

OPEN Policy & Advocacy Toolkit

Policy & Oral Health: Improving systems to ensure oral health for all:

<https://communities.openoralhealth.org/viewdocument/open-goals-policy-why-statements>

Members of OPEN share a vision of oral health for all. To accomplish this mission, the network developed six major goals to achieve by 2020 that range from issues of coverage, to perception, to improving oral health outcomes. As the Network has grown and matured, members have come to realize that to achieve these goals, change must also happen in the larger systems - namely, government, policy, and the dental care delivery system - that influence oral health. Learn why OPEN is advocating for these goals, and related policies and initiatives here.

The Congressional Engagement Matrix:

<https://communities.openoralhealth.org/viewdocument/weve-got-the-power-using-the-cong>

Information on every Member of Congress, Senate and House staff, and the Committees/Subcommittees with jurisdiction over various aspects of oral health. It also identifies the key committee/subcommittee members whom we need to educate about OPEN Destinations and Targets. Download the Matrix, the User Guide, and learn from Pat Finnerty on how to use the Congressional Engagement Matrix.

Policy/Advocacy Take 20 Series:

[WATCH](#): The Role of the Federal Agencies and Regional Offices in Promoting Oral Health

[WATCH](#): Lobbying vs Advocacy: Community & National Perspectives

[WATCH](#): Medicare Basics & Adding a Dental Benefit Parts 1 & 2

[WATCH](#): 2020 Surgeon General Report on Oral Health and OPEN Recommendations

[WATCH](#): 2020 Post-Election Update on State Legislators

2021 Virtual Hill Day

Everyone in America should have the opportunity to live a healthy life, and oral health is a necessary part of that opportunity. Oral health is key to overall health and wellness, including combatting COVID-19 and promoting employment, economic stability, and social connectedness. Currently, millions of people face barriers to oral health such as cost of care or lack of oral health coverage. By eliminating these barriers we will improve oral and overall health. We will also avoid unnecessary costs that result when oral health problems go untreated. Families need policy transformation to ensure that everyone can access adequate oral health coverage and care. The following socially and fiscally responsible actions are meaningful steps Congress should take to achieve that goal:

- Action 1: Congress should add oral health coverage to Medicare Part B.
- Action 2: Congress should ensure oral health coverage for families that rely on Medicaid for health insurance.
- Action 3: Congress should appropriate an additional \$15 million to the CDC Division of Oral Health to support oral health programs in every state.

2020 Virtual Day of Action

OPEN's 2020 Day of Action September 2nd where we raised the profile of oral health in the context of the 2020 election, and help candidates understand the need to address oral health in their commitments to health care. We took a deep dive into then current bills that would add an oral health benefit to Medicare:

- **H.R.576** Seniors Have Eyes, Ears, and Teeth Act (Rep. Roybal-Allard)

- **H.R.1393** Dental, vision, and hearing care under the Medicare program (Rep. Doggett)
- **S. 22** Medicare Dental Benefit Act of 2019 (Sen. Cardin)
 - **H.R. 2951** Medicare Dental Benefit Act of 2019 (Rep. Barragan)
- **S.1423** Medicare and Medicaid Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act of 2019 (Sen. Casey)
- **H.R. 4650** Medicare Dental Act of 2019 (Rep. Kelly)—this is the bill that was marked up by Ways & Means as part of the H.R. 3 package

Learn how to email candidates, ways to engage on social media, how to share a video story, and steps for hosting a virtual gathering. This recording also covers information on safe voting, and campaign engagement for 501c(3) organizations.

2019 Hill Day in Washington, DC

OPEN's 2019 National Meeting mobilized 300+ Network Members to Washington, DC for our first Capitol Hill Day on Thursday, October 24th where we advocated for three policy asks:

- *Policy Ask # 1: Medicare Coverage.* Congress should add oral health coverage under Medicare Part B.
- *Policy Ask # 2: Pregnant Women's Medicaid Coverage.* Congress should address the link between oral health and maternal health by making pregnant women's oral health coverage a mandatory service in Medicaid.
- *Policy Ask # 3: CDC Oral Health Funding for States.* Congress should appropriate an additional \$17.5 million, for a total of \$36.5 million, to fully fund the CDC Division of Oral Health to support an oral health program in every state.

Learn from the 2019 OPEN Hill Day Planning Committee on why a Hill Day is important, details about strategic plans for the Network, and the 'policy asks' we shared with legislators. Also check out how to Maximize Your Visit to learn helpful tips, hear a list of do's and don't's and more to make your meeting with legislators as successful as possible

Capacity Building & Network Technical Assistance

Advocacy Guide: How to Set up a Meeting with Your Member of Congress

- <http://familiesusa.org/product/how-set-meeting-your-member-congress>
- Families USA

Story Bank Toolkit

- <https://familiesusa.org/story-bank-toolkit>
- Families USA

Our Voices Have Power: A Storybanking Guide

- <https://www.communitycatalyst.org/resources/tools/storybanking-toolkit>
- Community Catalyst

It's All about the Base: A Guide to Building a Grassroots Organizing Program

- <https://www.communitycatalyst.org/resources/tools/grassroots>
- Community Catalyst

Webinar: Grassroots Organizing for Oral Health Issues

- <https://vimeo.com/265403654>
- Community Catalyst

State Legislators: Who They Are and How to Work with Them - A Guide for Oral Health Professionals

- <http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/a-guide-for-oral-health-professionals.aspx>
- National Conference of State Legislatures

Oral Health Overview for Legislators

- <http://www.ncsl.org/documents/health/OralHTK13.pdf>
- National Conference of State Legislatures

Blog: Policy Checkup: State Oral Health Caucus

- <http://www.ncsl.org/blog/2018/03/28/policy-checkup-state-oral-health-caucus.aspx>
- National Conference of State Legislatures

Oral Health: State Policy Options

- <http://www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/Documents/Health/OralHealth2015.pdf>
- National Conference of State Legislatures

Network Partner Resources

Elections & Civic Engagement

- Webinar: Oral Health Coalitions Engaged in Civic Action: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/kWfYa3FPgLM?rel=0>
- Webinar: Oral Health Community Engaged in Civic Action: <https://vimeo.com/276109129>

Medically Necessary Care in Medicare

- Webinar: Medically Necessary Dental Care in Medicare: <https://goo.gl/PV1aTY>
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- Blog: Congress Shows Support for Medically Necessary Dental Care: <https://goo.gl/7ZKSWo>

Federal Waivers

- Blog: Troubling trends for oral health in Medicaid waivers March 2018: <https://www.cdhp.org/blog/503-troubling-trends-for-oral-health-in-medicaid-waivers>
- Waiver Strategy Center: <https://familiesusa.org/state-waiver-resource-and-tracking-center>
- 1115 Waiver Elements Affecting Oral Health: <https://familiesusa.org/1115-waiver-elements-affecting-oral-health>
- Work Requirements: A One-Way Ticket to the Coverage Gap: https://www.communitycatalyst.org/resources/publications/document/2018/Community-Catalyst_Work-Requirements-and-Medicaid-Eligibility-in-Non-Expansion-States-Analysis.pdf
- Oral Health Innovation: Opportunity and Risk, Medicaid Waivers and the Keys to Good Oral Health: https://www.communitycatalyst.org/resources/publications/document/OH-innovation-and-1115-waivers_FINAL.pdf
 - Webinar: Opportunity and Risk, Medicaid Waivers and the Keys to Good Oral Health: <https://vimeo.com/263513706>

Oral Health & Public Charge

- Take 20 With the Network: Public Charge 101: The potential impact on the oral health and well-being of children and their families
- Department of Homeland Security announced the release of the "Public Charge" proposed rule: <http://www.oralhealth.network/p/fo/st/thread=3604>
- Proposed Changes to Public Charge: Analysis and FAQs: <https://goo.gl/ahK2k1>
- Protecting Immigrant Families Campaign: <https://protectingimmigrantfamilies.org/>
- Policy-Community Partnerships in Oral Health Advocacy: And Example in Celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month: <https://goo.gl/oqWbTN>

Advocacy Resources Recommended by OPEN Members

Kaiser Family Foundation

Website: <https://www.kff.org/>

This site contains information on disparities policy, Medicaid, Medicare, health costs, health reform, uninsured, and private insurance. This website has some great demographic information as well as data

POLITICO Pulse

Website: <http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/politico-pulse>

Summary: This news website examines the latest in health care policy every weekday morning.

Families USA: Health Policy & Advocacy Toolkit

Website: <http://familiesusa.org/advocacy-toolkit>

Summary: Families USA is a national healthcare consumer advocacy organization dedicated to achieving high quality, affordable health care and improved health for all. This link has Families USA's Advocacy toolkit, which provides guidance and tangible steps on how to become a better advocate. It will also take you to Families USA's website, where you can find policy and advocacy resources on a range of oral health and broader healthcare topics.

Community Catalyst

Website: <http://www.CommunityCatalyst.org>

Summary: Community Catalyst's first priority is quality affordable health care for all. Since 1998, we have provided leadership and support to state and local consumer organizations, policymakers, and foundations working to change the health care system so it serves everyone - especially vulnerable members of society.

CDHP: Why Dental Coverage Matters: A Tool-Kit

Website: <https://www.cdhp.org/resources/333-why-dental-coverage-matters-a-tool-kit>

Summary: A Tool-Kit for Health and Children's Advocates: Basic resources to support your advocacy; resources for CHIP advocacy, for Medicaid advocacy, web banners & interactive maps, letters to Congress from Children's and Oral Health Coalitions, webinars, fact sheets, and more.

Medicaid | Medicare | CHIP Services Dental Association

Website: <http://www.medicaidental.org>

Summary: "MSDA Vision: Optimal oral health for all Medicaid, Medicare and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) beneficiaries. MSDA Mission: To improve Medicaid, Medicare, and CHIP oral health programs by collaborating with key stakeholders, sharing resources and disseminating innovative strategies."

Advocating for Oral Health Policy: An Introduction

Website: https://www.oralhealthmissouri.org/images/857/document/advocating-for-oral-health-policy-an-introduction-slides-june-2016_426.pdf

Summary: Missouri Oral Health Coalition put this presentation together as a beginning level resource on advocating for oral health issues.

Take Action: Public Policy Advocacy Guide

Website: <https://www.uccresources.com/products/take-action-public-policy-advocacy-guide-pdf-download>

Summary: "This is your one-stop tool for engaging in faith-based advocacy! This resource, created by the United Church of Christ's Justice & Witness Ministries and Wider Church Ministries, provides tips, tools, and theological insights for understanding our call to work for justice through public policy advocacy. Tips for engaging in organizing and getting your message heard by decision makers are included."

Public Health Policy Advocacy Guide Book And Tool Kit

Website:

<http://phnurse.org/resources/Documents/APHN%20Public%20Health%20Policy%20Advocacy%20Guide%20Book%20and%20Tool%20Kit%202016.pdf>

Summary: A guide book for public health nurses who are providing information and advice to policymakers about the health, attitudes and behaviors of populations to be involved in the policy formation process.

Public Policy Advocacy Guide

Website: <http://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/Briefing-Book-2015.pdf>

Summary: "The Public Policy Advocacy Guide is a resource developed by staff in Justice and Witness Ministries and distributed at various UCC settings of the church, i.e. the local church, association, conference meetings and General Synod. Likewise, it is circulated at some ecumenical gatherings such as Ecumenical Advocacy Days, Samuel Dewitt Proctor Conference."

A workbook for policy advocacy strategy development

Website: <http://raylebov.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/RLB-PATHworkbook.pdf>

Summary: "Policy advocacy is essential to achieve public health goals by ensuring that the necessary resources, policies, and political will are available to support, scale up, and sustain global health programs. Because there are so many methods of influencing policy—and usually limited resources to pursue them—PATH has designed a 10-part framework that supports individuals and organizations to develop a high-impact, outcome-oriented policy advocacy strategy."

Communicating for Policy Change

Website: http://www.gih.org/files/usrdoc/Communicating_for_Policy_Change_FINAL.pdf

Summary: Grantmakers In Health (GIH) convened nearly 90 grantmakers and communications experts to discuss how health grantmakers can make effective use of communications strategies in their efforts to change public policy. The program was designed to address funders' desire to learn more about communications theories and techniques as well as their application to public policy work. Specific topics such as messaging, evaluation, capacity building for grantees, and integrating programs and communications are also discussed.

Budget Advocacy webpage from the International Budget Partnership

Website: <http://www.internationalbudget.org/budget-advocacy/>

Summary: "In each of these sections we offer not only ideas about how to be an effective budget advocate but also real examples of budget advocacy in action and what we can learn from those stories. The IBP has designed these pages to offer resources for a wide variety of users, from newcomers to budget work to those who already work in the field and are interested in getting a view of the cutting edge of how budget work is being carried out around the world. You will find links to that more advanced information in each of the pages in this section of the website."

Harvard Law School Webpage on Administrative Advocacy

Website: <http://hls.harvard.edu/dept/opia/what-is-public-interest-law/public-interest-work-types/administrative-advocacy/>

Summary: "Administrative advocacy encompasses a variety of positions concerned with influencing the formation, application, or change of rules that government agencies put in place to implement statutory law. Administrative lawyers might serve as in-house counsel to government agencies, as litigators in the federal courts or special hearings, as administrative law judges, or in non-governmental posts with advocacy organizations. Practitioners in this field work to create and enforce regulations and to shape the functions of government agencies and programs that affect many citizens' lives."

Executive & Administrative Advocacy webpage from the Alliance for Justice

Website: <https://bolderadvocacy.org/navigate-the-rules/executive-administrative-advocacy>

Summary: Influencing officials in the executive branch of federal, state or local government is a powerful tool. Executive or Administrative Advocacy can take several forms, including commenting on regulations; requesting enforcement of existing laws; advocating for or against executive orders; and trying to influence administrative decisions on policy and program implementation.

Paper on Administrative Advocacy: Influencing Rules, Regulations, and Executive Orders

Website: https://bolderadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Administrative_Advocacy.pdf

Summary: Short paper on: "Not all efforts to influence public policy meet the definition of lobbying, so 501(c)(3) organizations can play a significant advocacy role while still staying within their annual lobbying limits.

Grassroots Advocacy

Website: <http://www.asha.org/advocacy/grassroots/>

Summary: Information and Resources on Grassroots Advocacy

Grassroots Advocacy Training Exchange (GATE)

Website: <http://www.grassroots-advocacy.com/>

Summary: "Grassroots Advocacy Training Exchange (GATE), an interactive resource designed to help you and your organization define or change the state and federal policies that affect your life and livelihood. The key to reaching your objectives under a democratic government has always been participation, a technique that is both time-honored and very much cutting edge, in light of recent lobbying and campaign finance reforms. So begin by participating in the GATE to learn the skills you need and find the resources necessary to gain your representatives' attention."

Public Policy Advocacy: A Grassroots Guide

Website: <http://www.spannj.org/publications/SPAN%20Grassroots%20Advocacy%20Guide.pdf>

Summary: Guide to help you use the skills you already have to change government actions that affect your life. There are many things that may stand in your way. There are people and organizations that

oppose justice. There are elected officials who listen to money instead of their constituents. But this guide, and the companion Guide to Media Advocacy, can help.”

American Medical Association Grassroots Advocacy Page

Website: <https://www.ama-assn.org/about/ama-grassroots-advocacy>

Summary: This website has resources for advocacy for parents and physicians, as well as the public.

American Academy of Pediatrics

Website: <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Oral-Health/Pages/Oral-Health.aspx>

Summary: The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Children's Oral Health effort offers advocacy resources to promote oral care in primary pediatric care professional practices and, to educate policy makers and payers about the importance of payment for pediatric oral health care and, and to advocate for the community water fluoridation.

American Academy of Pediatrics Advocacy & Policy Webpages

Website: <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/Pages/Advocacy-and-Policy.aspx>

Summary: “The Academy advocates for the health of all children, and works with government, communities and other national organizations to shape many child health and safety issues.”

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Website:

<http://www.scdhec.gov/Health/FHPF/DiseaseResourcesforHealthcareProviders/OralHealth/ResourcesforHealthcareProfessionals/>

Summary: This site provides resources that advocates need to make the case for improvements.

Planning a PhotoVoice Project Worksheet - Youth Empowered Solutions 2016

Website: http://thelatruster.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/YES_Planning-a-Photovoice-Project-Worksheet.pdf

Summary: “This worksheet is to help groups build strategies and messages that can be turned into PhotoVoice pictures that tell the story of a community issue. Those pictures can then be used to create community change.”

Paving the Way to Access Toolkit

Website: <http://www.youthempoweredolutions.org/new-yes-toolkit-paving-the-way-to-access/>

Summary: “YES has released this youth empowerment toolkit focused on addressing health care disparities in the local community. The Paving the Way to Access Toolkit was designed by YES! youth and adult staff and is based off of their grassroots work to justify the need for a school-based health center (SBHC) in their community. The resources in this toolkit help to build a compelling case for SBHCs and can be used for other advocacy efforts as well.”

Healthy Vending Toolkit

Website: http://thelatruster.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/YES_Healthy_Vending_Toolkit_9-25-14.pdf

Summary: “By working with vending companies and changing vending locations, the environments can be supportive to make healthier foods and beverages more readily available. Making the healthy choice the easy and most accessible choice helps to reverse the cultural norm. These changes will help ensure

that today's generation of youth will not be the first generation to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents."

Healthy Corner Store Toolkit

Website: <http://cookcountypublichealth.org/files/pdf/healthy-hotspot/corner-stores/corner-store-toolkit-body-6F.pdf>

Summary: "In this guide, lessons learned from the Healthy Corner Store project of the Healthy HotSpot initiative in suburban Cook County, IL are shared. It is designed for community organizations interested in identifying, recruiting, and working with local retailers to create a healthy corner store environment.

Advocacy Action Guide: A Tool Kit for Strategic Policy Advocacy Campaigns

Website: http://global.tobaccofreekids.org/files/pdfs/en/BAI_Advocacy_Toolkit.pdf

Summary: "Moving a public health issue onto the policy agenda and through the policy making process requires a well-planned strategic advocacy campaign. The components of an advocacy campaign are the same regardless of the advocacy goals. This guide is designed to help civil society organizations plan and conduct effective advocacy campaigns that will result in the adoption and implementation of strong effective public health policies."