



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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Picture courtesy of Nathan Dumlao (Unsplash)

Medicaid Dental Benefit Act Introduced

Federal policymakers are working to address the oral health benefit gaps faced by adults enrolled in Medicaid. Congresswoman Nanette Barragan (D-CA) introduced the [Medicaid Dental Benefit Act](#) this week. We need your

help to urge members of Congress to support this bill and make dental services more accessible for Kansans.

The new legislation would make comprehensive adult dental coverage a mandatory component of Medicaid benefits across all states. KanCare covers emergency dental benefits for adults, and the managed care organizations offer some additional benefits. The new legislation could ensure that low-income Kansans have access to dental services that can help they stay healthy and get and keep good jobs.

Specifically, the Medicaid Dental Benefit Act would:

- End the confusing patchwork of Medicaid adult dental coverage that currently exists from state to state by making adult dental services a mandatory coverage category for all adults in Medicaid;
- Ensure that everyone gets the care they need by establishing a more comprehensive definition of Medicaid dental and oral health services for adults;
- Help states make this benefit a reality by increasing federal matching funds (FMAP) for Medicaid dental services;
- Set up standards for good care by establishing oral health quality measures for the adult population; and
- Account for racial equity and disparities, investing in outreach efforts to connect adults in underserved communities to oral health care and funding culturally competent and linguistically appropriate provider education.

Full text of the bill can be found [here](#). Read [Momentum for Dental Coverage Grows with Proposed Medicaid Dental Benefit Act in Congress](#) to learn more.

Community Catalyst is circulating a [letter of support](#) for the Medicaid Dental Benefit Act that will be sent to Congressional leaders. You can view the letter and organizations can sign on as a supporter at: [Medicaid Dental Benefit Act Support Letter](#).



KMOM Returns This Weekend

The 20th Kansas Mission of Mercy (KMOM) will be held this weekend in Wichita at Century II. During the event on July 23 and 24, volunteer dental professionals will provide free cleanings, fillings, and extractions on a first-come, first-served basis.

The 2021 KMOM was postponed due to the pandemic, and it will look a little different this year. Social distancing, mask wearing, and other precautions will be practiced. Organizers note that while COVID vaccines are very effective, anyone who is feeling sick should stay home.

The clinic will open at 5:30 AM on both Friday and Saturday. Details about what to expect and how to prepare are available on the [Kansas Dental Charitable Foundation's \(KDCF\) patient website](#).

KWCH TV recently aired a story about the upcoming KMOM event. About 1,000 people are expected to receive dental treatment this year at the annual event that has served over 30,000 people over the last 18 years.

Updates about the event via the [KDCF web site](#), [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#) accounts.



Students Learn About Advocacy

Last week Oral Health Kansas' Executive Director had the opportunity to give presentations about oral health advocacy to two groups of students. Senior dental hygiene students from [Concorde Career College](#) learned why advocacy for underserved populations is important and what some of the major public policy issues in Kansas are.

Participants in the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry's [STAHRS Scholars Dentistry program](#) also learned about the need for oral health advocacy and the status of several advocacy initiatives, including Medicaid dental services. The UMKC STAHRS program is designed to develop culturally and economically diverse dental school candidates.

It is clear the future dentists and dental hygienists in this area are ready to not only provide excellent dental care but also stand up for improved access to dental care for underserved people. If your class is interested in having OHK speak, email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.



Call For Abstracts

The [Kansas Public Health Association \(KPHA\)](#) will hold their virtual conference virtually on September 21-23, 2021 from 8:30 - 12:30 each day. They're currently accepting abstracts and need submissions **by August 6 at 5pm**. The KPHA Conference theme is [Strengthening Social Connectedness](#). Keynote presentations will focus on the

strengthening of public health practitioners and social connectedness practices. To learn more about submitting an abstract, click [here](#).



Upcoming Events

- 2021 Conference on Oral Health, presented by Oral Health Kansas, November 4 and 5. More information will be provided [here](#).
- Kansas Mission of Mercy, July 23 - 24 in Wichita, Kansas. Find more information [here](#).
- Tooth Tuesday, An Introduction to the Oral Healthcare System: A Community Equity Policy Conversation, July 27th, 1:00-2:00 PM CST. Register [here](#).
- Community Care Network of Kansas, Virtual Conference, September 20 - 23, 2021. More information coming soon.



On July 10, Policy Director, Christi Wells, celebrated her 5th year anniversary with OHK. During the legislative session, Christi is busy advocating around oral health issues and writing testimony as one of the many hats she wears for OHK. She plays a crucial role on our team and makes our organization what it is today. During her time away from work, she enjoys being a mother to beautiful Ava and spending time with her family. Congratulations Christi!



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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