



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](#).

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Legislative Session Begins

This week was a big one in our state's Capitol! Governor Kelly and all the statewide elected officials, along with all members of the Kansas House of Representatives and a handful of Senators were sworn into office on Monday at the start of the 2023 legislative session.

The Kansas House has new leadership on both the Republican and Democrat sides this year. The new House speaker is Rep. Dan Hawkins, R-Wichita, who previously served as majority leader. His replacement is Majority Leader Chris Croft, R-Overland Park. The new presiding officer is House Speaker Pro Tempore Blake Carpenter, R-Derby.

On the Democrat side, there is change after Rep. Tom Sawyer, D-Wichita, opted not to seek another term as leader. His replacement is House Minority Leader Vic Miller, D-Topeka, and the Assistant Minority Leaders is Rep. Valdenia Winn, D-Kansas City.

What will be OHK's focus?

As we begin the 2023 legislative session, Oral Health Kansas is proud to share our policy priorities. Our top priority this year will be advocating to add denture coverage to the Kansas Medicaid dental benefits.

Last year was exciting when the legislature appropriated funding to [extend Medicaid dental benefits to adults](#)! While this was a huge victory for Kansans, we were disappointed that denture coverage was not included in the benefit package. This is the year to change that. We will be leading the charge to request an appropriation to add dentures to the Medicaid covered services. We are building a [webpage for the denture advocacy](#) and will be adding resources in the coming weeks.

Oral Health Kansas is recruiting state and local organizations to support the Medicaid denture advocacy. If your organization is interested in lending its name to the growing list of organizations supporting this policy change, please fill out [this short form](#) to join us in our advocacy push.

Learn about all of Oral Health Kansas' policy priorities the 2023 session and download our policy brochure [here](#).

How can I listen to committee hearings?

The Kansas Legislature makes all of its floor debates and committee meetings available to the public both in person and online. You can go to www.kslegislature.org to find more information on visiting the Statehouse, and see schedules for floor debate and committee meetings. You also can access all hearings on the [Legislature's YouTube page](#).

Do you have legislative questions?

The State Library of Kansas Reference Division provides a Legislative Hotline service. The purpose of the Legislative Hotline is to provide all Kansas residents with a toll-free resource for up to date information about legislative activity. You can find more information on their website: <https://kslib.info/1510/Legislative-Hotline> or call the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-432-3924.

How can I learn more about advocacy?

Oral Health Kansas is proud to share our advocacy toolkit. This toolkit includes several sections describing the legislative process, how to find your legislators, and much more. Each of the toolkit modules is also available as a short video. [Check them all out here.](#)



Join the Lived Experience Advisory Group

We are continuing to accept applications to join our new Lived Experience Advisory Group. We spoke to individuals who are interested in joining and one question that was brought up “does it matter what part of the state one is from?” The answer is no. Different parts of the state would be more helpful but we do not need members from certain areas.

We are happy to accept applications from these communities:

- People with intellectual/developmental disabilities
- Parents of young children
- Older adults
- People with physical disabilities
- People experiencing poverty
- Veterans
- People living rural areas
- People of color
- Immigrant populations
- English not first language
- LGBTQ community
- Native American

Apply to join the Dental Care Access Lived Experience Advisory Group using [this form](#).

Please share it with others who may be interested in joining.

Please share our flyer with anyone who may be interested. [Click here to download it.](#)



Honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.

On Monday, Oral Health Kansas will join with people across the state and our nation as we honor the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. King said, "Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhuman." At Oral Health Kansas we strive every day to make Kansas a better place for people to live, work, learn, and thrive in good health. Oral Health Kansas has committed to being an inclusive and anti-racist organization. We invite all of our supporters to join with us in re-dedicating ourselves to ensuring that all people have equitable access to the things they need to be healthy and thrive.

Our office will be closed on Monday, January 16 to honor Martin Luther King, Jr.



Millennial Action Project

The [Millennial Action Project](#) is hosting a panel and reception for Millennial and Gen Z leaders and influencers. This event is an opportunity to hear from members of the [Kansas Future Caucus](#), composed of the legislature's youngest members, a bipartisan group of legislators who share ideas and coalesce around issues that affect young Kansans. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss their experiences across sectors and what resources they need from legislators to thrive.

This event is January 18th from 12pm-1:30pm at [The Beacon](#), Library Room, in Topeka, Kansas.

The Millennial Action Project (MAP) is committed to building a more collaborative political future by engaging young legislators across the country, sparking dialogue across the aisle and working towards future-focused policy solutions. [RSVP here](#). Contact Blaine Volpe (blaine@millennialaction.org), Director of Membership, Millennial Action Project; to [Schedule a meeting](#); cell: 440-318 5835.



Give Kids a Smile Event

University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry is hosting a Give Kids a Smile event on February 3 from 9:00am-12:00pm. This free event is for kids 0-17 years old in need of dental exams, teeth cleanings, dental sealants and fluoride treatment.

Care is first come, first served and delivered by students under the supervision of licensed faculty.

Referrals for return care will be available. Register [here](#)!



Help Improve Care Coordination Services in Kansas

The Kansas Health Institute on behalf of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is inviting you to participate in a focus group where your perspectives will be heard. Have you recently received healthcare coordination during pregnancy or after childbirth in Kansas? Or has your child age 0-8 recently received care coordination services in Kansas? Would you like to provide your opinion on ways to improve services.

If you are interested in participating in one of the virtual focus groups, please complete the focus group eligibility survey below **by January 23, 2023**. This survey helps determine your eligibility to participate in the study. If you are eligible to participate, we will contact you via phone with more information and next steps. Those who participate in the focus groups will be mailed a \$25 gift card to compensate them for their time.

Click here to complete Focus Group Eligibility Survey. The last day to complete this survey is January 23, 2023: https://survey.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a30J5zwn1g3lLBY

For more information about these focus groups, please visit:
<https://www.khi.org/articles/focus-groups-on-care-coordination/>



Upcoming Events

- **Kansas Public Health Association:** Take 20's every third Thursday of the month, beginning January 19 at 12:00pm CST. Click [here](#) to register.
 - **Missouri Oral Health Policy Pre-Conference Webinar, What's Up with That?** - HRSA Oral Health, January 20, 11:00am-12:30pm CST. Click [here](#) to register.
 - **Kansas Mission of Mercy,** March 24 and 25 in Topeka. Click [here](#) for more information.
 - **Healthy People 2030 Oral Health Promotional Series: Reducing Lifetime Tooth Decay Experience in Children & Adolescents,** February 1st 12:00 pm-1:00 pm CST. Register [here](#).
 - **2023 National Oral Health Conference,** April 17 - 19, 2023. Click [here](#) to register.
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We are excited to announce a new oral health advocate! Welcome Avyukth Sreeram! Avy was born January 6 to OHK staff member, Devaki Menon and already joined



his first staff meeting on Monday. Baby and mom are doing well. You may be lucky to see Avy on one of your Zoom meetings with Devaki!



Sugary Drink Display

Click [here](#) to learn more about sugary drink display reservations!

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