House Call Dentists Are Now in New York City

The Blende Dental Group: Home of the House Call Dentists has been serving both general patients and those with special needs, including seniors and others with physical, medical or cognitive challenges in the San Francisco Bay Area for over 25 years. Five years ago, we established a house call service, providing care to those who are confined to their homes or have difficulty traveling. We visit private homes, residential care communities, skilled nursing facilities, and even patients in the hospital.

Our new location in New York City will carry forward the work that began here in the Bay Area. In addition to the patients described above who will now benefit from this resource in their neighborhood, House Call Dentists New York has also found a new clientele - discerning patients who value quality healthcare in the privacy and convenience of their home. Patients can also visit our office in Manhattan, located at 150 East 58th Street, 8th Floor Annex, New York NY 10155.

A Year of Celebrations for The Blende Dental Group and the Special Care Dentistry Association (SCDA)

The Blende Dental Group recently had the privilege of attending the Special Care Dentistry Association’s 25th annual conference. In addition to this very important milestone for the SCDA, the Blende Dental Group is proud to have reached a milestone of our own: we have been sponsors of the SCDA’s annual conferences for 10 years.

This year’s theme was “One Purpose: Access for All,” therefore many of the conference events focused on the challenges to ensuring adequate access to dental care. “One of the most unfortunate barriers preventing patients from maintaining proper dental health is simply a lack of awareness that these programs and practices exist,” says Dr. Blende. “As a healthcare community, we all must continue to address this issue by spreading the word, not only to patients and their families, but also to those who are in a position to provide patients with referrals to resources, such as dentists, physicians, care managers, social workers and caregivers.” For more information on the SCDA, please visit www.scdaonline.org.

We Welcome Your Referrals

As the SCDA website says, “Every practice has patients with special needs.” Please take a moment to think about the patient charts on your shelves. Is there anyone you haven’t seen for a while? Could it be because they have become non-ambulatory or now have complex medical conditions? Maintaining the continuum of your office’s dental care for your homebound patients is our mission.

New Website

Have you ever wondered what we mean by Awake, Asleep, or At Home? Please visit our new website at www.blendedentalgroup.com to learn more about our services for general patients, sedation options, and house calls.
Is Dental Care at Home Affordable?

When someone hears about house care dentistry for the first time, their first reaction is usually “Wow, that’s great! A lot of people must need that!” Then a pause, followed by “How much does THAT cost?” It may come as a surprise to learn that having a dentist visit a homebound patient is not only less hassle, but also less expensive than bringing the patient to the dentist.

As an example, a typical scenario for taking a patient who resides in a nursing facility and requires wheelchair transport to the dental office includes $630 for travel fees alone (Nurse time 3 hours x $90/hour = $270, wheelchair van rental = $160, Adult Child to participate in consultation 1 hour X 200/hour = $200). The travel fees for a House Call Dentist are less than half this amount, averaging $250 - $300.

There is another “cost” that many people fail to consider, which is the anxiety of the patient. Many patients become highly agitated when they are removed from the comfort of their home, and others face great discomfort when they are transported. These circumstances often result in a lack of cooperation while in the dentist's office, necessitating a future appointment to “try again.” On the other hand, a patient who remains at their home is usually cooperative with an experienced house call team, and benefits from no disruption of their familiar routines.

A final “cost” to consider is to the overall health of the patient. Postponing dental care can lead to unnecessary dental deterioration and emergency situations that cost far more than preventative measures. Furthermore, many people do not recognize the connection between dental health and overall health. Chronic inflammation that results from dental decay and periodontal disease can contribute to an increased risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and respiratory diseases. Homebound people who have not received dental care for many years are also likely to suffer medication-induced xerostomia, pain and even malnutrition.

From the vantage point of being in someone’s home, House Call Dentists can learn many things about the way the household and the patient’s condition(s) work to support or challenge the patient’s medical/dental health. This ability to resolve acute dental health needs and to develop a targeted daily care routine is essential to the overall long-term success of the treatment plan.

Welcome our new RDHAP, Michelle Bernardo

We are pleased to announce the addition of Michelle Bernardo to our team. Michelle has been a Registered Dental Hygienist since 1994. After graduating from the New York University School of Dentistry, she returned to the Bay Area. In 2004, Michelle recognized the significant need for home services to care for the dental health of the elderly and the homebound. She then completed a special program at the University of the Pacific to become a Registered Dental Hygienist in Alternative Practice. She now divides her time between our office and visiting homebound and elderly patients throughout the Bay Area. Please join us in welcoming Michelle to our practice.