

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](#).

Click here to sign up for our [Weekly Wednesday Update](#).

August 5, 2020

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Urging Adoption Of Teledentistry

Last week, Oral Health Kansas joined with Community Care Network of Kansas and Kansas Dental Association to send a letter to Governor Laura Kelly urging her administration to take action to authorize teledentistry during this COVID-19 pandemic. KanCare authorized teledentistry through June 30. Teledentistry is not a specific service, but it is a means by which dental needs can be assessed and prioritized.

We shared several benefits of authorizing teledentistry during this pandemic:

- Lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission for the dental team and the patient.
- Ensure a touch-free dental experience for the purposes of reviewing medical history, requesting patient consent, and assessing patient needs.
- Allow dental providers to evaluate the backlog of patients after re-opening.
- Provide continuity of care if offices must close and re-open.
- Provide an option to care for patients who have limited access due to compromised immune systems and/or social determinants.
- Reduce the burn rate of personal protective equipment.
- Reassure patients and help them feel safe about accessing dental care.

Our neighboring states of Missouri, Nebraska, and Colorado all allow some form of teledentistry, and we hope Kansas will do the same very soon.

If you believe teledentistry would be beneficial during the COVID-19 pandemic, please contact the [Governor's Office](#) or [Kansas Dental Board](#) asking them to take action and further explore the use of teledentistry in Kansas.



Oral Health Kansas Celebrates World Breastfeeding Week: August 1-7

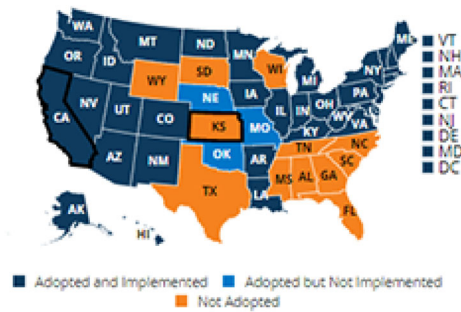
Before other foods are added, breast milk alone does not cause cavities. Breastfeeding and breast milk are the best choices for baby. When possible, babies should be fed only breast milk for the first 6 months.

The [Centers for Disease Control](#), [World Health Organization](#) and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) all agree that breastfeeding can continue even if you have symptoms of or are confirmed with COVID-19.

They recommend that you take these steps to avoid spreading the virus to your baby:

- Wash your hands before touching your baby
- Wear a cloth face covering, if possible, while feeding at the breast
- Wash your hands before touching pump or bottle parts and clean all parts after each use

Fast Facts are a collection of issue-specific oral health flyers. If you would like to order Fast Facts on Breastfeeding and are a non-profit organization in Kansas, you should contact khunt@oralhealthkansas.org for special rates. If you are a Kansas Health Department with WIC clinics you can order Fast Facts at no charge. Learn more [here](#).



Primary Election Results Trickling In

Every seat in the Kansas State Legislature is up for election this year, along with tight races for several US Senate and House seats. Yesterday, August 4th, the Primary Election narrowed down the pool of candidates for each position to one candidate per political party. Due to COVID-19, many Kansas voters chose to submit their vote through mail-in ballot, which had to be postmarked by 7PM last night to be counted. This means final numbers may not be available until Friday, August 7th. Current voting results do show Oral Health Kansas losing a few key oral health champions from the primary election. You can view the full list of current results [here](#). The General Election will be held on November 3, 2020. You can register to vote [here](#).

In our neighboring state of Missouri, voters approved Medicaid Expansion on yesterday's ballot. Missouri is now the 39th state to expand its Medicaid program under the Affordable Care Act to include low-income adults. Kansas remains one of only 12 states that has not expanded our Medicaid program, known as KanCare. According to the [Alliance for a Healthy Kansas](#), we have forfeited over \$4 billion in federal funds so far because we have not expanded KanCare. As the [Kansas News Service reported this week](#), the balance of power could shift enough from this primary election to make a difference in Medicaid Expansion. We will learn more in the days ahead as the winners of all the races are settled.



Healthy People 2030 Webinar

On August 18, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will unveil the latest edition of Healthy People! Healthy People 2030 is a set of science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving health and well-being in the United States. During the webcast, they'll highlight the new Healthy People 2030 goals and objectives and provide an overview of the development process. They'll also feature guest speakers from HHS who will discuss Healthy People 2030 data, social determinants of health, health equity, and more.

No registration is necessary. Just visit hhs.gov/live on August 18 at 12PM CST.



Virtual OPEN Academy Summit

Oral Health Progress and Equity Network (OPEN) Academy has opened registration for their 2020 Virtual OPEN Academy summit. The summit begins Tuesday, August 11. The first day will collectively aim to increase systems change capacity and skills, ground OPEN

members in the current reality of 2020, and deepen commitment to racial justice. Registration is available to OPEN members and non-members alike, at no cost. However, advance [registration](#) is required and must be completed by COB, Friday, August 7.



Physicians Play An Important Part In Oral Health

A new study from the AAPD Pediatric Dentistry Journal *Opportunities for Age-Specific Interprofessional Collaboration Between Physicians and Dentists in Pediatric Patients* examines collaborative care and interprofessional practice between dentists and physicians in improving children's oral health and overall health outcomes. The findings suggest that physicians play an important role in

integrating oral health into the well-child care of young children. Dentists may be well-positioned to provide oral health and overall health promotion for older children. Click [here](#) to view commentary. Click [here](#) to view article.



On July 13, Sarah Fertig began her role as the new Medicaid Director. She most recently served as the Medicaid Inspector General at the Office of the Attorney General. Oral Health Kansas is looking forward to

working with her.



Picture courtesy of KS Department of Health and Environment



Submit Your Award Nominations

The Excellence in Oral Health Awards are open for nominations. Submit your nominations by Friday, September 5, 2020 by 5pm to info@oralhealthkansas.org.

The categories for nominations are:

- Outstanding Organization
- Outstanding Dental Hygiene Clinician
- Outstanding Dentist Award
- Outstanding Community Leader
- Bob Bethel Outstanding Policy Maker
- Outstanding Oral Health Volunteer
- Ron Alexander Outstanding Dental Champion Award

[Excellence in Oral Health Award Nomination Form](#)

[Outstanding Dental Champion Award Nomination Form](#)

This year, we will honor the award winners during the virtual Conference on Oral Health. More details to come!



Sugary Drink Display Sanitation

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.



Out of an abundance of caution, we are suspending use of the Sugary Drink Display until further notice.

Follow Us



Oral Health Kansas • 712 S. Kansas Ave., Suite 412 Topeka, KS 66603
785.235.6039 phone • 785.233.5564 fax info@oralhealthkansas.org
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