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**TEXAS DENTAL ASSOCIATION (TDA) UNVEILS 2008 REPORT ON
IMPROVING ORAL HEALTH CARE IN TEXAS
*Report Makes Five Recommendations***

Austin, Texas (Dec. 9, 2008) – Today the Texas Dental Association (TDA) unveiled its first-ever report on the status of oral health care in Texas, *“Building Better Oral Health: A Dental Home for all Texans,”* commissioned by the TDA with grant funding from the American Dental Association (ADA).

The report examines the barriers to oral health, the medical, economic, and social consequences of untreated oral disease, as well as the state of the oral health care delivery system in Texas, the oral health status of Texas compared to the rest of the nation, and what populations are in the greatest need for oral health care services.

The report was modeled after the groundbreaking 2000 U.S. Surgeon General study, *Oral Health in America*. To develop the report, the TDA assembled a team of five nationally recognized dentists from both academia and private practice (known as the Editorial Review Board): **Patricia L. Blanton, D.D.S., M.S., Ph.D., Kevin Donly, D.D.S, M.S., Arthur Jeske, D.M.D., Ph.D., Eric S. Solomon, D.D.S., M.A. and Karen B. Troendle, D.D.S., M.P.H.** The Editorial Review Board was asked to identify the State’s most pressing issues, needs, and challenges associated with improving the oral health of all Texans, with a special focus on the State’s most vulnerable.

“We hope this report will spur a new dialogue about the state of oral health in Texas and what we can do as a state to help improve the oral health of all Texans,” said Dr. Hilton Israelson, President of the Texas Dental Association.

The ERB developed five key policy recommendations to help build better oral health for all Texans:

- 1) Identify a “dental home” for every Texan
- 2) Strengthen the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Oral Health Program (OHP)
- 3) Create new programs to encourage general dentists and specialists to practice in underserved areas and to treat underserved populations
- 4) Develop a comprehensive oral health public awareness and education campaign
- 5) Expand access to oral health services for older Texans

To download a full copy of the report and learn more, visit www.buildingbetteroralhealth.org

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About the Texas Dental Association:

The Texas Dental Association (TDA), chartered in 1871, is the third largest state dental association in the United States. Currently, the Association has more than 7,700 members and is comprised of 26 component dental societies grouped into four divisions across the state of Texas. The TDA is part of a tri-partite affiliation with the American Dental Association as its national representative and its component societies at the local level. For more information about the TDA, visit the association's Web site at www.tda.org.

About the American Dental Association:

The American Dental Association (ADA) is the nation's largest dental association, representing more than 155,000 dentist members. The premier source of oral health information, the ADA has advocated for the public's health and promoted the art and science of dentistry since 1859. The ADA's state-of-the-art research facilities develop and test dental products and materials that have advanced the practice of dentistry and made the patient experience more positive. The ADA Seal of Acceptance long has been a valuable and respected guide to consumer and professional products. For more information about the ADA, visit the association's Web site at www.ada.org.

Facts From: “Building Better Oral Health: A Dental Home For all Texans”

Oral health is more than the mouth. Poor oral health can compromise a person’s general health, quality of life and life expectancy.

Facts:

- The surgeon general estimates that children with oral disease miss over 51 million hours of school each year, and that adults with oral disease miss approximately 164 million hours of work each year. ***(See page 8 of the report)***
- Untreated oral disease can become systemic and lead to serious or even life threatening conditions that result in the need for emergency department visits, extended hospital stays and costly medications. ***(See page 9 of the report)***
- Researchers have found an association between oral disease and conditions such as heart disease, stroke, and bacterial pneumonia. ***(See page 9 of the report)***
- Researchers from the National Institute of Diabetes and Kidney Disease found that diabetic patients with severe gum disease were more than three times more likely to die of combined kidney and heart dysfunction compared with other groups with no or mild-to-moderate gum disease – even after adjusting for other risk factors, such as high blood pressure and tobacco use. ***(See page 11 of the report)***
- A two-year randomized survey of 366 residents of 11 different nursing homes found significantly lower rates of pneumonia among residents receiving oral care compared to those who weren’t. ***(See page 33 of the report)***
- According to an analysis of data collected by the U.S. government through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), in 2004 only seven states exceeded the Healthy People 2010 goal for annual dental exams among persons with diabetes. The statistics for Texas, a state with a high incidence of diabetes, are disturbing. In 2004, only 50 percent of dentate adults (those with teeth) with diabetes had a dental exam in the past year, down from 65 percent in 1999. The only state that had a lower rate of dental visits in 2004 among dentate diabetic patients was Mississippi, at 49 percent. ***(See page 35 of the report)***

- In 2004, dental services accounted for only about 4.6 percent of total health care spending in Texas. *(See page 16 of the report)*
- Approximately 29% of oral cancer cases in Texas are detected at the earliest, most treatable stage – compared to the Healthy People 2010 target of 50%. *(See page 28 of the report)*

With the changing face of Texas, the State must work to break the economic, structural, and cultural barriers that keep some Texans from getting proper oral care.

- **The report found that many of the young, sick, poor and elderly are falling through the cracks when it comes to dental care.**

Facts:

- In 2005, Texans paid nearly 54% of their dental expenditures out of pocket, compared to the national average of 49%. *(See page 14 of the report)*
- Of the ten largest states, Texas had the third highest percentage of dental expenses paid out of pocket, after Florida and New Jersey. *(See page 14 of the report)*
- According to the most recent Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, children with private dental coverage were twice as likely to have visited a dentist as children with no coverage. *(See page 14 of the report)*
- Among all 50 states, only three states (North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana) had a higher percentage of children without dental insurance in 2003. In that same year, 32% of Texas children did not have dental coverage. *(See page 14 of the report)*
- According to the “Basic Screening Survey of Texas Public School Children” done in 2006, 44% of children ages 6-8 had untreated dental caries (tooth decay) compared with 26% nationally. *(See page 27 of the report)*
- According to the Center for Health Care Strategies: “Approximately 80% of dental caries (tooth decay) is concentrated in 25% of U.S. children - mostly low-income children – with even higher levels of caries found in African-American and Hispanic children.” *(See page 27 of the report)*

- Adult Medicaid does not cover dental care, so unlike children, the poorest Texans have very limited access to government funded dental programs.
- Texas' three dental schools ranked in the top five of all nonminority dental schools in the number of underrepresented minority students (blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and Native Alaskans) in fiscal year 2006. **(See page 43 of the report)**

What is a dental home?

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and the American Dental Association define a dental home as “the ongoing relationship between the dentist and the patient, and includes comprehensive oral health care, beginning no later than age one.”

What does access to oral health care mean?

There are many different ways to define the term “access to oral health care.” The authors of this report developed an approach to access to care that takes into account both the need to: (1) increase the availability of oral health care services for all Texans regardless of income, geography, race or ethnicity; and (2) enhance the public’s understanding of the importance of oral health care.

Facts about the Frew agreement and Texas Medicaid:

Frew v. Hawkins was filed in 1993 on behalf of Texas Medicaid recipients. The class-action lawsuit alleged that children enrolled in Medicaid (known as Texas Health Steps) were not adequately receiving the preventive and specialty care services (including dental care) available to them under the federally mandated Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program.

In April 2007, after 14 years in court, the State of Texas reached an agreement with the plaintiff’s counsel in the *Frew* lawsuit. The agreement allocated \$1.8 billion (including \$707 million in state revenues) to expand access to children’s Medicaid services for the 2008 – 09 biennium.

Most of the *Frew* funding will be used to improve medical and dental Medicaid reimbursement rates in an effort to attract more providers into the Medicaid program. About \$150 million has been set aside during the 2008 – 09 budget period for “strategic medical and dental initiatives” to increase access to care, including dental services, in underserved areas. Another \$45 million for the 2008 – 09 biennium has been allocated to expand outreach and education for Medicaid-enrolled families and health care providers.

What is Healthy People 2010?

Healthy People 2010 is a set of health objectives for the nation to achieve over the first decade of the new century. It can be used by many different people, states, communities, professional organizations, and others to help them develop programs to improve health.

What is the 2000 U.S. Surgeon General report, “Oral Health in America?”

On May 25, 2000, Surgeon General David Satcher released “Oral Health in America.” This report shined much needed light on the “silent epidemic” of untreated oral disease – and affirmed the link between oral health and general health.

About the Editorial Review Board:

Patricia L. Blanton, D.D.S., M.S., Ph.D.

Patricia L. Blanton has led a distinguished career in dentistry dating back to her first faculty appointment in 1967. The first female president of the Texas Dental Association, she received her Ph.D. in anatomy from Baylor University in Dallas and her D.D.S. from Baylor College of Dentistry. Dr. Blanton has spent most of her professional career at Baylor College of Dentistry, where she is currently a professor emeritus in the Department of Biomedical Sciences. In addition to her academic positions and numerous professional appointments, she currently has a full-time periodontics and implantology practice. Dr. Blanton is a member of the ADA Presidential Task Force to Study Commission of Dental Accreditation (CO DA) and a delegate to the American Dental Association. She has held numerous positions in the past with the American Dental Association, the Texas Dental Association and the Dallas County Dental Society. Dr. Blanton has received many awards and recognitions in her field, including a nomination to the Texas Women's Hall of Fame in the Health / Health Research category, the Baylor College of Dentistry Distinguished Alumnus award, the Dallas County Dental Society Dentist of the Year award, the Dallas County Dental Society Lifetime Achievement Award, the American Association of Women Dentists 2008 Woman Dentist of the Year / Lucy Hobbs Taylor award, the Commanders Award from the Europe Regional Dental Command and the naming in her honor of the Patricia L. Blanton Library at Baylor College of Dentistry. Dr. Blanton lectures internationally and has produced over one hundred publications, including a book.

Kevin Donly, D.D.S., M.S.

Kevin Donly is currently a professor and chair in the Department of Pediatric Dentistry and a professor in the Department of Pediatrics at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. His past positions include professor and associate director of the Center for Clinical Studies at the University of Iowa, associate professor in pediatric dentistry at The University of Texas Dental Branch at Houston and associate professor at The University of Texas Medical School. He was educated at the University of Iowa, completing a D.D.S., Certificate in Pediatric Dentistry and masters of science. Dr. Donly holds many professional positions in dentistry, including with the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Foundation and the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. He is a past chair of both the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry Council on Post-Doctoral Education and the Public Information Committee for the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. He is also past president of the American Society of Dentistry for Children. He currently serves on the Advisory Committee on Training in Primary Care Medicine and Dentistry for the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resource and Services Administration (hrsa). Dr. Donly has published over 250 chapters, manuscripts and abstracts associated

with pediatric dentistry and dental restorative materials. Presently, he is a principal investigator on an R01 grant sponsored by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research.

Arthur Jeske, D.M.D., Ph.D.

Arthur Jeske is a professor in the Department of Restorative Dentistry and Biomaterials and Associate Dean for Strategic Planning at The University of Texas Dental Branch at Houston. He received his Ph.D. and D.M.D. from the Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry, and has since spent 29 years in dental education. Dr. Jeske is an active member of numerous dental associations, including the American Dental Association, the Texas Dental Association and the Greater Houston Dental Society. He is involved in the dissemination of new scientific knowledge of dentistry, both through frequent publication of his own research in dental pharmacology and by holding editorial positions with three scholarly dental journals and two reference books. Dr. Jeske has received several awards and recognitions in his field, including the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry, the Golden Pen Literature Award of the International College of Dentists, an Exemplary Service Award from the Texas Dental Association and a membership in the Alumni Hall of Fame at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte.

Eric S. Solomon, D.D.S., M.A.

Eric S. Solomon has served as executive director for institutional research at the Texas A & M Health Science Center since 2000, and is also a professor of public health sciences at the Baylor College of Dentistry. Dr. Solomon earned his bachelor's, master's and dental degrees from the University of Maryland. He completed his residency in general dentistry at the University of Rochester's Eastman Dental Center. Dr. Solomon has also earned a certificate in conflict resolution from The Texas A & M University System and a graduate certificate in Geographic Information Systems from The University of Texas at Dallas. Prior to joining the Baylor College of Dentistry in 1992, Dr. Solomon served as the assistant executive director for application services and resource studies at the American Dental Education Association. He has served in various leadership positions throughout his career at the Baylor College of Dentistry, including associate dean for institutional research, planning, and information technology and interim associate dean for student services. Dr. Solomon has published over 100 articles in scholarly journals and is frequently invited to speak on a wide variety of topics related to dental education and the future of dentistry. He received the Texas Dental Association Service Recognition Award in 2003 and 2008, the Texas Dental Association's President's Award in 2004 and the Texas A & M Health Science Center President's Award for Administrative Support in 2008.

Karen B. Troendle, D.D.S., M.P.H.

Karen B. Troendle is currently an associate professor in the Department of Restorative Dentistry at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. She received her D.D.S. from The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, and her M.P.H. from The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. Her master's thesis addressed the prevalence of oral / dental health problems among the elderly in Lower Rio Grande nursing facilities. Dr. Troendle has over 30 years of teaching experience in the disciplines of prosthodontics and restorative dentistry. She has directed numerous courses and has received several awards for teaching and for the creation and dissemination of innovative educational materials. Most notable among these materials was a package designed to train nurse aides in South Texas nursing facilities to deliver daily oral health care needs to residents with limited motor skills. The package won the ADA Geriatric Dental Health Care Award and has recently been adopted for use in the states of Nevada and Kansas.