

Vermont Oral Health Coalition

2018 Mid-Year Meeting Report

Meeting Attendees:

In-Person

1. Kathy DeLucco (Vermont Dental Care)
2. Heather Blair (VT Dental Hygienists Assoc)
3. Susan Coburn (DVHA)
4. Vaughn Collins (VT State Dental Society)
5. John Echternach
6. Michelle Fay (Voices for Vermont's Children)
7. Anna Ghosh (JSI)
8. Linda Greaves (VDH)
9. Ellen Grimes (VTC)
10. Marty Hammond (Southern Vermont AHEC)
11. Barb Hodgkins (Southern Vermont AHEC)
12. Denise Kall (VDH)
13. Kristina Kiarsis (VDH)
14. Robin Miller (VDH)
15. Pari Motia (VDH)
16. Susannah Offenhartz (VDH)
17. Jenny Pitz (VT State Dental Society)
18. NirMaya Pradhan
19. Chuck Seleen (Vermont Dental Care)
20. Julie Springer (CVHS, Head Start)
21. Debora Teixeira (VDH)

Phone

22. Kalton Bayer
23. Clark Eaton (DVHA)
24. Beth Ladd (CTE)
25. Adelaide Murray (JSI)
26. Stephanie Pagliuca (Bi-State Primary Care)
27. Penny Vanaman (Bennington Oral Health Coalition)
28. Joyce Gallimore (VT Public Health Association)

- VOHC Website: www.vtoralhealthcoalition.com
- Send news & events to Anna Ghosh at anna_ghosh@jsi.com

Summary of Meeting

The Vermont Oral Health Coalition (VOHC) held their Mid-Year Meeting on February 16, 2018 at the Vermont Department of Health in Burlington Vermont. The meeting was well attended; 21 attendees participated in person, 7 attendees participated by phone. The meeting purpose was to convene members to share information on relevant news, events, programming or policy to foster coordination across groups and organization's working to improve the state's oral health system and oral health of Vermonters.

VOHC subcommittees and subgroups provided a report out on their respective objectives, activities, and forthcoming efforts for the 2017/2018 project year. Two new participants joined the meeting as consumers of oral health care. This was the result of a goal expressed during the Mid-Year meeting in 2017.

News & Updates from Attendees

- Susan Coburn reported that VT Medicaid has opened the code for silver diamine fluoride reimbursement. They will work with the VOHC to outreach to providers.
- Robin Miller reported there is an updated disease schedule for preventative services. A planning committee will be developed for the pilot.
- Linda Greaves announced that the community water fluoridation received two grants. Public health hygienists will use silver diamine fluoride.
- Debora Teixeira announced that the state oral health program has decided to use communication funds to communicate about silver diamine fluoride.
- Susan Offenharz provided an update that the cleft palate clinic is in a state of flux but will continue through the transitions, but cannot offer any financial support to families.
- Denise Kall announced that updated data from PRAMS will be available and disseminated soon.

Coalition Survey

Denise Kall introduced a Vermont Oral Health Coalition survey. The leadership of the VOHC is seeking feedback from its valued members in order to understand how to improve their experience with Coalition activities and improve the Coalition's effectiveness. Time was allowed during the meeting to complete the survey and ask questions. Members were requested to complete the survey by February 23. Survey findings will be discussed with the Coalition.

Dental Workforce Subcommittee

The Dental Workforce Subcommittee is led by chair Debora Teixeira with the goal of promoting and expanding a trained and geographically distributed dental workforce in Vermont. The subcommittee includes four subgroups: Promoting Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries, Promoting Dental Therapists, Recruitment of Dentists and Community Dental Health Workers, and Promoting Dental Hygienists as Medicaid Providers.

Promoting EFDA's Subgroup: Kathy DeLucco reported that the group is trying to establish a path from EFDA training to attaining an employed position. The Center for Technology, Essex has a summer program with 8 students. Beth Ladd and Tracy Towers will be offering a course in April which will train dental assistants to challenge the national board to be certified. A grant of \$5,000 from Northeast Delta Dental has been offered to offset the cost of the national exam fee. Three students took advantage of this scholarship and have passed the exam.

Promoting Dental Therapists Subgroup: Ellen Grimes reported that students of Dental Therapy do not end up with high debts as compared to traditional dental students. A survey indicated that at least 29 dentists report they are willing to hire dental therapists.

Interested students must complete a job shadow before starting in the program to ensure they want to do this work.

This is a three-year program because all of the content could not fit into two years.

There has been an increase in the number of callers looking for dental hygienists which indicates a shortage in the state. This might be due to the fact that the loan repayment program was shifted from the dental hygienists program to the EFDA program. This decision to shift the focus of the loan repayment program was based on a low number of applicants to the dental hygienists program, and the EFDA program reaching maximum capacity with their applicants.

Recruitment Subgroup: Chuck Seleen and Jenny Pitz reported this is the high season for recruitment and the process is running smoothly. Activities include going to job fairs at colleges, staying in contact with UVM residency program participants, and increasing practice sites for externships. Most of the externship sites are currently private practices, not federally qualified health centers. Student debt remains a large issue for attracting students to this field. Students find loan repayment and residency programs appealing.

There is an aging dentist population. There is a need of between 15-21 new dentists per year for the next 3 years, which will drop off to 12-13 new dentists per year after that.

Loan debt from dental school has also increased. Debt can range between \$250,000 to \$800,000. If the loan repayment program is lost it will have a strong impact on ability to attract dentists.

A program has been developed for new dentists who do not yet have a patient panel where they receive loan forgiveness. The purpose is to place Medicaid patients on their panel. The dentists sign a contract to commit to serving a minimum number of Medicaid patients per year for up to six years. By reserving these spots, these early providers will integrate Medicaid recipients into their practice from the start and keep them in their care in the long term because they will have developed a practice pattern of treating them.

Promoting Dental Hygienists as Medicaid Providers: There are not any updates at this time.

MCH Oral Health Subcommittee

The subcommittee has determined two SMART objectives:

1. By 4/1/18 we will have developed an SDF fact sheet for consumers
2. By 6/30/18 we will have supported the dissemination of the Vermont Dental Periodicity schedule in a variety of ways, including website postings, email, newsletters, and meetings

The fact sheet is well underway and is intended to be used with a consumer audience in mind. The Dental Periodicity schedule has been developed and is being disseminated.

Alternative Practice Settings Subcommittee

Heather Blair reported that this subcommittee has gotten underway as of January. The goal is to identify current community based alternative practice settings by the end of the year. This inventory will help with the implementation of programs. They had initially drafted a survey to send out to alternative practice settings but then realized they first need to find out what settings exist. They are now drafting a brief survey to be disseminated to the VOHC and would also like to target other oral health partners such as shelters and substance use disorder treatment programs.

Fluoridation ad hoc Subcommittee

Marty Hammond announced that water fluoridation training will be held on April 6, 2018 in Rutland at the Heritage Family Credit Union on 50 West Street with the goal of training 20 people who can go back to their communities to provide wider trainings about fluoridation. The goal is to assist citizens in advocating for community fluoridation in their communities. The presenters, Johnny Johnson and Matt Jacob, are known to be very good. Please contact Marty Hammond or Linda Greaves for more information.

Consumer Experiences with Oral Health Services

The VOHC invited two new members to participate so they can share their experiences as a consumer of oral health services and learn what the VOHC is doing in its subcommittees. Inviting them to this meeting was with the hope there will be some mutual interest in learning and contributing collaboratively.

NirMaya Pradhan is a member of the Nepali community. She came to the US in 2009. She is a LNA, counselor and interpreter. She has seen older family members who take care of grandchildren spoil the children with sweets. They did not grow up in an environment such as the US where there is easy access to sugary snacks so they do not know the harm that sweets can do to children's oral health. She indicated that education for parents as well as extended family members may be valuable. She mentioned lack of transportation and unclear communication as barriers to accessing oral health care.

Exposure to oral health care services via the community events that are held would benefit the community. The Nepali immigrant community members are often shy and hesitant to ask questions of providers. Even if there is a translator, it does not mean the patient will understand the reason behind the need for further services and can even result in misinterpretations and avoidance of further treatment. A potential solution might be to ask the patient to repeat back what they understood and what the expectations are for further care.

Kalton Bayer is a member of the Somali community. She has been a dental assistant in MN and TX. She's witnessed long wait times (3 to 6 months) for dental appointments for friends and family. She also said she has experienced challenges in getting admission to a dental hygienist training program. She was curious about why there are not more spaces open in training programs, especially if there is a shortage of hygienists. Many people are embarrassed to say

they have to go to the dentist. If they do try to make an appointment and are told they need to wait 3 months, they give up and do not go.

Strengthening the VOHC

Denise Kall and Robin Miller led a discussion to determine what the VOHC can do right now to make the work of the subcommittees more effective. The following conclusions were made:

- If there is a need to update the Strategic Plan, a subcommittee will be formed to make the updates and ask the rest of the VOHC to review. The current Strategic Plan will be sent out to everyone with the notes from this meeting.
- Subgroups seem siloed in their work and experience missed opportunities to collaborate.
- More meetings are a possible benefit
- Updates can be provided ahead of these large meetings to allow time for a deeper dive into specific topics during the meetings
- Members are open to receiving more emails
- The August meeting will focus more time on topics of interest across subcommittees