



Virginia
Health Catalyst
The Intersection of Overall
Health and Oral Health

Monthly Update December 2019

The Virginia Oral Health Coalition is now Virginia Health Catalyst. Learn more about the next phase of work in a [message from our CEO](#).

Virginia and Federal Policy Updates Ahead of 2020

Join Virginia Health Catalyst and partners from across the commonwealth for [Legislative Action Day](#) on January 28 to advocate for a comprehensive dental benefit for all adults enrolled in Medicaid. We need this to be our largest Legislative Action Day yet to show legislators the importance of adding an adult dental benefit! Register to attend [here](#).

Heading into the legislative session, Virginia Health Catalyst is monitoring the following issues:

- **Governor Northam's Budget:** This week Governor Northam released his biennial budget. While his budget includes funding for programs that will improve the health and wellbeing of Virginians, **it does not include funding for a comprehensive adult dental benefit in Medicaid.** The budget does include \$200 million in unallocated funds some of which could be allocated for an adult dental benefit. Virginia Health Catalyst will move forward in supporting a budget amendment, but we need the support of health advocates across Virginia to make a dental benefit a reality. [Register to attend Legislative Action Day](#) and [request postcards](#) to send to your legislators to show your support.
- **DMAS Study Highlights ED Use for Dental Issues:** Last week a study by the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) found nearly 16,000 Medicaid recipients visited the emergency department (ED) roughly 19,000 times for dental-related issues in 2018. What's more, the study found

Upcoming Events

Registration is open for the **FREE Special Needs Dentistry - You Can Do It** events across Virginia! Receive 11 CERP credits while learning how to provide care to individuals with special health care needs. Register and find an event near you [here](#).

Regional Oral Health Alliance Meetings

January 8 | [Northern Virginia Alliance Adult's Oral Health Workgroup Meeting](#)

Catalyst Wide Events

January 28 | [Legislative Action Day](#)

Special Needs Dentistry Series

January 10-11 | [Middletown](#)

January 24-25 | [Warsaw](#)

February 28-29 | [Chesapeake](#)

March 13-14 | [Abingdon](#)

May 1-2 | [Farmville](#)

more than half of the visits were for adults who did not have comprehensive dental coverage in Medicaid. We know that nearly one-third of adults enrolled in Medicaid have cited access to dental care as their biggest unmet need. The DMAS study further underscores the importance of adding a comprehensive dental benefit for all adults enrolled in Medicaid. Read Virginia Health Catalyst’s summary of the report [here](#).

- **House of Representatives Passes Bill Supporting Oral Health in Medicare:** The House of Representatives recently passed HR 3, a package of health reforms that would fund a dental benefit in Medicare for the millions of enrolled Americans. While this is an important accomplishment, the legislation is not likely to pass out of the Senate. Regardless, oral health legislation has become a priority at the federal level, which is a testament to the great work of health advocates across the country.

Catalyst is seeking new members for the Summit Planning Committee. Help shape the agenda for the 2020 Virginia Oral Health Summit, [contact Alle Witt](#) to learn more.

Donate today to help ensure all Virginians have access to equitable health care that includes oral health:

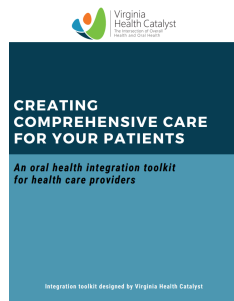
Donate

Your support in 2020 for an adult dental benefit is crucial. As the DMAS study shows, a dental benefit will not only improve health outcomes, it could save the state money on avoidable ED visits. Along with [registering for Legislative Action Day](#), please [reach out to Catalyst](#) directly for additional ways you can support an adult dental benefit.



Oral Health News & Resources

Virginia Health Catalyst Launches Integration Resource Center



This month Virginia Health Catalyst launched an online [Integration Resource Center](#) to share tools and resources with Virginia’s health care community that highlight opportunities for care integration. The [Integration Resource Center](#) includes a new [Oral Health Integration Toolkit](#) that provides recommendations on integrating technology, developing quality metrics, and addressing health equity, and highlights five use cases for integration: women’s health, early childhood, older adults, chronic disease, and behavioral health.

Oral Health and Pregnancy Training Module for Home Visitors

The Institute for the Advancement of Family Support Professionals has a new online learning module for home visitors on oral health and pregnancy. The module highlights the important role of oral health in overall health, specifically

for pregnant women and young children. Home visitors will also learn from the module how to discuss the importance of oral health with families. View the module [here](#).



Oral Health Value-based Care Readiness Assessment



The DentaQuest Partnership designed an online [Oral Health Value-based Care Readiness Assessment](#) to help dental safety net providers evaluate areas of growth and proficiency ahead of the anticipated transition to an oral health value-based care (OHVBC) reimbursement model. Those who complete the assessment will

receive a Competency Development Guide. [View the assessment](#) and [watch this short video on OHVBC](#).

Study Finds Link Between Oral Hygiene and Heart Failure

A [new study](#) in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology found that individuals who brushed their teeth at least three times a day had a lower risk of heart failure or atrial fibrillation (AFib). By integrating oral health into medical visits, providers can help patients better understand the important role oral health plays in their overall health. Visit Catalyst's [Integration Resource Center](#) to learn more about opportunities for integration.



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