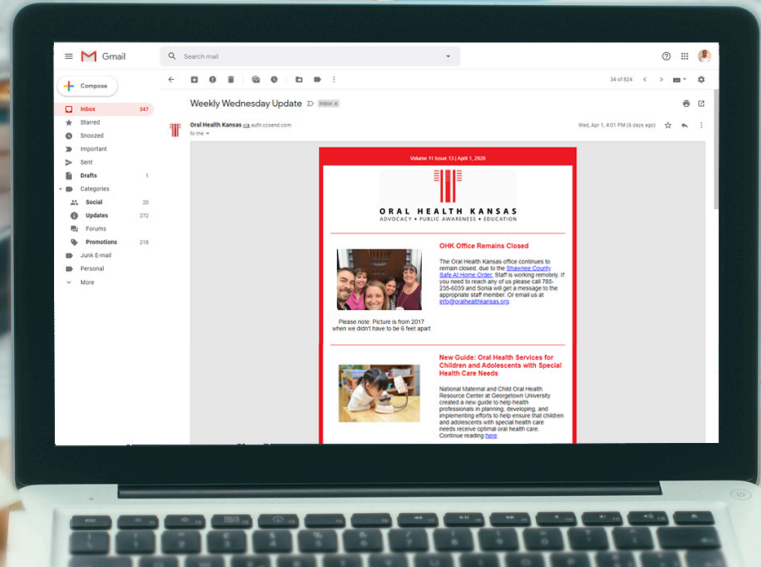




WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATE

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](#).

September 23, 2026

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Scan the QR code



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[Weekly
Wednesday
Update.](#)



New Conference Speaker Confirmed!

We're excited to announce Tatiana Y. Lin, Director of Business Strategy and Innovation with Kansas Health Institute will speak at our Conference on Oral Health on Friday, November 13. Tatiana will provide information on a systems-level look at the evidence behind AI-assisted diagnostics, what these tools mean for access, quality of care, and how policy and regulation are evolving to keep pace.

We'll have plenary and breakout sessions. This is a perfect opportunity to earn CE's!

(schedule is subject to change)

Oral Health Policy and Election Update

Speakers: Dr. Stuart Little, PhD, Little Government Relations

Enhancing Patient-Centered Care with the My Dental Care Passport & Sensory Modifications Guide

Speakers: Dr. MaryAnne Lynch Small, MPH, BDS, Oral Health Kansas; Abby Richwine, RDH, BS, Oral Health Kansas; Deb Pochop, Northwest Smile Center; Billie Donohue, CDA, Rogers Family Dentistry; Shelley Howard, RDH, BS DH, MHSA, UMKC School of Dentistry

Resilience, Well-Being, and Success in the Workplace

Speaker: Jody J. Fiorini, PhD, LCPC-S, NCC, ACS, Professor of Counseling
Coordinator of the PhD in Education & Behavioral Studies - Clinical Counselor Education & Supervision track, Intervention Services & Leadership in Education (ISLE)

Building Your Advocacy Skills

Speakers: Little Government Relations

Keynote Speaker: Whit Downing, Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities

AI and Dentistry

Speaker: Tatiana Y. Lin, Kansas Health Institute

The State of Dental Practice: Costs, Insurance, and Access

Speakers: Deesha Bhaumik, PhD, MS American Dental Association Health Policy Institute

How to register: Click on [this link](#) to register. If you do not have an account with the IRIS conference platform, you will need to set up an account.

Regular Attendee Rate: \$125 | Walk-in Attendee Rate: \$150

Regular Student Rate: \$20 | Walk-in Student Rate: \$25

Rates include access to all meals, snacks and sessions.

If you have any questions, email Sonia at solmos@oralhealthkansas.org.

We have a hotel block at the Courtyard by Marriott Olathe at 12151 S. Strang Line Court. Details coming soon.



Kansas Medicaid: New Rates and Provider Perspectives

Join us for our next webinar on **Tuesday, October 13 at 12:00pm CST**. Learn about the new Kansas Medicaid dental rates and what they mean for providers and access to care. We'll share results from the provider rate survey, including the priorities and concerns voiced by Kansas dental providers. The rate increase represents an important investment in oral health access during a challenging

budget year and reflects the Kansas Legislature's commitment to preserving the progress that has been made. This webinar highlights the collaborative efforts underway to listen to providers and use their voices to help strengthen the Medicaid dental system.

Click [here](#) to register. This is a great opportunity for one free CE.



Staff Member Runs 5K for Special Olympics Nebraska Benefit

Oral Health Kansas staff work hard to improve oral health access for Kansans every day. During her free time this weekend, Project Manager, Monica Turner, was found in Nebraska showing her support to improve the health of Nebraskans. On Sunday, Monica, alongside family members, ran the Run With a Heart 5K hosted by Sigma Phi Epsilon with the support of Alpha Phi to benefit Special Olympics Nebraska and Women's Heart Health. Special Olympics Kansas is part of the Pathways to Oral Health Project. We are so grateful Monica could support the Nebraska organization.



Picture courtesy of Google Arts and Culture

Celebrating First Hispanic Dentist

In honor of National Hispanic Heritage Month, we celebrate Dr. Ramon Emeterio Betances often recognized as one of the first Hispanic dentists connected to the United States. Dr. Betances was born in Puerto Rico and earned his medical degree in France. He practiced both medicine and dentistry, dedicating his life to improving public health and advocating for equality and education.

This month, we honor individuals like Dr. Betances whose dedication to healing, education, and community paved the way for generations of Hispanic dentists and health professionals.

What does the Hispanic dental workforce look like now? A [report](#) by the American Dental Association Health Policy Institute states while the proportions increased over the years, Black and Hispanic dentists are still underrepresented when compared with the U.S. population. With the Hispanic/Latino dental providers underrepresented those that are in practice shoulder a disproportionate share of dental care for minority and underserved communities.

A dental workforce that reflects the communities it serves builds trust, improves language access, and helps close outcome gaps that persist even where insurance coverage exists.



World Pharmacists Day

World Pharmacists Day is celebrated on **Friday, September 25**. This year's theme, "Empowering Pharmacists for Healthier Futures," highlights how empowering pharmacists to work alongside other healthcare professionals improves patient outcomes and continuity of care.

Pharmacists do far more than hand over medication and explain side effects. Oftentimes, they're the first point of contact for someone experiencing a toothache or other

oral health problem who isn't sure where else to turn. When dental care is out of reach, a pharmacist can offer product recommendations to help in the meantime. Oral Health Kansas has [one page tips](#) that can help with almost any oral health topic.

Another important topic to think about is medications for children and what to watch out for. Read labels to determine how much sugar is in medicine. If there's quite a bit of sugar, have the child rinse their mouth after taking the medicine. You can read more helpful tips on the [Medications and Your Child's Oral Health](#).



Upcoming Events

- Self paced courses: [Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals](#) and [Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers](#).
- **Webinar:** Rutgers University offering Perinatal Oral Health ECHO Series webinar. Check out the list of series [here](#).
- **Webinar:** Medicare: Expansion of Dental Services, hosted by CareQuest Institute for Oral Health on October 8 at 6:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- **Webinar:** Next Making Medicaid Work for You webinar series is on October 13 at 12:00pm. Registration information coming soon.
- **Webinar:** Substance Use Disorders and Dentistry, hosted by CareQuest Institute for Oral Health on October 22 at 6:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- **Event:** Community Care Network of Kansas annual conference, September 23-25 in Manhattan, Kansas. Learn more [here](#).
- **Event:** Kansas Public Health Association Conference, October 5 - 6, 2026 in Manhattan. Click [here](#) for information.
- **Event:** 2026 Conference on Oral Health will be **Friday, November 13** at the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park. Click [here](#) for information.



Oral Health Kansas Dental Program Director Kathy Hunt has been appointed to the Board of Directors for AllWays Community Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center serving communities in northeast Kansas. AllWays provides medical, dental,

behavioral health, and other services, with a focus on making health care accessible to everyone.



Kathy brings more than 45 years of experience in dental hygiene, oral health education, and public health to the board and will also represent the Topeka area of AllWays' service region. Her board service provides an opportunity to bring an oral health perspective to broader conversations about access to care and the health needs of the communities AllWays serves. Congratulations Kathy!



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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