



## Virginia Oral Health Coalition Update April 2017

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## Upcoming Meetings & Free Trainings

### *View our new online* [Event Calendar](#)

#### **May 10 | Glen Allen**

Unconscious Bias  
*Explore issues related to health equity and unconscious bias*  
[REGISTER](#)

#### **May 11 | Farmville**

Community Conversation: Oral Health Care for Individuals with Special Health Care Needs  
[REGISTER](#)

#### **May 12-13 | Farmville**

Practical Guide to Treating Dental Patients with Special Health Care Needs  
[REGISTER](#)

## **ALERT: New Amendments to American Health Care Act Harm People with Pre-existing Conditions, Speed Cuts to Medicaid and Fail to Cover Critical Health Services**

The House could vote as early as Friday on the American Health Care Act with new amendments that further strip away coverage and protections for Americans. The House Freedom Caucus agreed to a series of amendments to the AHCA that enable states to determine their own essential health benefits (a list of benefits, including pediatric dental, mental health services and hospitalization, that insurers are required to cover) and waive certain community rating provisions that prevent health insurers from varying premiums within a geographic area based on age, gender and health status. This ultimately eliminates protections for individuals with pre-existing conditions.

The main points of the bill remain unchanged - it eliminates funding for key public health programs, guts Medicaid, ends support for Medicaid expansion. **It will result in 21 million uninsured Americans by 2020.** Lack of support from the Freedom Caucus was a major reason why this bill died several weeks ago.

Congressional Democrats remain strongly opposed to the bill, while moderate Republicans (who have the power to kill the bill) are largely silent.

**May 15 | Glen Allen**  
School Age Oral Health  
Workgroup Meeting  
[RSVP](#)

**May 22 | Glen Allen**  
Greater Richmond and  
Petersburg Area Oral Health  
Forum  
[REGISTER](#)

**June 1 | Winchester**  
Community Conversation: Oral  
Health Care for Individuals with  
Special Health Care Needs  
[REGISTER](#)

**June 2-3 | Winchester**  
Practical Guide to Treating  
Dental Patients with Special  
Health Care Needs  
[REGISTER](#)

**June 13 | Glen Allen**  
Early Dental Home Workgroup  
Meeting  
[RSVP](#)

**July 12 | Oakton**  
Northern Virginia Oral Health  
Steering Committee  
[RSVP](#)

**October 12 | Oakton**  
Northern Virginia Oral Health  
Steering Committee  
[RSVP](#)

**November 2 | Richmond**  
2017 Virginia Oral Health  
Summit  
*Save the date*

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## Northern Virginia Oral Health Steering Committee

The Northern Virginia Oral Health Steering Committee met in April to continue building on the work initiated at the Northern Virginia Oral Health

**Please call your Congressional representatives and urge them to vote NO on this legislation.** ([Click to find your legislator.](#)) For more detailed information about the AHCA, you can read our [February health policy update](#) or check out research and resources from our national and state partners:

- [Repealing the Essential Health Benefits Means Only the Rich Can Afford Good Coverage](#) (Families USA)
- [Why Dental Coverage Matters: A Toolkit](#) (Children's Dental Health Project)
- [Alert: New ACA Repeal Bill, Resources](#) (Healthcare for All Virginians)

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## Greater Richmond and Petersburg Area Oral Health Forum | May 22

[Join us](#) on May 22 at the **Greater Richmond and Petersburg Area Oral Health Forum** to build multi-sector partnerships and improve regional health. The Forum, made possible with support from Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, will bring together stakeholders from health, education, social services, government, and other fields to examine regional oral health indicators and disparities and kick off regional work to improve Virginia's C+ grade on the 2016 Virginia Oral Health Report Card.

[Register Now](#)

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## Of Interest

### Oral Health and Overall Health

Oral health and overall health are fundamentally intertwined. The following articles present current information on how oral health is connected to overall health and well-being.

Forum in January ([view meeting notes](#)). At the April meeting, the group formed two subcommittees focused on **adults** and **children**.

To join the Steering Committee or a subcommittee or learn more, contact [Lauren Gray](#). The full steering committee will meet quarterly; [visit our website](#) to view meeting dates and locations.


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Please take a moment and support the Coalition's work.

[Donate](#)

Please check with your HR department to find out if your gift can be matched.

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- [Stress can play havoc with your patient's mouth](#) (Dr. Bicuspid)
- [How to tell patients about the link between gingivitis and diabetes](#) (MultiBriefs)
- [Bad teeth hinder 28% in job search](#) (Forbes)

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## Why Dental Coverage Matters: A Toolkit

Medicaid and CHIP coverage (known as "FAMIS" in Virginia) provide 4 in 10 children with affordable, comprehensive dental insurance. Proposed federal changes to the Affordable Care Act threaten to remove oral health protections and reduce access to affordable dental coverage. Oral health advocates must continue reaching out to decision-makers and offering support for these programs. To help, the Children's Dental Health Project (CDHP) has developed [Why Dental Coverage Matters: A Toolkit](#) with advocacy resources, templates and webinars. [Find your legislators](#).

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## Oral Health: An Essential Element of Healthy Aging

The Gerontological Society of America (GSA) has created a new initiative **Oral Health: An Essential Element of Healthy Aging** to encourage an interprofessional approach to oral health and to advance research, education and policy on the issue. The



GSA's [recent newsletter](#) includes an overview of oral and systemic health, barriers to dental care, workforce issues, and future steps to improve dental care and financing for older Americans.

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## Virginia Health Care Foundation's Prizes for Progress

To celebrate their 25th anniversary, the Virginia Health Care Foundation (VHCF) is granting a total of **\$25,000** in unrestricted funds to two current and/or former grantees just for explaining how the VHCF grant made a difference to the organization. Applications are due Monday, May 15. [Download the flyer for details](#).

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## Uninsured Kids More Likely to Experience Dental Problems

A national survey of parents reveals children without dental insurance are twice as likely as insured peers to have had a recent toothache or dental problem that affected their ability to eat, sleep or concentrate in school. Low-income and minority respondents showed more pronounced dental access issues. The survey underscores the need to ensure families can access affordable, comprehensive health and dental coverage. [Read the full summary from CDHP and Benevis Foundation.](#)



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## Chlorhexidine Mouthwash Effectively Reduces Plaque

A recent systematic review concluded that rinsing with chlorhexidine mouthwash for several weeks is an effective way to reduce plaque, when used along with regular oral hygiene practices. [Read more from Dr. Bicuspid.](#)

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## School-based Dental Sealant Recommendations

School-based dental sealants are a proven form of prevention, particularly for those most at-risk for cavities. The national Sealant Work Group has released a [report](#) with 16 recommendations to strengthen the availability of school-based sealant programs to reach more children. [Read more about the report.](#)

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