

MINUTES

Dental Advisory Committee (DAC)
DMAS 11 PM – 1 PM
November 21st, 2025

DAC Members Present	
Cynthia Southern	John Unkel
Chuck Duvall	
Girish Banaji	
James Parris	
Bhavna Shroff (Virtually)	
Ryan Dunn (Virtually)	
Michelle Taylor (Virtually)	
DMAS Attendees	
Justin Gist	Jamila Jones
Adrienne Fegans	
Daniel Plain	
Zachary Hairston, DDS	
Michele Anderson	
DentaQuest Attendees	
Kristen Gilliam	
Tim Whited	
Bridget Hengle	
Brittany Gray	
Other Attendees	
Laura Givens	Roger Palmer
Terry Dickinson	Jean Mitchell
Rowland Browder	Victor Mckenzie
Susan Moon	Ronnie Coleman

Welcome

Justin Gist, Dental Program Manager, called the meeting to order at 11:06 AM by welcoming and thanking the attendees for attending the November 2025 Dental Advisory Committee meeting. He advised that we'll hear perspectives from our committee members on certain topics that are important and pertinent to our program, including a session that is titled from Insight to Impact. Justin explained that this session is new to the committee and the subsequent discussions will be used to guide our priorities around access, program quality and program experience. He approved May 16th, 2025, DAC meeting minutes. Mr. Gist then transitioned to Adriene Fegans, Deputy of Programs and Operations, for DMAS updates.

Division Updates

Adrienne Fegans, Deputy of Programs and Operations, provided updates on the Health Care Services Division. She began with acknowledging that in January, we will inaugurate our first female Governor in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Along with that comes a new administration, which means a new secretary. She discussed the fact that we are waiting to see what their platform will be specifically for Medicaid in the programs and services area. Adrienne discussed that we are still implementing changes from this past General Assembly. Adrienne advised the group to be on the lookout to see what initiatives will impact Medicaid. Adrienne also mentioned that we have federal changes that we must adhere to as part of H.R.1, which is called the One Big, Beautiful Bill Act. With H.R.1 comes eligibility and enrollment changes as well as the community work engagement requirements. We (DMAS) are still waiting on guidelines from CMS around most of these provisions. Adrienne explained that when we receive guidelines, we will relay this information to the committee.

Adrienne then discussed the rural health transformation project. On November 5th, Virginia submitted our proposal for the rural health transformation which we have coined the Virginia Rural Vitality. Between Fiscal year 2026 and fiscal year 2030, the program will distribute \$50 billion with Virginia eligible for up to \$500 million in direct allocations through competitive grants.

Adrienne also discussed the coming changes to the DAC. She explained that we want to hear DAC member input. We want to hear the good, the bad and the ugly, because that helps us to improve and determine what we need to do internally. Adrienne praised the fact that we have more than 2500 providers now. She also advised the DAC that the dental team is working on the dental dashboard, and they should see that on the DMAS website soon, along with other dashboards. Adrienne discussed our partnership for Petersburg under Governor Youngkin and the dental event in Petersburg where a provider in Petersburg will provide services for community members free of charge. Finally, Adrienne then advised that this will be her last DAC as she will be retiring in January. She wished everyone much success as we work to serve our vulnerable population.

Daniel Plain, Division Director, thanked Adriene for her dedication and all that she has done for the Medicaid program. He acknowledged the fact that, as we as we move forward, we have our

mind on how to continue improving the program. Dan stated that we must figure out how to leverage technology and efficiency. We want to make sure members can get care and that providers have some ease of use with the program while we (DMAS) remain cognizant of the money piece.

Dan then turned the discussion over to Justin Gist who introduced the next speaker, Kristen Gilliam, with DentaQuest.

DentaQuest Updates

Kristen Gilliam presented a slide show with data and updates. She began with program accomplishments over the past 20 years:

- ❖ 2005- launched program with 420K children and 200k adults, provider payment increased 28%
- ❖ 2006- Provider payment increased 2%
- ❖ 2015- Added expanded pregnancy benefit
- ❖ 2019- Added 400k+ adults with Medicaid expansion
- ❖ 2021- Added comprehensive adult dental benefit
- ❖ 2022- Provider payments increased 30%
- ❖ 2023- Added innovative wellness programs to improve oral health outcomes
- ❖ 2024- Provider payment increased 3%
- ❖ 2025- Serving 894k children, 985k adults and 39k pregnant members

The program currently has 2,508 providers in the network as of 11/14/2025, which is the highest number of participating providers enrolled since the benefit was offered. Adult and pregnant woman utilization has grown as well since 2022, steadily progressing year by year.

Member-Based Interventions

Outreach to Members Without Recent Dental Visits. DentaQuest launched a targeted outreach initiative reaching out to members aged 2 to 20 who have not accessed dental services in the previous 12 months. DentaQuest successfully reached **45,989 (19%)** of the individuals they called.

Oral Health Matters Educational Series. In partnership with Central Virginia Health Services (CVHS), DentaQuest hosted **two** Lunch & Learn sessions in Petersburg as part of the *Oral Health Matters Educational Series*.

Anthem Foster Care Specialty Plan. DentaQuest participated in the Anthem Foster Care

Specialty Plan overview webinar and are planning a training presentation for the Foster Care team. DentaQuest developed the Foster Care utilization report to identify members in need of oral health services.

Community-Based Interventions

Coordination with Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). DentaQuest collaborated with all Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) through more than **41** community events, meetings, and presentations, both virtually and in person. To further enhance these relationships, DentaQuest launched a monthly chat series with MCOs, fostering continuous dialogue and strategic alignment.

Give Kids A Smile (GKAS) Day. DentaQuest supported Dr. Emily Bowen of Mountain Empire Community College in her GKAS Day event, which served over **700 students** at a local elementary school.

Community-Based Interventions

Cultural Ambassador Program. DentaQuest hosted a virtual educational session for Community Services Boards (CSBs), drawing strong interest with **218 registrations and 155 attendees** — a **71% attendance rate**. The session received an impressive **average rating of 4.76 out of 5**.

Grassroots Community Activities & Partnerships. DentaQuest participated in **198 community events, meetings, and conferences**. These engagements focused on educating community partners about oral hygiene and improving access to essential dental services.

Special Initiatives. DentaQuest continued to support the **Partnership for Petersburg** and **Accelerate Southwest Virginia** initiatives. As part of these efforts, DentaQuest engaged in **49** community events, meetings, presentations, and hosted two Lunch & Learn sessions.

DentaQuest Survey Results

- **100 telephone interviews** were conducted among Virginia Cardinal Care Smiles Medicaid members or parents/guardians of members for the first half of 2025.
 - 67 interviews were conducted among the parents or guardians of child members under the age of 18; 33 interviews were conducted among patients aged 18 or older.
- About **9 in 10 members (92%)** have a dentist they usually go to for check-ups, cleanings or tooth pain.
- Nearly **9 in 10 respondents** rated their/their child's oral health highly.
 - 88% believed their/their child's oral health was very good or good.
 - 87% have seen an improvement in their/their child's oral health in the past year.

- **17% of respondents** contacted Virginia Cardinal Care Smiles customer service in the past year. The majority (94%) of those who contacted customer service received the information they sought, and all (100%) felt they were treated politely and with respect.
 - About 1 in 6 members (17%) visited the website in the past 12 months; 88% of those who visited the website found it helpful.
 - About one-third (35%) had read the member materials in the past 12 months; all (100%) who read the materials found them helpful.
- Nearly all (**94%**) said their dentist reached out in some way to remind them of their appointments.
 - 99% of those who received reminders found them helpful.
- Nearly all (**98%**) indicated that they contact the dentist at least 48 hours in advance if they need to miss an appointment.
- Just **8%** say they missed an appointment in the past 12 months, and schedule conflict was the most prevalent reason cited for missing an appointment.

Satisfaction Results

- **97%** were satisfied with the dentist
- **97%** were satisfied with dental care received
- **99%** were satisfied with their dental plan

DAC Members Presentations and Updates

Dental Clinical Consultant Dr. Zachary Hairston shared a presentation titled: From Insight to Impact.

Below were the discussion topics.

Discussion Topics

- For providers — What are the administrative and/or clinical barriers that keep you from seeing more Medicaid members? These barriers don't have to be Medicaid focused (i.e. related to DentaQuest or the program). We want to understand your office barriers that prevent you from seeing more Medicaid members.
- For non-providers — What are some of the things you are hearing in the oral health space that would prevent providers from seeing more Medicaid members?
- What are some practical strategies that you think will help recruit and retain more Medicaid dental providers?
- What are some administrative processes or nuances in the Medicaid program that need simplification?
- What tools or supports would help to improve preventive care in the Medicaid program?

- If you could change one thing in the next 12–18 months about the Medicaid dental program, what would it be?

This prompted an open forum discussion amongst DAC members touching on different topics which provided a collaborative forum.

After this discussion, Mr. Gist introduced Dr. Jean Mitchell, Professor of Public Policy at Georgetown University, to discuss her project which evaluated the impact of Virginia school-based programs to address the unmet needs among low-income children. She presented a slideshow presentation that discussed the following:

Background

- RS program was piloted in three health districts with high unmet dental care needs: Cumberland Plateau, Lenowisco and Southside
- School-based RS programs were established in high-need schools defined as those where at least 50% qualify for NSLP.

Pilot Phase Evaluation: Aim 1 of AHRQ Funded Grant

- Analyzed Medicaid enrollment and claims records, obtained directly from the state of Virginia for children ages 6–13 spanning the school years 2006–2007 through 2014–2015.
- Evaluated the impact of this school-based initiative on the receipt of any sealant and the receipt of the first sealant before and after adoption of the program.
- To ensure comparable populations, Georgetown used propensity score weighting to construct the cohorts of children who attended treatment and control schools.
- Estimated a propensity score weighted linear probability model allowing for staggered adoption of the RS program while controlling for school and school year fixed effects.

Pilot Phase Findings

- Findings show that children who attended treatment schools were significantly more likely to receive sealants.
- The increased probability was 7.2 percentage points ($p=.001$) after two years of school participation in the RS program to 10.1 percentage points ($p=.003$) after five/six years of participation.
- For receipt of first sealants, the increased probability ranged from 6.8 (two years of participation) to 10.3 percentage points (five/six years of participation).
- The VDH school-based RS dental care delivery program was effective in improving the receipt of sealants among children enrolled in Medicaid.

Mr. Gist thanked and applauded everyone in attendance both virtually and in person. Mr. Gist thanked Adrenne for her service to the Medicaid program and specifically her services and care for the dental program. Mr. Gist called the meeting to be adjourned at 1:16PM.