

*“Why  
should  
I join  
Dentistat?”*

**Answers...**

**To The Questions  
Most Frequently Asked  
By Dentists.**

## Q. Why should I join Dentistat?

### A. The Short Answer...



The companies above are **Dentistat** clients. They include insurance carriers and other dental benefit administrators that offer **fee-for-service, PPO** programs as an alternative to traditional indemnity plans. **Each company has its own program** with differing plan designs, fee schedules, and provider contracts. They rely on **Dentistat** to make sure dentists have **verified credentials** and **appropriate utilization patterns**.

### The Longer Answer...

You may have received these **Dentistat** materials as part of the application process for a particular insurance company. They may wish you to become a **Dentistat** member in order to accept you into their network. Another reason for joining **Dentistat** is that you will be able to review and then accept or reject the offers you will receive from our other clients companies.

If you are asking about **Dentistat** on your own and not because of a mailing from a specific company, your reason for joining **Dentistat** is to receive individual, no-obligation offers from all of **Dentistat's** client companies. You will be free to accept or reject each offering as you see fit—the choice is always yours.

### The Big-picture Answer...

Your real question may be “Why should I be interested in dental PPOs at all?”

America is struggling with the difficult issues concerning the access, costs and delivery of healthcare. Like our medical colleagues, we know change is inevitable. Many dentists as well as other healthcare givers will have to adopt new “managed care” strategies to succeed in the current and future health benefits marketplace.

Among the various models of managed care, **Dentistat**-supported PPOs best preserve many aspects of traditional private practice. In a PPO, dentists agree to provide care to employee groups on a reduced **fee-for-service** basis. PPO dentists also agree to cooperate with utilization review and patient advocacy programs—all in return for being listed in preferred provider directories to attract new patients. In contrast, capitation plans transfer financial risk to the dentist and can leave the dentist in a negative financial position when many patients utilize the plan or have extensive treatment needs.

**Dentistat**-supported PPO plans are fee-for-service, **not capitation!**

**If you recognize the companies shown above as administering dental benefit plans in your community, perhaps it's time to consider what participating in Dentistat-supported programs could mean to your practice.**

**Q. *What is Credentials Verification and why the recent emphasis?***

**A.** **Dentistat** has been credentialing its member dentists since 1983. Verification standards have evolved dramatically since then and now exist as a well-defined and formal set of industry-accepted guidelines. Today's requirements for dentists participating in dental plan networks include collecting certain documents from primary sources, contacting various agencies, and repeating the entire process every two years.

The good news is that **Dentistat** will guide you through this process **as your advocate**. **Dentistat** members are considered fully credentialed by all current **Dentistat**-supported programs, as well as many other dental plans that are rapidly becoming **Dentistat** clients.

**Dentistat** will always attempt to make this process as easy as possible for its member dentists. **Dentistat** will be advancing efforts to bypass the dentist (with his or her permission, of course) and obtain information directly from the primary source, such as a state licensing agency. **Dentistat** will continue to seek every advantage using advanced Electronic Data Interchange capabilities to help keep costs low.

**Dentistat** will help you be sure that your own credentials are consistently up to date.

**Q. *Is there any fee to join Dentistat?***

**A.** No. **Dentistat** is paid by its client companies, not by dentists.

**Q. *If I join Dentistat, am I automatically signed up with all of Dentistat's client companies?***

**A.** No. **Dentistat** advises its client companies of all new member dentists, and when a company is building or maintaining a PPO network in your area, they will contact you with an offering. This offer will include their fee schedule for your area, a participating agreement and other information. You decide if it is good for your practice to sign up. You can join them all, just some, or say "no thanks" to all offers. You are in charge.

**Q. *Can Dentistat send me plan descriptions and fee schedules?***

**A.** No. Each **Dentistat** client independently develops its own plan design features and fee schedules. Common to all, however, are incentives to encourage patient selection of their participating dentists. Each **Dentistat**-affiliated company will send its offer directly to you. **Dentistat** is not involved with the setting of fee schedules.

**Q. *What is Utilization Review?***

**A.** Utilization Review, as performed by **Dentistat**, is a process by which your individual utilization and billing pattern is compared to those of other dentists in your community and across the country. An applicant whose utilization rates for many procedures exceed the rates of the majority of the dentists in the community is unlikely to be accepted as a **Dentistat** member.

Member dentists' practice patterns are continuously monitored to assure that performed procedures are appropriate and necessary and not being over-reported in an attempt to offset reduced-fee arrangements.

**Q. *Will I be required to provide all services or can I refer my PPO patients to specialists of my choice?***

**A.** You are required to perform only those procedures with which you are comfortable and feel competent to provide. When you need to refer patients for specialty care, we ask that you try to refer them to participating specialists, but most **Dentistat**-supported programs do not require it.

**Q.** *If I am in a group practice, do all of the dentists in the group need to participate?*

**A.** Recommended policy is that all dentists **who will treat PPO patients** in a particular practice participate, and it is certainly beneficial for group practices to have as many doctors as possible listed in network directories.

**Dentistat**-affiliated companies may have differing requirements about group practices that wish to have some dentists not participate. Important considerations include how the practice name, doctors' names, and ID number(s) will be used to submit claims. You will need to contact each company to ask their rules. **Dentistat** can help direct you; just call us.

**Q.** *How will I know which patients have an Dentistat-affiliated PPO Plan?*

**A.** The program administrator will provide you with updated listings of policyholders in your area. As with all dental insurance, it is a good idea for the dentist to ask if a new patient is covered under a benefit plan, and **the pre-determination of benefits process is always recommended**. Some plans issue patient ID cards, and most programs have toll-free numbers you can call to verify eligibility.

**Q.** *How will PPO patients find me?*

**A.** When you agree to participate in an **Dentistat**-affiliated PPO program, your name, office information and specialty (if any) will be published in their Directory of Preferred Providers.

**Q.** *If I join one or more Dentistat-supported programs, can I still participate with other managed care companies?*

**A.** Yes. **Dentistat** programs place no restrictions regarding the other contracts you sign.

**Q.** *What provisions are there for me to withdraw?*

**A.** Each program contract that you sign will have its own termination conditions. Generally, however, PPO plans do not require a long-term commitment. They allow dentists to quit the program by simply giving 30-60 days written notice. Of course, any treatment in progress must be completed under the terms of the PPO program. Just as joining **Dentistat** **does not** automatically sign you up with all **Dentistat** client companies, your choice to drop your **Dentistat** membership **does not** automatically sever the relationships you have with **Dentistat** clients. You will also need to separately and directly notify each company with whom you signed a contract about your wish to quit their program.

**Q.** *How do I get more information?*

**A.** **Call Dentistat at 408-376-0336 or 800-336-8250**

If you're concerned about attracting new patients, maybe you should consider **Dentistat** membership.

 **DENTISTAT, Inc.®**