



Excellent Oral Health for ALL Virginians

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October 21 - Virginia Oral Health Coalition Summit

The Virginia Oral Health Coalition will host its first annual Oral Health Summit in Richmond on October 21. The agenda will include state and national experts in oral health, with presentations on topics such as medical/dental integration, policy options for improving oral health access and sustainability options for dental safety net clinics. If you are interested in participating on the planning committee

May 2011 Bulletin

Oral Health in SW Virginia

At the Virginia Oral Health Coalition's recent meeting Sarah Raskin presented initial conclusions from her dissertation research on oral health and access to dental care in far southwest Virginia. Her work draws on narratives collected from patients, providers, stakeholders, and people she describes as "discouraged patients" - safety net patients so disenfranchised that they have stopped seeking dental care. During her presentation, she described some of the day-to-day realities of the region's residents who have the highest needs but the lowest access to care, as well as local dental providers, many of whom carry disproportionate case loads of donated and Medicaid services. Ms. Raskin, a doctoral candidate in medical anthropology at University of Arizona with a background in public health, urged the audience to think about old problems such as patient "non-compliance," charity care, and the dental team through the themes of trust, trade-offs, and sense of self or identity. Ms. Raskin will disseminate a summary of her final findings in a report to stakeholders, which will be available at the Coalition's website next year. If you are interested in talking with her directly, she has graciously provided her contact information: seraskin@gmail.com



Board Member Named RWJ Health Policy Fellow

[Dr. Carole Pratt](#) was named as one of five distinguished [Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellows](#). Dr. Pratt is a rural health care advocate and member of the Virginia Oral Health Coalition board of directors. As a Health Policy Fellow, Dr. Pratt will actively participate in health policy during a one-year residency program in Washington, DC. The fellowship is designed to enhanced Dr. Pratt's strong leadership as she continues to influence the future of health care in our nation.



Virginia Exchange: Governance

The Virginia Oral Health Coalition submitted [written comments](#) in response to the first of three background memorandums published by and distributed by the [Virginia Health Reform Initiative Advisory Council](#). Of note, the statement recommends the inclusion of a dental professional on the governance board of the Exchange, and

please email [Sarah Holland](#), executive director of the Virginia Oral Health Coalition.

Virginia Health Care Foundation Honored



Debbie Oswalt, executive director of the Virginia Health Care Foundation, accepts a plaque from Sarah Holland, executive director of the Virginia Oral Health Coalition, honoring her organization for its years of unwavering dedication to oral health access for all Virginians.

recommends the Exchange be housed in a quasi-governmental organization that follows administrative rules regarding transparency.

Pew to Update State Oral Health Grades

The Pew Center on the States assessed and graded states and the District of Columbia in 2010 on whether and how well they are employing eight policy approaches designed to improve dental health and access to children. In this report, "[The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children](#)" Virginia received a 'C', as it met four of the eight benchmarks.

Pew intends to re-issue grades to each state on May 24th. The Virginia Oral Health Coalition will work closely with its members to use this release as an opportunity to educate the public, policy makers and the media about the many issues related to oral health in the Commonwealth.

Virginia Dental Home Initiative - NOVA

The Virginia Oral Health Coalition in sponsorship with the Virginia Dental Association is offering 4 free CE credits at the upcoming Virginia Dental Home Initiative training on June 3rd in Springfield, Virginia. For more information or to register for the northern Virginia training [click here](#).

Of Interest

Government Announces Plan to Reduce Health Disparities

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued the [HHS Disparities Action Plan](#), to address the need to reduce health disparities in ethnic and minority populations. The *HHS Action Plan* will work in conjunction with the Affordable Care Act to transform health care and expand access, broaden insurance coverage and increase access to care and expand the health care workforce to promote its ultimate vision of "a nation free of disparities in health and health care".



Gum Disease Treatment During Pregnancy Does Not Harm Babies

According to a [study](#) at the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry, pregnant women can safely be treated for oral health disease without harming their baby. This study is based on concerns raised, in part, by dentists who treat pregnant women.

The Affordable Care Act and Dental Health Workforce

This [Implementation Brief](#) focuses on the provisions of the Affordable Care Act and its aim to strengthen the dental workforce.

Dental Public Health

[Partners in Information Access for the Public Health Workforce](#) has compiled a useful list of collaborative U.S. governmental agencies, public health organizations and public health libraries in the oral health field.

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



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