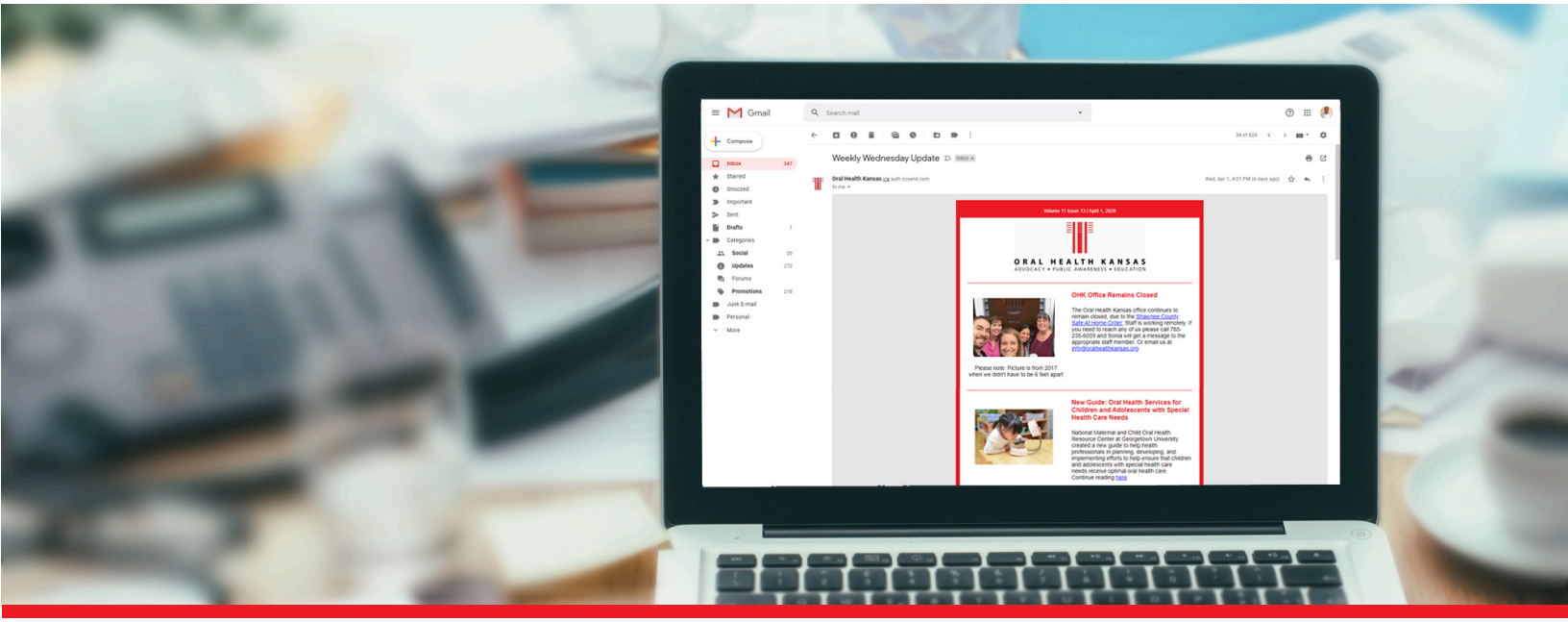
ORAL HEALTH KANSAS
ADVOCACY • PUBLIC AWARENESS • EDUCATION



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.

Scan the QR code

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

September 9, 2026

Volume 17, Issue 35

Conference Registration is Now Open!

We're ecstatic to announce registration for the Conference on Oral Health is open! The conference will be held on **Friday, November 13**. This is an all day in person event at the KU Edwards Campus BEST Conference Room in Overland Park. There will be plenary sessions as well as breakout sessions.

- Oral Health Policy and Election Update

- Enhancing Patient-Centered Care with the My Dental Care Passport & Sensory Modifications Guide
- Resilience, Well-Being, and Success in the Workplace
- Building Your Advocacy Skills
- Shifting the Narrative: Amplifying Voices
- The State of Dental Practice: Costs, Insurance, and Access

We'll have opportunities for you to visit with other attendees, Oral Health Kansas board members and staff as well as exhibitors.
CE's will be offered. You can earn your CE's in time before your year-end license renewal!

Exhibitors! Spots will fill up fast. Sign up to exhibit at our conference and have access to all of the conference sessions and meals, while visiting with the participants. View the various sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities here. You must use this link to register as an exhibitor or sponsor.

How to register: Click on this link to register. If you do not have an account with the IRIS conference platform, you will need to set up an account.

Regular Attendee Rate: $125 | Walk-in Attendee Rate: $150
Regular Student Rate: $20 | Walk-in Student Rate: $25

Rates include access to all meals, snacks and sessions.

If you have any questions, email Sonia at solmos@oralhealthkansas.org.

We have a hotel block at the Courtyard by Marriott Olathe at 12151 S. Strang Line Court. Details coming soon.

Healthy Aging Month

September is Healthy Aging Month, a national observance dedicated to promoting the physical, mental, social, and financial well-being of adults as they age. Rather than focusing on age as a limitation, the month encourages positive, proactive approaches to aging well. Oral health plays a bigger role in that picture than many people realize. As we age, tooth loss and gum disease become more common, but they aren't inevitable. Most oral health problems in older adults are preventable with consistent care. Dry mouth is a common side effect of medications frequently prescribed to older adults, and it significantly increases the risk of cavities and gum disease.

Oral health is also tied to nutrition. With advancing age, if we have missing teeth, ill-fitting dentures, or untreated dental pain, it can make it difficult to chew nutritious foods, which can lead to poor nutrition and weight loss in older adults.

What can you do?

- Visit the dentist! The dentist or dental hygienist can check our mouths and see if there are any issues that may come about.
- If you have dry mouth, talk to your dentist about possible solutions and check out our Tips and Tricks on dry mouth.
- If you're a caregiver, help remind your loved one about brushing twice a day and flossing.
- Confidence in Every Smile is an award winning video series designed to make brushing and flossing easier for people living with physical or intellectual disabilities but you can also find tips to use for aging individuals. Each video shares practical tips, creative tools, and encouragement so everyone can care for their teeth with confidence.
- If you need help finding a dentist or resources for dental care, visit the Finding a Dentist page.
- Visit our Older Adults for more helpful resources.

Remember...age is just a number. But our health shouldn't be. Take care of YOU!

What is a Community Dental Clinic and Where Can You Find One

In Kansas, Community Dental Clinics are clinics specifically designed to make oral health care accessible to people who might otherwise struggle to get it. The clinics see patients regardless of income, insurance status, or where they live. They offer comprehensive services on a sliding-fee scale. These are costs adjusted based on a patient's income and family size, so someone with limited means pays significantly less than the standard rate. There are several clinics in the state of Kansas and often times they are able to see patients but some locations may have a waiting list due to the number of providers they have.

Community Care Network of Kansas serves as the statewide primary care association connecting these clinics to trainings, advocacy, policy support, and a shared "Find a Clinic" tool that helps patients locate care across the network.

To find a Community Dental Clinic, visit our website. Our new Tips and Tricks Finding a Dentist handout has some helpful tips and also available in Spanish.

Join the Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition

The Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition is searching for their next new members to add to their coalition. As a volunteer-based coalition, the Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition has overseen exciting growth in the Brush Book Bed program and has collaborated with community partners to improve oral health outcomes for over 10 years. As a volunteer member of the Shawnee County Oral

Health Coalition, members work collaboratively with community partners to improve oral health outcomes for families through the Brush Book Bed program. Through community engagement, they help identify oral health needs, support initiatives that increase access to care, and promote the importance of oral health as an essential part of overall health. Members may volunteer to exhibit at community events to share oral health resources. Members are from organizations around the Topeka area such as community dental clinics, early childhood programs, health department, United Way and Kansas Children's Service League. Through community engagement, they help identify oral health needs, support initiatives that increase access to care, and promote the importance of oral health as an essential part of overall health.

The coalition meets every other month from 12:00pm-1:00pm. The meetings are virtual although members have offered to host at their place of employment. The meetings are run by two Co-Chairs. If you or your organization is interested in joining, email Sonia at solmos@oralhealthkansas.org or if you have any questions.

Upcoming Events

- Self paced courses: Providing Oral Health Care to Autistic Individuals and Caring for Individuals with Disabilities: Practical Considerations for Dental Providers.
- **Webinar**: How Medicaid Policy Changes Are Shaping Access to Oral Health Care, hosted by CareQuest Institute for Oral Health on September 10 at 6:00 CST. Register here.
- **Webinar**: Silver Diamine Fluoride in Action: Evidence and Implementation, hosted by CareQuest Institute for Oral Health on September 17 at 6:00pm CST. Register here.
- **Webinar**: Medicare: Expansion of Dental Services, hosted by CareQuest Institute for Oral Health on October 8 at 6:00pm CST. Register here.
- **Webinar:** Next Making Medicaid Work for You webinar series is on October 13 at 12:00pm. Registration information coming soon.
- **Webinar**: Substance Use Disorders and Dentistry, hosted by CareQuest Institute for Oral Health on October 22 at 6:00pm CST. Register here.
- **Webinar**: Rutgers University offering Perinatal Oral Health ECHO Series webinar. Check out the list of series here.
- 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.

- **2026 Conference on Oral Health** will be **Friday, November 13** at the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park. Click here for information.

Congratulations to our Pathways to Oral Health Project partner, Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas (SACK) who were recently awarded the 2026 Grassroots Advocate Award from the Kansas Disability Caucus for their dedication to increasing independence for people with disabilities. SACK is an amazing group of advocates and this recognition for their work is much deserved!

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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