

# Vermont Oral Health Care for All Project

Carlen Finn

Voices for Vermont's Children

# Oral health care landscape in Vermont

- ❑ Time and again, Vermont has been recognized as a leader in health care.
- ❑ While the state has made great strides in extending affordable health care to low and middle-income Vermonters, lack of access to affordable oral health care for everyone is a long-neglected systemic issue.

# Too many Vermonters go without needed dental care

## Children:

- ❑ 57% of Medicaid-enrolled children received dental care in 2009
  - Unfortunately, that means over 24,000 of these children did not receive care.
- ❑ 86.2% of children above 400% federal poverty level had teeth in good or excellent condition while only 55.9% of children below 100% federal poverty level had teeth in excellent or good condition

# Story from the field

*I see many pediatric patients on a daily basis. As part of my routine well child check up evaluation, I always ask about dental care and examine their teeth. Most kids have Dr. Dinosaur but only about a quarter see a dentist for routine care. The rest cannot find a dentist that accepts Medicaid. Just yesterday, I did pre-operative evaluations for three children under the age of nine. These patients are preparing for significant dental surgery/procedures, including extractions, crowns, and fillings done under anesthesia due to the extent of their dental disease. Many of these children did not have any routine dental care until they had such severe dental disease that a dentist specializing in surgery agreed to see them.*

- Vermont General Practitioner

# Too many Vermonters go without needed dental care

- According to the 2009 BISHCA Household Health Insurance Survey:
  - 62,000 Vermonters did not get needed dental care because they could not afford it.
  - Over 10,000 seniors with Medicare or Medicare/Medicaid needed dental care but could not afford it.

# Story from the field

*I have many patients younger than 50 without any teeth who cannot afford dentures. Those that do have dentures- are often ill fitted. On an average day of 25- 30 patients- ranging in age from infant to 90+ years old I will see at least 5 patients who have dental disease that is not being managed by a dentist.*

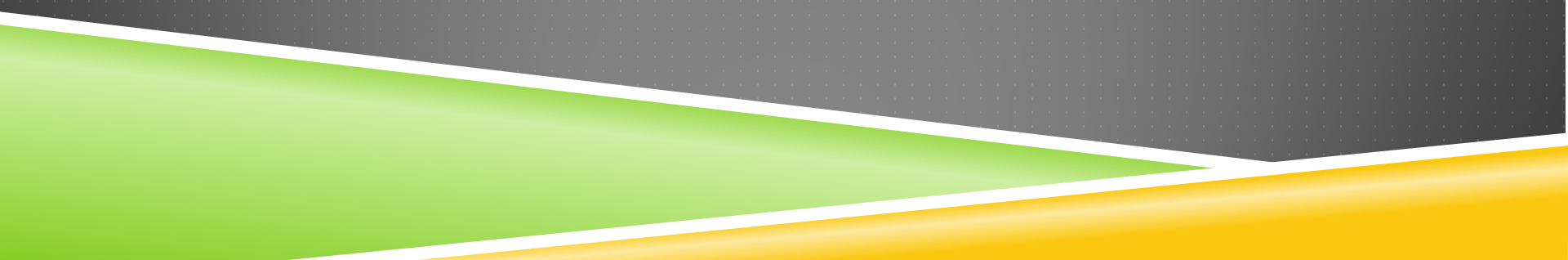
- Vermont General Practitioner

# Vermont Oral Health Care for All Coalition

The Coalition's mission is to:

- ❑ Build a statewide consumer voice for oral health care
  - More than 40 organizations representing consumers
  - Over 200 stories collected from Vermonters
- ❑ Raise public awareness of the need for greater access to affordable dental care
  - Regional outreach teams across Vermont
  - Statewide media campaign
- ❑ Focus on action for change

# Coalition Agenda

- ❑ Dental coverage included in VT's universal health plan
  - ❑ Expansion of Tooth Tutor Program
  - ❑ Full Medicaid Dental Coverage for Pregnant Women and Nursing mothers
  - ❑ Increase or add dental coverage in VT health insurance plans
  - ❑ New dental practitioner to the dental team
- 

# A new workforce model

- ❑ The Registered Dental Practitioner
  - H.398: Outline for a new model
  - Recent developments
- ❑ Scope of Practice/Supervision
  - Prevention and basic restorative care
  - General Supervision
- ❑ Impact on Access
  - Bringing care to people where they are
  - Building the capacity of current & future systems & infrastructure
- ❑ Sustainability & Quality
  - Provider reimbursement
  - Training and supervision

*A Statewide effort giving Vermonters a  
voice for better access to affordable oral  
health care*