



## 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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### November 13, 2019

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## 2019 Conference On Oral Health By The Numbers



- 145 participants
- 53 students
- 19 table facilitators
- 11 exhibitors
- 10 planning committee members
- 7 sponsors
- 5 speakers
- 4 award winners
- 3 dental hygiene schools

The numbers were great, but the experience was even better! 2019 Conference on Oral Health attendees were challenged to participate in a series of conversations about integration, innovation, health equity, and leadership. They met new people from across the state and dug into big issues as we all work together to consider how to improve oral health in our state and make it a higher priority for all Kansans.

Dr. Nathan Suter is a pioneer in teledentistry and has created a successful model in both private practice and safety net settings in Missouri. He shared insight about the emerging teledentistry technology and how it can make a difference in bringing dental care to underserved people. Pharmacist Jonalan Smith provided insight about how pharmacy and dentistry can work more closely in taking care of the whole person. The members of Dental Champions Class IX shared what they have learned about the challenges pregnant women, infants, and toddlers have in accessing dental care, as well as some of the solutions they are exploring.

Stand-up comedian and dental hygienist Carlos Rodriguez delighted and entertained the attendees, while reminding them that life can throw all of us some curve balls. He emphasized the importance of understanding that people who get into the dental chair may be going through all kinds of things and just want to be treated with kindness and compassion. He also helped everyone remember that no matter what is going on, we all need to stop and laugh once in a while.

Rear Admiral Timothy L. Ricks, Chief Dental Officer of the U.S. Public Health Service and Assistant Surgeon General, participated in pre-conference sessions with community coalition leaders and Dental Champions. He is overseeing the development of the second-ever Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health, which is scheduled to be released next year in conjunction with the 20th anniversary of the first report. He shared insight about the current challenges and opportunities in oral health across the country. He challenged attendees to look for new ways to approach education, advocacy, and direct service to improve oral health for all people.

As if that wasn't enough, Oral Health Kansas also had the chance to honor the outstanding work of three people and one community with the Excellence in Oral Health Awards. Laura Gigstad received the Outstanding Dental Hygienist Award, and Dr. Owen Poulson received the Outstanding Dentist Award. Jerri Jones was recognized as the Outstanding Volunteer. And, the city of Salina received a national award in recognition of their 50-year commitment to community water fluoridation.

In the coming days, watch for links to each of the presentations and the story of each of this year's award winners. Thank you to everyone who sponsored, planned, exhibited, and participated in the 2019 Conference on Oral Health! We believe that when we all work together like this, we will make a big difference in the future of oral health for all Kansans.



## Special Committee On Medicaid Expansion Meets This Week

On November 12th and 13th, the Special Committee on Medicaid Expansion met to discuss opportunities and challenges for Medicaid Expansion legislation in Kansas. Oral Health Kansas joined many organizations and individuals from across the state in submitting [testimony](#) in support of Medicaid Expansion. The committee discussed current Medicaid Expansion bill language, Medicaid Expansion in other states, and the fiscal implications of current proposals. The full agenda from this week’s meeting can be found [here](#). A recording from yesterday’s meeting can be found [here](#).

To learn more about Medicaid Expansion in Kansas, check out the [Alliance for a Healthy Kansas](#).



## New Consumer Marketplace Guide Available

The Children’s Dental Health Project and Families USA have released a new consumer guide to buying children’s dental coverage on the Marketplace. The guide includes details about how to buy coverage, how long the dental coverage will last, which dental services are covered, out of pocket limits, consumer protections, and more. [Read the guide](#) and [contact Cover Kansas](#) for help in enrolling in health and dental coverage during the Marketplace open enrollment, which runs through December 15.

Check out our [website](#) for more information on finding dental coverage in the marketplace.



## Take Care Of Your Health In November

November is Native American Heritage Month as well as National Diabetes Month. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Native Americans have a greater chance of having diabetes than any other US racial and ethnic group. In about two out of three Native

Americans with kidney failure, diabetes is the cause. Native Americans suffer from the poorest oral health of any population in the United States, with staggering rates of untreated tooth decay among children and untreated decay and gum disease among adults. [Periodontal disease](#) is the most common dental disease affecting those living with diabetes, affecting nearly 22% of those diagnosed. Especially with increasing age, poor blood sugar control increases the risk for gum problems.

[The Office of Minority Health is focusing on ways to improve health outcomes for this population.](#)



## Where Is Oral Health Kansas?

We'll be attending the [Intersections Faith and Health Conference](#) on Monday, November 18 in Salina, Kansas. Hope to see you there!



This year's 2019 Outstanding Oral Health Volunteer Award was given to Jerri Jones. She is a dental assistant by trade and has volunteered for all but one of the eighteen Kansas Mission of Mercy (KMOM) dental project clinics and has been an integral part of the KMOM back-office team. She comes in early to help in volunteer registration and stays late to make sure all the data input is finished, often being



the one of the last to leave the clinic. She has even driven to Topeka during the week to help reenter KMOM data when the data entry system failed. Jerri was also part of an early team of volunteers who traveled to other states teaching counterparts how to host their own MOM project.

There is so much more to say about Jerri and her volunteer work. The Oral Health Volunteer Award is well deserved!



## Reserve Now For The End Of The Year

Get your reservation in before another month gets booked! Or [purchase](#) a Sugary Drink Display to have as your own!

What is a Sugary Drink Display? It's our drink display that has 10 popular beverages and shows how much sugar is in each. You can reserve a child drink display or an adult drink display for a month.

We will do our best to fulfill requests of less than 30 days but there is no guarantee.

There is no charge to use the Sugary Drink Display; postage is reimbursed if you send in your receipt. All we ask is for you to fill out our survey included in the display materials and provide us with feedback about the display. **Click [here](#) to make a reservation!**

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### Follow Us



**Oral Health Kansas** • 712 S. Kansas Ave., Suite 412 Topeka, KS 66603  
785.235.6039 phone • 785.233.5564 fax [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org)

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