

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.

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Adult Dental Benefits Official

The new Kansas Medicaid adult dental benefits went into effect on Friday, July 1. There are many logistics still to be worked out between the managed care organizations and dental providers, so access to the services may not be available yet. Oral Health Kansas is working to identify

the next steps in implementation, including understanding how providers can use the new codes and how consumers can access the services. The scope of service will include fillings and crowns, as well as periodontal treatment. The managed care organizations (Aetna Better Health of Kansas, Sunflower Health Plan, and United Healthcare) will continue to cover exams and cleanings through their value-added benefits.

We will keep our readers informed as we learn more, and we will be sharing tools and guidance on our [adult dental webpage](#) as they become available. In the meantime, if anyone has a question, we will do our best to find the answer. Your questions can help us create a valuable list of Frequently Asked Questions. Please contact us at info@oralhealthkansas.org

Please watch and share our [short video](#) announcing the start of the new dental benefits.



Voter Registration Deadline a Week Away

The Kansas Primary Election is Tuesday, August 2. Lots of races are up for election this year, and every election counts. Every member of the Kansas House of Representatives and the four Kansas Congressional seats are up for election, along with the Governor, Attorney General, State Treasurer, Secretary of State, and Insurance Commissioner.

The deadline to register to vote in the August primary is Tuesday, July 12. Wednesday, July 13 is the first day advance by mail ballots are mailed and the date advance in-person voting may begin.

If you do not know if you are registered to vote, you can check your registration status at this site: <https://www.ksvotes.org/>. This page shows your voting location and includes an application for an advance ballot.

If you need help finding out who the candidates are, following are several helpful resources:

- Find your Kansas House of Representatives district at [Open States](#).
- Learn more about finding your legislators in [Oral Health Kansas' Advocacy Toolkit video](#).
- The [Kansas Secretary of State office](#) maintains the list of all candidates in the 2022 primary and general elections.
- [Ballotpedia](#) includes a list of the candidates for statewide offices.
- [Ballotpedia](#) also has a list of the candidates for the Kansas House of Representatives.



Missouri Medicaid Dental Rates Take an Historic Leap

The Missouri state budget for 2023 includes a significant rate increase for dental services covered by Missouri Medicaid (MO HealthNet). The Missouri Coalition for Oral Health (MCOH), partners and the statewide network of oral health advocates have worked long and hard to achieve this historic change. Congratulations to our colleagues in Missouri on this historic increase which will have a substantial impact on access to dental care for Missourians.

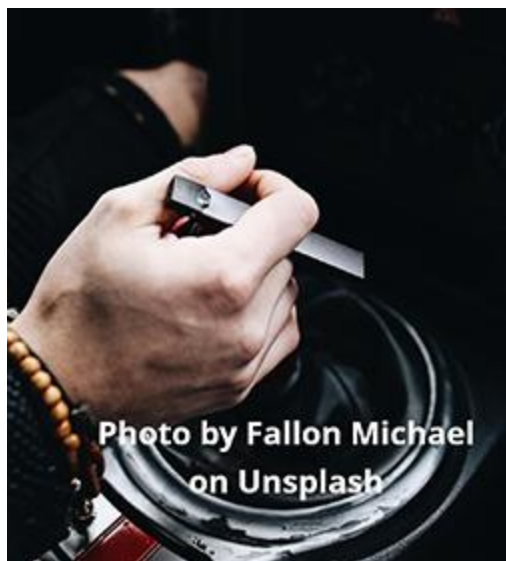
Dental practice participation in MO HealthNet has remained sparse for many years. The low rates are a key factor. MCOH Executive Director, Gary Harbison noted, "We are grateful to Gov. Parson, the Missouri Legislature and the Department of Social Services, MO HealthNet Division, for making this positive change that recognizes the need to increase access to dental care throughout Missouri, particularly in rural areas and for underserved people in urban areas. We will work to achieve an increase in dental provider participation."

The rate increase will set the stage to increase access to dental care throughout Missouri.

Harbison stated, "We know there will be a long road ahead to increase dental practice participation in MO HealthNet." There are many factors that will not make increased participation in MO HealthNet easy to achieve. The pandemic has had a difficult impact on the dental workforce. Many practices, including Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), are reporting they are understaffed. This reduces capacity to take new dental patients. In addition, many practices in Missouri have not worked with MO HealthNet, and many are unfamiliar with the MO HealthNet enrollment process and the claims process.

Harbison noted, "Providers should expect some bumps along the road as they learn to work with MO HealthNet and the managed care plans. MCOH is working collaboratively with our partners and the state to build up our collective capacity to support providers to enroll and work successfully with the MO HealthNet system. We should all expect a learning curve."

Providers can find the new rates [here](#). See the section titled *06/30/22 Public Notice regarding Rate Increases for Fiscal Year 2023 for the Department of Social Services, MO HealthNet Division*. There you can find the [Public Notice](#) and [FY23 Rates for Services Receiving Rate Increases](#). Dental codes and rates are listed on pages 64-70.



FDA's JUUL Ruling Reversed

Yesterday the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reversed a June 23 ruling that stopped JUUL Labs Inc. from marketing their products in the United States. In a June 23 [press release](#), FDA Commissioner Robert M. Califf, MD, said, "Today's action is further progress on the FDA's commitment to ensuring that all e-cigarette and electronic nicotine delivery system products currently being marketed to consumers meet our public health standards. The agency has dedicated significant resources to review products from the companies that

account for most of the U.S. market. We recognize these make up a significant part of the available products and many have played a disproportionate role in the rise in youth vaping."

The FDA was forced to reverse course this week when a federal appeals court temporarily blocked the June 23 ban. According to National Public Radio, "The initial FDA action was part of a sweeping effort by the agency to bring scientific scrutiny to the multibillion-dollar vaping industry after years of regulatory delay." The issue at the center of the FDA's scrutiny is whether JUUL can show that their e-cigarettes benefit public health by proving that adult smokers are more likely to quit or cut back on smoking while teenagers are unlikely to get hooked on smoking.



Upcoming Events

- **Webinar:** The Data-Driven Economic Implications of Veteran Oral Health Health, July 20 at 12 p.m. CST. Register [here](#).
- **Webinar:** A Discussion on Anti-Racism in Dentistry, July 21 at 12 p.m. CST Register [here](#).
- **16th Kansas Disability Caucus** on August 10th - 12th.

Click [here](#) for details.

- **Community Care Network of Kansas** annual conference, October 5-7 in Manhattan, Kansas. Click [here](#) for more information.
- **2022 Conference on Oral Health:** Friday, November 4. Conference will be a hybrid event. Thursday, November 3: Dental Champions Reception.

Dates to remember!

- July 12: Deadline to register to vote in the Primary Election
 - July 13: First day advance by mail ballots are mailed and advance in-person voting may begin
 - July 26: Deadline for votes to apply for advance mail ballot
 - **August 2: Primary Election**
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Congratulations to RADM Tim Ricks on completing his service as the Chief Dental Officer for the U.S. Public Health Service on June 30. In his final newsletter he reflected on his four years in the nation's highest post and said "...there is much

work for us to do. We live in the greatest country on the planet, yet a large portion of our population cannot attain affordable, culturally competent, geographically available, quality oral health care. We must do better and think outside the box about ways to achieve oral health equity for all, integrate oral health and overall health better, and work in unison to achieve our goals to improve health."



Dr. Ricks spoke at the 2019 Conference on Oral Health and has continued to be a friend and mentor to Oral Health Kansas in the intervening years. We are grateful for his service and thank him for leaving us with these thoughts. We hope all our supporters join us in taking up Dr. Ricks' challenge to work in unison to achieve our goals to improve health.



Sugary Drink Display

**Out of an abundance of caution,
we are suspending use of the
Sugary Drink Display until**

further notice.



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