



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.**



Denture Coverage Becomes Law

On April 20, Governor Laura Kelly signed the budget bill for state fiscal year 2024. The bill contains \$1.2 million to extend the Medicaid adult dental benefits to include denture coverage. Oral Health Kansas and a [coalition of over two dozen organizations](#) advocated with the 2023

Legislature to add denture coverage to the state's [new Medicaid adult dental benefits](#). This coverage inches Kansas closer to comprehensive dental coverage for adults.

Last week Oral Health Kansas [provided testimony](#) for the KanCare (Medicaid) Oversight Committee thanking the Legislature for their support of including denture coverage in the state's adult dental benefits. During that hearing the Committee also discussed the state's approval of the new [Dental Passport](#) for people with disabilities. Oral Health Kansas has led the Pathways to Oral Health stakeholder team in developing the Dental Passport. Look for news in the coming weeks about how the Passport is being distributed across the state.

The Governor's and Legislature's steady improvements in the Medicaid dental program over the past few years is making a difference for Kansans. In the first six months the fillings and periodontal benefits were in effect, over \$1.1 million was spent on dental care. We look forward to working with stakeholders as the new denture benefit is implemented on July 1, and we will be sharing educational materials about these new services in the coming weeks and months.



OHK Attends National Oral Health Conference

Three OHK staff and one board member participated in the [National Oral Health Conference](#) in Orlando April 16-19. Dental Program Director, Kathy Hunt, gave a very popular round table presentation about the Head Start

Dental Hygienist Liaison program, and Executive Director, Tanya Dorf Brunner, gave a presentation about the roles and services provided by state oral health coalitions. Medicaid Projects Manager Dr. MaryAnne Lynch Small and Board Vice President Dr. Nick Rogers both attended the conference for the first time.

In addition to our presentations, Oral Health Kansas got a couple of shout outs during the conference. We're excited to share them with you! During a roundtable presentation by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) about [Brush Book Bed](#), Oral Health Kansas' work on this project was mentioned. Also during a separate presentation by CareQuest Institute on Medicaid adult dental benefits, there was one slide just about Kansas' progress in this area and a quote from Executive Director, Tanya Dorf Brunner, about the value of the new [Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage Checker](#).

We not only enjoyed the time we spent learning from other coalitions around the state, we also were pleased to hear our work being shared at a national conference!



We thank you!

Celebrating Volunteer Month

During the month of April we celebrate National Volunteer Month. We appreciate our Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition members and OHK Board of Directors for giving their time and energy to help us work towards improving oral health for all Kansans.

The Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition continues to work on the Brush Book Bed program in Topeka as well as host exhibits and share resources at different community events. If you are in the Topeka area and would be interested in joining, they meet quarterly through Zoom over the lunch hour. Email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.

Our board of directors meets this Friday for our first in person board meeting of the year. We'll be traveling to Arkansas City and are eager to hold our meeting at the historical [Burford Theatre](#). This is a busy time of year and we appreciate our board members taking time out of their schedules to be there to learn more about the south central Kansas community and its unique needs and assets.



Oral Cancer Awareness Month

April is Oral Cancer Awareness Month. During this month we highlight the importance of seeing your dental professional so that issues do not go undetected. Your mouth is one of your body's most important early warning systems. Don't ignore suspicious lumps or sores. If you see something in your mouth that looks unusual, make an appointment. Early treatment may be the key to a full recovery.

What are some factors that contribute to risk?

- Cigarette smoking is the single largest risk factor for cancer, including head and neck cancer.
- Alcohol and tobacco are risk factors and using them in combination increases the risk 15 times more than the use of only one.

- Other factors such as poor oral hygiene, infectious diseases and poor nutrition can also play a part.

For more information, view [OHK's Tips and Tricks on Oral Cancer](#). The American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons also provides [information to raise awareness](#).



Help Shape Future Educational Offerings

[Kansas Health Institute \(KHI\)](#) is dedicated to providing high-quality education and training opportunities on a wide range of topics to professionals and community members. Our goal is to build the capacity necessary to improve community health and enable informed, quality decision-making. We offer classes both virtually and in-person at our Learning Center, directly across from the Kansas Statehouse. We also can visit communities throughout Kansas to provide training and education.

To expand our offerings, we seek feedback on topics, formats, and scheduling for relevant and engaging educational programs. Please take our [10-minute survey](#) to share your insights and help shape KHI's educational offerings. On behalf of KHI, we sincerely appreciate your time and contribution to this effort. Your perspective is essential as we strive to improve community health through knowledge and education.



Save the Date

The Conference on Oral Health will be held on Friday, October 27 at the KU Edwards Camps. The event will be in person and virtual. We'll keep you updated with details.



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.
- **Webinar:** Strategies for Treating Autistic Individuals, April 27 at 6pm CST. Register [here](#).
- **Facebook Live:** Emerging Practices in Promoting Health Equity, April 27, 3:00pm-4:00pm CST. [Follow OMH on Facebook](#) for more updates and to join in on the conversation.
- Kansas Community Health Worker Symposium, June 13, 9am-4pm in Wichita. Register [here](#).



Congratulations to [Swope Health](#) for receiving the "Reaching Out for Excellence in Dental Health" award! The award was presented by University of Missouri-Kansas City Dental Hygiene Alumni Association. The

award is given to honor a person(s) or organization(s) who has/have had a positive impact on the community through their time and extraordinary commitment. Dental Champion Class 9, Shawn Oprisiu is the Director of Dental Outreach at Swope Health. Hats off to Shawn and her colleagues for their hard work!



Sugary Drink Display

We have Adult and Children's Sugary Drink Displays available for reservations. 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!

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