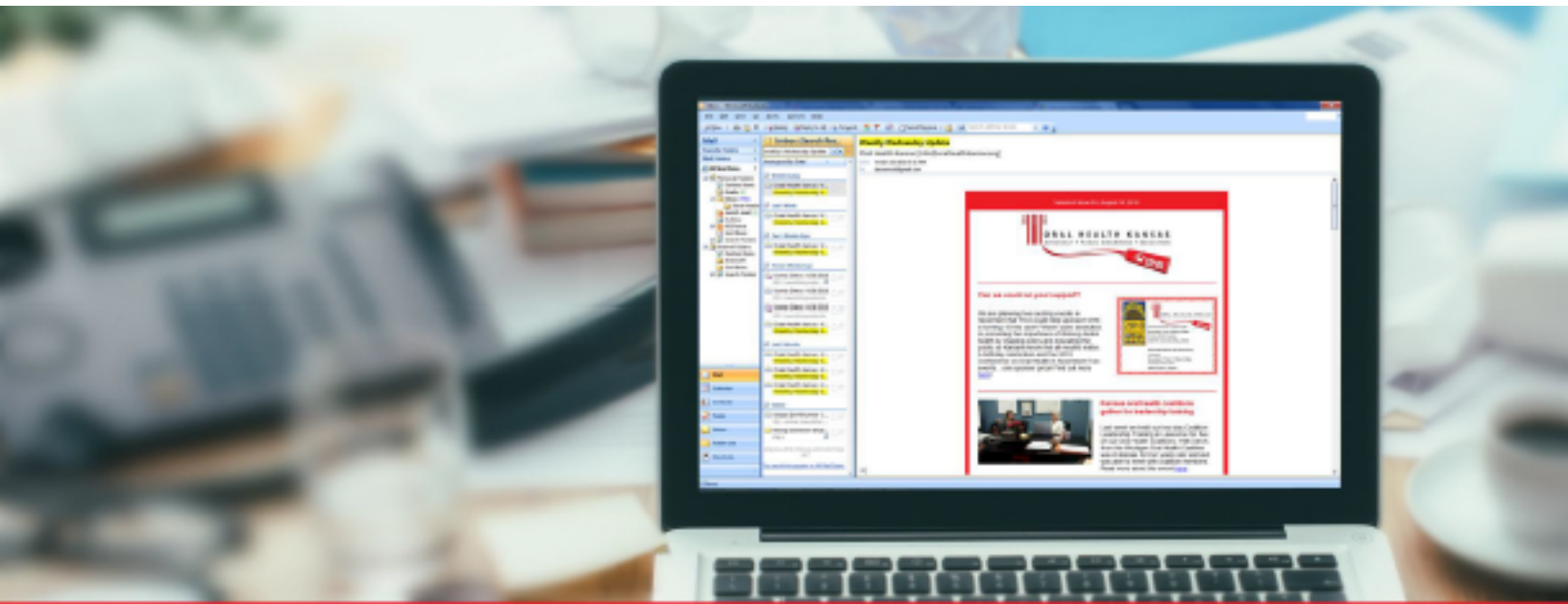




ORAL HEALTH KANSAS
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION



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](#).

March 16, 2022

Volume 13, Issue 11



Legislators Request Oral Health Briefing

The House Children and Seniors Committee is chaired by Rep. Susan Concannon (R-Beloit). She was a member of Dental Champions Class VII, and she continues to have an interest in helping people understand the importance of oral health and the challenges people face in

staying healthy. Last week Rep. Concannon invited Oral Health Kansas Executive Director Tanya Dorf Brunner to give a briefing to the House Children and Seniors Committee about the challenges children and older people have in accessing dental care.

The Committee had a full discussion about how oral health is connected to overall health, some of the challenges relating to coverage for dental care for kids and older adults, and how Kansas compares to other states in oral health status. (See the [2022 Kansas Oral Health Report Card](#).) Dorf Brunner described how the tragic death of Deamonte Driver in 2007 galvanized the oral health committee to advocate for and make changes to ensure that no child dies from a tooth infection again.

Committee members heard about some of the solutions in progress such as the recent Medicaid dental rate increases and the House and Senate budget committees' recommendations to extend Medicaid dental coverage to adults this year. They also learned that ongoing needs include outreach to families about how to use their dental benefits and providing education for dental providers about meeting the needs of people with disabilities and older people.

The Committee discussion included the challenges people have in accessing sedation dentistry, the importance of taking care of your oral health at home, and why people living in poverty face bigger hurdles in accessing dental care. While no action was requested from the Committee, members seemed eager to learn about this important issue and asked many questions.

A copy of the information shared with Committee members is available on [our website](#), and the recording of the session is available on the [Legislature's YouTube channel](#).



Resources for People with Disabilities

It is National Disability Awareness Month! This is a great occasion to share the oral health resources Oral Health Kansas provides for people with disabilities. People with disabilities are at greater risk for poor oral health and access to dental care. The ability to receive quality oral healthcare is the number one problem faced by children and adults with physical and intellectual disabilities. Oral Health Kansas has worked with the University of Kansas' Disability and Health Program and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment in recent years to create resources to assist with improving daily oral care as well as access to dental care.

- Information Form - [Dental Care Passport](#) - This form gathers information from the person with a disability or from a family member to help the dental team better understand the person's needs. It contains detailed information such as communication preferences, mobility limitations, and helpful strategies to prepare for a successful dental visit.
- Checklist - [Finding the Right Dental Office](#) - This checklist guides caregivers with questions that help them find the best dental office for the person with disabilities.
- Toothbrushing booklet - [Changing it Up: How to keep toothbrushing in your routine when experiencing limited mobility](#). Toothbrushing is an essential activity that everyone must practice daily to stay healthy. When body movements are limited, effective toothbrushing can be a challenge. This booklet includes ideas to improve the way you care for your teeth.
- Resource page - [Adaptive Aids for Toothbrushing](#) - This resource contains examples of adaptive aids that are available commercially to help people who find typical toothbrushes and floss to be a challenge to use. Finding a tool that helps keep the mouth and teeth clean is a great step towards a healthier life.
- Interactive webpage - [Super Smiles for Your Child](#) is a web experience for families with young children. Explore Super Smiles for Your Child together to watch fun videos, test your knowledge with exciting games, and listen to children's books that will provide you with great edutainment.

We are queuing up for a major website update, including both our consumer resources and disabilities pages, so the links may be changing. Be sure to keep an eye out for our updates!



Need Help Finding a Dentist?

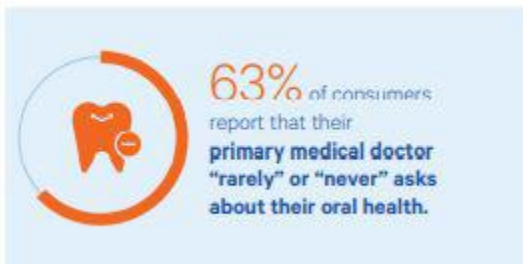
We recently updated our [Finding a Dentist](#) section on our website. Often times we receive phone calls from consumers or organizations looking for dental care for themselves or a client. Although we may not have all the resources on our website or have all of the answers, we do our best to help direct consumers on where they can look. It's not always easy to know where one would find such information. We have helped consumers understand how to look at their health insurance cards to find the customer services number as well. If you don't have insurance, an option may be to call the [safety net clinic](#) in your area.



Thinking About a Career in Public Health?

[Dental Champions Class V member, Doreen Eyler](#), RDH, BSDH, ECPIII, shares her experiences and her “why” she chose a career in Public Health. Doreen has been working at GraceMed Health Clinic Inc., since 2005. Dave Sandford, previous CEO for GraceMed Health Clinic, Inc., reached out to Doreen and said he would like to have someone with an Extended Care Permit at the clinic and that’s how her story at

GraceMed began! [Read more](#) about Doreen’s path to public health.



Oral Health Links to our Overall Health

Understanding our oral health affects our overall health, is important in understanding how critical it is to maintain our oral health. A [report](#) from CareQuest

Institute examines attitudes regarding the relationship between oral health and overall health, based on national surveys of oral health consumers and providers. Both consumers and dental providers described a lack of integration between medical and oral health care, and a desire for increased interprofessional collaboration. In this report, 63% of consumer report that their primary medical doctor “rarely” or “never” asks about their oral health. Read the full report [here](#).



Upcoming Events

- **Webinar:**The Changing Dentist Workforce, March 9 at 12:00pm. Register [here](#).
- **Webinar:** Improving Racial Equity in Kansas: A Three-Part Series Examining the Commission on Racial Equity and Justice’s Final Recommendations (this is the last of the series), March 10, 12:00pm-1:00pm. RSVP at

[Healthfund.org](https://www.healthfund.org)

- **Webinar:** Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Maternal Health: Challenges and Opportunities, March 16, 12:00pm-1:00pm CST. Register [here](#).

- **Kansas Mission of Mercy**, March 25-26 in Hays, Kansas. If you want to volunteer, you must [register](#). For patient information, click [here](#).
- **Webinar: [Oral Health is Essential Primary Care: The Importance of Interprofessional Collaboration](#)**, scheduled for April 1 from noon to 12pm CST.
- Thirsty for Health **Virtual Focus Groups** for the Topeka Public School area- April 12, 5 - 6pm or 6 - 7pm. Click [here](#) and learn how to sign up!
- **Save the Date!** 16th Kansas Disability Caucus on August 10th-12th. Click [here](#) for details.



Congratulations to [Junetta Everett, Class II Dental Champions](#) and vice chair of Kansas Health Foundation's Board of Directors, for receiving two honors on International Women's Day, March 8. Junetta was

awarded a Shine Award from [Storytime Village](#) and is being inducted into the [Junior Achievement of Kansas](#) Wichita Business Hall of Fame. What an honor and well deserved for all of your hard work! We are proud to call you our friend!



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



Oral Health Kansas • PO BOX 4567Topeka, KS 66604
785.235.6039 phone • 785.233.5564 fax info@oralhealthkansas.org
Copyright 2022