

## 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](#).

### November 1, 2023

Volume 14, Issue 44

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**Weekly  
Wednesday  
Update.**



## Successful 2023 Conference on Oral Health

On Friday, October 27 we held our annual Conference on Oral Health at the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park. With over 100 participants in the room and an array of virtual

participants, we held an exhilarating conference. Throughout the day participants remarked that the speakers were amazing and the sessions were inspiring. We work hard throughout the year planning our conference and this feedback encourages us for 2024!

We wanted to thank all of our speakers and moderators for sharing their insight and expertise. We also thank all of the exhibitors and sponsors for sharing their resources with attendees and for their support. A special thank you to Wichita State University conference staff who helped us coordinate the event!

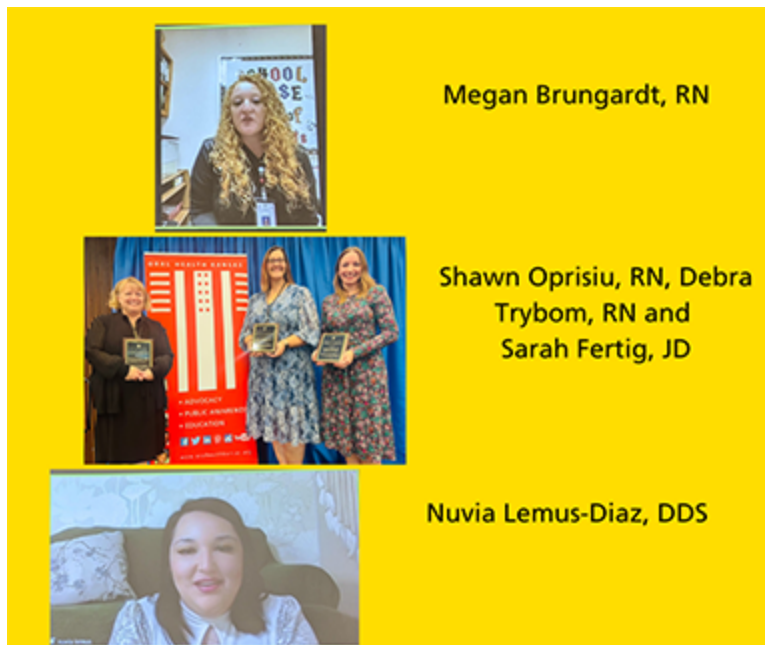
### **Sponsors:**

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- CareSource
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- Healthy Blue
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- Sunflower Health Plan
- REACH Healthcare Foundation
- CareQuest Institute for Health

### **Exhibitors:**

- CareSource
- Molina Healthcare
- Aetna Better Health of Kansas
- Envolve
- Healthy Blue
- UCare
- Sunflower Health Plan
- SkyGen
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas
- Team Placement Staffing Services
- Cover Kansas
- United Healthcare

We look forward to seeing everyone in **2024 on Friday, November 8 at the Kansas State University Campus in Olathe.**



## And this Year's Winners Are...

During our Conference on Oral Health on October 27, we were able to present awards to the 2023 Excellence in Oral Health winners. Listening to their heartfelt stories reminds us even more why we do what we do and the power of working together to make lasting change for Kansans!

Here are the 2023 Excellence in Oral Health Award winners:

- Outstanding Dental Hygienist - Shawn Oprisiu, RDH
- Outstanding Community Leader - Debra Trybom, RDH
- Outstanding Dentist - Nuvia Lemus-Diaz, DDS
- Outstanding Volunteer - Megan Brungardt, RN
- Bob Bethell Outstanding Policymaker - Sarah Fertig, JD

Thank you for all of your hard work and contributions to help Kansans stay healthy!

To view past award winners, click [here](#). Watch next year when we open up nominations for 2024!



## Kansas Featured in New Adult Dental Blog

This month Stacey Auger at CareQuest Institute for Oral Health penned a [blog post](#) about recent progress states have made in covering dental care for adults covered by Medicaid. The blog notes that the period of 2020 to 2022 “marked a significant expansion of Medicaid adult dental benefits across the country - one of the most significant in recent decades.”

Kansas added denture coverage to the Medicaid adult dental program in 2023 and is featured in the blog's discussion of 2023 benefit expansion along with Hawaii, Maryland, Tennessee, Kentucky, Michigan, and New Hampshire. In total over 3.2 million adults gained access to new or expanded benefits this year across the country. Along with sharing the recent increases in adult dental coverage in Kansas, the CareQuest blog also shares Oral Health Kansas' plans to work with partners in 2024 to seek coverage of cleanings, x-rays, and examinations for adults.

[Read more](#) about progress around the country and check out several tools to learn more and get involved in advocacy in the blog.



## Community Engagement Specialist Position Closes Friday!

You have time to submit your application for the Community Engagement Specialist position we currently have open! This is a half-time position dedicated to supporting Oral Health Kansas' efforts to engage community members and organizations. The position is responsible for

designing and carrying out community engagement projects including the Lived Experience Advisory Group and Brush Book Bed project. The Community Engagement Specialist will assist with special projects and provide guidance to the organization on policy strategy. The deadline to submit your application is **Friday, November 3**. You can view the full job description [here](#).

## Free Virtual Sessions Still Available

If you haven't signed up for the Accessible Oral Health 2023 ECHO series, that's ok! You can still sign up and view the last three sessions that will be available. The series aims to increase dental care access for Kansans with disabilities through the education of the dental teams and professionals involved in the dental journey of individuals with intellectual / developmental disabilities (IDD). Keep in mind, you do not need to be a dental professional to attend! The series includes raising awareness of IDD, destigmatization, communication strategies, sensory awareness, the importance of teamwork (both within the dental team, with care coordinators, and with other healthcare professionals), as well as introducing tools and resources. This



series is not only a practice builder, but also a great opportunity for team building and education and CEs are available.

All courses will be held via Zoom from 12:00PM - 1:00 PM CST and are **free of charge** but you must register.

Oral Health Kansas and the Pathways to Oral Health Team are proud to partner with the University of Kansas Medical Center and Aetna Better Health of Kansas to bring you these FREE sessions.

Learn more and [register](#) through the University of Kansas

Medical Center before spots fill up!

Contact Oral Health Kansas at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org) with questions.



## Trunk or Treat...or Teeth

This week Oral Health Kansas shared the importance of taking care of your teeth at a Trunk or Treat event hosted by the USD 501 Parents as Teachers program. Dozens of children and parents gathered on the Pine Ridge Born Learning Trail in East Topeka with Halloween costumes and bags on October 30. Oral Health Kansas joined several other community organizations in passing out candy and

imparting some education. We shared our sugary drink display to help families understand how much sugar is in their favorite drinks. Believe it or not the toothbrushes and toothpaste at our table were more popular than the candy!



## Vote on November 7

The November 7th local elections are fast approaching. Early voting in person has started in most counties across Kansas. [KSBallot.org](https://ksballot.org) provides voter information such as candidate information and what will be on the ballots. Enter your address to get the information in English or Spanish.



Do your studying and research about each candidate and topic before you go vote. Mark your calendars!



## 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](#).
- October 19 - November 16: New training series: Accessible Oral Health 2023: Building Confidence in Serving People with Disabilities. Learn more and register through the [University of Kansas Medical Center](#).
- **Webinar:** Community Engagement & Cross-Sector Collaboration Learning Community Registration, December 13. Click here: [bit.ly/3L2Yz11](https://bit.ly/3L2Yz11)



October 27 was a great day for our annual conference but also a sad day because it was Devaki Menon's last day with Oral Health Kansas. Devaki was our Community Engagement Specialist

who managed our Lived Experience Advisory Group and Brush Book Bed project. Devaki began as an intern and became a staff member when she graduated with her Masters of Public Health. Her encouraging spirit will be missed, but we were lucky to have her as part of our team.





## 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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