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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CMS Denies Lifetime Limits
In May, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) rejected a waiver from Kansas to set a lifetime limit on KanCare eligibility to three years. Following three years on the Medicaid program, Kansans who depend on KanCare for their health coverage would be kicked off for the remainder of their lifetime. CMS administrator Seema Verma stated, “We seek to create a pathway out of poverty, but we also understand that people’s circumstances change, and we must ensure that our programs are sustainable and available to them when they need and qualify for them”. This is a significant win for the oral health of Kansans and guarantees those on KanCare will continue to receive the preventive oral healthcare they need to maintain their overall health.
Increase in Tobacco Cessation Services for KanCare Recipients
Governor Colyer recently signed into law the Fiscal Year 2019 budget, which included an appropriation of expenditures up to $350,000 for the expansion of tobacco cessation benefits in KanCare. Individuals covered by KanCare are now eligible to receive up to four rounds of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) each year with no lifetime caps as well as ongoing cessation counseling services. This legislation replaces the previous limitation of one quit attempt per year and the limitation on counseling to pregnant women. This policy becomes effective on July 1st.

Join OHK for this sign on opportunity
The Children's Dental Health Project and Families USA invite your organizations to sign onto a letter to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) about the trends we're seeing in 1115 waivers that could cause harm to children, families, and communities. Join Oral Health Kansas as we sign this letter to send a message to CMS, that the oral health community is concerned about access to oral health coverage for low wage families and vulnerable individuals. Sign on here by June 8th.

Adult Dental Services Added in Virginia and Illinois
State legislatures from around the country are recognizing the need to provide both medical and dental services to their Medicaid populations.

Starting on July 1, all adults covered by Medicaid in Illinois will be able to receive periodic exams and cleanings. The legislation passed states that the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services will provide adult dental services including diagnostic, preventive, restorative, and services needed to treat periodontal disease. Read more here. Virginia legislature voted at the end of May to expand Medicaid coverage eligibility to more than 300,000 Virginians. Those who previously fell into the gaps now have access to affordable health and mental health services, and a limited dental benefit. Read more here.

These efforts would not have been successful without the hard work of a large group of advocates throughout the states. Oral Health Kansas, alongside our dedicated advocates (like you!), will continue working toward increased adult dental benefits and the expansion of Medicaid in Kansas.
How do I get involved in this work?
- Attend community/candidate forums and ask candidates where they stand on oral health issues such as increased adult dental benefits.
- **Contact** your state Senators and Representatives and keep oral health in the conversation by sharing about oral health in your community.

Congratulations to two former OHK partners on their big accomplishments!

Former Office and Communications Manager Caroline Stern graduated from the University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine on May 25. We appreciated her time here, and we knew she would go on to be a caring and compassionate dentist. We are proud of you, Caroline!

On the same day, the University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine honored Colorado Dental Association Executive Director Greg Hill as an honorary alumnus. Greg is the former Assistant Executive Director of the Kansas Dental Association and our former Dental Champions Advisory Board President. He was a close partner during his time in Kansas, and we are not surprised at all to see how well he is leading the dental community in Colorado.

Congratulations, Greg and Caroline!

Stories Are Needed from People Like You
The [Alliance for a Healthy Kansas](http://www.allianceforkansas.org) is beginning their community forums to hear why expanding KanCare is important to you. They want to know what health issues you are concerned about, such as oral health care and struggles you have had.

If you don't feel comfortable sharing your story at the event, you can pull a staff member aside and share that way.

Sugary Drink Display
What is a Sugary Drink Display? It's our drink display that 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!

Send your reservation request ahead of time to ensure you will have one on hold! [Fill out this form](http://www.allianceforkansas.org) and we'll get back with you!