

# DDS DENTAL NEWS

## *Briarwood Dental Hygiene Students Arrive at STS*



*Briarwood Dental Hygiene Students: Amy Casinerri, Melissa Rivas, Katie Wasko and their clinical instructor, Wanda Nelson*

This September, DDS and other organizations have embarked on the new partnership with The Briarwood College Dental Hygiene Program. Examples of other organizations participating in this endeavor include Hartford Public Schools, St. Mary's Home, Head Start, and The Veterans Administration. During the five-week rotation, two or three hygiene students and their clinical instructors, Sharon Strobel, RDH BS and Wanda Nelson, CDA RDH MS provide services along side the dental staff at STS Dental Clinic. The hygienists are in the clinic on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. In addition to providing valuable care to DDS consumers, they learn best practices and techniques in "special care dentistry." Some have family members with intellectual and developmental disabilities and have found this rotation to be very rewarding. STS consumers have also benefited from the care that these students have provided under the supervision of their instructors and the STS dental team.

In addition to these services, the students have been visiting the cottages at STS to provide in-service training to the staff and consumers on oral health. This training has been facilitated by the Briarwood Instructors under the guidance of Tonya McNair, Unit Manager and Patti Panasi, Unit Director.

The main focus of this project is to improve the dental professionals' attitudes towards people with intellectual disabilities by providing a clinical exposure for the dental hygiene students. It has been demonstrated that such experience improves students' willingness to work with this population after graduation. They will graduate having knowledge in providing preventative dental services in private practices and clinics. These students will be able to educate their peers in providing dental care to individuals with intellectual disabilities. A sign of the success of this program came recently, when one of the students commented that once she graduates she would like to provide care to DDS consumers. This is exactly what we hope to accomplish with this program.



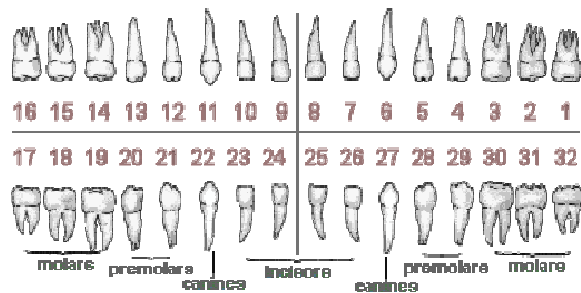
**Briarwood College Dental Clinic is now accepting appointments for FREE dental hygiene services in their brand new, state-of-the-art facility at 2279 Mount Vernon Road in Southington. For more information please call (860) 426-0467 or 1-800 952-2444 x 103.**

## ~ Decoding Dental Terminology ~

**QUESTION:** A consumer came back from a dental appointment and was told that he needed to return to have a filling placed on tooth # 31 – MO. What does this mean?

**ANSWER:** There are 32 adult teeth in a human mouth including wisdom teeth. For identification purposes, each tooth has a number. Numbering starts from the upper right, third molar (also called the wisdom tooth) is tooth number # 1. The tooth next to it is #2; next is #3; and so on until #16 is reached on the upper left (the left wisdom tooth). The numbering continues on to the lower left at tooth #17 (the lower left wisdom tooth) and continues to #18 and so on; until # 32 is counted on the lower right side. This is the lower right wisdom tooth.

This numbering system is used even if a person does not have all of their teeth. For example, if the wisdom teeth are missing, the upper right back tooth is still called #2.



Each tooth surface is divided into sections for further identification:

**Occlusal area (O)** is the chewing surface of the tooth

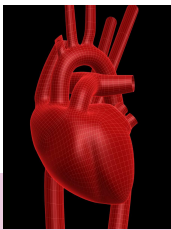
**Mesial area (M)** is the side surface of the tooth facing toward the nose

**Distal areas (D)** is the side surface of the tooth away from the nose

**Facial or Buccal areas (F, B)** are the front surfaces of the tooth facing the cheek or lips,

**Lingual area (L)** is the inside surface of the tooth facing the tongue.

To answer the question, tooth number 31, is a lower right second molar. MO stands for Mesial Occlusal area and is a chewing and side surface of the tooth that will require a filling.



*America enjoys the best health care in the world, but the best is no good if folks can't afford it, and doctors can't provide it.*

*William H. Frist, Former United States Senator (R-TN)*

### Antibiotics, Oral Health and Your Heart

For many years the American Heart Association (AHA) has recommended that individuals with certain heart conditions take antibiotics prior to dental treatments. This was done with the belief that antibiotics will prevent Infective Endocarditis, an infection of the heart's valves. This phenomenon could result when the bacteria in the mouth enters the blood stream and travels to the heart. According to the AHA, current research is finding that there is no compelling evidence that taking antibiotics before a dental procedure prevents Infective Endocarditis. The new theory suggests that the heart already is exposed to bacteria from the mouth that can enter the blood-stream during basic daily activities such as brushing and flossing.

Current guidelines now state that individuals who have taken antibiotics in the past for dental appointments may not need to take them. These include people with Mitral Valve Prolapse, Rheumatic Heart Disease, and Congenital Heart Conditions. It is important to note that each DDS consumer has a unique medical history. The person's physician or cardiologist should make the decision of whether an individual needs to be premedicated with antibiotics for dental appointments.

The American Heart Association advises that individuals who have artificial heart valves, a history of Infective Endocarditis, certain serious congenital heart conditions, or cardiac transplantation still require antibiotics prior to dental appointments.

All individuals with heart conditions should check with their primary care physicians or cardiologists regarding the need for antibiotics prior to dental appointments.