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**Bob Bethell Joint Committee on HCBS and KanCare Oversight Committee  
May 6, 2026**

Chairman Carpenter,

Thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony with the Committee. My name is Tanya Dorf Brunner, and I am the Executive Director of Oral Health Kansas, Inc. We are the statewide advocacy organization dedicated to promoting the importance of lifelong oral health by shaping policy and educating the public.

**Momentum in the Medicaid Dental Program**

This year the Legislature invested \$2 million SGF in a Medicaid dental rate increase. The Medicaid dental provider network in Kansas lags behind all of our neighboring states, so this increase is an integral part of a plan to grow the Medicaid dental provider network. Thank you!

The increase this year is part of a series of investments the Legislature has made in the Medicaid dental program over the last several years. From 2022 through 2024, the Legislature invested in covering dental care for adults, and in 2025 and 2026 funds were allocated to increase the rates.

- 2022: The extension of dental benefits to Medicaid adult enrollees. Dental services included fillings, crowns, and gum treatment.
- 2023: Dentures made an available Kansas Medicaid dental service.
- 2024: Preventive dental services including examinations, x-rays, cleanings, and oral health counseling made available Kansas Medicaid services.
- 2025: Dental rates increased by the following amounts:
  - Dental exams- 50%
  - Cleanings and scaling- 35%
  - X-rays and composite fillings- 20%
  - All other services- 10%.
- 2026: Dental rates will increase by amounts to be determined.

**Impact of the Investments**

Last year Oral Health Kansas started a [Medicaid Dental Facilitator program](#) modeled after a successful model in Missouri. We have educational resources and administrative support available for dental offices, and we have been able to help several offices enroll in Medicaid and troubleshoot problems.

Because of your investments and the supports we are developing we are seeing the Medicaid dental provider network start to grow. 2025 provided us with a preview of what is possible by pairing an increase in Medicaid dental rates with dedicated provider support.

From 2021 to 2024, the Medicaid dental provider network suffered a 20% loss in the number of providers enrolled in the system. In contrast, the past year saw an 8% increase in enrolled dental providers, with a net gain of 30 providers between January 2025 and December 2025. The greatest net gains (66.6%) came after the rate increase was implemented in July. Although this is not sufficient to replenish the provider network and care for all Kansans enrolled in Medicaid, it demonstrates what investing in Medicaid dental reimbursement rates does.

Thank you for the investments you have made over the last few years. They are making a difference.

### **Next Steps**

Following the rate increase last year, Oral Health Kansas and the Kansas Dental Association conducted a survey of dental providers to ask for their input on the best way to allocate the funds. A simple across the board increase would have had little meaningful impact, but their input led to a creative way of allocating the funds to the services that make the most difference for dental offices and consumers. (See the summary of the rate increases on page 1.) We were grateful to the Division of Health Care Finance for listening to providers' input when they implemented the rate increase last summer.

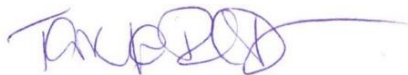
This year Medicaid staff have asked us to repeat the survey to get feedback about the best way to allocate the new funding. Oral Health Kansas, Kansas Dental Association, and Community Care Network of Kansas will distribute the provider survey in the coming weeks and share the results with Medicaid Director Osterlund and her team. We look forward to the results informing the allocation process when the rate increase goes into effect on July 1, 2026.

The data team at the Division of Health Care Finance is providing us with new dental provider data quarterly in order to give all of us a clear picture of how the provider network is changing as the resources and educational/administrative support grow. We will share updates with the Committee as we learn more.

We remain grateful to this Committee for your study of the complex issues around Medicaid dental care, and we thank you for your leadership in improving the dental program in Kansas. The momentum is going in the right direction, and Kansans are noticing.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



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