

**Delta Dental of Virginia Clinical Policy #901**
**Subject**

Palliative (Emergency) Treatment of Dental Pain – Minor Procedure

**Originating Department**

Clinical Professional Services

**Signature Authority**

Dental Director

**Type:**       New                       Replacement                       Revision                       Clarification

**Date:**              11/09/2009                      **Revision Date:**              11/15/2011

**Preamble:**

The Clinical Policy Bulletin is an expression of Delta Dental of Virginia's (DDVA) determination regarding whether certain services or supplies are medically or dentally necessary. DDVA bases its conclusions on a review of currently available clinical literature. This includes, but is not limited to, clinical outcome studies published in the peer-reviewed medical and dental literature, regulatory status of the technology, evidence-based guidelines of public health and health research agencies, evidence-based guidelines and positions of leading national health professional organizations, views of physicians and dentists practicing in relevant clinical areas, and other relevant factors. DDVA reserves the right to revise these policies as new clinical information is available and we welcome submission of further relevant information.

A group may define covered dental services under their dental plan, as well as those services that may be subject to dollar caps or other limits. The plan documents outline covered benefits, exclusions and limitations. DDVA advises dentists and enrollees to consult the plan documents to determine if there are exclusions or other benefit limitations applicable to the service request. The conclusion that a particular service is medically or dentally necessary does not constitute an indication or warranty that the service requested is a covered benefit payable by DDVA. Some plans exclude coverage for services that DDVA considers either medically or dentally necessary. When there is a discrepancy between DDVA's clinical policy and the group's plan documents, DDVA is to defer to the group's plan documents as to whether the dental service is a covered benefit. In addition, if state or federal regulations mandate coverage then DDVA will adhere to the applicable regulatory requirement.

**History:**

In Dentistry, palliative treatment is considered treatment for an emergency that alleviates pain only. The code is reported as a per visit, not per tooth, service and cannot be reported under its own procedure code. If the treatment rendered is better defined with an existing code, the appropriate code best describing the procedure should be used. Palliative treatment includes all services other than necessary X-rays for this procedure.

**Policy:**

DDVA Guidelines:

The clinical need for this procedure must be documented by a written narrative with a description of the procedure and the treatment provided.

**Code(2):**

D9110 – Palliative (emergency) treatment of dental pain – minor procedures

**References:**

1. Illustrated Dictionary of Dentistry. S Jablonsky. W B Saunders Co. Philadelphia PA. 1992.
2. American Dental Association, *Current Dental Terminology. CDT 2011-2012*;71 (©ADA 2010).