



COVID-19 Resources

Each Friday Virginia Health Catalyst shares the latest oral health-related COVID-19 resources. For additional information visit the Catalyst [COVID-19 resource page](#).

Front Line Innovations Blog Series - Racial Equity in Virginia

A note from Catalyst CEO Sarah Holland:

We started the Front Line Innovations blog series to highlight innovative and new approaches to improving oral health in Virginia. This week we had always planned to focus on systemic racism, with a [guest blog](#) and a [podcast](#) featuring author (and 2019 Summit featured speaker) Tamara Lucas Copeland. But as the Catalyst team prepares to send this to you, our closest partners, my heart is heavy and my mind is distracted. I am struck by a quote I just read, “racism isn’t getting worse, it’s just being filmed” and I am working hard to avoid the trap of fatalism (what can I possibly do?) and remember that organizations have power. I have power. And my responsibility is to cede and share this power to not only develop and implement equitable policies, care management protocols, and a public health system that works for everyone but to acknowledge that we cannot address the impact of racism without recognizing its many faces and forms, and its self-reinforcing nature.

I encourage all of you to [read](#) Tamara’s words and [listen \(or re-listen\)](#) to her summit conversation with Dr. Vanessa Walker Harris.

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Racism is at the core of many of Virginia's disparate health outcomes. And while innovation may seem an odd term to use to describe necessary solutions – the status quo is failing – and new approaches are vital to ensure equitable outcomes for everyone.

The COVID-19 pandemic media coverage has increased visibility of the racial inequities in our health care system, but simply acknowledging them isn’t enough. Tamara shares how decades of systemic racism have led to the inequities that have created significant racial disparities in COVID-19 cases. As a follow up to the [blog](#), check out the [podcast](#) of her conversation with Vanessa Walker Harris to hear a frank conversation about the role race plays in health, and ways we can create a stronger health care system that works for all Virginians.

If you have an innovative way to improve access to or delivery of oral health care please contact [Lauren Sawyer](#) to showcase your work in an upcoming blog.

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CDC Guidelines Updated for Dentists to Return to Work

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDC has updated its [guidance for dental care settings](#). Its newest changes provide additional recommendations for dentists reopening their practices, they include:

- **Recommendations for non-emergency dental care:** These include recommendations to avoid aerosol-generating procedures when possible, avoid the use of dental handpieces and the air/water syringe, and minimize the number of individuals in the building at one time.
- **New information on facility and equipment considerations, sterilization and disinfection, and considerations for the use of test-based strategies to inform patient care:** This includes recommendations like considering the use of portable HEPA filtration and consulting with HVAC specialists on potential upgrades.
- **Expanded recommendations for the provision of dental care to both patients with COVID-19 and patients without COVID-19:** The CDC guidance also provides recommendations on cleaning and disinfecting rooms and using a tiered approach to PPE based on the communities COVID-19 cases.

In addition to the updated guidance, the CDC has released the [Framework for Healthcare Systems Providing Non-COVID-19 Clinical Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), which includes information on how to provide care safely and how to expand services gradually.

Find the latest safety-net clinic status information with Virginia Health Catalyst

As clinics across Virginia begin to reopen for dental services Catalyst will make updates to our [Virginia Safety-Net Clinic Status spreadsheet](#) to reflect status changes. If you know of updates that aren't reflected, please [let us know](#).

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