



November 2016

Welcome to the seventh edition of the Vermont Oral Health Coalition (VOHC) quarterly newsletter. VOHC newsletters provide updates on Coalition activities, information on oral health issues and news, and initiatives in Vermont and across the nation.

The vision of the VOHC is that Vermont will have an oral health system that allows all Vermonters to achieve and sustain optimal oral health, contributing to their ability to lead healthy lives.

VOHC News & Updates

- Following the VOHC annual meeting in August, subcommittees are convening and in the process of developing annual objectives for their defined goals and priorities.
- The VOHC mid-year meeting will be in February 2017. Information on a date, location and agenda will be shared in the coming months.
- Dr. Bookwalter will be retiring in June 2017, and the Community Water Fluoridation (CWF) Subcommittee will be in need of a new chairperson. Please contact Dr. Bookwalter if you're interested in taking over this important role, we wish him all the best!

Subcommittee Updates

Community Water Fluoridation (CWF)

- ❖ **Goal:** *Maintain and expand CWF in Vermont.*
 - The subcommittee will continue its work with the Vermont State Dental Society promoting the benefits of water fluoridation, and will continue to pursue opportunities to expand water fluoridation.
 - The subcommittee is seeking to transition in a new chairperson during Spring 2017. Please let Dr. Bookwalter know if you are interested in taking on this role.

Dental Workforce

- ❖ **Goal:** *Promote and expand a trained and geographically distributed dental workforce in Vermont to increase access to and utilization of care.*
 - The Dental Workforce subcommittee is growing! New Expanded Functions Dental Auxiliary (EFDA) members are being recruited in addition to a public health member from the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council.
 - Due to the size of this subcommittee and the several priority topics, the subcommittee has organized into four subgroups: (1) Promoting EFDAs, (2) Promoting Dental Therapists, (3) Promoting Dental Hygienists as Medicaid Providers, and (4) Recruitment of Dentists and Community Dental Health Coordinators (CDHC). Each of these subgroups will meet monthly, the full subcommittee will meet quarterly.

VOHC ~ Improving & Promoting Optimal Oral Health for All Vermonters

To learn more visit the VOHC website, www.vtoralhealthcoalition.com, or contact a committee chair:

- **Maternal and Child Oral Health** – Chairperson: Robin Miller, robin.n.miller@vermont.gov
- **Dental Workforce** – Chairperson: Debora Teixeira, debora.teixeira@vermont.gov
- **Medical / Dental Integration** – Chairperson: Liz Cote, elizabeth.cote@uvm.edu
- **Community Water Fluoridation** – Chairperson: Chuck Bookwalter, book@timberlanedental.com

- Coordinators for these subgroups are: (1) Promoting EFDAs: Chuck Seleen, (2) Promoting Dental Therapists: Michelle Fay, (3) Promoting Dental Hygienists as Medicaid Providers: Ellen Grimes, and (4) Recruitment of Dentists and CDHCs: Chuck Seleen and Jenny Pitz.

Coordinators are in the process of meeting with members to refine the annual SMART objectives for their subgroups.

MCH Oral Health

- ❖ **Goal:** *Promote oral health and reduce oral disease for women and children in Vermont.*
- To complete activities for the previous year's 2015/2016 subcommittee annual objectives, MCH oral health endorsement letters, patient pamphlets, and national consensus statements are being distributed through a combination of mailings from the Office of Oral Health and hand delivery by local health office staff.
- The subcommittee administered a survey to members to inform development of annual SMART objectives for 2016/2017. Per the survey responses, the objectives will focus on the following topics: (1) Sugar sweetened beverages, (2) Follow-up with practices on the MCH oral health endorsement letter, (3) Creating a Ronald MacDonald van fact sheet outlining the resources and availability of the van, (4) Research to gain insight on the positive oral health outcomes of Newport to inform efforts in other communities in the state, and (5) Access to dental care for children beginning at age one.

The subcommittee will define SMART objectives for these topics during upcoming meetings.

Medical Dental Integration

- ❖ **Goal:** *Promote communication, coordination, and collaboration across medical and dental health professionals to enhance care and improve overall health.*

- The subcommittee will define annual SMART objectives for the 2016/2017 work year during upcoming meetings.
- Chairperson Liz Cote attended the DentaQuest Foundation's annual national oral health meeting in October, which focused in part on harnessing the collective impact of coalitions and other partnerships. She will share what she learned during upcoming meetings.

Oral Health Around the State

Vermont State Dental Society Launches 'Care Beyond the Chair'

During the Vermont State Dental Society's (VSDS) annual meeting in September, community dentists kicked off a new campaign to reduce oral health disease and highlight the role of community dentists and their teams beyond the care they provide their patients. *Care Beyond the Chair* is a yearlong initiative that will involve local, regional and statewide advocacy to improve the health and wellness of Vermonters. The campaign will focus on strategies that extend beyond dental care provided to patients.

"Vermont's community dentists are trusted community leaders who are dedicated to delivering quality care to patients, advocating for them outside of their practices and serving their communities," said Vaughn Collins, executive director of the VSDS.

"Research has shown associations between gum disease and other health conditions like heart disease, stroke, premature births and low birth weight, and proven links between gum disease and diabetes," Collins added. "That's why Vermont's community dentists, and their teams, are committed to expanding our system of care to ensure Vermonters are receiving the oral health services they need, when they need them and at a cost they can afford."

As part of the *Care Beyond the Chair* advocacy initiative, VSDS members will:

- **Prioritize Prevention & Proper Brushing, Flossing and Healthy Eating** – Too many kids and adults still do not brush and floss regularly. This easy and inexpensive practice can dramatically reduce rates of oral health disease and the costs of care.
 - **Help More Communities Benefit from Fluoride** – This naturally occurring mineral provides scientifically proven health benefits. \$1 spent on fluoride saves about \$38 in dental treatment costs.
 - **Expand the Successful Tooth Tutor Program to all School Districts.** 26,000 eligible children did not see a dentist in 2013. Vermont's Tooth Tutor program helps to ensure children have access to preventive, restorative and continuous care in a dental office.
 - **Add Expanded Function Dental Assistants (EFDAs)** – These dental assistants are thoroughly trained to deliver an expanded range of care in dental practices, schools and clinics.
 - **Put Community-Based Hygienists in Every Region** – The Department of Health currently contracts with dental hygienists to provide services and referrals in about half of its regional offices. To help underserved Vermonters achieve oral health, VSDS believes there should be a community-based hygienist in each regional office.
- *Contribution by Jason Gibbs
VSDS Communications Consultant –*

Oral Health Around the Nation

Oral Health at APHA

From October 31 – November 4, 2016 oral health practitioners took to Denver, CO for the 2016 APHA Annual Meeting & Expo. Highlights from the Annual Meeting include:

- Dr. Georges Benjamin opened APHA in Denver by celebrating Denver's addition of fluoride to public water systems in 1953.
- Dr. Harry Goodman, Former President of the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) received the APHA Milton and Ruth Roemer Prize for Creative Local Public Health Work. The award is given to a local health officer of a county, city or other unit of local government, in recognition for outstanding, creative and innovative public health work.
- APHA Oral Health Section celebrated National Brush Day on November 1, with their *Get it From the Tap* campaign! Attendees received and shared pictures of their "*Fluoride Prevents Cavities: Get it From the Tap*" buttons.

Did you attend the APHA Annual Meeting and have Oral Health updates to share? Let us know!

Healthy Futures: Engaging the Oral Health Community in Childhood Obesity Prevention National Conference

The role of oral health professionals in addressing childhood obesity is important because of the relationship between oral health and overall health. This 2-day national conference held in November 2016 served as an important step in involving the oral health community in contributing to the prevention of childhood obesity.

The conference included an overview of relevant scientific literature and evidence-based recommendations and strategies that could be employed by oral health professionals and organizations. For more information on this conference, visit the [conference webpage](#).

Oral Health Resources of Interest

Listed below is a selection of resources identified by VOHC members for VOHC members. Take a look.

- [Bright Futures Oral Health Pocket Guide](#) – This pocket guide is designed to be a useful tool for health professionals in addressing the needs of pregnant and postpartum women, infants, children, and adolescents. The guide provides health professionals with an overview of preventive oral health supervision and includes information about risk assessment, a tooth eruption chart, a dietary fluoride supplementation schedule, a glossary, and a list of resources.
- [CDC's Oral Health Website](#) – This website has been redesigned with a new look and feel. Information has been reorganized to make it easy for users to locate and view. This month, they are featuring “Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings” in recognition of Dental Infection Control Awareness Month.
- [Campaign for Dental Health: Shareable Images](#) – Pro-fluoridation shareable images can be downloaded and used on social media for local efforts have been designed to appeal to millennial audiences and parents. Each asserts a pro-fluoridation position, one with confidence and the other with humor.
- [National Drinking Water Alliance](#) – NDWA has just announced the launch of its new online resource clearinghouse with five main sections: 1) Research, 2) Policy, 3) Access, 4) Education, and 5) News.
- [International Bottled Water Association](#) – This website provides a resource on fluoride in bottled water. See the section on brands of bottled water containing fluoride. Upon linking to a particular brand of water, an analysis of the content of that water is provided, including fluoride content.
- [Oral Health Integration Implementation Guide](#) – The Oral Health Integration Implementation Guide provides advice and instructions for primary care practices on implementing the Oral Health Delivery Framework. Resources include an implementation guide, introductory video, and white paper on oral health as an essential component of primary care.
- [Seal in a Smile](#) – This video addresses the importance of dental sealants. Live action and animation are used to demonstrate what sealants are, how they prevent tooth decay, and how they are applied.