

Follow Up: Delaware Oral Health 2014 Summit

I want to thank everyone for taking time out of your busy schedules to participate in the Delaware Oral Health 2014 Summit that introduced the next phase of this process: the Delaware Oral Health 2020 Initiative.

Whether you were able to attend or not, there are many opportunities to get involved:

- **Join the Delaware Oral Health Coalition (DOHC):** Membership is open for all organizations and individuals that are interested in promoting oral health. [Join today!](#) Workgroups will be convened over the next few months to develop and implement strategies and activities for the Oral Health Plan.
- **Plan to attend the annual DOHC membership meeting** on September 12, 2014 in Dover.
- **Work within your organization to adopt and/or support any of the Oral Health Plan objectives and strategies.** You can contact the Bureau of Oral Health and Dental Services for assistance.
- **Become part of the oral health network** by promoting oral health among your friends and within your community.

Collectively we can achieve *optimal oral health throughout the lifespan in Delaware!* It's an ambitious goal, but one which we can make real progress towards by working together to create a movement for advancing oral health.

Many important efforts are already underway and there is still much to do -- starting with the top oral health priorities you helped identify at the June 6th Summit. They include:

- **Access to Care:** Increased interdisciplinary collaboration that establishes a social norm for oral health equity, removes barriers to care (financial, educational, geographic, transportation) and creates a demand for dental care beginning at age one throughout life.
- **Community Engagement:** Leverage untapped school, early childhood, faith-based and other community resources around clear, consistent and accessible prevention-based messages. Develop a non-segmented, mobilized network of trusted oral health advocates that ask, "What about dental?" in every setting.
- **Funding for Initiatives:** Expand and identify new financing opportunities through increased local and national public-private partnerships.
- **Policy:** Develop policies that will increase access to care for the traditionally underserved and address the underutilization of existing dental and medical resources that are accessible right now. Potential policies include Medicaid (reimbursements for adult dental care), emphasis on maximizing the use of dental hygienists and the entire dental team, school readiness, etc.

The complete Delaware Oral Health 2014 [Summit report](#) and [State Oral Health Plan goals and objectives](#) are now available. All Summit presentations and related materials will soon be available on the [Bureau of Oral Health and Dental Services website](#).

Additionally, the Bureau has expanded the resources that are available to help your organization prevent dental disease.

Order yours today and help spread the word!

- **No cost, bilingual education materials:** Now reaching populations across the lifespan, these cards provide simple and empowering messages about [prenatal, infant, child, teen, adult and senior](#) oral health.
 - Double-sided in English and Spanish, they can be ordered in any quantity and are free for all outreach purposes.
 - Order by phone or email: (302) 744-4554 / dhss_dph_dental@state.de.us
 - All orders include a sample [Delaware Dental Resource Guide](#). Organized by geographic area with an easy-to-use referral list, this guide makes it easy to connect dentists with those in need of dental care.

We really appreciate your contributions and support and look forward to your continued participation in the Delaware Oral Health 2020 Initiative. Thank you!