

## **NOT ENOUGH LETTERS BUT PLENTY OF LOVE**

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For the first time in history, the number of named tropical storms and hurricanes outran the letters in the English alphabet. We've moved on to the Greek alphabet as Tropical Storm Alpha brews in the Atlantic. As we bring this issue of Resource Connections to press, Hurricane Wilma has just delivered her destruction to southern Florida.

We have seen another extraordinary hurricane season. Fortunately, Florida escaped the forces of Dennis, Katrina and Rita that brought such devastation to our neighboring states. Perhaps our experiences last year are part of the reason so many compassionate Floridians gave of themselves to help this year's victims. On the local front, one of Resource Connections' good friends, Steve Mizrahi of AuRefining, drove a truckload of supplies to Mississippi to help in the massive relief effort after Hurricane Katrina. Linda Harvey's daughter, Michele, traveled to several areas in Mississippi as part of the AmeriCorps disaster relief efforts, and Elaine Anwander's husband, Bill, was part of a support team in the Gulf region after Hurricane Dennis. Kim Knapp has been helping displaced dental workers find temporary employment here in Jacksonville.

"It was an awesome experience to see workers from all around the United States extending help to people who have lost absolutely everything," Steve said. He talked with people from as far away as California, Chicago and New York. Among the supplies and pallets of food Steve and his team delivered were 200 very welcome pillows.

We are also proud to see the way organized dentistry has supported the massive relief efforts. At the end of September 2005, 288 dentists had volunteered to provide temporary housing and employment to dentists displaced by disaster through ADAF's Help-a-Dentist program. \$1,208,354 donations and pledges had been collected in the ADA Foundation Disaster Response Fund, and \$787,500 in needs grants had been disbursed to individual dentists, as reported by ADA News, 10/3/05, giving true meaning to the term "caring professionals."

Hurricane season officially ends November 30<sup>th</sup>, and not a moment too soon. After Wilma, the need is in our own home state. South Florida can use our help now. Resource Connections wants to take this opportunity to commend all our friends and associates for their heartfelt generosity.

## **Dental Health and Overall Health – An Important Link**

Excerpts from “North Florida Doctor” magazine, August 2005

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A recent article by Dr. Christian Berdy in “North Florida Doctor” brought to mind an old friend who didn’t know how sick she really was. Until, that is, she dragged herself into their family’s dentist for a routine cleaning. The dentist wisely suggested she get to her physician’s office right away. There she learned it wasn’t a sinus infection but a respiratory problem that was draining her energy.

Dr. Berdy cites two studies relating to a possible connection between subgingival plaque and risk of heart attack. Other researchers are investigating potential linkages between periodontal diseases and systemic conditions such as osteoporosis. Diabetes and high blood pressure are two things Dr. Berdy sees most frequently in older patients.

Coordination of care between a dentist and physician is also important prior to certain dental procedures. Some patients who have had hip or knee replacements may need to have antibiotics before oral surgery, Dr. Berdy explains. Or, if a patient takes aspirin or blood thinner, he contacts the patient’s physician to determine whether it is safe for the patient to continue or discontinue the medication during a dental procedure. In the case of cancer patients, the current treatment plan may limit what procedures dentists can perform.

The point of the article is that communication between the medical and dental communities is a key to patient safety and health. For re-prints of the NFD article entitled, “Doctors & Dentists, Bridging the Gap,” contact the editor at (904) 992-9945.