

## 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](#).

**June 10, 2026**

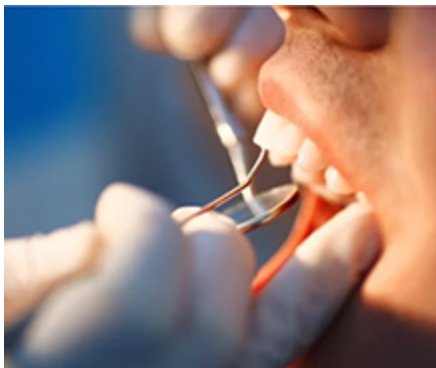
Volume 17, Issue 22

Scan the QR code



or click here to sign up for our

**[Weekly Wednesday Update.](#)**



## Register Now and Learn About the Perks

Hosted by Oral Health Kansas, the Kansas Dental Association, and the Pathways to Oral Health team, join us on Tuesday, June 16 for a special webinar on Medicaid Value Added Benefits (VABs): What You Need to Know. VABs are extra perks offered by the three KanCare (Medicaid) managed care organizations (MCOs) on top of standard KanCare coverage. Each of the three managed care companies offers their own special benefits to people who join their plan and they'll

each take time to share what benefits they offer for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This is a perfect **FREE CE** opportunity for dental offices to learn more.

**Date:** June 16, 2026

**Time:** 12:00pm - 12:30pm

**Register here:** [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/KZIM4500THKwaQh\\_Hh0Ktg#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/KZIM4500THKwaQh_Hh0Ktg#/registration)



## Oral Health Kansas Takes Oral Health Priorities to Capitol Hill

Last week, Oral Health Kansas staff traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with members of the Kansas Congressional Delegation and advocate for key federal oral health priorities. During the visit, staff met with representatives from Senator Jerry Moran's office, Senator Roger Marshall's office, and each of Kansas' four Congressional offices.

A primary focus of the meetings was support for [H.R. 210](#), the Dental Care for Veterans Act, which would make dental care a standard benefit for all veterans enrolled in the VA health system. Following our meetings, Rep. Sharice Davids signed on as a co-sponsor of H.R. 210.

The meetings also highlighted the importance of protecting Medicaid funding and preserving access to essential oral health services for Kansans. Oral Health Kansas hand-delivered the letter signed by 29 organizations urging Congress to prevent cuts to Medicaid dental care. The letter underscored the critical role Medicaid plays in helping children, adults, older adults, and individuals with disabilities access oral health services throughout Kansas.

In addition, staff advocated for [S. 4008](#), the Promoting Dental Health Act, which would reauthorize funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Oral Health Program and help ensure oral health remains represented within federal public health efforts.

In Senator Moran's office, national partners from CareQuest Institute for Oral Health, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Institute of Disparities in Public Health joined Oral Health Kansas to meet with staff from the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. Together, the group discussed the importance of expanding access to dental care for veterans, and the positive impact comprehensive dental coverage could have on overall health and quality of life.

These meetings provided an important opportunity to elevate oral health as a health equity issue and share the real-world impact federal policy decisions have on Kansas communities. Oral Health Kansas looks forward to continuing conversations with members of the Kansas Congressional Delegation and their staff as federal policy discussions move forward. We will continue working with national and state partners to advance policies that improve access to oral health care for veterans, protect Medicaid coverage, and strengthen federal support for oral health programs.

If you have any questions, you can email us at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org).



## Sponsor the 2026 Conference on Oral Health

The conference planning committee is busy preparing for this year's annual conference and are seeking sponsors and exhibitors! We're excited to have Whit Downing, Vice President of Policy and Programming at

the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities, as our Keynote Speaker. She'll share her compelling life story of an autistic self-advocate with lived experience.

The Conference on Oral Health will be held on Friday, November 13 from 8:30am - 4:00pm at the KU Edwards Campus, 12600 Quivira Road in Overland Park. We have opened the conference for sponsors or exhibitors. This is a unique opportunity for organizations to reach the dental public health community. If you are interested or want to learn more, click [here](#) to view the sponsorship levels. Contact us at [info@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:info@oralhealthkansas.org) for more information.



## Men's Health Week

June is National Men's Health Awareness Month and Men's Health Week begins this week from June 8 - 14! Men's Health Week is a week to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection. Men are often less likely than women to seek preventive healthcare, including oral health. Help encourage the men in your life to schedule dental checkups and eat well including limiting sugar drinks and foods.

### What can you do at home?

- Brush your teeth daily at least twice a day for two minutes.
- Use toothpaste with fluoride.
- Floss!
- Limit sugary drinks to special days. If this is difficult, drink your beverage at one sitting to avoid acid attacks. Check our Tips and Tricks on [Soft Drinks and Cavities](#).
- Drink water to stay hydrated!
- Avoid snacking throughout the day, if possible. Snacking all day can also cause acid attacks! Read more on Tips and Tricks for [Healthy Eating](#).

Small steps today can lead to healthier tomorrows. It can also lead to healthier habits we do every day!



## Migraine and Headache Awareness Month

Are you someone that suffers from migraines or headaches because you grind your teeth? You are not alone! So many people clench or grind their teeth, especially at night and don't realize it until they wake up with a sore mouth. Grinding your teeth can lead to chipped teeth, if grinding or clenching too hard without being aware. Tightening your face every night could cause headaches.

What can you do? You should first find the cause of why you grind your teeth. If it's before bed, are you going to bed feeling stressed out? Try to do some breathing exercises or read a book to calm your mind before bedtime. You can talk to your dental provider if using a mouth piece, such as a night guard, is an option. You can also find mouth pieces in the stores although they may not fit as well.

OHK staff member, Sonia Olmos, shares her mouth clenching experience:

*"I didn't know I was clenching my teeth every night while I slept, until I kept having tooth pain throughout the day. Once I realized what I was doing because my jaw was hurting each morning, I tried relaxing habits before bed. I stretched while doing breathing exercises. Read a book even if it was just for 10 minutes. I even just laid on the floor with my dog to relax. I am now noticing my mouth doesn't hurt! This may not be a solution for everyone, but why not try it or find your own relaxing techniques."*

If you are still experiencing migraines or headaches, talk to your medical or dental provider.



## 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.
- Rutgers University offering Perinatal Oral Health ECHO Series webinar. 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.



Congratulations to Oral Health Kansas board member, Shane Lewis and his organization [Woolly Farms](#) for their recent \$500 donation from DeVaughn James Injury Lawyers. Woolly Farms is an organization that provides services for adults with diverse abilities. The organization empowers individuals to reach their full potential by offering opportunities for personal development. The donation will boost the organization's mission.



## 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 2026