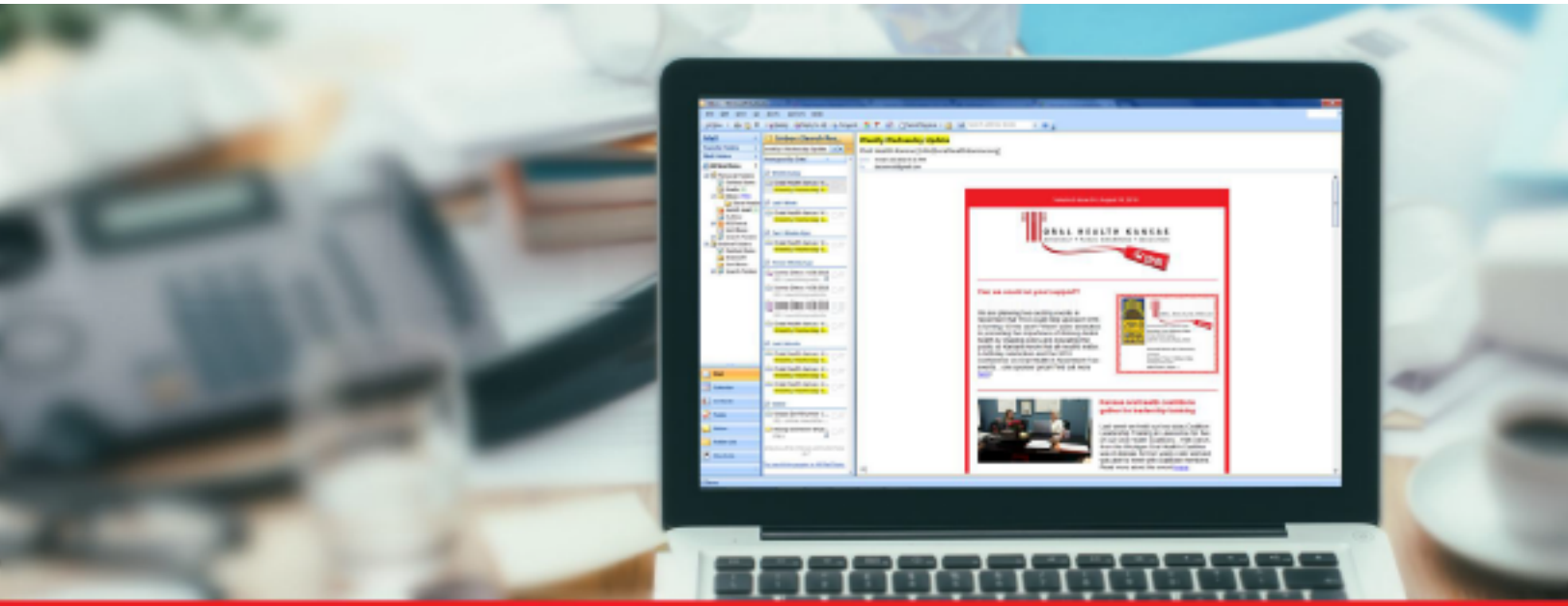




ORAL HEALTH KANSAS
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION



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](#).

Click here to sign up for our [Weekly Wednesday Update](#).

March 2, 2022

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Legislative Turn Around Leaves Issues Unresolved

Last week marked Turn Around at the Kansas Legislature. This is the point where most bills must pass out of their chamber of origin. The House passed about 35 bills last week, the vast majority being largely uncontroversial. The Senate also passed about 35 bills. Both chambers, for the most part, avoided any largely

controversial issues, leaving some major topics to be resolved during the second half of the session.

In the remaining five weeks of the session and through the wrap up session in late April, every single significant issue is unresolved, available for action, negotiations, and old-fashioned trading. The upcoming weeks will be very complex. The issues that will take center stage include tax policy, a constitutional amendment that gives the Legislature more control over administrative rules and regulations, prohibiting the Medicaid agency from making changes to the Medicaid program through December 2024, APRN scope of practice, and vaccine policy.

The issue Oral Health Kansas has been working hard on this year is extending Medicaid dental coverage to adults. That issue remains in play as both the House Appropriations and Senate Public Health and Welfare Committees included recommending extending dental coverage to adults in their budgets. The budget process that includes adult dental coverage will continue in mid-March and may conclude by early April. We will keep you informed as the budget process continues and notify you when and if additional advocacy is needed.

If your organization would like to sign on as a supporter of extending Medicaid dental care to adults, [please click on this link to add your organization's name](#). A list of all the organizations that have signed up to support adult dental coverage is on [our website](#). If you have any questions about the legislative session and current policy debates, please reach out to us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.



Let's Talk About Water!

Why water? Water makes children healthier by helping their muscles, joints, and tissues, improving their digestive system and keeping their growing bodies hydrated. The [Thirsty for Health](#) team will be having a virtual focus group for the community in the Topeka

Public School area. If you are a parent, teacher, student, family member (the list goes on!) and would like to come talk with us about water in schools, anyone is welcome!

Dates: Tuesday March 15th 5 - 6pm or 6 - 7pm
Tuesday April 12th 5 - 6pm or 6 - 7pm

Location: This will be a **Zoom meeting**. Links will be sent to people who register.

Only attend one session.

All attendees will get a Walmart gift card! Click [here](#) to sign up!



OHK Returns to Exhibiting in Person

Kathy Hunt, OHK's Dental Program Director, provided an exhibit at the 40th Annual Kansas Division for Early Childhood Conference in Wichita last week. KDEC promotes the education of young children with exceptional needs and encourages and promotes professional growth and research as a means of better understanding the unique needs related to young exceptional children. Kathy shared oral health resources we have developed for this population as well as engaging participants with our sugary drink display and dental acid attack demonstration. Kathy enjoyed visiting with participants and being able to have conversations with people face to face again!



Remembering Steve Coen

We were saddened to hear of the passing of our friend, Steve Coen. Steve served as the President and CEO of the Kansas Health Foundation from 2008 until his retirement in 2019. He invested in Kansas communities to improve the health of all people, and he prioritized oral health through advocacy, public health, and service delivery. Steve was a dynamic leader who inspired countless Kansans. We appreciated his support of our organization and the issues we fight for. [Steve passed away on February 25.](#) We send our thoughts and prayers to his family.



Celebrating National Nutrition Month

March is National Nutrition Month! Oral Health Kansas along with the Kansas Head Start Association have been advocating for the importance of healthy meals in schools. Last month we visited with Senator Jerry Moran's staff about the importance of the Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) legislation. This is a federal law that

includes the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program and other child nutrition programs.

Children consume a third to half of their daily calories at school, so making sure those meals include whole grains, fruits, and vegetables is good for their health and their ability to be ready to learn. Healthy foods lead to healthy and successful students, well into adulthood. We will continue to meet with our Congressional delegation throughout this month to discuss the importance of CNR.



Upcoming Events

- **Webinar: Improving Racial Equity in Kansas: A Three-Part Series Examining the Commission on Racial Equity and Justice's Final Recommendations** (this is the last of the series), March 10, 12:00pm-1:00pm, RSVP at [Healthfund.org](https://www.healthfund.org)
- **Kansas Mission of Mercy**, March 25-26 in Hays, Kansas. If you want to volunteer, you must [register](#). For patient

information, click [here](#).



We are pleased to welcome Trina Morgan to the Oral Health Kansas Board of Directors. Trina serves as the West Region Assistant Director for Healthy Families at Kansas Children's Service League. She was in [Dental Champion Class IX](#),



serves on our Conference Planning Committee member, and led a panel discussion at last year's Conference on Oral Health. Trina understands the importance of good oral health and teaches parents about how to prioritize oral health at the home and the importance of everyone having a dental home. She is also a mother of two adult sons who utilize special care dentistry. We are looking forward to having Trina as a board member!



Sugary Drink Display Sanitation

Out of an abundance of caution, we are suspending use of the Sugary Drink Display until further notice.

During this time, hand washing and social distancing is on everyone's mind. We want everyone to have the comfort of knowing we sanitize our sugary drink displays. They are wiped down and cleaned off after they have been returned.



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