

## SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO STRENGTHEN VIRGINIA'S HEALTH WORKFORCE

The Virginia General Assembly is considering several legislative proposals that would strengthen Virginia's health care workforce. As a valued partner of Virginia Health Catalyst, we hope that you consider asking your legislators to support the following proposals.

Not sure who represents you? Use the [Who's My Legislator \(whosmy.virginialegislature.gov\)](http://whosmy.virginialegislature.gov) tool or email **Ben Barber, Policy Director**, at [bbarber@vahealthcatalyst.org](mailto:bbarber@vahealthcatalyst.org). Your voice matters!

### Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact

**Bills:** [HB 225 \(Sickles\)](#) / [SB 22 \(Locke\)](#)

**Budget Amendments (BA):** N/A

These bills would authorize Virginia to become a signatory to the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact. The Compact increases public access to dental services by permitting eligible licensed dentists and dental hygienists to practice in Compact participating states provided that they are licensed in at least one participating state.

### Community Health Worker Funding

**Bills:** N/A

**BA:** [278 #3h \(Sickles\)](#) / [292 #7s \(Aird\)](#)

These bills support continued funding of over 100 existing community health worker positions. Community Health Workers are frontline public health professionals who are from or have an unusually close understanding of the communities they serve. They have a unique ability to build trust, health literacy, and self-sufficiency among the individuals they serve, which improves health and reduces costs.

### Remote Supervision

**Bills:** [HB 605 \(Price\)](#)

**BA:** N/A

This bill increases the number of days dentists have to examine a patient who was seen by a hygienist working under remote supervision from 90 to 180 days, allowing more time for a dentist to integrate a patient first seen under remote supervision into his or her practice. Remote supervision makes oral health care more accessible to underserved populations by allowing dental hygienists to treat patients in safety net and community-based settings without patients first having to see a dentist.

### Community Health Worker Medicaid Benefit

**Bills:** [HB 594 \(Sickles\)](#) / [SB 615 \(Pillion\)](#)

**BA:** [288 #68h \(Sickles\)](#) / [292 #7s \(Pillion\)](#)

These bills and their companion budget amendments would ensure sustainable, long-term access to Community Health Workers by creating a process and timeline for Medicaid to reimburse for Community Health Worker services.

### Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority

**Bills:** HB 1499 (Willett) / SB 155 (Head)

**BA:** 276 #2h-#3h (Hodges), 276 #11h-#12h (Willett) / 276 #2s-#3s (Favola), 276 #5s-#6s (Boysko)

These bills and their companion budget amendments will enable the Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority to carry out several initiatives designed to increase the number of health professionals in the commonwealth, including establishing a fund to form regional, employer-led partnerships that prioritize workforce growth and training, similar to the successful Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Science Careers. It would also invest in Virginia's Area Health Education Centers, which have been instrumental in developing effective partnerships to address the health workforce needs of their communities.

### Virginia Community College System

**Bills:** N/A

**BA:** 200 #1h (Carr) / 200 #6s (Marsden)

These budget amendments would strengthen the Virginia Community College System's workforce talent pipeline in high-demand sectors, including health care. This \$198 million investment will produce over 20,000 more credentialed workers than the community colleges currently produce.

### VCU School of Dentistry Building

**Bills:** N/A

**Budget Item:** C-14, Part 2

This item in the budget is a first step toward the construction of a new dental school for VCU School of Dentistry. The SOD is the only dental school in Virginia, training dentists, dental hygienists, and oral health scientists. It is also the largest provider of dental care to patients with Medicaid in Virginia. The education at the SOD is excellent, but current facilities are almost 70 years old, severely limiting its ability to compete with newer schools for faculty and students. Investing in a new building would make the school more competitive and strengthen Virginia's oral health workforce for years to come.

Learn more about our work at [www.vahealthcatalyst.org](http://www.vahealthcatalyst.org). Contact Sarah Holland, Chief Executive Officer, at [sholland@virginiahealthcatalyst.org](mailto:sholland@virginiahealthcatalyst.org) or 804-269-8721 should you have any questions.