



## 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](#).

**November 19, 2025**

Volume 16, Issue 44

Scan the QR code



or click here to  
sign up for our  
**[Weekly  
Wednesday  
Update](#)**.



## Conference on Oral Health: Another Successful Event!

The 2025 hybrid Conference on Oral Health was held on Friday, November 7 at the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park. The event brought together 122 registrants, 9 sponsors, and 14 exhibitors. It was a jam packed day! The event also had some of

us with tears in our eyes but we hope participants walked away inspired because we sure did. You can

read the speaker bios on our webpage: <https://www.oralhealthkansas.org/Conference.html>. Go to our [Facebook page](#) for pictures of our event.

Thank you once again to all of our sponsors. We cannot have such an amazing event if it wasn't for their support!

- **Delta Dental of Kansas** - Platinum Sponsor
- **Centene Dental Services** - Gold Sponsor
- **Health Forward Foundation** - Gold Sponsor
- **United Healthcare Community Plan** - Silver Sponsor
- **United Methodist Health Ministry Fund** - Silver Sponsor
- **Healthy Blue** - Bronze Sponsor
- **REACH Healthcare Foundation** - Bronze Sponsor
- **Sunflower Foundation** - Bronze Sponsor
- **Wichita State University - Evelyn Hendren Cassat Speech - Language Hearing Clinic** - Bronze Sponsor

If you missed it, that's ok because we're set for next year! You can join us on Friday, November 13, 2026! Location TBD.



Allen Reavis

Melanie Jacobs

Deb Pochop

## Congratulations to our 2025 Winners!

If you were at the Conference on Oral Health, Friday, November 7, you witnessed these three amazing individuals receive their Excellence in Oral Health Awards. They have shown exceptional commitment to advancing oral health in our communities. Below are the 2025 winners for the Excellence in Oral Health

Awards.

*Bob Bethell Outstanding Policy Maker:* **Rep. Allen Reavis**

*Outstanding Community Leader:* **Deb Pochop**

*Outstanding Volunteer:* **Melanie Jacobs**

Next year we'll be ready to honor more individuals at the 2026 Conference on Oral Health. Watch for when we open up nominations in 2026. Visit our [webpage](#) for updates.



## FDA's Restrictions on Fluoride

On October 31, the [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) announced new restrictions](#) on fluoride supplements. The announcement states that fluoride supplements should not be used for children under age three and only used for children over age three who are at high risk for tooth decay. In May the FDA signaled they may ban fluoride supplements altogether, so this announcement is a better outcome than many in the oral health community feared it would be. Nonetheless, the new restrictions signal new risks to the oral health of people living in communities that do not have access to optimally fluoridated water.

The [American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry \(AAPD\) issued a statement](#) that they along with the American Dental Association and American Academy of Pediatrics affirm “that the use of fluoride in prevention of caries is safe and effective.” In their statement, the AAPD said, “We strongly support fluoride supplementation as a method to prevent caries, particularly in communities without fluoridated water and for all children with high caries risk.” In the AAPD’s statement there are links to several useful resources on best practices for the use of fluoride.

People living in communities like Wichita, which is the largest city in the state that is not optimally fluoridated, have relied on fluoride supplements for decades as the best way to ensure children grow up with strong teeth. Oral Health Kansas shares in our national partners’ concerns about limitations on access to fluoride. We will continue to monitor the situation and share resources from our national partners as they become available.

Our partners at the Oral Health Progress and Equity Network (OPEN) host monthly calls about fluoride and community water fluoridation. The next meeting is on December 3 at 2 pm CT. Anyone is welcome to participate. Register [here](#) to attend.



## OHK Seeks Virtual Interns

Oral Health Kansas is seeking an intern to help us with our projects. This past summer we had two interns develop a new data dashboard and now we need someone to continue the work on analyzing and presenting Medicaid data. This internship is virtual. All communication is done via Zoom, phone calls or emails.

Fill out [this application](#) if you’re interested! If you have any questions, email us at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org)



## Accessible Oral Health ECHO is Now Available

In September, the Accessible Oral Health ECHO: Building Confidence in Dental Teams to Serve People with Disabilities webinar had a series for five weeks and had over 100 participants! Now the webinar is available on demand at no cost. Thanks to funding from Delta Dental of Kansas, access best practices, tools, and resources for providing oral health care to people with disabilities available online, 24/7, for CE credit at no cost. This virtual learning series is a valuable resource perfect for sharing

with colleagues, partners, and students, and it even makes a great team-building activity! Access the series at this link: <https://bit.ly/ECHO-On-Demand>.



## National Diabetes Month

November is [National Diabetes Month](#), where health professionals and advocates across the US come together to increase awareness about diabetes. Diabetes is one of the fastest growing chronic diseases in the world. Nearly one in two Americans has diabetes or prediabetes, and diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death in the US. There have been numerous

advancements in diabetes knowledge, treatment, and care over the past few decades, but there is still much more to be done to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by the disease. Health professionals need to be able to educate their at-risk patients about the oral-systemic connection in diabetes and the importance of best oral care practices. Health literacy tools such as the Oral Health Nursing Education and Practice's Oral Health and Diabetes fact sheets in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) can be shared with patients to help them understand their role of maintaining good oral health in preventing and managing diabetes. For more diabetes and oral health resources, their [OHNEP Interprofessional Oral Health Tool Kits](#) for undergraduate and graduate nursing contain a wealth of resources on the connections between diabetes and oral health!

## 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:** Fluoride Hesitancy in Clinical Practice: What's a Dentist to Do?, November 18, 7:00pm-8:30pm CST. Register [here](#).
- **Webinar:** The Oral Systemic Connection: The Importance of Oral Health in Patients with Intellectual or Developmental Disorders (IDD), December 9 at 6:00pm CST. Register [here](#).



Congratulations to our former intern, Isha Kothari for winning the *In Your Own Words* storytelling contest through the Kansas Health Institute. The contest highlights the impact of public health in Kansas. Isha's story is one that

many parents have endured but may not know where to get help. *Quiet Battles: How Public Health Gave Me My Voice Back*, is Isha's personal story about postpartum and finding resources to help. We appreciate her vulnerability to share! Read her full blog at this

link: <https://www.khi.org/articles/quiet-battles-how-public-health-gave-me-my-voice-back/>



## 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



**Oral Health Kansas** • PO BOX 4567 • Topeka, KS 66604  
785.235.6039 phone • 785.233.5564 fax • [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org)  
Copyright 2025