



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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Kansas Legislature Calls for a Special Session

The Kansas Legislature will return to Topeka for a special session on November 22nd. This special session was called after Republican majorities in both chambers filed a petition consisting of signatures surpassing the two-thirds majority needed. This marks the first time in the state's

history when the Legislature, by petition, has been successful in calling a special session. Historically, governors have solely been the ones to exercise this authority.

The focus of the special session will be on the impact of federal COVID-19 mandates. There are two bills that will be considered. One will allow people to employees to claim medical or religious exemptions to COVID vaccine mandates, and the other will allow people who lose their jobs because of vaccine mandates to collect unemployment insurance. The Legislature will convene at 10:00AM on Monday, November 22nd. Learn more about the special session [here](#).



Graphic courtesy of Overland Park Dentistry

Diabetics
are 2x more
likely to get
gum disease

Diabetes and Oral Health

World Diabetes Day is celebrated on November 14th, and it is the largest diabetes awareness campaign. The goal of this campaign is to bring awareness of diabetes to the public and politicians. According to the Centers for Disease and Prevention, more than 122 million Americans have diabetes or prediabetes. In 2018, 1 in 9 Kansas adults had been diagnosed with diabetes.

Diabetes occurs when the blood sugar level is high. There are three types of diabetes: type 1, type 2 and gestational diabetes. Diabetes not only affects the eyes, nerves, kidneys, and heart, but it also has an impact on oral health. Periodontal (gum) disease, bad breath, chewing difficulty, tooth loss, dry mouth, and thrush are all symptoms of diabetes. Find out more from Oral Health Kansas' Tips & Tricks focused on Diabetes and Oral Health, available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

According to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 570 million KanCare dollars were spent on patients with diabetes in 2019. A [recent study by the Health Policy Institute](#) found if a comprehensive adult dental benefit is introduced to Medicaid in Kansas, estimated reduction in health care costs for those with diabetes would be \$117,503 and \$352,509 in the second and third year, respectively. This is a huge cost reduction. Oral Health Kansas is seeking to pass legislation that will provide comprehensive dental coverage to all Medicaid-eligible adults. To help support this bill, [SB 227](#), kindly share your stories to info@oralheathkansas.org.

Here is a link to a short video on how diabetes impact oral health. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=to8uSqrDMMU>



Anti-Racism in Dental Public Health Science

The American Association of Public Health Dentistry recently produced a [white paper](#) in response to the events of the pandemic and the growing awareness of racism as a public health problem. The white paper includes perspectives on how dental public health can engage in anti-racist practices and outlines action steps for the dental public health community to employ. We hope you will join

Oral Health Kansas in recognizing racism as a public health problem. Oral Health Kansas is devoted to anti-racist practices and ask for your help in calling us out when you see work from us

that speaks otherwise. If you ever feel our work could be more inclusive, please contact us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.



National Rural Health Day

National Rural Health Day is recognized on November 18. It's an opportunity to celebrate the "Power of Rural", bringing to light the unique healthcare challenges that rural residents face and showcasing the efforts of rural healthcare providers, State Offices of Rural Health and other rural stakeholders to address those challenges. Rural communities often lack adequate oral healthcare and subsequently miss out on the benefits of good oral health

as well.

Below are factors contributing to the oral health challenges of rural America as shared by the Rural Health:

- Information Hub supported by HRSA and HSS:
- Access to dental care
- Oral health literacy
- Fluoridation of water supplies
- Tobacco use

The Rural Community Health Toolkit features a section on improving the oral health of rural communities. Program models, funding strategies, and more can be found in the full toolkit [here](#).



Upcoming Events

- Webinar series: Integrating Race Conversations into Healthy Patient-Provider Interactions, 3rd Friday of every month at 12:00pm CST. Find more information [here](#).
- Webinar: Pregnancy and Dental Care Go Together, November 16 and 18, from 12 to 3 pm CST each day. Please [RSVP now](#).
- Webinar: How to Talk to Vaccine Hesitant People, November 18, 6:00 pm CST. Register [here](#).
- Webinar: Seven Recommendations to Boost Oral Health Advocacy Efforts, November 18, 12PM CST. [Register here](#).
- Webinar: ADA Webinar on Oral Health Literacy, November 29, 12PM CST. [Join here](#).
- Webinar: Managing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) with Dental and Oral Health, December 8, 8:00pm-10:00pm CST. Register [here](#).



Oral Health Kansas is back on the road! This past Monday we had the opportunity to visit with the JAG-K (Jobs After Graduation-Kansas) classes at Shawnee Heights High School in Topeka about careers in dentistry. We highlighted the

opportunities and benefits of a career in the dental field, with an emphasis on building the diversity of the dental workforce. They had some great questions and enjoyed taking part in a hands-on demonstration of how cavities happen.



Sugary Drink Display Sanitation

Out of an abundance of caution, we are suspending use of the Sugary Drink Display until further notice.

During this time, hand washing and social distancing is on everyone's mind. We want everyone to have the comfort of knowing we sanitize our sugary drink displays. They are wiped down and cleaned off after they have been returned.



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