

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.**

My Dental Passport Goes National

Kathy Hunt and MaryAnne Lynch Small have been selected to present the work of our very own "Pathways to Oral Health" team at the [National Network for Oral Health Access \(NNOHA\)](#) conference in Denver, Colorado, this coming fall. Recognized by NNOHA as a national issue, 6.5 million Americans with disabilities do not have access to high quality oral healthcare, making it the number one healthcare need for this population. Since 2019, Pathways to Oral



My Dental Care Passport

For users: This passport is unique to you. Please fill out all information that you think is important.

For my dentist or healthcare provider: This is key reading for all staff working with me. It gives important information about how I can be supported when visiting your clinic. This passport should be kept visible and used when you talk to me or have a question about me.

Please check the box that applies:
☐ I completed this form myself ☐ I completed this form with help from someone else

This form was completed with help from:
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 E-mail: _____

ABOUT ME

My name is:
 I like to be called: _____
 Nickname if you have one: _____

I am: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Transgender Male ☐ Transgender Female
☐ Variant/Non-conforming ☐ Not listed: _____

My preferred pronoun is:
☐ He ☐ She ☐ They ☐ Ze ☐ Not listed: _____ ☐ No preference

Health, formerly “Dental Homes for Kids,” have been building a multisectoral team to uncover barriers and implement solutions to overcome this inequity.

As the NNOHA audience are taken on a journey of all things Pathways to Oral Health, a key area will be our most recently updated tool, “My Dental Care Passport.” The Dental Passport was designed to improve the communication between people with disabilities and the dental team by allowing passport users, and their families and caregivers, to share what is most important to

them before they even enter the dental office. Sharing information such as what has worked well at the dental office in the past, what parts of the appointment may be most challenging, and specific likes and dislikes, can help the dental team better prepare for a successful dental visit and further, increase the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of healthcare teams across the nation for the better.

Titled “Smiles Without Barriers: Enhancing Dental Care for People with Disabilities,” the session will highlight some of the oral healthcare barriers faced by people with disabilities and, by taking the NNOHA audience on a journey of all things Pathways to Oral Health, offer actionable steps for participants to make positive change in their own community.

My Dental Care Passport is available in English and Spanish at:

<http://www.oralhealthkansas.org/DentalPassport.html>



Dental Diversity Month

June is Dental Diversity Month, and it gives us an opportunity to highlight the importance of diversity and inclusion within the dental profession. Improving diversity in the dental profession helps address disparities in oral healthcare and improves access to dental services for underserved communities. [Recent research](#) from the American Dental Association’s Health Policy Institute

demonstrates that the diversity of the dentist workforce in the U.S. is not in proportion to the diversity of the U.S. population. For example, in 2020 12.4% of the U.S. population was Black, but only 3.8% of the dentist workforce was Black. This research also shows that dentists who are Black are more likely to participate in Medicaid. The under-representation of people of color in the dental profession has an impact on people visiting the dentist, establishing dental

homes, and being able to afford dental care.

An April 2022 article in *Health Affairs* entitled “[Oral Health Equity Cannot Be Achieved Without Racial Equity](#)” was co-authored by former Conference on Oral Health presenter Dr. Eleanor Fleming. In this article the authors point out, “Diversity in the dental workforce is an important component of efforts to mitigate systemic racism.” The authors outline a number of policy and practice changes that can bend the arc toward oral health equity, including expanding access to dental care for adults enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare.

Dental schools across the country are working to improve the diversity of the dental workforce. The University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry is preparing to start a student chapter of the [National Dental Association](#). Dental schools, including Creighton University School of Dentistry in Nebraska also host student chapters of the [Hispanic Dental Association](#). Organizations like [GEHA Solutions](#) are investing in scholarships at UMKC School of Dentistry and through [BrownGirl, RDH](#) to increase diversity in the dental professions. Much work is being done to increase diversity, and much work is left to be done. Contact Oral Health Kansas at info@oralhealthkansas.org if you are interested in helping us advocate to begin tracking the diversity of the Kansas dental workforce.



Men's Health Month

June is Men's Health Month and with Father's Day coming up this weekend, it's the perfect opportunity to remind the men in our lives to take care of their health! Data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey for the 2017 - 2018 cycle was used to explore the relationship between males and females and their

oral health. The [findings](#) showed that males tended to have fewer dental visits, worse perception of their gum and tooth health, poorer flossing habits, and more root caries. For women, 8% more women brushed their teeth twice a day and were 26% more likely to floss daily compared to men.

How do you approach someone about their oral health? Easy! Oral health is part of your overall health and it's just as important to have good oral health as it is a healthy body! What we put into our mouths can affect our entire body. Talk to all of your friends and family about healthy foods and drinks. Refer to our [Tips and Tricks](#) for useful information on sugary drinks, healthy eating habits, and even flossing.

Did you know?

- One 12 oz. bottle of sugary soda contains the daily allowance of added sugar for most adults.
- Using a straw can help keep the sugar away from your teeth.
- It takes less than five minutes a day to keep your teeth healthy! Brush at least two times a day for two minutes.
- Flossing helps fight tooth decay, reduces gum disease and helps with bad breath.
- You should enjoy a dessert! If you eat sweets as desserts immediately after a meal instead of waiting to snack on sweets in between meals you will experience less tooth decay.

Find more resources on our [website](#).



Kansas State Loan Repayment Program

Kansas offers multiple programs designed to provide financial assistance to current and prospective healthcare professionals working in an underserved area within the state. Programs like the [Kansas State Loan Repayment Program](#) are open to medical, dental, and behavioral healthcare professionals. The state program offers a quarterly application schedule, the deadline for the upcoming application cycle is October 1, 2023. For questions or technical assistance, visit their website or contact [Ashley Templin](#), Workforce Program Analyst, KS Office of Primary Care & Rural Health.



Special Food Offer for Seniors

Local farmers markets, in collaboration with the Kansas Department of Health & Environment (KDHE), will offer \$50 coupons to Kansans over age 60 through the Kansas Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. Coupons are also available for Kansas Indian Tribal Organizations whose members are 55

and over.

Hurry to apply as the coupons are offered on a first come first serve basis. They can be used to purchase local fruits, vegetables, honey, and cut herbs. To apply, older adults must fill out an application through their nearest Local Distribution Agency by using the [interactive map](#). If someone does not have access to the internet they can call 785-291-3742 for assistance.



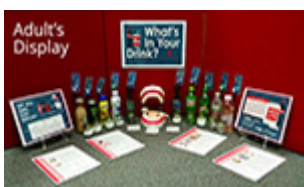
Upcoming Events

- Course: An Introduction to Value-Based Care in Oral Health: Moving from Volume to Value, 1 CE. Click [here](#) for the course information.
 - **Webinar:** A Deep Dive into Preventing Caries, June 15 at 6:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
 - **Webinar:** The Heartbeat of Dentistry: Integrating CV Screening and Wellness Checks in Dental Visits, June 26 at 12:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
 - Community Care Network of Kansas conference, October 4-6, in Lawrence. Learn more [here](#).
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The Thirsty for Health team exhibited at the United School Administrators of Kansas (USA Kansas) convention in Wichita. The

team visited with 90 school administrators and discussed the importance of water bottle filling stations in schools as the best way to keep Kansas students healthy and hydrated during the school day. This was the second year the Thirsty for Health team participated, and it was fun to see so many administrators again.



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!

Follow Us



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