



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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Scan the QR code



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



Help Us Urge Congress to Protect the Medicaid Program

The Oral Health Kansas staff are going to be in Washington, DC for Hill visits next week. We plan to meet with staff at each member of our Congressional delegation's offices. One of the issues we will talk about is the importance of the Medicaid dental program. We know the program is important because it helps ensure that children, families, older adults, and people with disabilities can access essential oral healthcare regardless of income. Oral health is closely connected to

overall health, and untreated dental problems can lead to pain, infection, missed school or work, and serious medical complications.

We will hand deliver a sign-on letter from Kansas organizations that support the Medicaid dental program. If you would like to **include your organization's name on the [letter](#), you can fill out this simple [form](#)**. We ask you to sign **by this Thursday, May 28** so we have time to compile the list of organizations and make copies.

Feel free to share this with your friends and colleagues!!

If you have any questions, email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org



Medicaid Value-Added Benefits: What You Need to Know

Free CE

June 16, 2026
12:00-12:30 pm

Did you know that a KanCare Managed Care Organization (MCO) may offer up to two practice visits to help individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities feel more comfortable in the dental office? This value-added benefit supports patients in building familiarity and trust with the dental team—making future visits smoother and more successful.

Learn more about these valuable supports in our upcoming webinar, where we'll highlight KanCare MCO Value Added Benefits (VABs). These unique offerings vary by plan and are designed to improve access to care and support better oral health outcomes for members.

Click here or scan to register!

ORAL HEALTH KANSAS
KANSAS DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Value Added Benefits and How They Can Help

Did you know that there are value-added benefits available through the KanCare managed care organizations (MCOs) that help make it easier for people to access dental care? These are benefits in addition to what is covered by Medicaid. On June 16 from 12:00pm - 12:30pm, join us and the three MCOs Healthy Blue, Sunflower Health Plan and United Healthcare as they explain what each of them provides for their members. This is a great FREE CE opportunity for dental offices to learn more!

Oral Health Kansas, the Kansas Dental Association, and the Pathways to Oral Health team are hosting this event! If you have any questions,

you can reach out to us at info@oralhealthkansas.org.

You can register here at this [link](#).



Recognize Outstanding Achievements

We are seeking nominations for the Excellence in Oral Health Awards, honoring dedicated Kansans whose impactful work is transforming communities and advancing healthier oral health for all. The nominations can be individuals or an organization that you feel should be recognized for their work. Is there an organization in Kansas you can nominate? Award-winning organizations have

leaders who inspire and drive progress! In 2022, South Central Kansas Medical Center won the Outstanding Organization Award for providing treatment to individuals who may need a hospital setting and sedation for dental care.

Do you know someone you can nominate? Submit your nominations by Friday, August 28 by 5:00pm. Click here for the [Excellence in Oral Health Award](#) or here for the [Ron Alexander Outstanding Dental Champion Award](#). They will be recognized during the Conference on Oral Health, Friday, November 13 at the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park.

Please note that individuals or organizations who have already received this award are not eligible for nomination again. Email info@oralhealthkansas.org with any questions about the award nominations.



Veterans and Their Oral Health

As we reflect on Memorial Holiday this week, we wanted to highlight how important access to oral health for veterans is to us all. Veterans' access to dental care varies depending on their eligibility for benefits. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides dental benefits to some veterans, but the availability and extent of these benefits depends on several factors, such as service-connected disabilities, former prisoner of war status, and eligibility for VA healthcare. The VA offers comprehensive dental care services to certain veterans, including diagnostic, preventive, and restorative treatments. However, these services are not automatically available to all veterans. Only about 26% of veterans are eligible. Veterans can check with their local VA healthcare facility or visit the VA website for information on dental benefits and how to apply.

CareQuest Institute for Oral Health and the American Institute on Disparities in Public Health [published a white paper](#), Veteran Oral Health: Expanding Access and Equity, focused on solutions supporting veteran oral health, physical health, and economic security. Providing veterans with access to affordable, high-quality dental care will improve their overall health and well-being while reducing immediate and long-term costs.

In Kansas, 8.6% of the state population, or about 192,964 people, are veterans and about 8% of Veterans in Kansas have lost all their natural teeth. Click [here](#) to view the fact sheet for veterans in Kansas. Next week, Oral Health Kansas will meet with the members of the Congressional delegation to raise awareness about gaps in access to oral healthcare for veterans and urge them to support [HR 210](#), the Dental Care for Veterans Act. This bill would make dental care a standard benefit for all veterans enrolled in the VA system.

Upcoming Events

- Self paced courses: [Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals](#) and [Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers](#).



- Community Care Network of Kansas annual conference, September 23-25 in Manhattan, Kansas. Learn more [here](#).
- Kansas Public Health Association Conference, October 5 - 6, 2026 in Manhattan. Click [here](#) for information.
- **Webinar:** Rutgers University offering Perinatal Oral Health ECHO Series. Check out the list of series [here](#).
- Save the date! The 2026 Conference on Oral Health will be Friday, November 13 at the KU Edwards Campus.



We're excited to welcome United Way of Kaw Valley to the Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition. United Way invests in communities and the whole family in Shawnee County. We're looking forward to working with them!



If you're interested in joining the Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition, you can email us at info@oralhealthkansas.org. The group meets from 12p-1p every other month.



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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Oral Health Kansas • PO BOX 4567 • Topeka, KS 66604
785.235.6039 phone • 785.233.5564 fax • info@oralhealthkansas.org
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