



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](#).

February 28, 2024

Volume 15, Issue 8

Scan the QR code



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



Legislature Hits Mid-Point

Last Friday was “Turn Around Day” at the Capitol. This marks the halfway point of the 2024 legislative session and is the day by which bills needed to pass out of their chamber of origin. From now until the end of the legislative session, there

will be fewer bills under consideration. Two bills we have been following moved forward last week.

[HB 2453](#) would allow Kansas to join a new [national dentist and dental hygienist interstate compact](#) which would make it easier for dental professionals to become licensed in the state. Seven states must pass interstate compact bills in order for it to go into effect. Four states have passed it since last year, and Kansas is on the list of the states considering a bill. HB 2453 passed out of the House of Representatives with a vote of 119-0. Oral Health Kansas supports this legislation, and our testimony in favor can be found on our [website](#). The next step is for the bill to go to the Senate for consideration.

[SB 103](#) would eliminate the “20 percent rule” in the Kansas Dental Practice Act. The “20 percent rule” in Kansas says that a dentist who owns a practice must be in the practice at least 20 percent of the time the office is open. The bill passed out of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, but has not been considered by the full Senate yet. It is still alive for consideration. Oral Health Kansas submitted neutral testimony on this bill. That testimony also is on our [website](#).

The Legislature will meet through the first week of April. During this time we will learn if these bills and any other legislation affecting the oral health community will pass. The House Health and Human Services Committee also has promised a hearing on Medicaid expansion before the end of March. Oral Health Kansas will submit testimony in favor of expansion.

Along with these bills, Oral Health Kansas’ advocacy to include \$4.8 million in the state budget to cover dental exams, x-rays, and cleanings for adults in the Medicaid program is moving forward. Today the Senate Ways and Means Committee accepted the recommendation for this funding in their budget. The House Appropriations Committee recommended the funding be considered during the wrap-up portion of the legislative session known as Veto Session in late April. We will continue the advocacy to get the funding into the budget as quickly as possible. Learn more about the advocacy initiative on our [website](#).

If you have any questions about pending legislation or the legislative budget process, please contact us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.

We Need Your Responses by February 29

Recently we have been asking for your help to give us ideas on ways to improve oral health in Kansas. Using Thought Exchange, a brief survey that allows you to provide us with ideas, we will take your responses to create our goals for our strategic plan. While many of you are on



the ground in communities, you see first-hand what health and oral health problems we are facing in Kansas.

This brief survey consists of four multiple choice items and one Exchange question on potential steps. After you have responded, you will also have the opportunity to rate the importance of ideas shared by others. We encourage you to rate as many ideas as you can and to come back often to rate newly shared ideas. The survey will close on

Thursday, February 29, 2024.

The more responses we receive, the more assistance we have to create goals for our strategic plan and help make improvements in our oral health! Share the survey with everyone! We all want better health for the future of our families. Click [here](#) to respond to this quick survey.



Success Begins with a Smile

Last week, Kathy Hunt, OHK Dental Program Director, delivered a presentation entitled “Success Begins with a Smile”, to young individuals residing in the Wyandotte County Juvenile Detention Center in Kansas City, Kansas. Assisted by James Davis, RDH, they had lively conversations with the 24 students as well as the staff from the juvenile detention center. The presentation centered on the role good oral health plays not only in the young people’s overall health, but their ability to succeed in

life.

During the session, students engaged in a hands-on activity that allowed them to observe the acidic effects that simple carbohydrates have on teeth. They were astonished and visibly impacted by the demonstration. Afterwards, staff reported that many of the students were seen looking in their own mouths and chatting about what they learned.

We are very pleased with the launch of this new project and look forward to having opportunities for it to grow and expand. Thank you to [CareSource](#) for sponsoring the development of an impactful educational program for Kansas youth!



Guardians of Smiles: Veterans Oral Health

Across the country, more than 85% of Veteran Health Administration enrollees are not eligible for dental care coverage. A [white paper](#) by CareQuest Institute and the American Institute of Dental Public Health (AIDPH), shares that veterans have greater rates of tooth decay and gum disease than their civilian peers. They're also more likely than non-veterans to have diabetes and hypertension, which dental disease can make harder and more expensive to manage.

- 8.6% of the Kansas population, or about 192,964 people, are veterans
- 14.4% of veterans live in a rural county
- Geary, Clay and Leavenworth County have the highest veteran population

Join us on March 12 at 12:00pm for a dynamic one-hour webinar sponsored by AIDPH designed to empower state-based stakeholders to illuminate gaps and identify solutions for Kansas veterans and their oral health. You can also earn one CEU for this free webinar. Register [here](#)!



Excellence in Oral Health Awards Are Now Open

In the 20th year of honoring Kansans for their hard work around oral health in their communities, we're excited to announce the Excellence in Oral Health Awards nominations are now open! This is a wonderful opportunity to recognize and celebrate the outstanding contributions and achievements of individuals who have demonstrated excellence in oral health. Whether it be through projects, leadership, or volunteerism, we encourage you to nominate individuals who have made a significant difference.

We ask that you don't nominate a previous award winner again so that everyone has an opportunity! You can view previous award winners [here](#). Click [here](#) to nominate someone for the 2024 Excellence in Oral Health Awards or [here](#) for the Ron Alexander Outstanding Dental Champion Award. The deadline to submit a nomination is Monday, September 23 at 5 pm. The winners will be honored at the [Conference on Oral Health](#) on Friday, November 8 at the Kansas State Olathe Campus.



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](#).
- **Webinar:** Community and Population Health Projects, Wednesday, February 28 from 6p-7p.m. CST. Register [here](#).
- Genesis Family Health Dental Clinic, dental screenings and fluoride applications - February 29, 3p-6p. Click [here](#) for the flyer. ([Spanish here](#)).
- Early Learning Advocacy Day at the Capitol on March 6. Find out more [here](#).
- Medicaid Expansion Rally, March 6 at 12:30pm CST in the 2nd floor rotunda of the Kansas Statehouse. RSVP [here](#).
- Missouri Oral Health Policy Conference, March 7-8, 2024, DoubleTree by Hilton, Jefferson City, Missouri. Register [here](#).
- First Annual Community Care Fair, Saturday, March 9 from 12-6 pm, Salem Baptist Church, 1824 N 11th St, Kansas City, KS. Click [here](#) for more information.
- **Webinar:** Advancing Veteran Oral Health in Kansas, March 12 at 12pm CST. Register [here](#).
- Interhab Advocacy Day, March 14. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Alliance for a Healthy Kansas monthly meetings, [Events | Alliance for a Healthy Kansas 2022 \(expandkancare.com\)](#).
- **Save the date!** 2024 Conference on Oral Health will be Friday, November 8.

If you would like to add your event to this list, email info@oralhealthkansas.org.

GraceMed Health Clinic and Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition Member, LaTonya Hidalgo, had a table full of oral health resources during National Children's Dental Health Month to



share with families coming to the clinic. Thank you, LaTonya, for your dedication helping families

understand how important their oral health is.

If you're interested in learning more about the Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition, email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.



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



Oral Health Kansas • PO BOX 4567 • Topeka, KS 66604

785.235.6039 phone • 785.233.5564 fax • info@oralhealthkansas.org

Copyright 2024