Virginia Oral Health Coalition

Excellent Oral Health for ALL Virginians

2013 VA Oral Health Summit Friday, Nov.8

Register Today!

Nearly 150 individuals have already signed up. YOUR input is necessary to shape the future of oral health delivery in Virginia!

Click here to register

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October 2013 Newsletter

Joint Commission on Healthcare Study: Cost of Untreated Dental Disease in the Commonwealth

The Joint Commission on Healthcare recently presented an overview of its study regarding the economic impact of oral health issues in the Commonwealth.

Of note:

- More than one-third of adults do not have dental insurance. Studies show that children are more likely to visit the dentist if their parents have dental coverage.
- Low-income adults are more likely to seek dental care on an emergency or as-needed basis.
- More Virginians are utilizing the adult Medicaid dental benefit, which is limited to emergency dental extractions.

As a next step, Commission members will vote November 18 on which policy options they will recommend to Virginia's General Assembly (see page 20 to view the options). In addition to these five policy options, Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Resources, Dr. William Hazel, requested that the report also include a policy option to extend comprehensive Medicaid dental benefits to pregnant women.

The Commission is accepting public comment on policy options through Tuesday, November 12. Email a public comment.

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Medicaid Innovation Reform Commission Considers Medicaid Expansion in Virginia

The Medicaid Innovation and Reform Commission (the Commission) met twice in October for a public hearing (Oct. 15) and for a regularly scheduled meeting (Oct. 21). During the public hearing, 103 individuals offered public comment - of these, 75 individuals indicated support of Medicaid expansion and 28 expressed opposition. The

Teledentistry: An Innovative Care Model for Virginia

[Teledentistry](#) is the use of information technology and telecommunications for dental care, consultation, education and public awareness, and can be used by dental professionals to improve services to underserved or rural populations.

Members of the Coalition's medical and dental collaboration initiative Task Force are focusing on ways that teledentistry can be used to increase access to oral health services in Virginia. Additionally, the 2013 Virginia Oral Health Summit will feature a presentation (via teleconference, no less!) from teledentisty innovator Fred Summerfelt, RDH, AP, MEd - [click here to register for the Summit](#).

If you have questions about the Coalition's Task Force, please contact [Katherine Libby](#). Questions about the Summit can be directed to [Samantha Dorr](#).

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[Read about the Coalition's accomplishments](#)

Commission has received over 2,000 written public comments; the majority indicate support of Medicaid expansion.

If Medicaid expands to cover individuals up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level (~$15,282 for a single adult), over 400,000 Virginians will be eligible for an emergency extraction dental benefit, which will likely reduce reliance on emergency department use for dental-related issues.

At the Oct. 21 meeting, in an update to the Commission about the progress Virginia has made implementing Medicaid reforms, Secretary Hazel stated that the Commonwealth has "arguably" implemented all of the reform requirements that must be in place if Virginia is to expand Medicaid. The Commission will meet again after the [gubernatorial election](#) to continue to evaluate reform progress.

[Read more about the Commission and Medicaid reform in Virginia](#)

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School Nurses Make Oral Health a Priority

School nurses report that 40 percent of children avoid smiling or laughing because of dental issues. In response, Virginia affiliates of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) created the video series "[School Nurses: Partnering to Make Oral Health a Priority](#)." This resource shows school nurses how they can impact their students' oral health in everyday practice and establish meaningful partnerships with parents to reinforce positive oral health behaviors.

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Of Interest

Dental Medical Integration Program Lowers Payer's Medical Claims Costs

Aetna reports that its dental medical integration program has resulted in fewer hospital admissions and lower claims costs six years after the program's launch. Moreover, diabetes control has improved by 45 percent among 1.5 million patients.

[Read more about the program and its results](#)

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Oral Health and Overall Health

[Oral health and overall health](#) are fundamentally intertwined. The following links present current information on how oral health is

connected to overall health and well-being.

- [High Dose Statin May Reduce Gum Inflammation](#)
- [Poor Oral Health Among Olympians](#)

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Dental Info Sheet for Exchange Navigators - Spanish Version

Thanks to Northern Virginia Family Services, the Coalition's Dental Info Fact Sheet is now available in Spanish. The fact sheet is intended for use by exchange navigators, and anyone else helping with enrollment, to guide enrollees through dental options within the exchange.

[View and download the Spanish Dental Info Fact Sheet](#)

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October Issue: Children's Oral Health e-Newsletter

The October issue of the American Academy of Pediatrics's [Children's Oral Health e-Newsletter](#) is now available. Of note, the newsletter mentions a recent study showing the number of hospitalizations for preventable oral infections is on the rise.

[Read the e-Newsletter](#)

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www.vaoralhealth.org

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