

Virginia Health Catalyst
Early Dental Home Workgroup
Thursday, May 7, 2020
10:00-11:30am

Attending: Chanel Bea (Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond/Peter Paul), Carole Pratt (VDH), Meg Pienkowski (Smart Beginnings Greater Richmond), Chernise Harris (DentaQuest), Dawn Ault (Virginia HeadStart Association), JoAnn Wells (VDH), Deirdre Kane (HeadStart Liaison for VDHA), Kristen Gilliam (DentaQuest), Mylinda Moore (FamiliesForward), Richard Zucker (Aetna Better Health of Virginia), Tonya Adiches (VDH), Consuelo Staton (VDH), Zach Hairston (DMAS), Rachel Rees (Virginia Health Care Foundation)

Staff: Sarah Holland, Brita Bergland, Samantha Dorr, Chloe Van Zandt, Lauren Sawyer

Action Items:

- Catalyst will convene a small group to address oral health access barriers in light of COVID-19 for your organizations and your clients. Please reach out to Brita (bbergland@vahealthcatalyst.org) if you would like to be involved or have an idea for a project.
- Interested in further improving access to and use of oral health services for children and families across Virginia? The [Networks for Oral Health Integration](#) project has multiple paid opportunities for clinicians, family advocates, policy makers, etc. to participate. Reach out to Brita (bbergland@vahealthcatalyst.org) to learn more.
- Check out [Catalyst's COVID resource webpage](#), and let us know if we are missing anything.

Next meeting: TBD

Proceedings

We shared some happy habits during quarantine ☺

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ● Dog walks | ● Daily thank you notes | ● Bird watching |
| ● Puzzling | ● Front porch sitting | ● Small acts of kindness |
| ● Reading - support your local bookstores | ● Baking bread | ● One-on-one time with kids |

Catalyst updates

Networks for Oral Health Integration (NOHI) (*Samantha Dorr*)

- NOHI is a new phase of maternal and child health, oral health quality improvement. It's a five-year project through 2024 that will involve community health centers in 18-month quality improvement projects.
- Three programs nationally; our cohort in the Eastern US is called "Oral Health Transformation for Babies" or "OHCT4B" and includes VA, MD, DC, and NY (Catalyst is the VA state coordinator).
- NOHI's three goals:
 - Increase clinical provider knowledge about oral health



- For pregnant women and kids 0-3, reduce dental disease and increase access to dental home
- Improve interprofessional collaboration among medical and dental providers
- Opportunity for EDH members to participate:
 - Steering Committee: Steering Committee members may be clinicians, parents/caregivers, family advocates, state agency/policy makers, and anyone working with the population (pregnant women and young children 0-3). The Steering Committee members serve as advisors to the project leaders to be sure the project design and implementation takes into account the actual barriers faced by patients and staff when accessing or providing oral health care in VA. Members serve 18-month terms and stipend funding is available to cover time and travel to one annual meeting.
 - Faculty: This project will provide education to community health center staff on topics such as social determinants, health IT, literacy, and evidence-based caries prevention. Faculty members lead these training sessions and serve 18-month terms; stipend funding is available.
 - Community Health Centers: Community Health Center teams will participate in an 18-month cohort during the five-year period. Up to ten Virginia-based CHCs can participate over the project period; stipend funding is available.

Policy updates (*Sarah Holland*)

- Pregnancy Medicaid dental benefit extended through July 2020
- Funding for the comprehensive adult dental benefit in Medicaid is not off the table; its funding is currently unallocated and the final decision to fund will be made in the fall when the Governor reconvenes the GA to finalize spending
- Teledentistry services can be reimbursed through Medicaid
 - Catalyst has a [teledentistry implementation guide](#) that explains billing, recommended use, workflows, etc.
 - [Teledentistry video](#) shows how the service can be used
- As of May 1, dental clinics are beginning to reopen. Things will go slowly with all the COVID considerations (PPE, social distancing, staff education and comfort, etc.). Catalyst is working to ensure that integration is a priority as the process continues.
- Patient and provider resources available:
 - [Catalyst's COVID-19 Webpage](#)
 - [Virginia's dental safety net clinic status list](#)
 - [CrossOver Healthcare Ministries' COVID video series](#) (4 languages)

East End Initiative (*Chanel Bea*)

See attachment "*Pathway Out of Poverty*" article for more context on the project.

- A grant through Virginia Early Childhood Foundation is taking a comprehensive approach to finding out what families and providers need to meet the needs of families at a holistic level. Chanel is one of 5 community liaisons focusing on low-income, low-access areas to help them access quality childcare services – learning, care, etc.
- Charged with lifting up voices into a barrier busting tool, taking concerns from the community and addressing them through systems and policy change at local and state level, even nationally



- East End RVA – four public housing unit, along with high-income communities creates two different cities and experience with resources
- Chanel works on asset-based approach: ask the right questions about experience to catalog barriers and make connections. Community members come up with their own solutions and Chanel checks in to make sure they're working
 - Connector, cataloger, resource for where to go and what to do. Bridging the gap between families and providers
- One surprising finding: Parents aren't aware of how much they play the role of educator with their children. Opportunities to educate your child exist all throughout the day (ex: baking teaches patience, math, following direction), and they don't have to be formal or intricate
- Policy changes are making huge difference:
 - Chanel connected with local DSS office to close the loop on miscommunication regarding subsidy benefits (sometime, families will qualify for subsidy but funding isn't available so they are placed on a waiting list). Families can better prepare when they have clear information regarding their benefits
 - Friend and family networks are integral in helping with child care and creating a structured setting for the child. Chanel is understanding what that network looks like and how it runs well so it can continue to help families through the COVID crisis
- Building trust amongst communities is important to find those who may be flying under the radar. Personal interactions are what is important to understand needs. Chanel wants to connect them with more structure and educational opportunities.
 - Also important to have the right partners at the table: ChildSavers, for example, provides TA support for providers. Peter Paul action teams provide community connections and communication
- *Meg Pienkowski*: not only focus on early childhood care. The project is looking holistically at the problem, and if basic needs aren't being met (like housing), you can't address other needs (like childcare).
 - Quality of care has different definitions for families and providers; Chanel is trying to untangle the two, all while balancing the other issues that come up for communities.

Group share

What are you hearing from your clients and families?

What pivots has your organization made to support your clients during the COVID response?

What kind of changes do you see being long-term?

What opportunities do you see to expand access to dental care for your clients and families?

Dawn Ault: moving from crisis mode to strategic mode for next school year

- Early childhood house and senate bill, \$90M expansion of slots for children and quality
- CARES Act has provided opportunities for relief and summer program funding
 - VPI money is on hold, HeadStart money can be spent
- Opening scenarios:
 - School year with best practices guidance for safety, sanitation, and social distancing



- If class room sizes are limited to 10, potentially stagger when the kids are allowed to come because HeadStart classes are usually 20 kids and 2 teachers, or do distance learning. Students scared to walk into class without parent
- All distance learning – doing this strategically, including creative ways to reach families without internet
- Many unknowns; some potential things to think about:
 - Separate shoes for school
 - Individual toys/no sharing - really tough with young children
 - Some kids don't brush at home – they only brushed at school. With infection control concerns, is that even possible?
 - Social distancing on buses – how will children get to school on time?
 - Children may not be social distancing at home/in the neighborhoods
- HeadStart is behind on recruitment/enrollment since fairs are cancelled
- Worried about kids being behind on immunizations and dental visits

Chanel Bea: the longer this goes on, the less people are going to comply

- COVID testing in public housing – lots of positive cases and hard to social distance
- Conducting virtual hangouts for parents to connect differently outside of work – reconnect with neighbors to feel supported, sharing challenges, feeling validated
- Conducting virtual education opportunities – shifting to coordination of needs and resources (PPE, food, childcare, etc.)

Deirdre Kane:

- Concern about tooth brushing in schools and aerosols, and if kids are/are not brushing and snacking/drinking on unhealthy foods and drinks at home without structure of school
- She is working on a video to reiterate oral health practices (brushing, flossing, healthy foods); recording it and make it available to kids and families

Myllinda Moore: Home visitors are doing virtual check-ins (Zoom, FaceBook, telephone)

- Some clients are experiencing a lack of data on their Medicaid Lifeline phones. Some providers expanded data through May, but amount of data varies
- SNAP benefits aren't available for delivery – without transportation, clients can't get groceries
 - FamiliesForward Policy Director working on this at a state level
- Seeing high participation rates through virtual visits because it's a break for parents, they are excited to see their home visitor, they get comfort from this interaction
- For clients in rural communities with connectivity issues: home visitors use phone calls, home deliveries with educational/programmatic materials

Opportunity: Is there an opportunity to help outside of systems change to get a small win – crisis response for oral health piece? Catalyst will bring together a small group to look at this specific issue: how to address this access barrier at least temporarily. Contact Brita (bberglund@vahealthcatalyst.org) to get involved!

- DentaQuest trying to figure out how to re-route supplies