

## 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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November 4, 2020

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## November 6 Conference On Oral Health Last Session

Our last session of the 2020 Conference on Oral Health is this Friday, November 6. We will begin at 8:00 am with a special preconference session from Dr. Bonnie Branson on Public Oral Health 101. Dr. Branson has decades of experience teaching about dental public health at the dental schools at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and the University of Arkansas. This is a good opportunity for anyone interested in learning more about the framework of dental public health.



The last day to register is Thursday, November 5 by 5pm. You will also have access to the Friday, October 30 recorded session with this registration. Find out more information [here!](#)



## General Election Has Big Impact On Kansas Legislature

*By Stuart J. Little and Mallory Lutz, Little Government Relations*

While there are still some races to be resolved and some potential for recount and final certification, we currently know the following. In the Kansas House of Representatives, Republicans will at a minimum hold their supermajority and may gain seats from the Democrats after some recounts in several races. The Kansas Senate will have no change in the partisan division between the Democrats and the Republican majority. Speculation that Democrats would gain one seat in the House and three seats in the Senate to weaken the Republican majority ability to override any Governor's vetoes did not happen.

In general, following the primary, the scale of movement within the Republican party that occurred during the 2016 elections has now been reversed. Moderate Republican gains in 2016, following the 2018 elections and 2020 primaries, are gone and conservative Republicans are reaffirming their control of their party as well as the House and Senate.

### **Kansas House**

During the 2020 session, the division of the Kansas House was 84 Republicans and 41 Democrats. Following the November 3rd election, that division will be 87 Republicans and 38 Democrats, barring any changes to the current count. Several incumbent moderate Republicans lost their August primary elections to conservative Republican candidates. On November 3, House Democrats failed to secure enough votes to block Republican supermajority action. The Republican caucus will retain an enhanced majority.

### **Kansas Senate**

During the 2020 legislative session there were 29 Republicans and 11 Democrats in the Kansas Senate. Following the November 3rd election, there will be 29 Republicans and 11 Democrats in the Senate, barring any changes to the current count. The Senate primary election resulted in a significant defeat of six moderate Republicans who were elected in

2016. The leadership of the Senate is firmly in the hands of the Republican caucus that is more conservative than it was before Tuesday night.

There was a significant incumbent defeat in the Senate. Republican Rick Kloos in the Shawnee/Douglas County area defeated Senator Anthony Hensley, the longest serving legislator in Kansas history, serving 42 years. He served as Senate Minority Leader for twenty-five years.

### **What comes next?**

Legislators will begin selecting leadership for both chambers in December, including naming committee chairs and assigning committee members. Oral Health Kansas will continue monitoring the changes in the Legislature as we make plans for a new policy agenda in the 2021 session. Please contact us at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org) if you have any questions.



## **New Kansas Oral Health Data Coming Soon!**

Over the last year, Oral Health Kansas and the Kansas Health Institute (KHI) collaborated to develop a new report to research dental insurance coverage and unmet dental needs in Kansas. The results showed that 64% of Kansans reported having dental insurance at the time of the survey, and there were significant gaps in dental insurance coverage based on race and ethnicity. The study results will help to identify future policy and research implications to continue increasing access to dental care in our state. If you attended the Conference

on Oral Health on Friday but you missed KHI researcher, Phillip Steiner, sharing study details, a recording can be found on Whova! Be on the lookout for an email from Oral Health Kansas releasing the full report soon!

This study was funded through a contract with Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Bureau of Maternal and Child Health.

## **What's The Scariest Part Of Halloween?**

Halloween may be a few days behind us, but this new blog published by the American Heart Association's [Voices for Healthy Kids](#) points out that the scary part of Halloween is what happens to kids' oral health throughout the rest of the year. American Network of Oral



Health Coalition's member [Gina Sharps](#), who wrote the [blogpost](#), noted that the sugary drinks kids consume throughout the year cause more harm to baby teeth and newly erupted adult teeth and should be what parents worry about. She said, "On average, children consume more than 30 gallons of sugary drinks every year - enough to fill a bathtub." Check out the blog and the tips about healthy drinks parents can help kids choose every day.

Oral Health Kansas is a member of the American Network of Oral Health Coalitions ([ANOHC](#)).



## Complete The Tobacco Dependence Treatment Survey

The Behavioral Health Tobacco Project is a collaboration led by NAMI Kansas with funding support from the Kansas Health Foundation. The Project involves a broad array of behavioral health and primary care providers and their associations. The focus of the Project is to reduce tobacco use by individuals with behavioral health conditions.

*While quitting tobacco has been a critical issue for the behavioral health population for some time given high rates of smoking compared to the general population, it's importance is heightened during the COVID pandemic since tobacco users and vapers are at higher risk of complications resulting from the coronavirus.*

NAMI would appreciate your participation in a short survey (estimated to take 8 minutes to complete) which can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/OralHealthKS>

This survey is designed to collect essential information about the capacity of health care practitioners to provide evidence-based tobacco dependence treatment. Survey responses will be used in part to publish a directory of providers for those who wish to be included. The Kansas Tobacco Quitline, KanCare Managed Care Organizations (MCO's), and other entities may use the directory to provide referrals for tobacco treatment. NAMI would

appreciate your participation in the survey regardless of your level of tobacco treatment services and/or desire to be included in the directory.

More information about the project can be obtained at the Project's web page (<https://namikansas.org/resources/smoking-cessation-information/>) or by contacting Rick Cagan at [rcagan@namikansas.org](mailto:rcagan@namikansas.org).

NAMI thanks you for your consideration and participation.

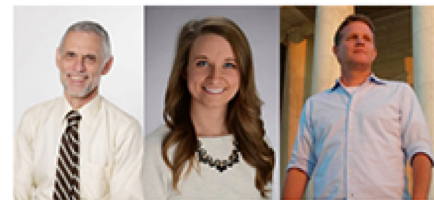


What a way to end the Conference on Oral Health on Friday, November 6th with speakers discussing dental public health 101, racial justice and health equity, the needs of

people with disabilities and a discussion on policy and politics in Kansas and how oral health is a part of the conversation to ensure all Kansans are healthy. Speakers are ready and so are we!



From left to right: Bonnie Branson, Irene Caudillo, Tanya Dorf Brunner



From left to right: Timothy Garvey, Christi Wells, Stuart Little

If you haven't registered yet, [register](#) by Thursday, November 5, 5pm.



## 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.

## Follow Us



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