



## 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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## 2022 Dental Champion Award Winner

In 2022, Davette McCoy, RDH, received the 2022 Ron Alexander Outstanding Dental Champion award. She was nominated by one of her students for the work she does to encourage dental hygiene students to work in a public health setting. She is an ECP-III dental hygienist, a Dental Champion, and member of the Kansas Dental Board as well as Oral Health Kansas board member. And if you can imagine, she is also an author and has written a Children's book



called, “Goodnight Teeth: A Nighttime Brush Book”. Davette is a valuable asset to the oral health community!

If you want to nominate someone for the [Ron Alexander Outstanding Dental Champion award](#) or the [Excellence in Oral Health award](#), the deadline to submit nominations is Monday, September 23rd at 5:00pm. Awards winners will be honored during the Conference on Oral Health on Friday, November 8 at the Kansas State University Olathe Campus. One award will be awarded in each category and we ask that you look at [previous award winners](#) to make sure you don’t duplicate past award winners.



## Legislature to Study Sedation Dental Care

Last week the Legislative Coordinating Council approved an interim study on sedation dental care. This is the first legislative interim study on a dental issue in many years. Rep. Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado), winner of the 2020 Oral Health Kansas’ Outstanding Policymaker Award, requested the

study and has been a champion of addressing unmet dental needs for underserved populations in Kansas.

When the Kansas Legislature adjourns in May each year they are done with official business for the year, but they use the summer and fall as an opportunity to look at a few issues in more depth. These “interim” studies offer legislators the chance to have more detailed discussions about issues, such as sedation dental care, and then make recommendations for the Legislature to consider the next year.

Oral Health Kansas is happy to see this important and challenging issue on the Legislature’s agenda, and we look forward to the committee discussions. We will share more information about the meeting, including the date, as soon as it is available. Contact us at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org) with any questions.



## National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

July is National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month! This annual observance raises awareness about the unique challenges that affect the mental health of racial and ethnic minority and American Indian/Alaska

Native (AI/AN) populations.

This year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH) is focusing on improving mental health outcomes for racial and ethnic minority and AI/AN communities through its 2024 theme, [Be the Source for Better Health: Improving Health Outcomes Through Our Cultures, Communities, and Connections](#). This theme calls on each of us to better understand how the unique environments, cultures, histories, and circumstances (known as social determinants of health, or “SDOH”) of racial and ethnic minority and [AI/AN](#) populations impact their mental health and can also impact their oral health.

Although the oral health of AI/AN adults has shown improvement, they are more likely to have severe periodontal disease than the general U.S. population, with twice the prevalence. Some factors that can affect their oral health because of one’s mental health are:

- **Stress and Anxiety:** High stress and anxiety levels can lead to teeth grinding (bruxism) and jaw clenching, resulting in dental problems such as tooth wear, fractures, and temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders.
- **Depression:** Individuals with depression may neglect oral hygiene, leading to an increased risk of dental caries, gum disease, and other oral health issues.
- **Medications:** Some medications for mental health conditions can cause dry mouth (xerostomia), increasing the risk of tooth decay and gum disease.

How can we help? Healthcare providers should be trained to deliver culturally sensitive care that addresses the specific needs and concerns of minority patients. Community-specific delivery of messages and the community context within which individuals reside may modify their capacity for behavior change.

## 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](#).
- **Webinar:** Whole Person Care: Interdisciplinary Medical and Oral Health, August 6, 2024 from 12:00pm - 1:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- **Webinar:** Through the AI Lens: Exploring the Impact of Artificial Intelligence and Augmented Intelligence on Dental Public Health, August 13 from 2:00pm-3:00pm 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. Registration opens in August!

If you would like to add your event to this list, email [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org).



Last week Oral Health Kansas had the chance to share our resources with participants at the Kansas Poverty Conference. Executive Director Tanya Dorf Brunner

presented a session in which she introduced our work to make dental care more accessible through Medicaid, especially through the new adult dental benefits. The attendees had a lively and productive conversation about advocacy strategies, educational resources for consumers, and ways to work together.

Thank you to the Kansas Association of Community Action Programs for including us in the agenda this year!





## 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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