

MINUTES

Dental Advisory Committee (DAC)
DMAS 11 PM – 1 PM
November 17, 2023

DAC Members Present	
Donnie Parris	Sarah Bedard Holland
Terry Hake, DDS	Steve Ford
John Unkel, DDS	Tegwyn Brickhouse, DDS
Doug Gray	Barry Griffin, DDS
Girish Banaji DDS	Carl Atkins, DDS
Lynn Browder, DDS	Cynthia Southern, DDS
Robin Langston, DDS	Michelle Taylor
Bhavna Shroff, DDS	Susan Pharr
Ryan Dunn	
DAC Members Absent	
Chuck Duvall	Randy Adams, DDS
Roger Palmer, DDS	Kris Walsh
April Payne	
DMAS Attendees	
Daniel Plain	Donna Taylor
Adrienne Fegans	Justin Gist
Lisa Bilik	Casey Terrell
Zachary Hairston, DDS	Sara Cariano
Michele Anderson	
DentaQuest Attendees	
Kristen Gilliam	Terry Dickinson
Gina Springer	Waradah Eargle
Bridget Hengle	LaShaye Fluellyn
Melanie King	Altise Street
Tim Whited	
Other Attendees	
Dean Lyndon Cooper	Jonathan Wong, DDS
Laura Givens	Ronnie Coleman
Kelly Bradshaw	Tracy Douglas Wheeler
Dustin Reynolds, DDS	

Welcome

Justin Gist, Dental Program Manager, called the meeting to order at 11:02am and welcomed attendees to the November 2023 Dental Advisory Committee meeting. He provided an overview of the meeting agenda available to both in-person and virtual attendees. Mr. Gist motioned to approve the minutes from the May 2023 DAC. The minutes were approved. Mr. Gist then transitioned to Adrienne Fegans, Deputy of Program Operations, for DMAS updates.

DMAS Updates

Adrienne Fegans provided DMAS updates to the group and thanked the attendees for their commitment to dental care across Virginia for the last eighteen years. Ms. Fegans also provided thanks to Sarah Holland for an invite to the Catalyst Oral Health Summit in October. Ms. Fegans then highlighted three major current initiatives, including the “Unwinding”, Governor Youngkin’s “Right Help Right Now” behavioral health initiative, and the Medicaid Cardinal Care rebranding. Ms. Fegans directed attendees to the DMAS website for all information on the rebrand, reporting that Smiles For Children will also be rebranded as Cardinal Care Smiles and DMAS Dental will be working with DentaQuest on the rebrand and updated logo.

Ms. Fegan discussed the recent visit from CMS, and reported they were interested in the dental program and impressed at the services offered, specifically three visits per year. Ms. Fegans also reported the team has been working with Dr. Cooper at VCU on transportation to the dental school. Additionally, Ms. Fegans notified the group that Dr. Hairston will be speaking to the Baby Steps team to discuss oral health before and after pregnancy, and if anyone is interested in attending this meeting to reach out to Dan Plain or Justin Gist. Ms. Fegans thanked all for their contributions and transitioned to Division Director, Dan Plain, for division updates.

Division Updates

Dan Plain, Division Director, provided updates on the Health Care Services Division. Mr. Plain highlighted the recent CMS visit and reported CMS was very impressed with the dental services offered in Virginia. Mr. Plain thanked all for their contributions to the program and dental care in the state. Mr. Plain then transitioned back to Justin Gist who introduced Sara Cariano from DMAS for an Unwinding update.

Unwinding (Enrollment) Updates

Sara Cariano, with DMAS, presented on *Ending Continuous Coverage for Medicaid* to provide an update on the unwinding process. Ms. Cariano provided an overview of the PHE requirement to maintain Medicaid coverage for enrollees, and as the protection period has ended the “unwinding” process has begun to review eligibility for all Medicaid members.

Ms. Cariano discussed that due to the three-year halt in this process there has been a massive growth in enrollment, and it is predicted that 14% may lose coverage. Ms. Cariano stated they are a little over halfway through the unwinding process and there is an online dashboard available on the DMAS site that breaks down coverage rates and status of the process. Ms. Cariano then provided an overview of coverage and renewal rates, member appeal rates, and requests for information rates by month, and reported the agency has been

working hard to ensure that renewals are processed. Justin Gist thanked Ms. Cariano for the information and then transitioned the meeting to Kristen Gilliam for DentaQuest Smiles for Children (SFC) updates.

DentaQuest SFC Updates

Kristen Gilliam of DentaQuest thanked all for their work in Virginia dental services and provided the following updates on the SFC program:

- Approximately 116,000 adults have received treatment since 7/1/2023 (SFY 2024)
- Adult member claims for SFY 2023 (200,000+ adults) exceeded those from SFY 2022 (165,000+ adults)
- Restorations continue to exceed extractions
- As of October 31, 2023, there are 2,098 dentists participating in the SFC program
- 37% of Virginia's practicing dentists participate in the SFC program
- 86% of network providers treated members in SFY 2023

Ms. Gilliam provided the following provider survey results:

- There was an increase in reported provider satisfaction from 82% previously to 91% currently
- 94% of providers plan to continue participating in DentaQuest network next year
- 96% believed DentaQuest was as good or better than competitor insurance carriers

Additionally, Ms. Gilliam highlighted CDT 2024 Code additions and changes to codes D2991, D7284, and 2335, which will be available in the Office Reference Manual and effective for all dates of service on or after January 1, 2024. Ms. Gilliam also notified the group of the updated state budget language impacting dental, effective January 1, 2024, stating: *(ii) remove the current limitation on the number of times a dentist can bill the behavioral management code when treating adults with disabilities; (iii) provide payment for crowns for patients who received root canal therapy prior to becoming a Medicaid beneficiary; and (iv) provide reimbursement for pre-treatment evaluations performed by dentists treating patients requiring deep sedation or general anesthesia to mirror the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) guidelines.*

Ms. Gilliam concluded the presentation with an update on member outreach initiatives, highlighting an increase in pediatric and pregnant member claims, and discussed member survey results reporting a 95% member satisfaction rate with dental care and 92% reporting they had a dental home. Ms. Gilliam thanked the attendees and then transitioned the meeting to Dr. Hairston who introduced Dr. Barry Griffin.

Health and Periodontal Disease

Dr. Hairston introduced DAC member Dr. Barry Griffin, who provided a very informative presentation on *Health and Periodontal Disease*, with a focus on how providers can treat

periodontal disease as it relates to whole body health and the importance of taking into consideration factors such as medications, social habits, mental health, and other medical issues in treatment.

In his presentation, Dr. Griffin highlighted the impacts that periodontal disease can have on patients who also have medical conditions such as cardiovascular disease, rheumatoid arthritis, or diabetes, as well as the impacts of certain medications that can cause inflammation of the gums. Dr. Griffin emphasized the importance of dental providers being aware of these social and systemic factors as they are treating the “whole patient” and not just their mouth. Mr. Gist thanked Dr. Griffin for his informative presentation and transitioned the meeting to VCU School of Dentistry Dean, Dr. Cooper.

VCU School of Dentistry Presentation

The meeting then transitioned to a presentation by Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry Dean, Dr. Lyndon Cooper, who provided an update on the VCU Dental School, speaking on their present and prevalent challenges and plans to work with VCU to address oral health disparities and meet the needs of patients seeking dental care. Dr. Cooper highlighted plans at the school to improve communication, enhance efficiency, and address social determinants of care provision. Dr. Cooper then transitioned to Donnie Parris, VCU Director of Patient Business Services.

Mr. Parris provided a presentation on *Improving Urgent Care*, discussing goals to increase capacity for walk-in patient visits, decrease queues during the intake process, improve triage and see patients the same day they arrive. Mr. Parris reviewed VCU’s strategy to expand the urgent care clinic, dedicate faculty in existing oral surgery, provide pre-triage service, and fast seating. Mr. Parris reported that walk-in volume has increased 43% since implementation.

Adrienne Fegans inquired about a pilot program to provide Saturday hours to help the clinic meet increased volume needs. Mr. Parris and Dean Cooper reported that after hours and weekend hours have been discussed; however, because it is a dental school with students, they would need to open the school and campus security for those hours as well. The meeting then transitioned to Dr. Hairston who provided Dental Advisory Committee updates.

Dental Advisory Committee Updates

Dr. Hairston began by welcoming the president of the VDA, Dr. Dustin Reynolds, to today’s meeting. Additionally, Dr. Hairston provided a brief update that the changing endodontic language is still a current focus and working to develop a process for dentists to submit a note of explanation with requests. The meeting then transitioned to President of the Virginia Dental Association (VDA), Dr. Reynolds, to provide an update.

Virginia Dental Association (VDA) Updates

VDA President, Dr. Reynolds, thanked all for the opportunity to speak today. Dr. Reynolds also thanked Dr. Hairston and Justin Gist for their presentation at the Virginia Dental Showcase, to spread the SFC program message across Virginia. Dr. Reynolds discussed the VDA’s current focus for Virginia to increase the workforce, specifically the importance of

increasing the number of dental hygienists. Dr. Reynolds reported the Dental Workforce Council is collaborating to address workforce issues in Virginia.

Additionally, Dr. Reynolds discussed the importance of supporting mental health and well-being of dental staff and highlighted an important VDA member benefit, Caring Dentsits Committee, which is a peer support organization that provides support to dental staff who may be struggling. Lastly, Dr. Reynolds discussed the General Assembly session and VDA support of the Dental Insurance Transparency Bill, which will require dentists to publicly report costs going to care. The meeting then transitioned to Sarah Holland for an update from Virginia Health Catalyst (VHC).

Virginia Health Catalyst (VHC) Updates

Sarah Holland thanked DentaQuest and VCU for sponsoring the Catalyst Annual Summit and notified the group that this years Summit will be held on October 18, 2024, at the Westin in Richmond. Ms. Holland reported the Public Oral Health Task Force will be working on an Oral Health Workforce Gap Assessment and will be sharing this information as a companion document to other statewide surveys recently released, in order to highlight oral health care. Ms. Holland also reported VHC will be working with partners on legislative pushes to ensure oral health is not left out of the 2024 General Assembly session and will have more information in the spring.

Public Comments/Questions

Justin Gist thanked all the presenters for their contributions and opened the meeting up for public comment. No attendees had any additional comments. Mr. Gist announced that the next full DAC will be held on May 17, 2024. Mr. Gist thanked all for attending. With no further questions or additional items for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 pm.

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