



## 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.](#)**

## Eighth Grader Wins the Outstanding Volunteer Award

In 2017, Jenna Weikel was an 8th grader at Fort Scott Middle School in Kansas. She entered a cartoon character contest for the Thirsty for Health Project with Oral Health Kansas. The Thirsty for Health cartoon character contest was to identify an image that resonated with students, specifically younger ages to help them think differently about water and hydration. Out of all the entries, Jenna was selected. The drawing was original and fun, children were naturally drawn to it. We were able to design the Sippy mascot and make it a reality!

At the 2018 Conference on Oral Health, we presented Jenna with the Outstanding Volunteer award. Jenna ultimately created the face of Thirsty for Health and for that we will always be grateful for her



generous contribution!

Do you have a story to share and want to recognize someone for their creative work to improve the oral health of Kansans? Nominate them for the Excellence in Oral Health Award! The deadline to submit nominations is **Friday, August 29th by 5pm.**

Award winners are recognized during the **Conference on Oral Health** which takes place on Friday, November 7 at the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park.

Find the nomination application forms and previous list of award winners at [this link](#).



## Sign Up for the Conference on Oral Health

The annual Conference on Oral Health will be held Friday, November 7 at the KU Edwards Campus in the Best Conference Center, 12600 Quivira Road in Overland Park. This event is hybrid but attending in person will allow you the chance to network, visit exhibitors and

attend the breakout sessions for a more in-depth discussion.

Here are some of the highlights of the conference:

- State of the State of Oral Health in Kansas
- Dental Care for Veterans
- Excellence in Oral Health Awards Celebration

Attendee Rate - \$125

Student Rate - \$20

Walk-up Attendee - \$150

Walk-up Student - \$25

Click [here](#) to register. If you do not have an account on the Iris system we use to register for the conference, you do need to set one up. You can view the conference agenda [here](#). If you have questions about registration, email us at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org)

CE's will be available for the conference!

### Hotel: Courtyard Kansas City Olathe

12151 South Strang Line Ct.

Olathe, Kansas 66062

\$145 plus taxes. **Please book by Oct 16.**

Book at [link](#) or by calling 1-888-236-2427. Group name: Conference on Oral Health



## Webinar Series Continues

If you missed yesterday's webinar series, *Your Practice, Your Way: Managing Your Patient Mix*, don't be concerned. We'll have the recording and presentation slides on the Pathways to Oral Health website. You can still attend next week's webinar on **Tuesday, September 2, Get to Know Your MCOs at 1:15pm**. During this session, the KanCare (Medicaid) Managed Care Organizations, Healthy Blue, Sunflower Health Plan and United Healthcare will be joining us to share about themselves and what each one has to offer. If you're considering becoming a Medicaid provider, this is a

perfect opportunity to learn more about them.

Earn up to 3.5 CEs. You only need to register one time to sign up for all of the sessions. All sessions will be from 1:15pm - 1:45pm CST.

- September 2: Get to Know Your MCOs
- September 9: Enrollment & Credentialing
- September 16: Filing Medicaid Claims
- September 23: Do Well by Doing Good: Medicaid Opportunities
- BONUS: September 30: My Dental Care Passport

Click [here](#) to register for the series. Contact us at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org) if you have any questions. There is no cost to attend.



## Helping Your Community Smile Healthier with a Project ECHO Series

Next week, Project ECHO series, **"Building Confidence in Dental Teams to Serve People with Disabilities"** will begin on Thursday, September 4 from 12:00pm-1:00pm CST. Take advantage to watch this webinar during your lunch hour with your dental clinic team. This **FREE** five-part virtual educational program will be held on Thursdays from 12:00pm - 1:00pm CST until October 2. It's designed

to expand understanding of disabilities, address sensitivities that may arise in the dental setting, and highlight how one dental office has successfully created a safe, welcoming environment for patients with disabilities. This is a great opportunity to learn ways to improve your office and enhance patient care!

### SERIES TOPICS

- A Multidisciplinary Approach to Inclusive Oral Health Care

- Behavioral Strategies to Improve Patient Experience and Cooperation
- Creating a Sensory-Inclusive Dental Office Environment
- Fostering an Accessible and Welcoming Environment in the Dental Office

#### SPECIALTY TEAM

- **Barbie Vartanian DePonte**, Director, Oral Health Advocacy & Policy Initiatives, NYU College of Dentistry, New York, NY
- **Allen Wong, DDS, EdD, DABSCD**, Dental Department Head, Kramer Davis Health Nashville, TN
- **Christie Stiehl, MA, BCBA, LBA**, Owner & Clinician, Stiehl Behavioral Consulting, San Francisco, CA
- **Ben Hudson**, CEO, Sensory Health, Dallas, TX
- **Nick Rogers, DDS**, Owner & Dentist, Rogers Family Dentistry, Arkansas City, KS
- **Billie Donohue, CDA**, Dental Assistant, Rogers Family Dentistry, Arkansas City, KS

ADA CERP credit will be available for attendees. Register [here](#).



## Feeling Good About Your Smile Workshops

Beginning this month, Oral Health Kansas staff is going to be traveling around Kansas to provide fun, interactive learning sessions for people with disabilities called [Feeling Good About Your Smile](#).

Kathy Hunt and Abby Richwine presented at Big Lakes in Manhattan and as well as Johnson County Developmental Supports in Lenexa.

Participants learned what cavities are, what causes them, and how to make healthier snack choices to protect their teeth. The sessions included hands-on activities like seeing how acid attacks teeth, practicing the right amount of toothpaste to use, and brushing away “germs” in the mouth. These high-energy sessions make learning about oral health both engaging and enjoyable!

If you have any questions about the Feeling Good About Your Smile events, email Abby at [abby@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:abby@oralhealthkansas.org).



## Recruiting Interns for the Fall

Over the summer Oral Health Kansas had the great fortune of working with a Masters of Global Health Policy intern from Brandeis University and a Masters of Public Health intern from Kansas State University. Together Dr. Augustina Mensah and Dr. Isha Kothari developed a new data dashboard we will be debuting soon. Their research is helping us tell the story of Kansans’ access to Medicaid dental care.



We are recruiting interns for this fall to continue the work on analyzing and presenting Medicaid data. [Click here to access our internship application.](#)



## Advocating for Access: InterHab's Role in Advancing Inclusive Oral Health in Kansas

The Pathways to Oral Health Project has many different partners, including InterHab. InterHab is the association that has become the predominant voice in Kansas for persons with intellectual developmental disabilities (IDD), their families, and the providers of services and supports needed to live independently and inclusively. With their expertise, InterHab was a clear choice for a Pathways collaboration.

As Meghan Shreve, Associate Director at InterHab, put it, “Dental care for people with disabilities is just as important, if not more so, than for the general population.” When we combine forces - educators, dentists, advocates, families - we actually can move the needle. Inclusive dental care isn’t an abstract idea. It’s achievable. It just takes partnerships like Pathways to make it happen.”

InterHab wrote a blog about their work to improve oral health for people with disabilities. You can read the full blog post on the [Pathways to Oral Health Project website.](#)



## 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:** webinar series beginning August 19, *Making Medicaid Work For You*. Register [here](#) for five sessions!
- **Webinar:** *Fact and Fiction on Fluoride and IQ*, August 28, 6:00pm-7:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- **Webinar:** Project Echo Series beginning September 4 - October 2, *Building Confidence in Dental Teams to Serve People with Disabilities*. Register [here](#)! CE's are available!
- **Webinar:** *Older Adults and Oral Diseases: Benefits from Early Intervention, Emerging Technology and Minimally Invasive Dentistry*, September 30, 7:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- [Community Care Network of Kansas](#) annual conference, September 24-26 at the Marriott Kansas City Overland Park Hotel, in Overland Park, Kansas.
- The Conference on Oral Health will be held Friday, November 7 at the KU Edwards Campus. Click [here](#) for updates on the conference.
- SPEAK Up! (Self-Advocates Promoting Empowerment and Access in Kansas) conference on Saturday, November 8. Click [here](#) for information.



Congratulations to Kansas Medicaid Director Christine Osterlund on being selected for the [Medicaid Leadership Institute Class of 2026](#)! The [Center for Health Care Strategies](#) has named their

fifteenth Medicaid Leadership Institute Class, and we are thrilled that Kansas Medicaid Director Osterlund is a member of the class. She is a strong and knowledgeable leader in our state who understands the importance of developing sustainable systems to improve care for Kansans with Medicaid coverage. Director Osterlund has expertly led the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's implementation of a series of Medicaid dental policy changes, including this year's rate increase. We are excited she will be able to share her expertise and experience on this national stage. Congratulations!



Picture courtesy of Kansas Department of Health and Environment



## 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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