



Excellent Oral Health for ALL Virginians

**In This Issue**

[Give to the Coalition](#)

[Oral Health Grants](#)

[Save the Date: Oct. 26](#)

[Oral Health Legislation](#)

[Get to Know the JCHC](#)

[Of Interest](#)

**Give to the Coalition**



The Virginia Oral Health Coalition is thankful for the generosity of our supporters.

Without contributions from individuals and organizations, we would not have been able to successfully advocate on behalf of the 30,000 individuals who were seen last year at Virginia Department of Health dental clinics or embark on a statewide initiative to increase collaboration between medical and dental providers, in order to improve access to oral health preventive services.

Please consider making a secure, online donation to support these efforts.

# June 2012 Bulletin

## Oral Health Legislation Goes Federal

On June 7, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Elijah E. Cummings (D-Md.) introduced the [Comprehensive Dental Reform Act of 2012](#). The twin bills, touted as the most comprehensive dental legislation in U.S. history, were introduced in the Senate and the House to address the current dental crisis affecting millions of Americans.



**Sen. Sanders**

In Virginia, this bill would ensure adult Medicaid, Medicare and V.A. beneficiaries would be eligible for dental benefits.

The legislation also proposes the following actions to curb the dental crisis:

- Increase Medicaid reimbursement rates by boosting the federal government's contribution to states.
- Increase funding to safety net clinics.
- Redirect emergency care to clinics to reduce hospital spending.
- Increase the dental workforce by creating an oral health professional student loan program and employing more midlevel providers.

In addition, the legislation asks for money to be appropriated to educate medical and other non-oral health providers, such as social workers and nutritionists, with the "goal of integrating oral health care into overall health care."

According to Sen. Sanders, the provisions of the legislation would be funded by a 2.5 cent tax on security transactions. The bill has been assigned to a congressional committee for review. The majority of the bill's provisions have broad support from oral health stakeholders, though the American Dental Association has voiced [opposition](#) to the bill's workforce provisions.



[Back to top](#)

## Oral Health Grants Available



The Delta Dental of Virginia Foundation is now accepting grant applications from organizations that focus on oral health research and education or improved access to dental care for the underserved.

The first grant application period is **June 1 - Sept. 30, 2012.**

[Click here](#) for more information.

[Back to top](#)

## Save the Date: Oral Health Summit October 26, 2012 Richmond, VA

*Oral Health is Integral to  
Overall Health*

CE credits available for dental and medical professionals.

More information to follow here and on our [website](#).

[Back to top](#)

## Follow Us!

[Track the status](#) of this bill online.

Read statements from [Sen. Sanders](#) and [Rep. Cummings](#).

[Watch](#) Sen. Sanders talk about this legislation and America's dental crisis.

[Back to top](#)

## Get to Know the JCHC



The [Joint Commission on Health Care](#) (JCHC) will study the economic impact of oral health access issues in the Commonwealth. This study, for which the Coalition advocated, will provide data that will help oral health stakeholders to develop smart, targeted solutions to improve oral health access throughout

Virginia. The study was introduced as a resolution (SJ50) and heard by the General Assembly during this past legislative session.

### About the JCHC

The JCHC was established by the General Assembly in 1992 as a bipartisan committee to "ensure that the Commonwealth as a provider, financier, and regulator adopts the most cost-effective and efficacious means of delivery of health care services so that the greatest number of Virginians receive quality health care." Its primary function is to conduct healthcare studies of interest and report on recommendations to the General Assembly. The JCHC is made up of five staff and 18 legislative members.

[2012 Committee Members](#), chaired by Sen. Linda ("Toddy") Puller

[Back to top](#)

## 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.



- [HIV/AIDS and oral health innovations](#)
- Infographic: [Oral Health and Overall Health](#)

### Saliva Test May Increase Detection of Oral Cancer

A Michigan State University surgeon is partnering with a dental benefits firm in hopes of developing a simple, cost-effective saliva test to detect oral cancer. This type of test would



drastically improve screening and result in fewer oral cancer-related deaths.

[Read the article from Science Daily](#)

---

### **PBS Frontline to Air Special "Dollars and Dentists"**



On June 26, PBS Frontline will air a special called "Dollars and Dentists" that examines the consequences of an insufficient health safety net.

[View a preview and check local listings](#)

---

[Back to top](#)

Please visit our website for more oral health information  
[www.vaoralhealth.org](http://www.vaoralhealth.org)

