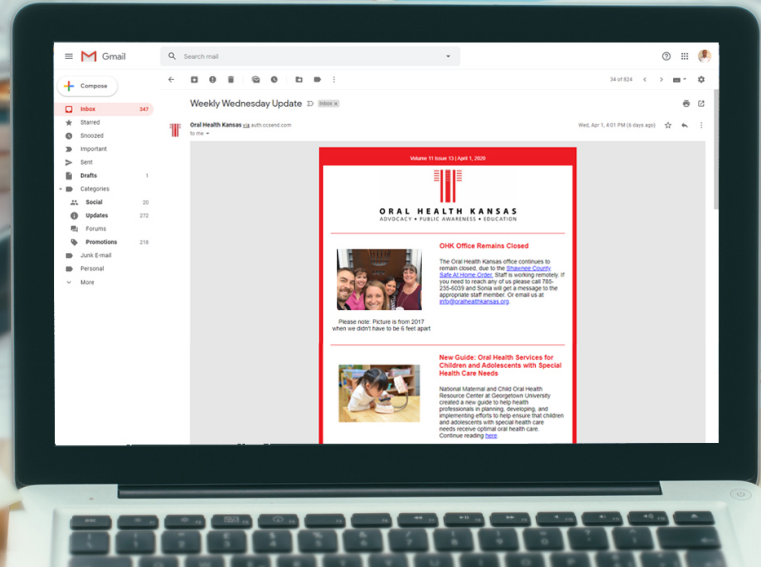




WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATE

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](#).

October 1, 2025

Volume 16, Issue 38

Scan the QR code



or click here to
sign up for our
**Weekly
Wednesday
Update.**



Exhibitor Spots Available at the Conference on Oral Health

If you're interested in signing up to exhibit at the Conference on Oral Health this year, there is still time! The conference is on Friday, November 7 and will be at the KU Edwards Campus, BEST

Conference Center, 12600 S Quivira Rd in Overland Park.

You'll be visiting with advocates from various professions, dental and dental hygiene students, professors and so many more! The benefits for exhibitors are below:

- Two complimentary spots with access to all conference sessions and meal functions and speakers.
- A 5-foot undraped table in exhibitor area with two chairs.
- Complimentary internet access.

You can view the sponsorship and exhibitor form [here](#). Spots are limited! If you're ready to register, click the link [here](#)!

Questions? Email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.



We Still Need Your Help!

Thank you to those of you that have signed on to help increase Medicaid dental rates in Kansas. A Medicaid dental rate increase went into effect on July 1, 2025! With a \$10 million investment from the Legislature, most dental rates increased - some by as much as 35 - 50%. This is the largest dental rate increase in at least two decades, and providers are already saying it's a promising step forward but there's still work to do. To ensure Medicaid dental rates are competitive with commercial rates, Oral Health Kansas and partners are advocating for the Legislature to complete the job in 2026. We still need more voices to help.

To grow and sustain a strong dental provider network, lawmakers need to hear why further investment is critical. Whether you're sharing your story, contacting legislators, engaging your peers, or adding your organization's name in support - **every action makes a difference**. If you're not sure how to take the first step, email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org and we'll provide guidance.

Join the coalition today by adding your name to [this form](#). Together, we can strengthen the dental provider network and make sure Kansans with Medicaid coverage have access to the dental care they need.



LAST Session Tomorrow! Get Ready for "Building Confidence in Dental Teams to Serve People with Disabilities"

Thursday, October 2 is the last Project ECHO series for **"Building Confidence in Dental Teams to Serve People with Disabilities"**. You'll hear from Nick Rogers, a dentist from Arkansas City, Kansas, who is a Medicaid provider and has created his dental office to accommodate

individuals with disabilities.

The sessions provide insight on caring for people with disabilities in your dental office. The Project ECHO team addresses sensitivities that can arise in providing dental care and allow an opportunity for you to

ask your questions.

If you missed any of the series, that's not an issue. If you register, you will have access to the recorded sessions. You can register at this link [here](#).

If you have any questions about this series, you can email info@oralhealthkansas.org.



Join ECHO Plus

Implementing insights from a KU Project ECHO learning series in your practice, clinic, or organization can be a challenge! Project ECHO can support you and your team as you level up your practices to improve health outcomes in your community with ECHO Plus. Select Project ECHO learning series feature the enhanced ECHO Plus option, providing tailored resources and benefits to drive practice transformation at the

clinic or organization level. These series are designed to elevate your team's skills and position your practice as a leader in the specialty area.

Resources available for ECHO Plus participants include:

- Advanced training and mentorship programs
- Marketing and promotional support
- Stipend during participation

Up to 5 practices will receive a \$500 stipend for their participation.

Explore the current KU Project ECHO series that are recruiting clinics and organizations to join an ECHO Plus cohort. Reach out to ProjectECHO@kumc.edu for additional details. Register for the Accessible Oral Health series [here](#).



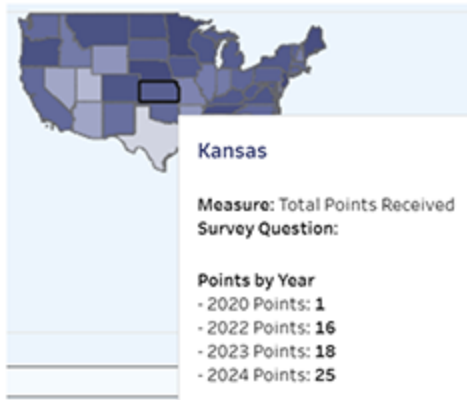
Making Medicaid Work For You Webinar Series A Success

Thank you to everyone who helped make our Making Medicaid Work For You Webinar Series a complete success! The series began on Tuesday, August 19 and ended on Tuesday, September 30. The goal was to provide information for dental offices who wanted to learn more about becoming a Medicaid provider. Throughout the month we received questions from providers and office staff that we hope we were able to help. We have posted these Frequently Asked Questions, along with a

new MCO Quick Reference Guide and links to all of the resources we covered in the webinar series on

the [dental provider page](#) of our Pathways to Oral Health website. If you have a question, feel free to email Bryan Thompson, Dental Medicaid Facilitator at bthompson@oralhealthkansas.org.

If you missed any of the webinars and want to watch, you can find the recorded sessions and PowerPoint slides at this link: <https://pathwaystooralhealth.org/resources-list/webinar/>.



Kansas Score on Adult Dental Increases

Each year the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health updates its [Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage Checker](#). This innovative tool uses data from each state Medicaid program to demonstrate Medicaid dental coverage for adults across the country. It reports on coverage in eight service categories, and it tracks any limits on coverage.

States that score 27 points or more are considered to have comprehensive coverage. In 2020, Kansas scored just one point. Since 2022, Kansas has had steady growth in Medicaid adult dental coverage, and now we score 25 points. This dramatic increase in coverage means adults are able to access exams, x-rays, cleanings, fillings, periodontal care, and dentures. While it is not quite comprehensive, the coverage available now means adults with Medicaid coverage should have access to most of the dental care they need.

The last step in getting meaningful access to Medicaid dental care is ensuring that the rates paid for care are sufficient to encourage dental offices to accept Medicaid. Oral Health Kansas and our partners will be advocating to finish the job of increasing the Medicaid dental rates during the 2026 Legislative Session. If your organization would like to sign on to help advocate, please use [this form](#) to indicate your interest. Contact us at info@oralhealthkansas.org with any questions.



Recruiting Virtual Interns for the Fall

Over the summer Oral Health Kansas had the great fortune of working with a Masters of Global Health Policy intern from Brandeis University and a Masters of Public Health intern from Kansas State University. Together Dr. Augustina Mensah and Dr. Isha Kothari developed a new data dashboard we will be debuting soon. Their research is helping us tell the story of Kansans' access to Medicaid dental care.

We are recruiting interns for this fall to continue the work on analyzing and presenting Medicaid data. [Click here to access our internship application](#). Yes, the internship can be virtual. We communicate quite

a bit through Zoom calls and interns have shared their experiences are positive!



OPEN Annual Meeting: Advancing Community Oral Health

OPEN, an initiative of CareQuest Institute for Oral Health, is a diverse network of individuals and entities who are taking on America's oral health challenges. They will be having their

annual meeting on October 15 - 16 from 1 - 5pm ET. The event is a virtual convening that will spotlight community water fluoridation as a critical equity issue and offer hands-on training with the new Framing for Oral Health Equity Toolkit. Come ready to build relationships, sharpen your strategy, and take action.

Click [here](#) to find out how you can be a part of the annual meeting!



New Smiles for Life Podcast

Smiles for Life is proud to announce a new Podcast - Oral Health Matters. In the inaugural episode of Oral Health Matters, host Dr. Karlynn Sievers welcomes Dr. Denise Rizzolo and Dr. Thomas Chiodo for a deep dive into dental pain, trauma, and emergencies. They explore why dental injuries are especially common in children, the most frequent reasons patients seek emergency dental care, and how to respond when accidents happen. Dr. Chiodo breaks down the differences between avulsion, luxation, and subluxation injuries, while the guests stress the critical importance of quick action -

particularly when it comes to repositioning displaced teeth. The conversation also highlights prevention strategies, from the use of mouthguards to safe practices with oral piercings, and it closes with a reminder that routine dental care is the best defense against severe issues. Listen to the podcast here:

<https://smilesforlife.podbean.com/e/dental-emergencies-what-to-do-when-accidents-happen/>.

Upcoming Events

- Course: An Introduction to Value-Based Care in Oral Health: Moving from Volume to Value, 1 CE. Click [here](#) for the course information.
- Self paced courses: [Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals](#) and [Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers](#).



- **Webinar:** Project Echo Series beginning September 4 - October 2, *Building Confidence in Dental Teams to Serve People with Disabilities*. Register [here](#)! CE's are available!
- The Conference on Oral Health will be held Friday, November 7 at the KU Edwards Campus. Click [here](#) for updates on the conference.
- SPEAK Up! (Self-Advocates Promoting Empowerment and Access in Kansas) conference on Saturday, November 8. Click [here](#) for information.



Heartfelt congratulations are being sent to Meghan Shreve, who previously was InterHab's Associate Director and is now enjoying her role as Executive Director. InterHab is the resource network for Kansans with intellectual and developmental disabilities and also a Pathways to Oral Health project partner. We look forward to continuing our partnership with InterHab and Meghan!



Picture courtesy of InterHab



Sugary Drink Display

We have Adult and Children's Sugary Drink Display's available for reservations. These displays are eye catching at exhibits, schools, library, dental offices, clinics and just about anywhere you see them! We only have a limited amount so please sign up soon if you're interested in reserving one. Click [here](#) to learn more about sugary drink display reservations!

Follow Us



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