



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](#).

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[Weekly Wednesday Update.](#)

Dental Compact Goes into Effect!

Earlier this month Governor Kelly signed the bill that will enable Kansas to join a new interstate compact for dentists and dental hygienists. Kansas was the sixth state to enact the dental interstate compact law, and yesterday Maine became the seventh. Now that seven states have enacted the legislation, the compact can go into effect. This means that dental licensure portability for dentists and hygienists is now possible for states that participate in



the compact.

Kansas joins Iowa, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Maine as the first states in the compact. Several other states have legislation pending. [This map](#) shows the current status of all states.

The [Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact](#) is the result of a collaboration between the Council of State Governments, American Dental Association, and American Dental Hygiene Association. Oral Health Kansas proudly [presented testimony](#) in support of the legislation this year.

The work to set up the Compact begins now. Once it is active, licensed dentists and dental hygienists will be able to apply for a compact privilege to practice in any participating state, rather than obtaining an individual license in every state they want to practice.

We will follow the progress as the Compact is set up and keep you informed. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.



City of Abilene Loses Fluoridation

On Monday of this week the Abilene City Commission voted to stop adjusting the level of fluoride in the water to the optimal level. The 3-2 decision means over 6,100 residents of the central Kansas community will not have access to optimally fluoridated water.

Oral Health Kansas joined with many other state and national organizations, including the Kansas Dental Association, CDC and American Fluoridation Society, in sending letters to the County Commissioners asking them to preserve the ordinance that has been keeping Abilene residents healthy for over a quarter of a century.

Dr. Beatrice Brittan spoke at the City Commission meeting urging Commissioners to keep adjusting the fluoridation level. According to the [Abilene Reflector-Chronicle](#), Brittan said, "This decision will be costly and painful. Not metaphorically painful - unnecessarily, physically painful for people and kids who will end up with more advanced dental problems. It will also create new financial burdens for families. It costs \$4,400 to fluoridate our water annually. That's less than \$0.70 per citizen each year. Dental work is much more expensive."

Community water fluoridation has been in use for nearly 80 years and was named by the CDC one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century. Abilene has been fluoridating its water since 1997. All water has fluoride in it, but most water sources need to have a slight adjustment to get to the optimal level of 0.7 ppm (parts per million). People experience lower rates of tooth decay when they have access to optimally fluoridated water along with fluoride toothpaste. The [CDC](#) and [ADA](#) have valuable information about the importance and benefits of community water fluoridation.



OHK on the National Stage

The [National Oral Health Conference](#) is the annual national dental public health conference, and it was in St. Louis this year. Tanya, Kathy, and MaryAnne were active participants in the

meeting.

- Tanya was on a panel presentation entitled, “**Disability Justice in Oral Health: Utilizing Collaboration and Community Engagement for Effective Solutions.**” She discussed our Pathways to Oral Health team, Sedation Dental Care Task Force, [Dental Passport](#), Project Accessible Oral Health, and much more. Several people from around the country connected later to learn more about our work.
- Tanya helped organize and facilitate parts of the annual meeting of the [American Network of Oral Health Coalitions](#), including hosting a table about state oral health coalitions in the exhibit hall for three days.
- Kathy was asked to share her experiences in non-clinical dental hygiene roles at a preconference session. She specifically described her role in the work Oral Health Kansas is doing in [medical dental integration](#) through the Begin with a Grin program and 100 Million Mouths Campaign.
- Kathy was also asked by the [100 Million Mouths Campaign](#) leadership to share her experiences in their session as the state champion in Kansas.
- Kathy also led a roundtable around her work with the [Head Start Dental Hygienist Liaison Project](#).
- MaryAnne, alongside Dr. David Albert from Columbia University, led a round table exploring caries risk assessment and **caries risk-based management** in young children through the lens of a pilot study she is conducting at Columbia University.



Sponsor the Conference on Oral Health



We wanted to say thank you to the organizations that have already signed up to sponsor our 2024 Conference on Oral Health! [Delta Dental of Kansas](#) - Platinum

[Health Forward Foundation](#) - Gold

[Aetna Better Health of Kansas](#) - Silver

[Sunflower Health Plan](#) - Bronze

The conference will be held on Friday, November 8 at the beautiful Kansas State University Olathe Campus. We have sponsorship opportunities and exhibitor spots available. Click [here](#) to check out the options.



April is Oral Cancer Awareness Month

April is Oral Cancer Awareness Month, also known as mouth cancer. Oral cancer can happen on the lips, tongue, cheeks, mouth, sinuses and throat. People at any age can have oral cancer, but it happens the most in people over the age of 45. Men have twice the risk for oral cancer than women do. DentaQuest provided a list of signs you can look for:

- A sore on the lip or in the mouth that won't heal
- A lump on lip or in the mouth or throat
- A white or red patch on the gums, tongue, or other area in the mouth
- Unusual bleeding, pain, or numbness in the mouth
- A sore throat that won't go away
- The feeling that something is caught in the throat
- Pain with chewing or swallowing, or having a hard time chewing or swallowing
- A swelling of the jaw
- A change in your voice
- Ear pain

Oral cancer is caused by changes or mutations in the DNA of the cells that make up your oral cavity. These changes cause them to multiply uncontrollably and spread. Sometimes these

changes occur for no reason. Click [here](#) to read a list of possible risk factors. The best way to check for oral cancer is to visit your dental professional. Having regular check ups can prevent issues that may arise. Oral Health Kansas has a short [Oral Cancer Tip and Trick](#) handout with more information. Find it [here](#) in Spanish.



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](#).
- Alliance for a Healthy Kansas monthly meetings, [Events | Alliance for a Healthy Kansas 2022 \(expandkancare.com\)](#)
- **Webinar:** Exploring the Myths and Misconceptions about Oral Health and Pregnancy, April 25 at 6:30pm CST. Register [here](#).
- **Webinar:** The Role of Local Public Health in Community Water Fluoridation, Friday, May 3, 12:00pm-1:30pm. Click [here](#) to register.
- **Save the date!** 2024 Conference on Oral Health will be Friday, November 8 at the Kansas State Olathe Campus, 22201 W Innovation Dr., Olathe, KS.

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



Congratulations to Sonja Armbruster, former Oral Health Kansas (OHK) Board President and Dental Champions Class 5 alumni who was recently awarded the Fredrickson Lifetime Commitment to Public Health award. She is the perfect example of someone working tirelessly to find solutions for Kansans to stay healthy!



She continues to stay engaged with OHK and sits on the Conference Planning Committee and Advocacy Committee.



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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