



part of the ModernDental NETWORK

Search...

SUBSCRIBE: Magazine / eNewsletter

CONNECT:

HOME

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

MATERIALS

TECHNOLOGY

NEWS & BUSINESS

TECHNIQUES

EMERGING RESEARCH



TRENDING:

Composite Resource Center

Practice Management

CAD/CAM

Hygiene

Digital Impressions

Financial Advisors

PREV

Osseointegration Foundation research grant ap ...

Group practice

Why dentists need to fight back against corporate giants

In an era where private practice ownership is declining, more dentists are banding together to fight insurance companies and dental groups.



September 27, 2018

By Marni Jameson Carey

After watching what has happened to independent doctors over the last decade, dentists have realized that if they're not careful, they'll be next.

Changes in the marketplace have forced many U.S. doctors to cash in their autonomy in exchange for hospital employment or private equity firm oversight. As they became cogs in

RESOURCE CENTERS

PARTNER CONTENT/IN-SITES

Dentures

Group Practice

Cosmetic Dentistry

Infection Control

Oral Health

TOP HEADLINES

Hourly and annual salary numbers for ...

Stratasy: A next-level lab solution

Bench Mastery: Improved ceramic ...

Webinar: Learn the real value of 3D ...

can refer patients, how much they get paid and how many patients they must see a day.

To dentists across America, this is a cautionary tale. As more [private equity companies buy up dental practices](#), turning them into employees of megabrands like Heartland Dental, Aspen Dental and Smile Brands, to name a few, other dentists are rallying together to make sure they don't suffer the same fate.

They're not only saying no to private equity but also fighting the insipid undertow of insurance plans.

[Trending article: Is the solo practice dead?](#)

One group of dentists in Massachusetts has banded together to fight the trend. Betrayed by their own state dental society, these independent dentists formed the Massachusetts Dentists Alliance for Quality Care.

"Over the past five years, dental insurance companies and private equity groups have extended their tentacles into the private practice of dentistry, changing the way it is financed and ultimately diverting more dollars into their pockets and far less into the pockets of those actually providing the care," says Dr. Jill Tanzi, a Boston-based dentist and founding member of the alliance. "Quite simply, they are using the medical model as their guide to extract as much money as possible out of the dental health industry."

The model is simple: Sew up market share, control the dentists, cut their pay, leave them no way out through binding non-compete contracts, then raise premiums.

It's good work if you can get it.

"As we have seen from our friends in the medical field, when you allow insurance companies and large partnerships to take over healthcare, it does not end well," Tanzi says. "Sadly we are seeing the fallout as talented doctors and dentists leave their professions in droves."



For the Massachusetts dentists, the final straw came in December 2016. Delta Dental sent its dentists a new contract, requiring them to sign it by Jan. 6 or face a one-year lockout. The new contract would cut their already substantially reduced contracted rates by as much as 30 percent, so the cut was closer to 60 percent, Tanzi says.

[Read more: Medical billing for dental surgery — what you need to know](#)

By far the largest provider of dental benefits in the state, Delta services more than 5,000 Massachusetts companies and 2.2 million members. More than 95 percent of the state's dentists participate in the Delta plan. The dentists were over a barrel — and they're not alone. Delta is making similar moves in other states, including Washington and Wisconsin.

While Delta argued that it needed to slash payments to dentists to "control costs," the nonprofit was paying eight top executives over a [million dollars](#) a year in compensation. In 2015, Fay Donahue, the top executive at Dental Service of Massachusetts, Delta Dental's parent company, made \$7 million.

Meanwhile, the [average dentist salary](#) in the United States is \$151,090.

Continue to page two to read more...

	PRODUCTS	DIGITAL ESTHETICS	HYGIENE	PRACTICE MANAGEMENT	E-BOOK LIBRARY
TAGS	Delta Dental	dental industry	dental insurance	DSO	Editor's Choice DPR
	group dental practice	group practice	insurance	private practice	solo practice
					trends

Marni Jameson Carey

Marni Jameson Carey is the executive director of the Association of Independent Doctors, a national nonprofit designed to support ...

MORE

0 COMMENTS

No comments available

ADD COMMENT



HOME

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

MATERIALS

TECHNOLOGY

INFECTION CONTROL

BUSINESS

CONNECT:



[Home](#) | [About us](#) | [Advertising Information](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Editorial Policy](#)

© 2018 UBM Medica, LLC, a UBM company.

Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited.

Please send any technical comments or questions to our [webmaster](#).