



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

Advocates Present at Dental Leadership Conference

Oral healthcare is the number one unmet healthcare need for individuals with disabilities. However, what does this mean in reality for people with disabilities and their families? And how can we make dental care more accessible?

Advocates and Lived Experience Advisory Group members Tammy Vicin, Jim Woods, Melanie Jacobs, Skylar Schwindt, and Tami Allen, alongside Oral Health Kansas' MaryAnne, were



excited to explore these questions and more during their panel presentation at the Community Care Network Dental Leadership Conference in Wichita last week. MaryAnne and Kathy hosted an exhibit and were delighted to visit with dental leaders and share all things Oral Health Kansas, including [My Dental Care Passport](#), oral hygiene [adaptive aids resources](#), and recent [Medicaid adult dental benefit](#) updates.

The platform to share lived experience and engage with dental leaders from across Kansas and neighboring Nebraska and Iowa on policy, education and communication barriers stifling dental providers' abilities to provide such care affirms how together, we can navigate and overcome the complex barriers to equitable dental care access for individuals with disabilities.

We appreciate Community Care Network giving us the opportunity to share our stories and resources and all the dental teams striving to both make dental care and the dental visit experience accessible for individuals with disabilities.



Oral Health Kansas Sponsors Team Smile Event

Oral Health Kansas (OHK) along with CareSource sponsored Team Smile event in Kansas on June 18. The event was held at the Kansas City Monarchs baseball field. Over 100 children from area Boys and Girls clubs were seen receiving dental services, dancing, running the bases, and talking with OHK staff about sugar in the drinks

they consume. The children were really surprised to see how much sugar is in Gatorade. They were reminded that water is a better option to stay hydrated. Kids enjoyed brushing the teeth of Maji Dragon and showing OHK staff how they brush their own teeth.

Thank you to all the volunteers that tackled the heat and thank you CareSource and Team Smile for the partnership and the opportunity to provide free dental services to children.



Abilene's Fluoridation Success Recognized by the ADA

This month the ADA News shared the story of Abilene, Kansas, reinstating its practice of community water fluoridation in a story entitled, "[A tale of two cities, both successful in keeping water fluoridation.](#)" The Abilene City Commission's decision to stop fluoridation in April and then reinstate in May was highlighted along with a similar story in McVille, North Dakota. Oral Health Kansas, Kansas Dental Association, and Abilene dentist Dr. Bea Brittan were featured in the story about communities' success in preserving the longstanding practice of providing optimally fluoridated water for their residents.



You're Invited!

This year's Conference on Oral Health will be on Friday, November 8 at the Kansas State University Olathe Campus. We invite you to come exhibit! At our conference, we include a generous amount of time for attendees to visit exhibitors because we want them to learn from you and ask questions that they may not have the chance to do otherwise.

One of the benefits as an exhibitor, you can attend all sessions and all meals throughout the day! See what last year's exhibitor said:

"I was able to meet providers and vendors who I may otherwise not get to meet. Listening to the speakers brought new information to light and was very informative."

If you can't exhibit, that's not a problem because we also have sponsorship opportunities available! [Click here to learn more!](#)

Exhibitor space is limited! The deadline to exhibit or sponsor is October 25 but if spots fill up sooner, we will close sign ups!



Pride Month and Your Oral Health

June is Pride Month which commemorates the 1969 Stonewall Uprising in New York and celebrates the LGBTQ community and the fight for equal rights. It's also a time to educate communities on the inequities people in the LGBTQ community experience. Fear of discrimination can deter LGBTQ people from seeking regular dental check-ups and treatment. Dental practices can create welcoming environments for LGBTQ patients, including non-discriminatory policies and inclusive language or having visible signs of support such as LGBTQ friendly materials or symbols on display. [My Dental](#)

[Care Passport](#) is a useful resources for someone to fill out information about themselves, including gender and preferred pronouns before their dental appointment. An excellent way for dental providers to connect with their patient.

Higher prevalence of smoking, alcohol use, and recreational drug use in some LGBTQ subgroups can lead to oral health issues such as gum disease, tooth decay, and oral cancer. It's important to provide [education on smoking](#), alcohol or drug use as well as the importance of maintaining their oral health. Allowing open communication for patients to ask questions and be heard can create positive, healthy behaviors.

Addressing oral health in the LGBTQ community requires a multifaceted approach that includes education, access to care, and addressing underlying social determinants of health. By creating inclusive environments and providing tailored care, dental professionals can help reduce oral health disparities and improve overall health outcomes for LGBTQ individuals.



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](#).
- Community Care Network of Kansas and the Health Center Association of Nebraska (HCAN) are co-hosting the second annual two-day Dental Clinic Leadership Conference, June 13 - June 14. Register [here](#).

- Webinar: Strategies Focusing on IDD Patients within the Dental Clinic Webinar Series, Centers for Inclusive Dentistry Immersion Program, NYU's Part in Closing the Healthcare Gaps for Individuals with Disabilities, July 2. 12:00pm -1:00pm. Register [here](#).
- Supporting Dental Health Care Coordination for Individuals Dually Eligible for Medicare and Medicaid, July 15, 1:30pm - 3:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- OPEN's Advocacy Assembly: Oral Health on the 2024 Ballot, July 17, 11:00 - 2:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- **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.



Pattie Mansur, Health Policy Director with REACH Healthcare Foundation, has announced her departure from REACH. We have worked with Pattie many times

throughout the years and she has been an active health care advocate! We wish you success in your next journey, Pattie!



Picture courtesy of REACH Healthcare Foundation



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!

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