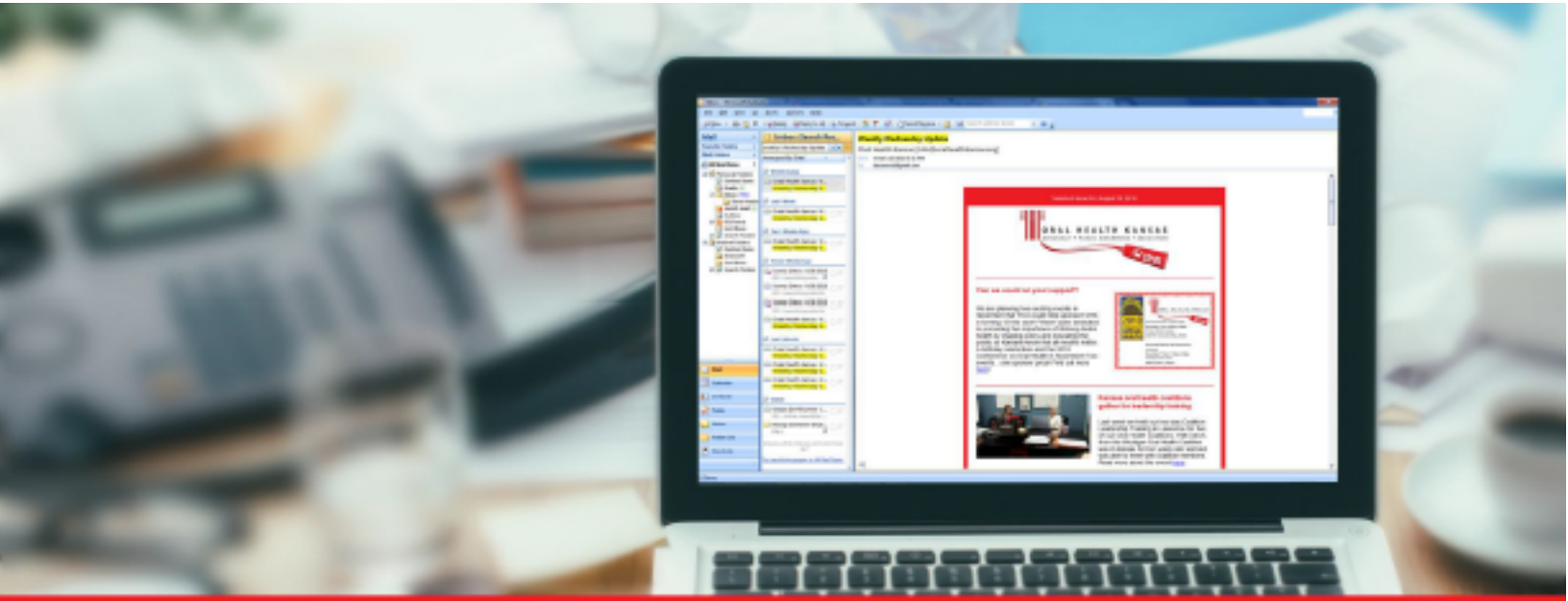




**ORAL HEALTH KANSAS**  
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION



## 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 9, 2022

Volume 13, Issue 10

## Three Lessons in Oral Health

CareQuest Institute's Vice President of Grant Strategy Dr. Michael Monopoli penned an article for *Dentistry Today* that outlines three opportunities in the oral health community as we begin 2022.

First, inequities in access to oral health and oral health status remain stark, especially for people of color and people living in poverty. The cost to access dental care is a major factor in



Mike Monopoli  
picture courtesy of  
CareQuest Institute for Oral Health

these inequities. Second, the use of teledentistry that began during the early days of the pandemic have shown that it is a valuable tool for both providers and patients. The possibilities that come along with using teledentistry can be a game changer. Third, strengthening dental benefits is key. While Congress has yet to enact a Medicare dental benefit, it got closer to doing so in 2022 than at anytime in the past. Many states, including Kansas, are working hard to extend Medicaid dental coverage to adults.

The momentum on all these issues is swinging in the right direction, and Dr. Monopoli shares new resources and new insight about each. [Read more in the full article.](#)



## Women Dentists in the Workforce

In most instances, we feel more comfortable when we have a provider that looks similar to us. Whether someone is the same gender or the same race, it's helpful to feel that person can relate to us and that includes having more female dentists for female patients. "Dental school enrollment is now 50-50 gender split, so that is the

main reason why we are seeing more dentists who are women in the workforce," said Marko Vujcic, Ph.D., chief economist and vice president of the American Dental Association Health Policy Institute. "The gender shift is not unique to dentistry at all. In fact, the majority of the U.S. labor force is now women."

Data from the Health Policy Institute show the percentage of dental school graduates who are women grew from 46% to 50.6% between 2009 and 2019 and the percentage of dentists in the workforce who are women grew from 24.1% to 34.5% between 2010 and 2020 and it's going to continue to grow! Click [here](#) to read more about this story.

## Spots Still Available

If you are in the Topeka Public School area participate in one of our virtual focus groups and receive a Walmart gift card. 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](#) and learn how to sign up!



## Child Dental Services at Kansas Mission of Mercy

The Kansas Mission of Mercy (KMOM) will be held on March 25 and 26th at the Ellis County Fairgrounds in Hays. This is a great opportunity for families that have not been able to access dental care. This event is for kids and adults. Children are granted the special privilege to receive an "arrival time" to see a pediatric dentist to avoid having to wait in line for treatment. [You can find more information at this link](#). For adults, services are first come, first served and ALL patients must be able to wait in line - no appointments. Click [here](#) for more patient information.



## ADHA Apologizes to Communities of Color

In a letter issued to the National Dental Hygienists' Association (NDHA), American Dental Hygienists Association (ADHA) acknowledges that the founding of NDHA by African American dental hygienists was necessary due to opportunities denied to them by ADHA. The apology is part of the ADHA's strategic planning ahead of its 100th anniversary. The 2020-2023 ADHA Strategic Plan includes diversity and inclusion as one of their four core values. Read the letter [here](#).



## Upcoming Events

- **Webinar:**The Changing Dentist Workforce, March 9 at 12:00pm. Register [here](#).
- **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](http://Healthfund.org)

- **Webinar:** Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Maternal Health: Challenges and Opportunities, March 16, 12:00pm-1:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- **Kansas Mission of Mercy**, March 25-26 in Hays, Kansas. If you want to volunteer, you must [register](#). For patient information, click [here](#).



Tami Allen is one of our new board members this year. Tami works for Families Together Inc. as the Co-Executive Director and Project Director for the Family-to-Family Health center serving families who have



children with special health care needs. She has been a part of our Dental Homes for Kids initiative over the past two years and was a presenter at the 2021 Conference on Oral Health. We are happy to have Tami on our board and looking forward to the continued collaboration with Families Together.



## 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.



## Follow Us



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