



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

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TO: Information Collection Clearance Officer
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Health Resources and Services Administration

FROM: Teri Morgan
Executive Director
Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

RE: Comment on Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant to States
Program: Guidance and Forms for the Title V Application/Annual Report, OMB
No. 0915-0172 - Revision

I am writing on behalf of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (the Board) to provide comments on the *Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant to States Program: Guidance and Forms for the Title V Application/Annual Report, OMB No. 0915-0172 - Revision*. We urge HRSA to retain the oral health national performance measure rather than transitioning it to a state performance measure.

Oral health is a vital part of overall health and wellbeing. Gum disease is associated with other health conditions including diabetes, heart disease, pregnancy outcomes, and dementia. Poor oral health can impact someone's ability to eat and sleep. It can also impact someone's ability to get a job and their social status. These challenges ultimately result in increased medical expenses, unemployment, and sick days from school or work.

Oral health remains a national problem today. Cavities are the most common chronic childhood disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. One-quarter of children and adolescents did not visit the dentist in the past year, according to the 2021-21 National Survey of Children's Health. Among those who did visit a dentist in the past year, they may not have visited as often as recommended. Two visits per year is the standard recommendation,

according to the American Dental Association. The impact of missed preventive care is magnified even more as children grow older.

Some populations have less access to oral health care, and worse oral health outcomes, than others nationwide. Certain populations, including people with disabilities, may need to visit the dentist more than twice a year according to the American Dental Association. Children and youth with special health care needs were more likely to have had decayed teeth, teeth in fair or poor condition, or a toothache in the past year than other children and youth, according to the 2020-21 National Survey of Children's Health.

Oral health needs to be a designated national priority in order to maximize oral health for everyone. Therefore, we recommend that HRSA retain the following oral health national performance measures:

- Percent of children and adolescents, ages 1 through 17, who had a preventive dental visit in the past year
- Percent of women who had a preventive dental visit during pregnancy

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed change.