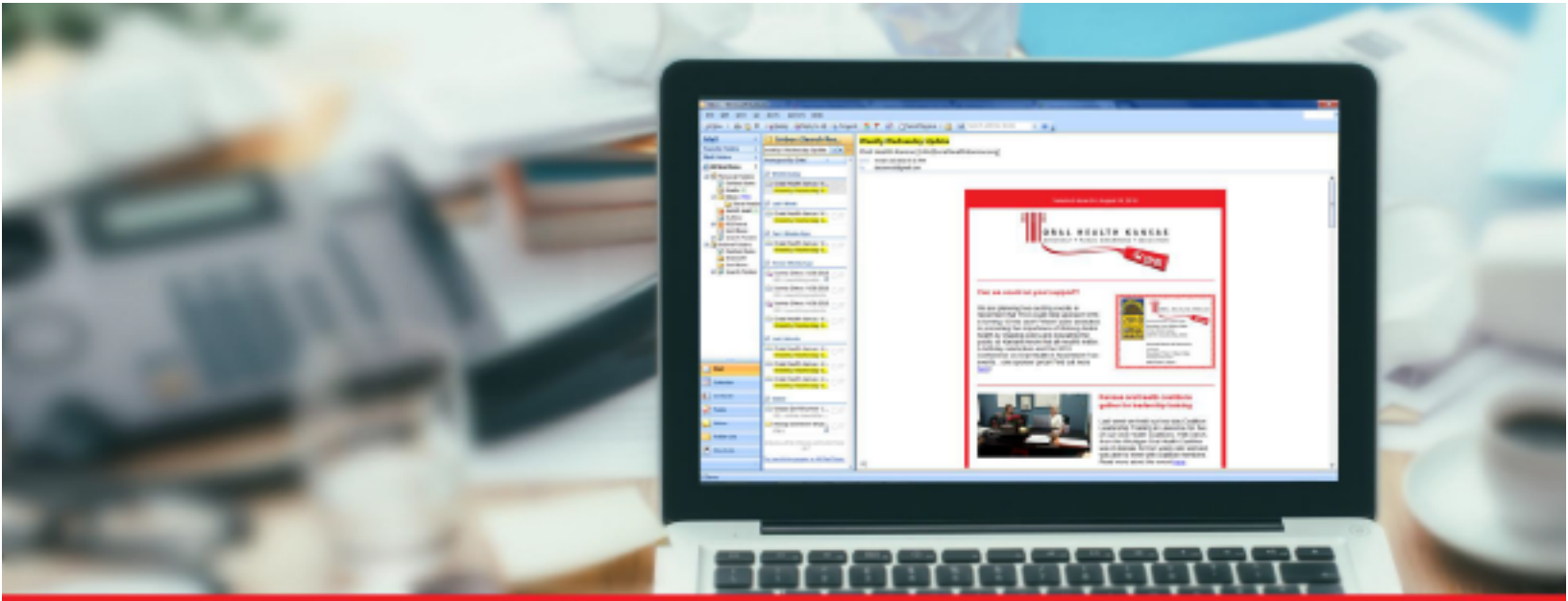




**ORAL HEALTH KANSAS**  
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION



## WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATE

The Weekly Wednesday Update is our newsletter which we email every Wednesday with oral health, health and policy updates from around the state and nationally.

To view past issues [click here](#).

Click here to sign up for our [Weekly Wednesday Update](#).

### January 19, 2022

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## Join Us in Advocating for Increased Medicaid Adult Dental

As the 2022 Legislative Session kicks into high gear, the time is now to show legislators how many organizations support including adult dental services in the Medicaid program. Dental care is an integral part of health care, yet Kansas adults who are enrolled in Medicaid do not have access to a comprehensive set of benefits each

year. We are advocating to change that and include dental coverage for everyone enrolled in Medicaid this year!

If your organization would like to be included in the list of groups that supports Medicaid adult dental services, **please take a couple of minutes and sign on [here](#)**. It isn't hard to do, and it will make a big impact.

### How can you involved?

- Learn more about the importance of adult dental benefits in this [one-page overview](#).
- Share our [one-pager](#) and **action alerts** throughout legislative session with your networks.
- Visit our [Medicaid Adult Dental webpage](#) for additional resources.
- Learn more about the legislative process by visiting our [Advocacy Toolkit webpage](#).
- Contact us at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org) to **share your stories** about the problems people face when they do not have access to a way to pay for the dental care they need.



## Thirsty for Health Team Needs Your Help

The Thirsty for Health team is looking for people in the Topeka area to participate in a focus group on **Thursday, January 27 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm**. We want to learn how parents, teachers, students, and staff in the Topeka school districts feel about water quality and the opportunities students have to stay hydrated throughout the school day.

**Focus Group participants will receive a Walmart gift card** as an appreciation for their time. Because of the current COVID situation, the focus group **meeting will be held via Zoom**. Everyone who registers using the link below will receive a Zoom link.

**Register today!** <https://forms.gle/wcPehR5gPx4fBLAD6>.

Click [here](#) to download the flyer with more information.



## National Oral Health Data Portal

A new National Oral Health Data Portal was launched this month after two years of development. In 2020 the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) secured funding from Delta Dental of Michigan and Glaxo Smith Kline to create the nation's first comprehensive oral

health data portal. John O'Malley of Positive Sum Population Health Informatics has been the lead for the project which launched in January of 2022.

The ASTDD National Oral Health Data Portal brings oral health status, workforce, access, cost, and quality of life information from existing federal, state, and other datasets into one consolidated publicly accessible website. The website has multiple exploratory features such as curated dashboards, custom visualization builders, and downloadable reports to support a wide audience with actionable national, state, and local data. More than 30 separate oral health datasets with state and national scope have been centralized into one website to remove the barriers that epidemiologists, statisticians, care providers, policymakers, public health officials, legislators, researchers, and the public face in getting actionable information to improve our oral health care system.

Elements of the National Oral Health Data Portal include:

1. Dataset Explorer helping users find and interpret the oral health information they need from different public oral health datasets, filterable by topic, geography, and population.
2. National Oral Health Surveillance System Dashboard consolidating 32 of the child and adult indicators to examine state performance across many measures in one view.
3. Public Github Repository hosting raw data files, detailed descriptions of the datasets and the processes to incorporate them into the National Oral Health Data Portal, and code used to generate analyses.

The project collaborated with state/territorial dental directors and program staff to help make the new oral health database as complete and useful to our stakeholders as possible. Join us in learning how to access and use the new National Oral Health Data Portal!

**[Watch the recording](#)** of the introduction of the portal and how to use each section.



## Drop in Children's Preventive Care During Pandemic

*Public Health Reports* published a new study by Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) researchers called [\*Missed and Delayed Preventive Health Care Visits Among US Children Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic\*](#). Using data from the Census Bureau's

Household Pulse Survey collected in April/May 2021, the researchers estimated missed, skipped, or delayed preventive checkups among households with children in the previous 12 months. They found that about 26% of these households had at least one or more children under age 18 who had missed or delayed their preventive visit because of the pandemic. **Find out** the most common reasons for missed/delayed preventive health care visits, variations between states, socioeconomic differences, and more.



## Here's Why Health Equity Needs Teeth

People living in poverty or who are members of communities of color face oral disease at higher rates than other communities. Continued separation of dental care from medical care exacerbates these inequities, creating difficult choices involving pain, payment

options, and inadequate care in emergency departments.

CareQuest Institute reports that a new peer-reviewed article in the *AMA Journal of Ethics* highlights how value-based approaches to health care can improve outcomes for everyone. "Clinicians, payers, communities, policymakers, employers, and other decision-makers must collectively decide to promote justice," write the authors. "An integrated system of medicine and oral health care must bring attention to disparities and build policy, practice, and research solutions to support equity."

The authors share four components of a healthcare system that can reduce inequities for marginalized communities:

- integrates medical and dental services
- focuses on prevention rather than disease management
- reimburses providers based on quality of care and patient outcomes
- invests in training a more diverse health care workforce

You can read the full article [here](#).



## KABC in Search of Executive Director

Kansas Advocates for Better Care (KABC) is seeking a committed, dynamic leader to advance good, safe long-term care for older Kansans and the public programs and policies which are foundational to better elder care.

KABC is a consumer advocacy non-profit organization. Their small staff and volunteer board of directors have an out-sized impact on long-term care quality for individual older adults and for Kansans collectively. KABC is recruiting now for their next strong leader. Visit their website for complete details: <https://www.kabc.org>. Resumes can be emailed to [info@kabc.org](mailto:info@kabc.org).



Join us in a "Welcome Back" to staff member, Sonia Olmos. Sonia was on maternity leave and returned to work this week along with OHK's new oral health advocate, Braxxton. Braxxton turned two months this week, has joined staff meetings and is learning about oral health with a [Potter the Otter](#) hand puppet!



## Sugary Drink Display Sanitation

**Out of an abundance of caution, we are suspending use of the Sugary Drink Display until further notice.**

During this time, hand washing and social distancing is on everyone's mind. We want everyone to have the comfort of knowing we sanitize our sugary drink displays. They are wiped down and cleaned off after they have been returned.



Follow Us



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