



## Excellent Oral Health for ALL Virginians

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### Save the Date!



**The next Virginia Oral Health Coalition meeting is April 29th!**

Among the agenda items: Sarah Raskin, a doctoral student from the University of Arizona and Fellow at the Healthy Appalachia Institute at UVA-Wise, will share preliminary findings from her qualitative research on oral health and dental care in southwest Virginia. Some of her findings will surprise you.

All dues must be paid in full to attend.

## Bulletin

### Greetings!

Twelve weeks ago the Virginia Oral Health Coalition received grant money from the DentaQuest Foundation which allowed us to hire staff, set up an office, convene a board of directors and (most importantly!) finish the Virginia Oral Health Plan. I think all of you are well aware that The DentaQuest Foundation's support is the culmination of a vision articulated on a very rainy October day at the 2009 Oral Health Summit when stakeholders from throughout Virginia gathered to hear from oral health experts and begin work on the next Virginia Oral Health Plan.

This is the first monthly newsletter of the Coalition. It is intended to be an avenue for communicating about VaOHC and our initiatives and to provide links to relevant research, articles and stories. I hope you will send your feedback and ideas.

The newsletter also launches simultaneously with the Virginia Oral Health Coalition website, [www.vaoralhealth.org](http://www.vaoralhealth.org). The website provides an overview of the Coalition and comprehensive information about oral health policy issues in Virginia and the nation. Information on the site will be updated regularly.

Thank you for all you do to better oral health access and education in the Commonwealth!

**Sincerely,**

*Sarah Holland*

Sarah Bedard Holland  
Executive Director  
Virginia Oral Health Coalition

### 2011 General Assembly Update

The General Assembly has passed the budget. It **RESTORES** the 4% Medicaid dental provider cuts - meaning the cuts are avoided and the reimbursement rates will remain the same. In addition to the budget, there



Dr. Terry Dickinson, VaOHC board member and executive director of the VDA, wins the 2010 ADA Humanitarian Award

was a host of legislation pertinent to oral health this session. For a full update, please visit the advocacy section of the [Virginia Oral Health Coalition website](#).

## Virginia Oral Health Plan

It is official! The Virginia Oral Health Plan, a living document of objectives that provides a road map to bring excellent oral health to all Virginians, has been approved by the Virginia Oral Health Coalition board of directors.

The objectives outlined in this plan were identified by stakeholders from throughout the Commonwealth, beginning with the Oral Health Summit in October of 2009 and continuing through workgroup meetings and coalition meetings over the course of the last year. More information about the Virginia Oral Health Plan, as well as a list of the objectives, is available on the [Virginia Oral Health Coalition website](#).

The plan is not a stagnant document, nor is it designed to sit on a shelf. Objectives will be updated and refined continuously so they best reflect the needs and environment of the Commonwealth. If you are interested in joining one of the workgroups associated with the Virginia Oral Health Plan, please contact [Sarah Holland](#).

## Virginia Dental Home Initiative - Abingdon

The next Virginia Dental Home Initiative (VDHI) Training is March 25th in Abingdon, VA. VDHI training provides an opportunity for dental professionals and Head Start Educators to come together to learn strategies and techniques to both provide oral health care to young children and to teach the importance of a lifetime of good oral health to children and their caregivers. The Virginia Dental Home Initiative was created to help break the cycle of poor oral health habits and ensure all Virginia kids have a dental home. For more information or to register for the Abingdon training, [click here](#).



The next Virginia Dental Home Initiative Training is planned for May in Northern Virginia.

## Of Interest

### Oral Health and School Attendance

A recent article in the American Journal of Public Health online finds that children missed an average of .05 days of school for reasons related to oral health care, with 17 percent of the absences related to pain or infection. The study examines the impact of poor oral health status on school performance. An abstract is available at:

<http://ajph.aphapublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/AJPH.2010.200915v1>.



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### Oral Health and Emergency Department Visits

Washington State Hospital Association's Report on Emergency Room Use (October 2010) found that dental complaints are the #1 reason for non insured adults to seek emergency department care, and the 6<sup>th</sup> most common reason patients with Medicaid seek emergency department care. (The section on Dental Disorder and Tooth Root Access discusses the ER costs related to these conditions). [Click here for a PDF of the full report](#).

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### Dental Champions

Dr. Tegwyn Brickhouse, chair of the Virginia Oral Health Coalition and the Virginia Commonwealth University's Department of Pediatric Dentistry, is featured in this month's American Academy of Pediatrics newsletter as a dental champion for children <http://www.aap.org/oralhealth/enews.cfm>.

