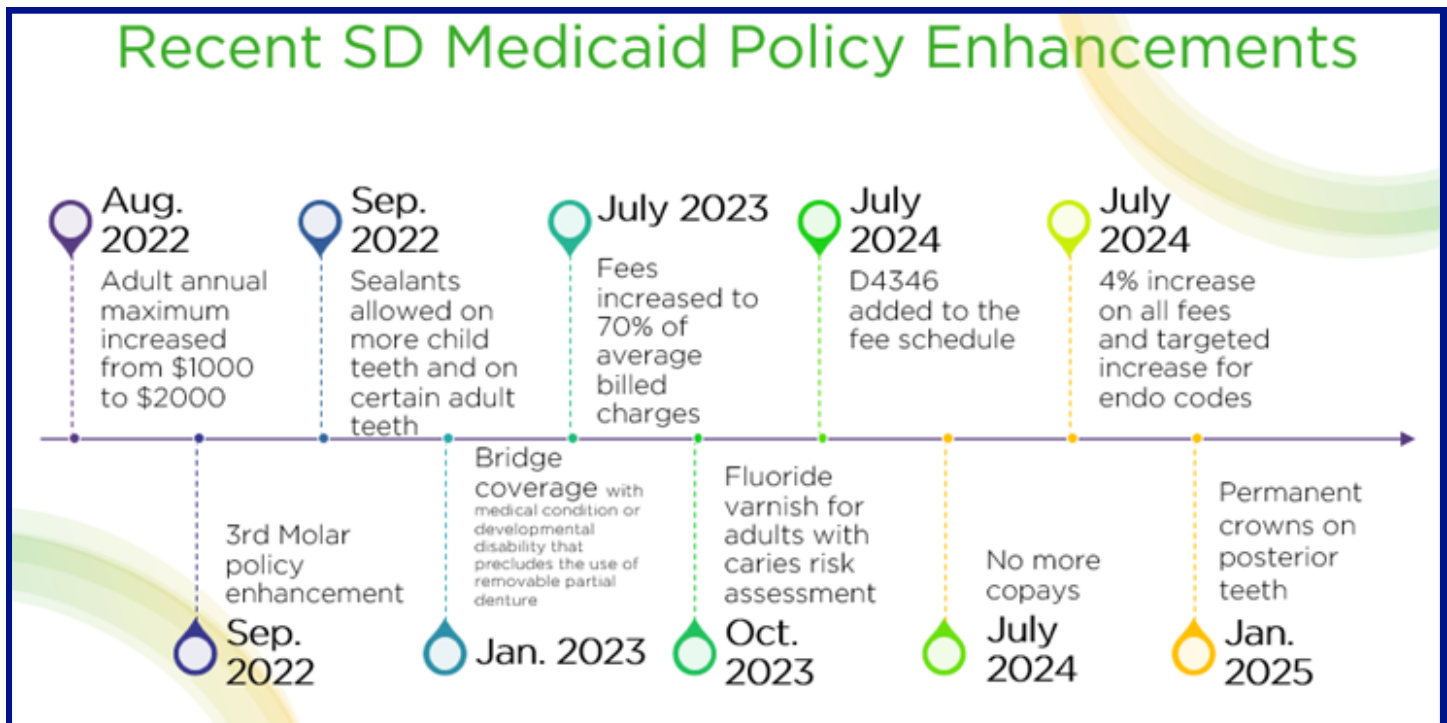
| Generation                       | Core Values & Traits   |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Traditionalists (born 1922-1945) | Loyalty, stability, respect for authority, hard work, discipline         |
| Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964)    | Teamwork, personal gratification, work ethic, optimism, loyalty          |
| Generation X (born 1965-1980)    | Independence, self-reliance, work-life balance, adaptability, skepticism |
| Millennials (born 1981-1996)     | Innovation, technology, collaboration, purpose-driven work, flexibility  |
| Generation Z (born 1997-2012)    | Diversity, inclusivity, digital fluency, social impact, entrepreneurship |

<https://www.purdueglobal.edu/education-partnerships/generational-workforce-differences-infographic/>

## So Many Great Changes

South Dakota Medicaid has made many changes to the dental benefit in the past two years as depicted by the graphic below. Many of the changes have been made in response to feedback from SDDA members.

Effective January 1, 2025, permanent crowns are a covered benefit from first molar to first molar for adults and children 12 and older. Providers should refer to the Adult and Child Dental Services provider manuals for additional information.



## Foundation Grant Applications

The South Dakota Dental Foundation provides financial support to the people, organizations and causes that advance oral health and the dental profession in South Dakota. Contributions are awarded for:

- Dental health projects for the underserved.
- Dental and auxiliary student activities and scholarships.
- Dental education programs for the dental professional and the public.
- Continuing education and promotion of professional ethics.
- Recruitment of dentists and dental students to South Dakota.



For more information and an application, please go to our website at [www.sddental.org](http://www.sddental.org), click on SD Dental Foundation, then Grants and Gifts. Applications are **due April 1**.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION CALENDAR

The listing of these programs is provided as a service to SDDA Newsletter subscribers, and does not mean that these programs have been endorsed or approved by the SD Dental Association or the SD State Board of Dentistry. All members are cautioned to evaluate the programs on their own merit.

### SOUTH DAKOTA DENTAL ASSOCIATION

#### 2025 ANNUAL SESSION

Contact: Melissa Afdahl, 605-609-1152  
melissa@sddental.org, www.sddental.org  
May 15-17, 2025; Rapid City, SD

### WESTERN DAKOTA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Contact: 605-718-2410; email: corped@wdt.edu

#### Third Friday of the month (AM)

- American Heart Association CPR Class for Healthcare Professionals

#### Third Friday of the month (PM)

- American Heart Association CPR Recertification for Healthcare Provider

#### Dental Radiology (2-day course)

- April 11-12, May 9-10, or June 14-15, 2025 in Rapid City

### SOUTHEAST TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Contact: 605-367-4607  
or corporateeducation@southeasttech.edu

#### Dental Radiology

- March 28, 2025

### LAKE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Contact: Nicole Pahl, 605-882-5284, ext. 362;  
Nicole.Pahl@lakeareatech.edu  
<https://www.lakeareatech.edu/corporate-education/corporate-education-registration/>

#### Home Study Radiology Courses available:

- Radiology Safety
- Radiography Production

**CPR COURSES:** Contact: Tia Meyer; 605-842-5672 or meyertia@hotmail.com

**605CPR:** Local instructor with 20 years of CPR teaching experience. We provide AHA and Red Cross BLS/ACLS/PALS certification. Will travel for onsite delivery.

[www.605CPR.com](http://www.605CPR.com); jr@605CPR.com; 605-525-4CPR (4277)

### UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA

Contact: Dept. of Dental Hygiene, 605-658-5960

#### Radiology Certification for Dental Assistants

- May 29-30, 2025

#### Nitrous Oxide/Oxygen Sedation Course

- June 5-6, 2025

#### Nitrous Oxide/Oxygen Inhalation Sedation Refresher

- June 13, 2025

#### Local Anesthesia Certification

- June 18-20, 2026

#### Local Anesthesia Refresher

- June 20, 2025

#### AAP Periodontology Guidelines

- June 6, 2025

#### Advanced Instrumentation

- June 5, 2025

#### Pharmacology Refresher

- June 13, 2025

#### Home Study Courses available:

- Radiology Interpretation, Pathology & Anomalies
- Errors of PA's, BWS & Panoramic Radiography
- Oral Effects of Head & Neck Radiation Therapy
- Radiation Safety
- Portable Dental Radiography
- SDF

### ADA CE ONLINE

Contact: [engage.ada.org](https://engage.ada.org)

Dentistry in South Dakota  
804 N Euclid; Ste 103  
Pierre SD 57501

## Classified Ads

Dakota Family Dentistry in Huron, SD is seeking a **registered dental hygienist** to join our team. The ideal candidate should be dedicated to providing excellent patient care with exceptional service. This is an outstanding opportunity to practice in a well-established clinic with a great team in a wonderful community. Benefits include a \$5000 sign-on bonus, student loan repayment for 3 year commitment, competitive pay, 401K with profit-sharing, in-house dental benefit plan, paid sick leave, vacation, dues, licenses, CE, and 6 paid holidays. Visit our website: [www.dakotafamilydentistry.org](http://www.dakotafamilydentistry.org) for an application or call 605-352-6999.

**Dental Hygienist:** Are you a dental hygienist looking to make a difference? Would you like to set your own schedule? Delta Dental of South Dakota's Mobile Program has collaborative supervision opportunities for dental hygienists. These opportunities include both—full time and part-time flexible schedules, including working specific weeks or months out of the year. The dental hygienists will work under collaborative supervision in South Dakota, primarily on the Pine Ridge or Cheyenne River Native American Reservations. The dental hygienists will join a team providing preventive services and oral health education in schools, Head Starts, etc. Extensive travel is required. May be eligible for benefits including health, dental, vision, life/long term disability insurance, paid holidays, vacation/sick leave, 401k, and more. For more information visit [www.deltadentalsd.com](http://www.deltadentalsd.com). Submit a cover letter and resume to: [summer.sporrer@deltadentalsd.com](mailto:summer.sporrer@deltadentalsd.com). Questions? Contact Zach Parsons at 605-494-2558.



Bridge the Gap

SOUTH DAKOTA  
OFFERS A HOST OF  
**DENTAL  
EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES**

Check out  
**sddental.org**

HR SDDA South Dakota  
DENTAL ASSOCIATION

### Dentistry in South Dakota

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