



This e-mail is another update from the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) on issues related to health reform. This week Congress will return to session after an August recess where dialogue on health reform took center stage across the country. As part of our effort to keep the dental hygiene community informed on health reform matters that may impact the profession, ADHA is submitting this update.

Certainly health reform has proven to be a highly charged issue with passionate advocates on both sides. This update is not intended to sway recipients in one direction or the other on the issue, but is being offered as a means to update dental hygiene professionals about the role that oral health plays in pending health reform legislation and offer an overview of ADHA's engagement in the process thus far.

Congressional leaders have made it clear that work on health reform will continue once Congress returns to session. Health reform is much more than just one vote for or against health reform legislation. When thinking about health reform, please consider that policymakers must make a series of decisions and votes that shape health reform legislation prior to any final votes on the House and Senate floor. Even those members of Congress who will likely not vote in support of health reform legislation when a final vote is taken, will have to weigh in on various amendments and incarnations of health reform proposals as legislation moves through the legislative process.

ADHA is recognized as a valued stakeholder in oral health and has been approached by policymakers and their staff for input on health reform. Not being a part of the dialogue on health reform is simply not an option for any stakeholder, including ADHA. As the national association that Empowers, Develops, and Supports dental hygiene professionals, ADHA has a responsibility to serve as the voice of the profession on policy matters.

ADHA respects that there are many opinions on health reform within the dental hygiene community. The association has not endorsed a specific health reform plan or legislative vehicle. ADHA's efforts relative to health reform are guided by the association's Statement on Health Reform: http://www.adha.org/downloads/ADHA_Health_Reform_Statement.pdf. The Statement highlights the importance of oral health as an integral component of total health. As an oral health profession you know that an individual cannot have a healthy body without a healthy mouth. As such, ADHA asserts that if/when comprehensive health reform proposals are considered by Congress, oral health should be included.

For additional information on health reform activity to-date and how it impacts dental hygiene, please open the attached document. The document offers an overview of activity in the House and Senate to-date as well as some information about specific provisions in health reform bills that impact oral health. Health reform is a complex issue and it can be challenging to understand the implications of the policies proposed. Please know that ADHA staff is available to answer questions and offer additional information. Contact us via e-mail by replying to this message or sending a separate message to gov.affairs@adha.net or calling ADHA's Governmental Affairs Division at 312.440.8925.

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