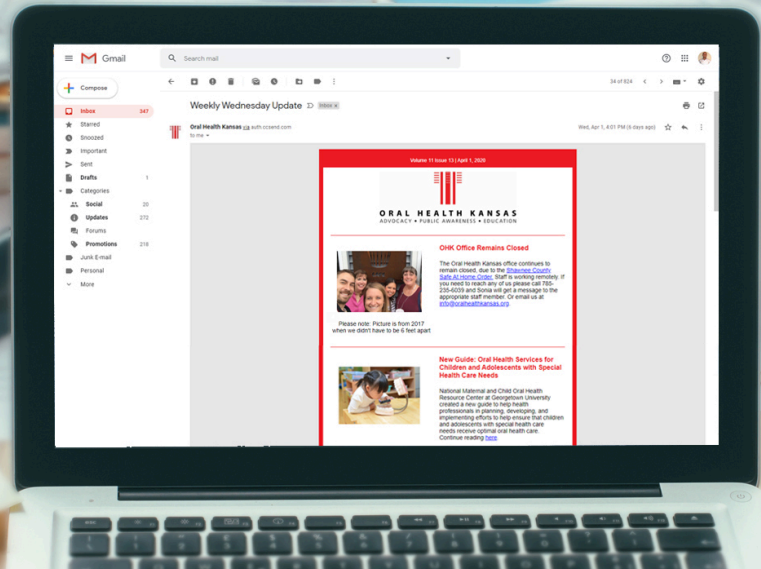




ORAL HEALTH KANSAS
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION



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](#).

January 28, 2026

Volume 17, Issue 4

Scan the QR code



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**Weekly
Wednesday
Update.**



Finishing the Job on the Medicaid Rate Increase

Advocates have finished providing testimony to the House and Senate budget subcommittees asking for funding to finish the Medicaid dental rate increase. Over 15 individuals and organizations made their case to the two committees to ask for \$12 million to finish the rate increase that started last year.

Consumers, providers, and advocates are telling lawmakers that the rate increase that began last year is making a difference, but it was not sufficient to make it financially feasible for more dental offices to join Medicaid. Dentists want to provide care for people who have Medicaid coverage, but as small business owners, they need to be reimbursed for the cost of that care. The commitments Kansas legislators have made to the Medicaid dental program over the last few years are remarkable. Dental coverage for adults is now in place, and a meaningful rate increase is in effect. Finishing the rate increase with an additional \$12 million is the final step.

The Senate Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services did not make any recommendations to include new spending yet. In the coming days we will find out if the House Social Services Budget Committee will make a recommendation on the rate increase. We will keep you posted about the next steps. Learn more on our [Medicaid Dental Rate Advocacy webpage](#). Read our testimony on the rate increase on our [Testimony webpage](#).



Why Community Water Fluoridation Matters for Kansas

As lawmakers consider SB 333, a bill that would prohibit community water fluoridation across Kansas, it's important to understand what's at stake for our families and communities.

At Pathways to Oral Health, our mission is to improve access to dental care - especially for Kansans who face barriers to care such as disabilities, low income, or living in rural areas. Community

water fluoridation is one of the most effective and equitable tools we have to support that goal

Community water fluoridation is the adjustment of fluoride in public drinking water to levels proven to prevent tooth decay. It has been used safely in the United States for more than 80 years and is recognized as one of the most successful public health measures in history.

You can read the full blog on the [Pathways to Oral Health Project website](#).



Your Voice Can Help Someone Find a Dentist

Finding a dentist who accepts Medicaid or feels comfortable seeing someone with a disability can be hard. Too many people are turned away or go without care simply because a dentist who is comfortable seeing people with disabilities isn't available.

Our [Dentist Recruitment Toolkit](#) gives people the tools to help change that. It offers simple talking points and helpful tips to start positive conversations with dental offices about accepting Medicaid and welcoming patients with disabilities. You don't need to be a professional advocate - just someone who cares.

By using and sharing this toolkit, you can help more dentists say "yes" and help more people get the care they deserve. One conversation can make a real difference. Click on [this link](#) for the toolkit or use the QR code above.



Early Bird Registration Ends Soon!

The National Oral Health Conference's early bird registration will be ending this weekend, Saturday, January 31. If you plan on attending with us on April 11-12 for Weekend Workshops and April 13-15 for the conference, register soon so you don't miss the early bird deadline. The conference will be a short drive away in Oklahoma City. You will have the opportunity to visit with advocates, dental professionals, health professionals and many more from different states. Show your support and listen to Oral Health Kansas staff present on two different days! Register [here](#).



Smiling with Confidence

On **Thursday, February 12th from 6:00 - 7:00 PM CST**, Abby Richwine, Education Coordinator at Oral Health Kansas, will present a virtual session for LEND's Family Education Series focused on practical ways to make oral care easier and more successful. The session will be held on Zoom, and participants can register by clicking on [this flyer](#).

During this session, Abby will share simple, realistic strategies to help make daily oral care more manageable. She will showcase short videos with easy tips for individuals with disabilities and their helpers that can make brushing less stressful. Participants will also learn how to find dentists who accept Medicaid and have experience treating people with disabilities, along with ideas for how to talk with dental providers about the importance of offering accessible, disability-friendly care.



Children's Dental Health Month Resources

Gearing up for Children's Dental Health Month! February we celebrate Children's Dental Health Month and how to teach children that good oral health is important starting at a young age! Brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and flossing are good steps in having healthy teeth to avoid gum disease! The

American Dental Association provides posters, coloring sheets and a brushing calendar as a way to get children excited about oral health!

- [English poster: Brushing Fights Cavities, Bruh](#) and [coloring sheet](#)
- [Spanish poster: Cepillarte Combate Las Caries, Bro](#) and [coloring sheet](#)
- [English poster: Forever In My Brushing Era](#) and [coloring sheet](#)
- [Spanish poster: Mi Era De Cepillado Por Siempre](#) and [coloring sheet](#)
- Click [here](#) for a brushing calendar for every month
- [Sugar Swatters activity pages](#)

Find more fun resources on the [American Dental Association page](#).



Upcoming Events

- Course: An Introduction to Value-Based Care in Oral Health: Moving from Volume to Value, 1 CE. Click [here](#) for the course information.
- Self paced courses: [Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals](#) and [Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers](#).
- Save the date! The 2026 Conference on Oral Health will be Friday, November 13.



Thank you to Dr. Jill Jenkins, DDS, for providing testimony on two days for the Senate Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services as well as the House Social Services Budget Committee.

Dr. Jenkins spoke about how important a

Medicaid dental rate increase would be to her dental practice. With expenses and salaries increasing in her private practice, a rate increase would help her keep her staff and continue to see patients. Thank you again for being an advocate for your practice and other dental offices!





Sugary Drink Display

We have Adult and Children's Sugary Drink Display's available for reservations. These displays are eye catching at exhibits, schools, library, dental offices, clinics and just about anywhere you see them! We only have a limited amount so please sign up soon if you're interested in reserving one. Click [here](#) to learn more about sugary drink display reservations!

Follow Us



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