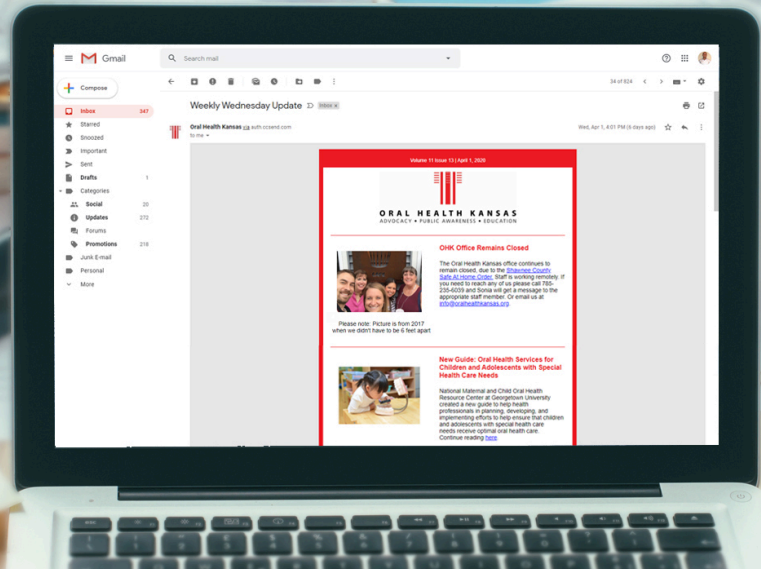




WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATE

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](#).

August 12, 2026

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Scan the QR code



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



Progress on Medicaid Dental Rates and the Work Still Ahead

Yesterday, Executive Director, Brooks Robertson, provided testimony to the Bob Bethell Joint Committee on HCBS and KanCare Oversight Committee. He thanked the committee for the Medicaid dental rate increase and shared how last year's increase has made an impact on dental providers choosing to continue as Medicaid providers or enrolling their practice in Medicaid. A total of 44 new providers have joined Medicaid since the 2025 rate increase went into effect.

Brooks updated the Committee on the plans for the 2026 rate increase to go into effect in October and shared some of feedback providers offered in the rate survey Oral Health Kansas and Kansas Dental Association conducted. Providers indicate rates remain the most pervasive barrier to joining the Medicaid program.

The Committee will meet again in early October, and Oral Health Kansas will share our request for a recommendation to finish the job on the rate increase in 2027.



Behind the Curtain Gave Participants Insight on the Advocacy Process Works

If you attended yesterday's webinar, Behind the Curtain: How Dental Advocacy Creates Change, we hope you enjoyed it and took away some useful information. We felt that we had some good questions and discussion. The webinar recording will be up soon! The link for the

Advocacy Toolkit mentioned during the webinar can be found at this [link](#). At our 2026 Conference on Oral Health on Friday, November 13, you'll learn more about advocacy and how you can build your advocacy skills. Watch for conference registration coming up soon!

Mark your calendar for our next FREE webinar on October 13! Until then, you can review last year's webinar series, [New Era: New Opportunities: Making Medicaid Work for You](#). The sessions are recorded so you can view them at your leisure. The topics are below:

- New Rates, Better Coverage
- Your Practice Your Way
- Get to Know Your MCOs
- Enrollment & Credentialing
- Filing Medicaid Claims
- Do Well by Doing Good
- My Dental Care Passport
- Value Added Benefits

If you have any questions about Tuesday's webinar or the Medicaid webinar series, reach out to us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.

Oral Health Kansas Speaks to New Mexico Providers

This week, Education Manager, Abby Richwine, had the opportunity to share the Pathways to Oral Health project with the New Mexico Oral Health Coalition. The coalition brings together dental directors from Federally Qualified Health Centers across New Mexico, the New Mexico Primary Care Association,

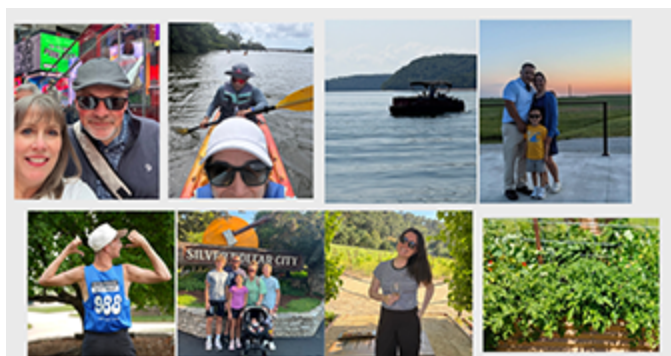


dental and dental hygiene associations, Medicaid representatives, Delta Dental, mobile and school-based dental providers, Touro's new dental school, the New Mexico Department of Health, and other community partners.

During the presentation, Abby provided an overview of the Pathways project and highlighted some of the resources available to both dental providers and individuals with disabilities. She shared the Providers page, which provides education and practical resources to help dental professionals feel more prepared and confident when caring for individuals with disabilities. She also highlighted the Consumers page and the award winning [*Confidence in Every Smile*](#) video series, which offers accessible oral health education and brushing tips for individuals with disabilities and their caregivers.

Abby also showcased the Resources page and the [*My Dental Care Passport*](#), a tool designed to help individuals and their caregivers communicate important needs, preferences, and accommodations with their dental team. If you have any questions, you can reach Abby at arichwine@oralhealthkansas.org

We got great feedback and enthusiasm from coalition members! They shared how valuable and innovative they found the work being done through the Pathways to Oral Health Project. Abby was invited to present to an upcoming conference in New Mexico!



Staff Summer Snapshots

Is summer really over? For most of us in Kansas, school has started this week! Oral Health Kansas (OHK) staff and OHK intern Laura Gigstad had a busy summer with their families and friends! Read about our summer fun and enjoy our pictures!

Tanya - had a fun time enjoying one of her favorite

spots on earth - New York!

Monica - kayaking in Hawaii with her husband was an adventure!

Laura - spent time on Beaver Lake in Arkansas!

Sonia - attended a wedding and the scenic view was amazing (and so relaxing)!

Brooks - plays co-ed sports year-round, but nothing beats the summer kickball season and uses the opportunity to promote the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline with the help of his closest friends.

Abby - every summer you'll see them on the lake and enjoying time at Silver Dollar City!

Kathy - planted some delicious vegetables! Lots of rain sure helped!

MaryAnne - she enjoyed some wine tasting in Ojai, California!

We hope everyone had a good summer!

You can see our pictures on our [Facebook page](#)!



Back to School Means Back to Routines

While you are out school supply shopping, don't forget to add to your to-do list "make dental appointment". Dental appointments fill up fast and it's best to call soon to get in for your child's next appointment. If you need help with steps on Finding a Dentist, you can check out our Tips and Tricks [handout](#)

and you can also go to the [Finding a Dentist](#) webpage!

Also, getting their children back into routines for school should be on your to-do list. It's always useful to start getting back into new schedules the week before school starts. As you know, routines take time!

The Brush Book Bed model is the perfect model to begin bedtime routines. Although the model is meant for younger children, this can be used for any age!

Brush, Book, Bed (BBB), a program of the American Academy of Pediatrics, recommends this simple ritual at the end of the day:

1. Each night, help your children to brush their teeth.
2. Read a favorite book (or two)!
3. Get to bed at a regular time each night.

You can read more about the BBB model [here](#).



Check out the Medicaid Financial Sustainability Toolkit

The American Dental Association published the Medicaid Financial Sustainability Toolkit: An Operational Guide for Dentists Wishing to Treat Medicaid Beneficiaries. The guide provides practical, experience-informed solutions to help dental practices maintain financial viability while serving Medicaid populations. It focuses on optimizing practice efficiency to mitigate revenue loss and patient attrition. The toolkit covers several critical operational and administrative topics:

- Risk management
- Identifying your ideal patient mix
- Optimizing reimbursements
- Administrative efficiency

You can read the full report at this [link](#).



Upcoming Events

- Self paced courses: [Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals](#) and [Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers](#).
- **Webinar:** Substance Use Disorders and Oral Health in People Living with HIV, August 27 at 12:00pm CST. Click [here](#) to register.
- Community Care Network of Kansas annual conference, September 23-25 in Manhattan, Kansas. Learn more [here](#).
- Kansas Public Health Association Conference, October 5 - 6, 2026 in Manhattan. Click [here](#) for information.
- Rutgers University offering Perinatal Oral Health ECHO Series webinar. Check out the list of series [here](#).
- **Save the date!** The 2026 Conference on Oral Health will be Friday, November 13 at the KU Edwards Campus.



Thank you to our 2026 Conference on Oral Health sponsors for your generous support. We believe this year's conference which will be held on Friday, November 13, is going to be an inspiring one!

Our current sponsors are:

Platinum Sponsor - Delta Dental of Kansas

Silver Sponsor - United Healthcare Community Plan

Bronze Sponsor - REACH Healthcare Foundation



If you're interested in sponsoring our event or would like to exhibit, go to our [website](#) to learn more! If you have any questions, you can reach us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.



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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