



ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION

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Dental Champions Corner

Jane Shirley (Class VII), Director for the Local Public Health and Population Health Programs at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment has accepted a wonderful career opportunity as the Disease Wellness Nurse/Employer Group Clinical Coordinator with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas. She has been a tremendous asset to the Kansas public health system at the local and state levels, and will leave big shoes to fill. Jane is beginning her new role as she winds down her current role at KDHE, and will retire from state service in mid-September. Congratulations to Jane!

The First 50 Years of Medicaid and Medicare

On Thursday, July 30, our nation will celebrate fifty years of the Medicaid and Medicare programs. Our partners at Oral Health America share the following reflection on the last fifty years of Medicare and a look forward to a future that could and should include comprehensive dental benefits for people served by both programs.

In 1965 more than half of older adults in the US were uninsured. Currently, 54 million older adults and persons with disabilities have affordable healthcare coverage because of Medicare. Throughout the years, Medicare has evolved to meet the changing health and economic needs of older Americans.

Medicare and Medicaid has provided low-income vulnerable older adults, living with multiple chronic diseases with dual eligibility to protect them from the devastation that can result from unaffordable out of pocket costs.



Missouri to Host Free Dental Clinic This Weekend!

The free dental clinic, organized by Missouri Mission of Mercy on behalf of the Missouri Dental Association, will be held from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, July 31 and Saturday, August 1 in the Fieldhouse at the Hearnes Center in Columbia, Missouri.

For more information: <http://www.momom.org/>



Save the Date!

The 2015 Oral Health Kansas Conference will be

In 2003, Medicare Part D was established to ensure older adults could pay for prescription drugs they needed to maintain health. Most recently, in 2010, the importance of early disease detection for older Americans to curb disease and subdue costs was acknowledged. Through the Affordable Care Act, older adults can now access free preventive services.

Although Medicare revolutionized the way older adults access and pay for healthcare, many critical health benefits are excluded, such as routine and preventive dental services. Each day 10,000 older Americans are retiring. In fact, this cohort is expected to reach 72.1 million by year 2030.

"Maintaining a healthy mouth is one of the keys to independence as we age because of the vital connection to overall health and well-being," said Beth Truett, President & CEO of Oral Health America. "However, 70% of older Americans lack dental insurance because of inadequate financial resources and the need to cover the costs of daily living, like housing, food and transportation. This is a situation in a country as wealthy as ours that must be addressed in our lifetime."

Today's older adults are living more independently than previous generations. Nearly 90 percent of older adults want to stay in their own homes as they age, often referred to as "Aging in Place." While improvements in oral health across

November 12-14 in the Johnson County area:

**Olathe
K-State University campus**

Please plan to attend. Details coming soon!



**KPHA Annual
Conference**

The Kansas Public Health Association (KPHA) is hosting their 72nd annual conference on September 16-17, 2015.

[Find out how you can attend!](#)



**Reserve your sugary
drink display!**

Our display shows how much sugar is in a variety of your favorite drinks, emphasizing which drinks are the best choice. It has traveled its way to schools, libraries and various events.

the lifespan have been observed in the last half century, it is up to us to raise awareness and create good policy to ensure that older Americans have the opportunity to live healthy, independently and in their homes.

For more information about Oral Health America's advocacy efforts, please visit: www.oralhealthamerica.org/take-action. To get involved in Oral Health Kansas' advocacy efforts, please contact us at: info@oralhealthkansas.org.



**Improving Oral Health Care
for Seniors**

On July 29, advocates from the newly-created Johnson County Oral Health Coalition at Grace United Methodist Church was a success to assemble oral health kits for seniors. The kits contain an oral health "tips" card, toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss. Nearly 2,000 kits will be distributed to Meals on Wheels, congregate meal sites, and senior residential living communities in

Reserve a sugary drink display for your event! This display is completely free, and return shipping costs are reimbursed by Oral Health Kansas. Learn more **on our website** and **email us** if you are interested in hosting the display!



Oral Health Kansas
800 SW Jackson
Topeka, Kansas 66612
785-235-6039
info@oralhealthkansas.org



Johnson County.

Thank you to everyone who helped assemble the kits!



A Community Working Together

On July 21 over three dozen people gathered in Garden City to discuss the possibility of revitalizing their community oral health coalition. A wide spectrum of persons from a variety of organizations and professions attended. The deep commitment to addressing local oral health needs was clear.

If you would like to join the coalition in Finney County, or if you wish to explore an oral health coalition in your community, contact Doug Bowman, Community Coalition Coordinator at: dbowman@oralhealthkansas.org

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Oral Health Kansas | 800 SW Jackson | Ste. 1120 | Topeka | KS | 66612