April-May 2012 Bulletin

Oral Health and Your Heart

The American Heart Association (AHA) recently released a review of current literature which validated an association between periodontal disease and atherosclerotic vascular disease (ASVD). While the article did not find evidence of a causal relationship, the acknowledgement of an association between oral health and heart disease is a major step toward understanding this important public health issue.

As the American Association for Dental Research (AADR) notes, even though the AHA review did not prove a causal relationship, it does highlight significant gaps in our understanding of the interaction of oral health and ASVD. Though some research exists, such as a recent Taiwanese study that found a relationship between tooth scaling and a reduction in heart attacks and strokes, the association between periodontal and cardiovascular diseases needs further study. AADR president Rena D'Souza concurs, adding, "Further research on the association of oral health and cardiovascular disease is critical."

The AHA review is timely, given the Coalition's growing medical and dental collaboration efforts and our newly formed Virginia Interprofessional Oral Health Alliance (VIOHA). While no one knows for sure if visiting a dentist can directly prevent a future heart attack, it is known that high levels of oral bacteria can lead to blood clots, blood vessel thickening and inflammation, all of which may adversely affect the heart and are associated with other health problems such as diabetes and stroke.

For more information on oral health and your heart, visit our webpage on heart disease and stroke. To learn more about the VIOHA, click here.

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Oral Cancers Costliest to Treat in U.S.

A recent study has found that head and neck cancers, including oral cavity, oral pharyngeal and salivary gland cancers, may be the most...
include objectives related to practice environment, provider training and education, with the ultimate goal of better health outcomes for all Virginians through improved oral health.

In June, the Coalition will hold two stakeholder feedback webinars to share a draft of the goals and recommendations for interprofessional collaboration and ask for your feedback.

To register for a feedback webinar, click here.

To learn more about VIOHA, click here.

Coalition Board Member Honored

Coalition Board member and CHIP of Roanoke Valley CEO, Robin Haldiman, was recently named Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow by the Salem Rotary "in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given for the furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations among peoples of the world."

Congratulations, Robin! We are proud to have such a strong, dedicated Board of Directors.

Of Interest

Oral Health and Overall Health

Oral health and overall health are fundamentally intertwined. The following links present current information on how oral health affects other conditions in the body, including:

- Hip/knee joint failures and oral bacteria
- Hospitalization and oral health
- Heart disease and gum disease (Taiwanese study)

Teledentistry Helps to Improve Outcomes for ECC

Several recent studies have shown an improvement in treatment for early childhood caries (ECC) (or cavities) through teledentistry programs. Read more about these studies by following the links below.

- Teledentistry Program Helped Increase Kids' Dental Treatment Rates
- Home Visits and Telephone Contacts Reduced ECC in a Low Socio-economic Area

Gum Disease Treatment Lowers Medical Costs, Study Says
A recent study shows that diabetics who receive treatment and ongoing care for periodontal disease experience significantly lower medical costs. In addition, these patients had 33% fewer hospitalizations and 13% less physician visits when their gum disease was treated and managed.

Read the entire article from Industry Reports

Nationwide Tax on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages

A new study predicts that a nationwide tax on sugar-sweetened beverages would prevent thousands of heart attacks, strokes and cases of diabetes.

Read the entire article from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

CDC National Fluoridation Statistics (2010) - Now Available

The CDC has released the latest national statistics regarding water fluoridation with data from 2010. Virginia currently ranks #6 in the U.S. with 95.6% of our citizens receiving fluoridated water.

View the CDC statistics

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Please visit our website for more oral health information www.vaoralhealth.org

Try it FREE today.