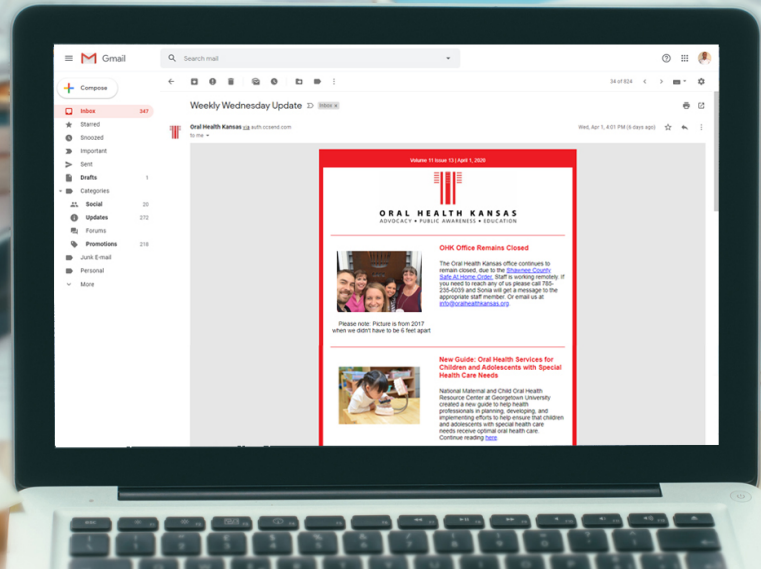




WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATE

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](#).

October 15, 2025

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Scan the QR code



or click here to
sign up for our
**Weekly
Wednesday
Update.**

Conference Registration Winner!

The winner of our 2025 Conference on Oral Health free registration is Stephanie Coleman! The goal of the Facebook giveaway was to submit a question or comment on an oral health topic you are interested in learning more about. Below is Stephanie's question along with our answer!

How can we work together to get more dentists to take Medicaid in Kansas for adults? This is such an important need.



Recent legislative successes have resulted in a nearly comprehensive adult Medicaid dental benefit and a large rate increase, yet Medicaid dental care remains difficult to access. Less than 30% of dentists bill Medicaid, and 41 out of 105 counties (all rural) have no Medicaid dentists. Kansans living in poverty face limited access to essential care. In fact, only about 15% of adults enrolled in Medicaid received dental care last year. Oral Health Kansas and the [Pathways to Oral Health](#) team are working to pair a new Medicaid rate increase with education and technical assistance for dental offices to help them take another look at Medicaid.

What can you do?

- Ask your dentist if he/she accepts Medicaid. If the answer is no, ask them why.
- Share with your dentist that [Medicaid dental rates](#) are higher than they have been in the past 20 years. (We can share talking points for you).
- Get involved in rate increase advocacy. This week Oral Health Kansas asked the Legislature's KanCare Oversight Committee to finish the job on the Medicaid dental rate increase. They are interested in making sure the Medicaid dental program works well, and we need you to help tell them why it is important. Join our [dental rate increase advocacy coalition](#) to learn more and get involved.



Protecting Community Water Fluoridation

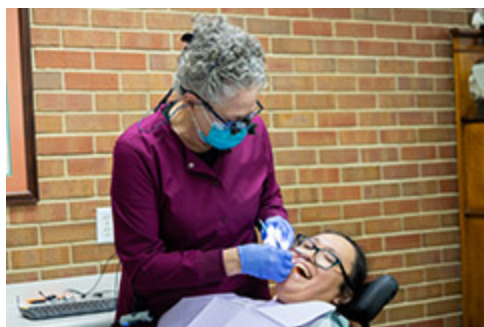
Did you know that one of the simplest ways to protect your smile is right at your sink?

Community water fluoridation is a safe, effective, and affordable way to help prevent tooth decay for everyone, no matter the age! By adding just the right amount of fluoride to public water systems, communities help strengthen teeth and reduce cavities, even for people who may not have regular access to dental care. It's one of the few public health measures that truly benefits everyone, regardless of age or income.

The issue that communities are considering eliminating fluoride in their water is a huge concern. Melissa Burroughs, Senior Director of Public Policy at CareQuest Institute for Oral Health will speak at the Conference on Oral Health and discuss the importance of maintaining community water fluoridation as well as explore how we, as a community, can ensure our elected officials understand and support it.

If you haven't registered for the hybrid Conference on Oral Health, the event takes place Friday, November 7 at the KU Edwards Campus (BEST Conference Center), 12600 S. Quivira Rd in Overland Park. Click [here](#) to find more information about the conference. This is an opportunity to gain 5.75 CE's.

To find more information about fluoride in Kansas, visit <https://fluoridekansas.org/>.



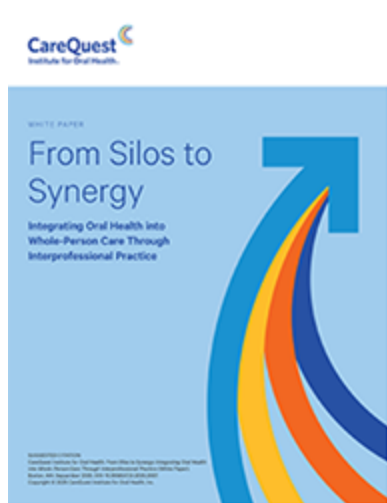
Confidence in Every Smile Video Debuts

As part of the Pathways to Oral Health initiative, [Oral Health Kansas](#) has launched a new consumer video series called [Confidence in Every Smile](#). The videos are designed to help individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers navigate oral health routines through adaptive techniques, specialized

equipment, and practical strategies for common challenges such as limited upper extremity mobility.

Thanks to our very own Dental Program Director, Kathy Hunt, who wholeheartedly works to bring oral health awareness into the hands of everyone, for spearheading this series. She believes that education and knowing how to maintain your oral health and your loved ones, is important for prevention and will keep you healthy overall.

[Read this powerful interview](#) with Kathy Hunt, *Confidence in Every Smile: A Conversation with Kathy Hunt on Empowering Oral Health for People with Disabilities*.



Kansas Featured in New National Report

[From Silos to Synergy](#) is a white paper collaboration between CareQuest Institute for Oral Health and more than 15 authors, including Oral Health Kansas. The white paper showcases how oral health professionals are collaborating with colleagues in medicine, nursing, pharmacy, social work, and other fields to deliver comprehensive, whole-person care.

[My Dental Care Passport](#) was highlighted in the publication. One of the ways Oral Health Kansas has made attempts to create better communication between individuals with disabilities and dental teams is through the My Dental Care Passport. We are honored that our collective work in Kansas is being recognized as part of this national conversation

on interprofessional collaboration and oral health integration.

Key takeaways from the full report include:

- **Workforce development is essential for long-term success:** Supporting training programs that build oral health competencies among medical professionals, and vice versa, fosters a culture of collaboration and prepares teams for integrated care environments.
- **Cross-disciplinary collaboration strengthens care delivery:** Investing in integrated teams that include dental, medical, behavioral, and social care professionals leads to more coordinated, efficient, and patient-centered outcomes.
- **Integrated care models reduce disparities and improve access:** Embedding oral health into broader health systems, especially in primary care, long-term care, and behavioral health, helps reach

underserved populations and supports equity goals.

- **Technology and shared tools drive operational efficiency:** Interoperable electronic health records and communication tools that enable seamless coordination across departments and disciplines are critical to successful integrated care.
- **Policy alignment and financial incentives are critical enablers:** Sustainable integration requires advocacy for reimbursement reform, expanded scopes of practice, and strategic partnerships that support value-based care.

You can find Oral Health Kansas' case study on page 29: [From Silos to Synergy Use Cases](#). You can read the full white paper [here](#) or the executive summary [here](#).



American Network of Oral Health Coalitions Seeks Executive Director

The [American Network of Oral Health Coalitions \(ANOHC\)](#) is a national organization that supports and strengthens state oral health coalitions to promote optimal oral health for all. Through shared learning, capacity building, and collaboration, ANOHC empowers coalitions to be effective agents of change in their communities and across the nation.

ANOHC seeks a dynamic, experienced leader to serve as its inaugural Executive Director. This fully remote role will guide the organization's strategic and operational direction, strengthen member coalitions, and oversee day-to-day management. The Executive Director will work closely with the Board of Directors, staff, consultants, and national partners to advance ANOHC's mission.

View the full job description [here](#).



World Food Day

World Food Day is on Thursday, October 16. The theme for this year is "Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future". This theme emphasizes global collaboration to create a more peaceful, sustainable, and food-secure future for everyone. We all know that healthy foods help our bodies stay strong but when budgets are tight or grocery options are limited, eating well can feel out of reach. Food insecurity affects millions of families, making it difficult to find or afford fresh fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious foods. But those are what's important for our bodies!

Still, small steps can make a big difference. Choosing canned or frozen fruits and vegetables (without added sugar or salt), whole grains like oats or brown rice, and protein sources such as beans or eggs can help stretch your budget while keeping meals balanced. For example, when given the choice between potato chips or peanuts, choose peanuts! They are a healthier choice because they offer protein, healthy fats, and fiber, whereas chips are a more processed snack.

Read our [Tip and Trick on Healthy Eating](#) for more ideas!



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](#).
- The Conference on Oral Health will be held Friday, November 7 at the KU Edwards Campus. Click [here](#) for updates on the conference.
- SPEAK Up! (Self-Advocates Promoting Empowerment and Access in Kansas) conference on Saturday, November 8. Click [here](#) for information.



Denise Cyzman, Dental Champions Class 8, has announced her retirement from the Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She has been a leader in our state for many years, and we have enjoyed working with her. We wish

Denise all the best in the next chapter.



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!

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