



NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE QUALITY INSTITUTE

A BI-WEEKLY LOOK AT THE BUSINESS & POLITICS OF HEALTH CARE IN NEW JERSEY



PRESIDENT & CEO, LINDA SCHWIMMER

It's Time to Elevate Oral Health in New Jersey and Nationally

Oral health is a window into overall health. Poor oral health is associated with higher rates of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and pulmonary infections. Oral health also is linked to pregnancy complications such as low-birth weight and premature birth. Moreover, studies have shown that regular dental treatments for those with chronic conditions such as diabetes lowers overall health care spending. Regular cleanings and preventive dental care also have the potential to lower total [costs of care](#).

The sooner children start getting routine dental [screenings](#) and [checkups](#), the healthier their mouths will stay throughout their lives. Cavities and tooth decay can lead to pain and trouble concentrating for young students. And there is the intrinsic lifelong value of a healthy smile.

New Jersey's Medicaid program has one of the nation's longest running and most comprehensive dental benefit programs. This commitment to oral health provides a strong foundation from which we can strive for better results. This commitment is especially important because poor oral health is directly linked to income and other social determinants of health. Beyond dental care, access to healthy foods, avoidance of sugary snacks and drinks, reduction of stress, and on-going education about dental hygiene all contribute to improved oral and overall health. The data surrounding New Jersey's dental benefit shows that we have more work ahead to improve access to care...



TAKE FIVE INTERVIEW

Interviews with members, influencers, and noteworthy people

Nicole McGrath-Barnes, DDS, FACD, is Founder and CEO of the [KinderSmile Foundation](#), a member of the Quality Institute’s Consumer Council. Dr. McGrath-Barnes serves on the Advisory Council of the Quality Institute’s [Medicaid Policy Center](#).

Interview Sneak Peek: *What can you tell us about KinderSmile’s more comprehensive approach to dental services?*

Part of that comprehensive approach is our education, intervention, and prevention. Getting a tooth extraction or filling or anything like that is the icing on the cake. We also must educate and intervene. We’re talking about the number one preventable disease here. We partner with Head Start programs, WIC programs...perinatal programs to educate people about oral disease and link them to a dental home for continuity of care.

[Read Full Interview](#)

NEW QI WEBINAR

HOW TO REENGAGE AND CARE FOR PATIENTS AS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CONTINUES

Thursday, September 23rd, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

 NEW JERSEY HEALTH CARE
QUALITY INSTITUTE



Four in 10 adults reported avoiding medical care due to concerns related to COVID-19. Delayed care can result in increased morbidity and mortality associated with both chronic and acute health conditions.

Quality Institute members and invited guests, join us on Thursday, September 23,

Past Issues
for our newest webinar. Our multi-stakeholder panel will share their strategies to engage their patients or members to provide safe, high quality care during the pandemic.

[Register Now](#)

This event is open to members and invited guests.

NEW MEMBER



Humana

Humana is committed to helping our millions of medical and specialty members achieve their best health. Their successful history in care delivery and health plan administration is helping them create a new kind of integrated care with the power to improve health and well-being and lower costs. Their efforts are leading to a better quality of life for people with Medicare, families, individuals, military service personnel, and communities at large.

WE'RE HIRING

Community Health & Policy Associate, Quality Institute

Know someone that would make a great Community Health & Policy Associate? Please share this job description.

[Apply Now](#)



For information on how to join, please contact Virginia Tesser at vtesser@njhcqi.org.

To learn more about our current initiatives, please visit our website at www.njhcqi.org.

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