

Kansas Raises Grade in Oral Health

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The state is making strides when it comes to dental health.

The latest report card from Oral Health America gives Kansas an overall grade of "B," up from a "D-plus" in 2003.

The state ranks lowest in state policies and access to care. Dawn McGlasson of the Oral Health Kansas coalition says Kansas needs to have more dentists accept Medicaid patients. Right now, 75,500 adults eligible for Medicaid do not have dental coverage.

In addition, McGlasson says the state needs dentists in rural areas. She says 14 Kansas counties don't have a dentist, and the entire state is at risk for a shortage of dentists.

McGlasson says dental health is important to our overall health. She says studies have linked diseases to the mouth with increased risk for strokes, lung problems and infections.

The State's Grades:

Prevention: C

Access: D-

Oral Health Infrastructure: B+

Health Status: C+

State Policies: D

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