



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](#).

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



There's a Spot for You! Register Now!

With just days away, the 2025 Conference on Oral Health will be making a debut! This year has been impactful in Kansas and nationally, so we're ready to show you what has kept us so busy and all the partnerships we have created along the way. We hope you find the topics captivating!

New this year! We're providing three breakout sessions to allow you to choose a topic that you want to learn more about. But you can only choose one! (Please note: Our previous planned session, Dental Care for Veterans, has been canceled).

Breakout Sessions in the afternoon: Community Approaches to Meeting Community Needs

■ Expanding Impact: How Dental Hygienists can Lead Community Outreach

Kylie Austin, RDH MS ECP-III, UMKC School of Dentistry; Tammi Engel, RDH, ECP-III, Northwest Smile Center; Kathy Hunt, RDH, ECP-II, Oral Health Kansas

■ Dental Care for Individuals with Disabilities: Behavioral Strategies to Improve Patient Experience and Cooperation

Christie Stiehl, BCBA, Stiehl Behavioral Consulting, LLC; MaryAnne Lynch Small, MPH, BDS, Oral Health Kansas

■ Integrating Dental Care into Medical Care

Celeste Carpenter, RDH BS ECP III, Swope Health; Shawn Oprisiu, RDH, BS ECP III, Swope Health; Julie Thiesen, RDH BS ECP III, Swope Health, Abigail Richwine, RDH, BS, Oral Health Kansas

State of the State of Oral Health in Kansas

Stuart Little, PhD, Little Government Relations; Rep. Allen Reavis, DDS, Tanya Dorf Brunner, MS, Oral Health Kansas

Accessible Oral Health: Building Confidence in Dental Teams to Serve People with Disabilities

Jacqueline Belden, MLS, KU Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth University of Kansas Medical Center

Fluoride in Kansas: Trends, Policies, and Public Health Impact

Melissa Burroughs, BA, CareQuest Institute for Oral Health

KEYNOTE: Positive Exposure by Rick Guidotti

Providing Thoughtful Care for People Who've Experienced Trauma

Trina Morgan, BEd, MOL, Kansas Children's Service League

Pathways to Oral Health: A Collaborative Approach to Improving Access to Medicaid Dental Care

Tim Kolling, Compass Marketing & Advertising Partners, Oral Health Kansas Staff and Pathways Partners

When: Friday, November 7

Breakfast and registration begin at 7:30am CST. Sessions begin at 8:30am CST.

Where: Virtual or in person at KU Edwards Campus (BEST Conference Room), 12600 S Quivira Rd, Overland Park

The opportunity to earn 5.75 CE's is available!

YES! You can still register. Register at this [link](#) and find out more information about the conference.



New Idea to Help Recruit Dentists to Medicaid

Last week we introduced the new [Consumer Toolkit for Recruiting Dentists](#). This is a practical guide designed for community members, advocates, and caregivers who want to make a difference. It's a way to help you talk to your dentists or dentists in your community.

The toolkit gives you everything you need to start the conversation:

- **Fact sheets** you can share with local dental offices.
- **Sample emails, texts, and talking points** for reaching out to dentists in your area.
- **Social media posts and graphics** to raise awareness and inspire action.

- **Information about recent Medicaid improvements**, including higher reimbursement rates and expanded adult coverage.
- **Resources for dentists**, such as provider enrollment links and [helpful advice on provider enrollment](#), disability care training, and [My Dental Care Passport](#) to support inclusive care.

You don't need to be an expert to make a difference. Every email, call, and social post helps show Kansas dentists that their participation in Medicaid truly matters—and that our communities are ready to support them.

When more dentists open their doors to Medicaid patients, families get the preventive care they deserve, and individuals with disabilities can maintain their oral and overall health with dignity and confidence.

Visit the [Pathways to Oral Health](#) website for more resources.



Dental Students Learn About Oral Health Advocacy

Last week Oral Health Kansas' MaryAnne Lynch Small and Tanya Dorf Brunner had the opportunity to share an introduction to advocacy to 140 dental and dental hygiene students from the UMKC School of Dentistry. The students in the public health classes learned about interpersonal, community, and legislative advocacy. Tammy Vicin and her brother Jim Woods joined the students to share their story about advocating with managed care organizations and legislators to ensure Jim has the care he needs. Oral Health Kansas lobbyist Mallory Lutz described some

of the best ways to engage with policymakers. Along the way, the students learned how valuable dental professionals are as oral health advocates and experts in their communities. Students brainstormed the barriers people face in accessing dental care. This word cloud shows their insight is keen. This class of students is learning a lot and will be ready to advocate for their communities and ensure their future patients and neighbors have every opportunity to maintain good oral health.



FDA Limits Fluoride Supplements for Children Under Age 3

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced on October 31 its recommendation that ingestible fluoride drug products should not be given to children under age three or any child at low or moderate risk for tooth decay despite the effectiveness fluoride supplements have shown to be effective. In a recent statement from the American Dental Association states:

"The research shows that daily use of fluoride tablets or drops at home are a safe and effective way to strengthen teeth and prevent cavities in children who are at high risk for tooth decay and whose water is deficient in fluoride," said Richard J. Rosato, D.M.D., president of the American Dental Association. "A doctor's clinical judgment, not a new warning label, should remain the guiding factor in determining appropriate fluoride use for children, ensuring both safety and access to essential oral health care."

Fluoride supplements have been shown to be effective at reducing tooth decay and are one method for maintaining oral health when utilized daily in compliance with the proper dose. The first step before taking supplements is to determine the fluoride content in the drinking water (well or water system). Families in cities like Wichita that are not optimally fluoridated have long relied on fluoride supplements to keep their children's teeth strong and healthy. This policy change could put children's dental health at risk.

Oral health advocates from across the country are responding to the recommendations. You can read the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry's response [here](#), the American Fluoridation Society's response [here](#), and the American Dental Association's full response statement [here](#).

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:** Motivational Interviewing: How and Why to Collaborate with Patients, November 6 at 6:00pm CST. Register [here](#).
- 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.

■ **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](#).



Rick Guidotti is the Keynote Speaker for the 2025 Conference on Oral Health which is coming up on Friday, November 7. Rick will be coming to Kansas from New York City! We're so grateful he's coming to share his time with us

and conference participants! Rick is an award-winning photographer who worked in New York City, Milan, Paris and London for a variety of high profile clients including Yves St Laurent, Revlon and L'Oreal. Rick founded Positive Exposure after a chance encounter in 1997 with a young lady living with albinism at a bus stop in New York City, was taken back by her beauty and asked if he could photograph her.



Picture courtesy of Positive Exposure

[Here](#) is a glimpse of Rick's work. He photographed individuals with disabilities and their families while they shared some of their struggles accessing health care services and dental care.



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!

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