

**The Connecticut Oral Health Initiative, Inc.**  
**Three Year Strategic Plan: January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 through December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

This strategic plan is a guiding document designed with input from the COHI Board of Directors. The plan is grounded in emergent strategy to allow for nimbleness and addressing shifts in our opportunities and political context. This plan is to be coupled with annual advocacy agendas and work plans.

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**Mission:** To strengthen and safeguard access to quality, affordable oral health services for all Connecticut residents

**Vision:** All Connecticut residents will have equal opportunity to obtain the services needed to maintain good oral health

COHI builds towards this by:

- Leading and collaborating in statewide oral health advocacy efforts
- Serving as an expert resource on oral health policy
- Analyzing and disseminating oral health policy recommendations
- Communicating the impact of structural and social factors on oral health
- Promoting the necessity of good oral health to overall health and well-being

**Our Core Values:**

A Culture of Collaboration

Dedication to Social Justice, Health Equity, and Diversity & Inclusion

Commitment to Community Engagement

Responsiveness to Connecticut's Oral Health Advocacy Needs

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**Goal 1: Maintain and strengthen COHI's infrastructure and programs in order to achieve COHI's mission and vision, ensure COHI's sustainability, and continue to be the reliable oral health advocacy voice for the state of Connecticut**

**Objective 1.1:** Develop and execute comprehensive annual advocacy agendas and action plans

**Strategy 1.1a:** Host Advocacy Committee meetings to create COHI's annual advocacy agenda, prepare for, strategize during, and reflect after the legislative session, and coordinate with partners as needed for other advocacy initiatives throughout the year

**Strategy 1.1b:** Engage decision-makers on oral health issues by communicating in-person, sharing materials electronically, and organizing and participating in constituent communication campaigns such as calls, emails, and letters to legislators or other decision-makers

**Strategy 1.1c:** Build relationships with legislators to develop oral health champions who will work with COHI to move legislation forward

**Objective 1.2:** Create an organizing infrastructure for COHI to execute advocacy campaigns and effectively impact oral health policy

**Strategy 1.2a:** Expand COHI's Advocacy Committee to include a wide range of stakeholder perspectives, while prioritizing the perspective of low-income people and people of color

**Strategy 1.2b:** Build and maintain partnerships with community-level and state-level advocacy groups and agencies that have identified oral health as a focus

**Strategy 1.2c:** Attend community and grassroots advocacy meetings to listen to community perspectives and concerns regarding oral health and incorporate community perspectives into COHI's agendas and initiatives

**Strategy 1.2d:** Identify or create tools to train and support advocates on how to engage on oral health policy issues, including contacting decision-makers, delivering testimony at public hearings, and participating in oral health advocacy campaigns

**Strategy 1.2e:** Cultivate community leaders through education and advocacy training for the purpose of developing a group of grassroots oral health advocates

**Strategy 1.2f:** Provide opportunities for advocates and community members to participate in oral health advocacy initiatives at the state, local, and federal levels by sending action alerts with clear guidance on how to participate and offering individual assistance

**Objective 1.3:** Build a Board of Directors that reflects the population COHI advocates for and includes people who are committed to COHI's mission, vision, and values; people with non-profit governance experience; and people with fundraising and resource development capacity

**Strategy 1.3:** Network in order to identify and recruit directors from diverse backgrounds with significant non-profit governance experience and the capacity to increase and diversify COHI's funding streams

**Objective 1.4:** Diversify funding streams to ensure COHI's programming and initiatives are financially sustainable

**Strategy 1.4a:** Explore contracting with a development consultant who is well-positioned to build relationships between COHI and potential funders and donors

**Strategy 1.4b:** Identify and secure grants from a variety of funders and revenue from additional programmatic or fundraising initiatives

**Strategy 1.4c:** Deepen relationships with current donors and previous fundraising partners in order to scale up fundraising efforts

**Strategy 1.4d:** Explore opportunities to apply for funding in collaboration with partners

**Goal 2: Increase accessibility, affordability, and utilization of quality oral health services with a focus on reducing race- and ethnicity-based oral health disparities**

**Objective 2.1:** Advocate for administration and legislation that improves and/or protects access to, and affordability and utilization of, quality oral health services

**Strategy 2.1a:** Monitor legislation, regulations, and administrative initiatives that impact oral health

**Strategy 2.1b:** Contact decision-makers and provide them with data and community perspectives on policies that impact oral health

**Strategy 2.1c:** Organize coordinated actions by advocates and allies to support or oppose legislation, regulation, or administrative initiatives related to COHI's areas of focus, using consistent, tailored messages

**Objective 2.2:** Document or otherwise identify race-, ethnicity-, and culturally-based oral health disparities and viable strategies for narrowing or eliminating those disparities

**Strategy 2.2a:** Collect and analyze national, state, and local level data from the State, CDC, scientific literature, and consumer stories that identify race-, ethnicity-, or culturally-based oral health disparities, as well as promising practices and evidence-based strategies for reducing or eliminating those disparities

**Strategy 2.2b:** Create and disseminate fact sheets, informational summaries and messages about race-, ethnicity-, and culturally-based oral health disparities and methods for reducing or eliminating those disparities

**Objective 2.3:** Increase number of schools that provide school-based oral health services and the number of school-based health centers in Connecticut that provide dental services, including preventive and restorative services

**Strategy 2.3:** In partnership with key stakeholders, seek opportunities and resources to establish new school-based oral health service programs and increase the number of school-based health centers that offer dental services, including preventive and restorative services

**Objective 2.4:** Improve access to affordable, quality oral health care for older adults and people with disabilities

**Strategy 2.4:** Participate in federal-level advocacy efforts to include a dental benefit under Part B of Medicare

**Objective 2.5:** Advocate for increased access to quality dental coverage

**Strategy 2.5a:** Work with Connecticut state-level health advocates to include oral health coverage in health reform advocacy efforts

**Strategy 2.5b:** Advocate for the inclusion of dental coverage within general health coverage

**Strategy 2.5c:** Work with stakeholders to explore possible ways to expand access to dental coverage to low-to-middle income people in Connecticut who are not currently eligible for Medicaid

### **Goal 3: Advance integration of dental and medical systems**

**Objective 3.1:** Integrate oral health in state and local level planning, programs, and advocacy efforts

**Strategy 3.1a:** Participate in state-level innovation and local-level innovative efforts seeking to impact the health system, to encourage inclusion of oral health in policy and practice.

**Strategy 3.1b:** Educate decision-makers and partners on the importance of oral health to overall health and the benefits of including oral health in efforts to improve patient health, measure quality, and save costs to the overall health system

**Objective 3.2:** Strengthen the referral process and communication between dental and medical providers

**Strategy 3.2a:** Support the Department of Social Services efforts to advance dental/medical integration in the Medicaid program

**Strategy 3.2b:** Act as a resource and support to community health centers, federally qualified health centers, and private practices seeking to advance medical/dental referral processes, provider-to provider-communication, and integration

**Strategy 3.2c:** Support efforts to streamline or increase communication between dental and medical electronic health records and to include oral health in health information technology

*Approved by the COHI Board of Directors on December 9, 2019*