



Excellent Oral Health for ALL Virginians

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VaOHC 2011 Oral Health Summit



Join the nearly 100 other attendees and register today!

The Coalition's **2011 Oral Health Summit** will be held on **Friday, October 21**, at the Jefferson Hotel in the heart of downtown Richmond. The Summit will feature experts on medical and dental collaboration, pediatric oral health prevention and diagnosis, and oral health policy. Continuing education

September 2011 Bulletin

Dental Health Survey Captures Dismal Results for Low-Income Northern VA Residents



A [recent survey](#) of 1,300 North Virginian adults, commissioned by the [Northern Virginia Health Foundation](#), shows that while nearly all (91%) higher-income adults reported seeing a dentist in the last two years, fewer than two-thirds (63%) of lower-income adults said they saw a dentist within the past two years. Cost was the main barrier to getting dental care. Seventy-three percent of lower-income households (defined as those with an annual income of less than \$40,000) did not have dental insurance and two-thirds of this population said they could not afford dental insurance. Sixty-six percent of lower-income adults said they could not afford to see a dentist.

Foundation President Patricia Mathews commented, saying, "For people with limited means and no insurance, routine dental care is often out of reach." She continued, "Because of costs, they are more likely to suffer severe pain from untreated dental problems, miss time from work or school or wind up in a hospital emergency room, which increases health care costs for everyone."

[Read the Foundation's full press release](#)

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New Senate Bill Protects Oral Health as a Priority; Threats Still Exist



In September, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved a FY 2012 [funding bill](#) for Labor, Health and Human Services that protects oral health as a priority. Though oral health programs were authorized under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), they remain unfunded due to the current political climate and focus on responsible spending. In addition, funds are no longer set aside for oral health programs for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The bill helps to safeguard some existing programs, encourage collaborations among health care

credit will be offered for dental professionals.

Register by October 5 to receive a reduced rate of \$35 for VaOHC members and \$75 for non-members. Pre-registration is required by October 14.

[Click here to register](#)

Thank you to our Premier Sponsors: Delta Dental of Virginia; DentaQuest, LLC; Small Smiles Dental Centers; and, Virginia Dental Association; and our Distinguished Sponsor: the Medical Society of Virginia.

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Study: Oral Health and the Dental Care Workforce in Southwest VA



The [Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service](#) has published a [study](#) that discusses oral health and the dental care workforce in Southwest Virginia by examining the health impact of a proposed dental school in the area. The study evaluates the dental school's impact through a variety of approaches, including social, economical and geographical research, and compares the region to national trends in oral health needs. Additionally, the study assesses how the school might affect dental care access and quality and

organizations and promote oral health as a priority across HHS agencies, in spite of decreased funding.

[Read the full article](#)

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Periodontal Disease May Be Linked to Respiratory Disease



A [new study](#) has found an association between periodontal disease and respiratory disease. Respiratory infections involve the aspiration of bacteria from the oropharynx to the lower respiratory tract. Researchers found that patients with respiratory disease had significantly poorer periodontal health, gingival inflammation, deeper pockets and higher clinical attachments compared with the controls. Frank Scannapieco, DMD, who has also conducted research in this area, commented on the matter, saying, "One of the main problems we have is that medical and nursing professions do not teach much about oral health. It would be very useful if they could become more knowledgeable about oral health."

[Read the full article](#)

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Young Father Dies from Tooth Infection

A 24-year old father died last month from a tooth infection that spread to his brain. Kyle Willis, an unemployed and uninsured single father, ignored the pain from his wisdom tooth after a dentist recommended that the tooth be pulled.



Kyle Willis

After developing headaches and facial swelling, Willis sought care in the emergency room where he was prescribed an antibiotic and pain medication. "He couldn't afford to pay for the antibiotic," Willis' aunt, Patti Collins, said. "So he chose the pain meds, which was not what he needed."

Doctors told Willis' family that while the pain had stopped, the infection continued to spread, attacking his brain and causing it to swell. According to Collins, the family wants to make sure what happened to Willis never happens to anyone else.

"He should have gone to the dentist to take care of the toothache, and it wouldn't have escalated to this," said Collins. "It's a lesson learned by all."

[Read the full article](#)

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Of Interest

Study Shows More U.S. Employers are Offering Dental Benefits

The National Association of Dental Plans' (NADP) 2011 Group Purchaser Study shows that more U.S. employers are offering

discusses alternative policies and programs to improve access and oral health outcomes in the region.



separate dental plans than ever before, with significant increases noted in every geographic region and all size categories, especially among companies with 25-100 employees. The study also cites dental health's impact on overall health as one of the main reasons why companies consider offering dental benefits to employees.

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Sugar-free Polyol Gum, Hard Candy and Lozenges Linked to Cavity Prevention When Used with Nonfluoride Varnish

HRSA Awards \$550,000 to National Network for Oral Health Access (NNOHA)



The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) recently awarded \$550,000 to the National Network for Oral Health Access (NNOHA) to provide training and technical assistance to help HRSA's primary care service delivery programs improve access to high quality oral health services. The NNOHA will use the funds to support the National Oral Health Institute, which offers yearlong educational activities for HRSA grantees, as well as to develop online learning resources and support oral health workforce activities.

[Read the full announcement](#)

American Academy of Pediatrics Awarded \$3 Million from the Administration for Children and Families



The HHS's Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Head Start recently awarded \$3 million to the American Academy of Pediatrics to operate the Office of Head Start National Center on Health. This National Center office will focus on health, oral health and mental health for pregnant women, children birth to five years and their families, and will highlight evidence-based practices to ensure all Head Start and Early Head Start agencies have access to the same level of high-quality information, training and technical assistance.

[Read the full announcement](#)

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A multi-disciplinary panel, convened by the American Dental Association (ADA) Council on Scientific Affairs, issued [clinical recommendations](#) that sugar-free chewing gum, lozenges and hard candy containing xylitol or polyol combinations, and a prescription varnish with chlorhexidine and thymol, could be beneficial in preventing cavities in high-risk patients when used in conjunction with products containing fluoride, community water fluoridation and healthy eating habits.

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

