Act now to protect Medicaid

The U.S. Senate may vote as early as next week on a bill to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Obamacare. Senate leaders have been working on revisions to the House-passed American Health Care Act (AHCA), but the bill has not been debated in a committee, nor has the text of it been shared with Senators or the public. As the AHCA bill was written, it would cut funding to Medicaid by $800 billion, eliminate Medicaid expansion, and allow states to stop offering the EPSDT services for children which have guaranteed all children covered by Medicaid receive dental services.

According to the Commonwealth Fund, if the AHCA passes, Kansas will face the loss of 5,300 jobs and $500 million in gross state products, and the number of uninsured Kansans will rise again.

While advocates for the AHCA describe it as offering states more flexibility with their Medicaid programs, in reality, the bill will offer less flexibility. The current
Medicaid program guarantees the federal government will pay a portion of all services offered by state Medicaid programs. This means states are able to provide new services, such as an adult dental benefit, or open eligibility to new low-income populations, and have federal funding for the new services or populations. The block grant proposed in the AHCA will limit the amount of money states have to fund Medicaid services, and as the need for services grows over time, the flexibility states have to meet it will be limited.

This week and next, Kansas Senators Pat Roberts and Jerry Moran need to hear from constituents. They need to hear that Kansans want to maintain the safety net that Medicaid provides, including the dental services guaranteed to children. Ask them to protect the health care Kansans count on.

Contact both Senator Roberts and Moran now. Call their Capitol offices at 866-426-2631. You also can send emails to Senator Roberts and Senator Moran through their websites.

- Learn more about how the AHCA would impact children’s dental health from the Children’s Dental Health Project.
- Families USA offers several tips for advocating with Senators about the AHCA.

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Forum on the impacts of the AHCA

The Alliance for a Healthy Kansas will be hosting a Community Health Care Access Forum to learn about the impact of the AHCA (American Health Care Act) on members of our community and across Kansas.

**When:** Saturday, June 24, 2017 from 10am-11:30am

**Where:** Topeka and Shawnee Council Public Library (Marvin Auditorium), 1515 SW 10th Street, Topeka, KS 66604

To RSVP, or to find out more information, click [here](#).
Give your feedback at a KanCare forum

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) is continuing their series of public meetings for the discussion of the state’s proposed renewal of the KanCare program and to provide input and ideas for changes.

Attend as a provider and give input on what consumers say works for them, what they would like to see change or suggest improvements.

Consumers...your voice is important! Attend these meetings and share your story. What would you like state officials to hear about KanCare?

While at these meetings, share why Kansas needs a Medicaid dental benefit for adults. A list of talking points to use at the forums and when talking to state officials is available here.

Oral health and Alzheimers

The Alzheimer’s Association -- Heart of America Chapter invited Oral Health Kansas to participate in its innovative Training Room. This was a day-long program for professionals and families caring for people with dementia.

Participants selected which of the 18 "table topics" they wished to attend for 15-minute "workshops." Staff member, Marcia Manter, made 24, 15-minute presentations between 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. She demonstrated tips for better toothbrushing, flossing, and dry mouth conditions, to a total of about 50 people throughout the day. Caregivers also learned about other serious health risks when oral disease is left untreated.

Marcia is seen here with participants at her table

For resources on oral health care for older adults, visit our website.

Use this summer to talk about healthy beverage options

It's summer and along comes the summer heat! Reserve a sugary drink display for an event, health fair, day care or summer camp to show everyone healthy beverage options they can be choosing!

Our sugary drink display has 10 popular beverages and shows
how much sugar is in each. We also include some of our Tips and Tricks fact sheets and brush your teeth mirror clings! The display is free to use for up to a month, and we reimburse postage!

Reserving yours ahead of time ensures you can get the date(s) you need. Sign up now!

Join us tomorrow for a community forum on oral health

Tomorrow, we'll be in Pittsburg, Kansas to meet with community residents and stakeholders to share concerns on what oral health issues are in the area. Or what has been working really well!

Please RSVP to Doug at 785-235-6039 or dbowman@oralhealthkansas.org.