

## DENTAL | Director hopes to offer Beach clinics quarterly

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survey commissioned by Sentara Healthcare five years ago. Community health professionals tagged dental care as one of the top medical services the uninsured had trouble finding, even higher than prescriptions and mental health care.

They often turn to emergency rooms instead. During a one-year period starting in 2003, there were 1,577 cases of uninsured people showing up in Sentara hospital emergency rooms with problems that would have been better treated in a dental office.

"All they can do is give them pain medication or an antibiotic and tell them to see a dentist," said Candice Driskell, executive director of Access Partnership, a coalition of health and community groups working to increase access to health care.

There are a number of places locally with free or reduced dental care, and various organizations are working together to bolster those programs and

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start new ones.

Susan Hellstrom, executive director of the Beach Health Clinic, started laying the groundwork last summer for the dental clinic there, which she hopes can be conducted quarterly.

Hellstrom lined up mobile dental vans from the Navy. She used grant money from the Virginia Beach Foundation, Wal-Mart and the Virginia Association of Free Clinics to buy equipment and supplies. Local dentists volunteered their time, and Old Dominion University's dental hygiene department pitched in to help as well.

Jim Milonas and David Crouse, two Virginia Beach dentists who volunteered at the

Beach clinic, said people often think of dental care as less critical than other medical services, but an increasing amount of evidence is showing links to general health.

For instance, studies have shown that gum disease can trigger or worsen conditions like heart disease, diabetes and stroke, and is also linked to higher rates of premature birth.

At the Beach clinic, dentists and dental hygienists worked together to take X-rays, make evaluations and pull 52 teeth during the clinic on May 15 and 16. Some people had to be referred to other resources, since only extractions and evaluations could be done.

Driskell said people often have to cobble together services, since clinics offer varying levels of care and different eligibility standards. She recently had a call from a radiation oncologist about a patient who couldn't start treatment until some dental issues were resolved.

Stephanie Morrison had

moved to Virginia Beach from Arizona in February, hoping the job market would be better here. She hadn't yet landed a job when she went to see a doctor about a sore throat.

"My sore throat was, in fact, cancer," said Morrison, 52.

But before she could start chemotherapy and radiation therapy for throat cancer, she needed to have some decaying teeth pulled. Driskell was able to hook her up with a volunteer dentist, and Morrison later had seven teeth pulled at Healthy Smiles Dental Center in Portsmouth.

She'll start cancer treatment this week.

"My mouth has a clean bill of health," Morrison said.

Driskell said much of the dental work for the uninsured and underinsured would not be possible if it weren't for health care providers throughout the community pulling together: "Collaboration is key."

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PRESTON GANNAWAY PHOTOS | THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT



**ABOVE:** Marchia Dolbow holds her jaw after volunteer dentist David Crouse extracted a tooth.

**LEFT:** Jim Milonas, another volunteer, examines Joyce Burham.

### South Hampton Roads dental clinics

Here's a list of some other dental resources in the region compiled by Access Partnership:

**AMERICAN RED CROSS DENTAL CLINIC** 606 W. 29th St., Norfolk, (757) 446-7757

**Services** Cleanings, fillings and extractions

**Eligibility** Norfolk residents 18 years and older who have no dental insurance or current relationship with a dentist and are at or below 125 percent of federal poverty level

**Fees** \$15 per visit

**CHESAPEAKE CARE FREE CLINIC** 2145 S. Military Hwy., Chesapeake, (757) 545-5700

**Services** Dental exams, X-rays, cleanings, fillings and extractions

**Eligibility** Uninsured residents of Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach at or below 200 percent of federal poverty level. Proof of income and residency required.

**Fees** Free for financially eligible people

**NORFOLK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH** 207 E. Little Creek Road, Norfolk, (757) 531-2133

**Services** Oral exams and treatment plan, medical history, restorative dentistry, dental sealants, endodontics, space maintenance, scaling, prophylaxis and oral hygiene instructions, and fluoride treatment.

**Eligibility** Low-income preschool and school-age children who live in Norfolk. Proof of income and residency required.

**Fees** Charges for some services depending on ability to pay; some services are free. Medicaid and FAMIS are accepted for children up to 18.

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY DENTAL HYGIENE CARE FACILITY** ODU Health Sciences Building, 1st Floor, 46th Street and Hampton Boulevard, Norfolk, (757) 683-4308

**Services** Oral cancer screening, dental and periodontal charting, oral prophylaxis, therapeutic scaling, stain removal, soft tissue management, fluoride therapy, dental sealants, denture cleaning, custom athletic mouthguard, custom fluoride tray, radiographic services

**Eligibility** No financial requirements. Insurance is not accepted.

**Fees** Minimal fees are charged to cover the expense of supplies used during care. Fees must be paid at the first appointment.

**PENINSULA INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH** Main Street Community Dental Center, 157 N. Main St., Suite A, Suffolk, (757) 942-1280

**Services** Adult and pediatric dental exams, cleanings, fillings, extractions, root canals, sealants, fluoride and other treatments

**Eligibility** Valid identification and proof of income required

**Fees** Medicaid, Medicaid HMOs, FAMIS "Smiles for Children" and sliding scale fees according to income

**PORTSMOUTH COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER** Healthy Smiles Dental Center, 644-A Lincoln St., Portsmouth, (757) 399-4588

**Services** Dental exams, cleanings, fluoride treatments, dental sealant, fillings, extractions, root canals, partial and full dentures

**Eligibility** Residents of South Hampton Roads. Children enrolled in the school lunch program are automatically eligible for services. Proof of income and residency required.

**Fees** Most insurance plans, including Medicaid, Medicaid HMOs and FAMIS are accepted. Uninsured pay sliding scale fees according to income level.

**VIRGINIA BEACH DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH** 4452 Corporation Lane, Virginia Beach, (757) 518-2694

**Services** Exams, X-rays, cleaning, sealants, restorations and selective root canals

**Eligibility** Virginia Beach children ages 3 to 18 and those in the free school lunch programs. Income information and city residency required.

**Fees** Sliding-scale fees based on income; certain services are free. Medicaid and FAMIS accepted.

**KOOL SMILES** 4239 Holland Road, Virginia Beach; 5900 E. Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach; 2165 Cunningham Road, Hampton; 14346 Warwick Blvd., Newport News; 4072 Victory Blvd., Portsmouth; 2338 E. Little Creek Road, Norfolk; (757) 588-5665

**Services** Preventive care, diagnostic imaging, restorative care

**Eligibility** Underserved children and young adults ages 1 to 21 who are covered by Medicaid, State Children's Health Insurance Programs - Smiles for Children or Tricare health insurance

**Fees** Medicaid, Medicaid HMOs, FAMIS Smiles for Children, Tricare and private pay

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If you would like to have your birthday boy or girl recognized, e-mail us at least three weeks in advance at [birthdays@pilotonline.com](mailto:birthdays@pilotonline.com) or mail to The Virginian-Pilot, 150 W. Brambleton Ave., Norfolk, VA 23510, attn: Jasmine Washington, News Department.

Include the person's full name, city of residence and birthday age and a clear photo. E-mailed photos should be "jpg" files no larger than 5 inches at 200 dpi resolution. We cannot promise to return pictures.

We will publish up to two birthdays per date (Sunday birthdays will run on Saturdays), and we will select them on a first-come, first-served basis.

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