



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Santa Fe Group Secures Grant from CareQuest Institute to Launch Coalition to Advocate for Oral Health Care Policy Reform

The nonpartisan Coalition for Oral Health Policy (COHP) aims to balance perspectives of providers, health care consumers, and other partners

New York, New York — CareQuest Institute for Oral Health has awarded a grant of \$125,000 to the Santa Fe Group (SFG) to establish a center to identify key issues facing the dental profession, prepare policy statements, and develop advocacy strategies to inform key partners about these important topics. The Coalition for Oral Health Policy (COHP), a nonpartisan group of high-impact individuals and organizations, aims to increase equity and access in oral health care across the United States through policy reform.

In awarding the grant, CareQuest Institute emphasized COHP’s mission to “provide unbiased, community-focused, and evidence-based information regarding policies and funding strategies to improve access to preventive and therapeutic oral health care services for the U.S. population.” The collaborative effort will seek input from all interested parties, including the dental practice community, consumer/patient advocacy groups, dental insurance companies, other healthcare disciplines, and federal and state legislators and policymakers. Discussions concerning the development of COHP began among SFG members in 2021, spurred in part by misinformation surrounding the debate over the potential inclusion of a dental benefit in Medicare, as included in the proposed “Build Back Better” legislation.

According to Dr. Ira Lamster, former dean of the Columbia University College of Dental Medicine and principal investigator of the grant, "There is a genuine need for an unbiased voice to formally address the issues that will determine the future of the dental profession. The Santa Fe Group, a well-recognized neutral convener for issues involving the dental profession, is the ideal organization to assume this responsibility, and we greatly appreciate CareQuest Institute’s support.”

“Only through inclusively designed, nonpartisan, and evidence-based policy reform can we finally achieve equity, affordability, and accessibility, defining a system truly built for all,” said Dr. Zachary Brian, associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Adams School of Dentistry and member of COHP. “The establishment of the Coalition for Oral Health Policy represents a true milestone in the effort to collaboratively reimagine the oral health care system in the United States and ensure that all voices are represented in policy development.”

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*The **Santa Fe Group (SFG)**, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is an action-oriented think tank focused on improving lives through oral health. The interprofessional group includes thought leaders in dentistry, medicine, public health, business, academia, and other fields. The organization celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2023. For more information, please visit santafegroup.org.*

About CareQuest Institute for Oral Health®

CareQuest Institute for Oral Health® is a national nonprofit championing a more equitable future where every person can reach their full potential through excellent health. We do this through our work in philanthropy, analytics and data insights, health transformation, policy and advocacy, and education as well as our leadership in dental benefits and innovation advancements. We collaborate with thought leaders, health care providers, patients, and local, state, and federal stakeholders, to accelerate oral health care transformation and create a system designed for everyone. To learn more, visit carequest.org and follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

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