

Member Newsletter



Coalition News

Think Big! on Medicaid Adult Dental Coalition Board Member Talks Advocacy

Last Thursday, I participated in the annual meeting of Oral Health Kansas, which is Kansas' version of the Michigan Oral Health Coalition. The meeting was held in Topeka and I was able to attend the opening session of the event. If I closed my eyes and just listened to the speakers' concerns and ensuing discussions, I would hardly have been able to discern that this was taking place in Kansas versus Michigan--as their issues are so similar to ours!



Andrea Goodwin
Board Member
Smiles Across Michigan

Oral Health Kansas had invited the Coalition to present "Think Big! Successful Medicaid Adult Dental Benefits Campaigns," a [presentation](#) on our Coalition's efforts to re-establish funding for adult dental benefits under Medicaid. Due to a CDC Grant meeting on the same day, I attended the meeting in executive director Karlene Ketola's place.

As mentioned, the issues facing Kansas are the same ones with which we struggle on a regular basis: access to care; quality of care; water fluoridation; recruitment of dentists; reimbursement rates, lack of funding, etc. In contrast to Michigan, however, Kansas has not had a Medicaid adult dental benefit so their fight is a bit different: they must prove the case for establishing funding in the first place. Low-income, disabled and elderly residents must use federally funded community-based dental clinics, and the state seems to have a well-established network of these clinics. Nevertheless, care is not readily accessible and it hinges on the clinics' ability to stay afloat in tough economic times. School-based dental clinics are available for school-aged children. Water fluoridation participation by communities was determined to be below par by the Pew Center study.

The dental community is strongly represented in Oral Health Kansas' membership. The state's health department, college/university systems, major insurers, and state policymakers are also part of OHK's membership. My message to their organization was that they seem to have the diversity needed to develop a robust message regarding oral health care access in Kansas. I urged them to organize their advocacy,

December 9, 2010

In This Issue

[Think Big! on
Medicaid Adult
Dental](#)

[Membership
Renewals Still in
Progress](#)

[Many New Faces in
Lansing](#)

[Pew Study: "It Takes
A Team" Released](#)

[HHS Launches
Healthy People 2020](#)

Quick Links

[Visit Our Website](#)
[Join the Coalition](#)
[Read Our Blog](#)
[Join Us On
Facebook](#)

Upcoming Events

Legislative
Workgroup
Conference Call
December 16, 2010
10 to 11 a.m.

CDC Workgroup
Conference Call
January 6, 2011
8 to 9 a.m.

Medicaid Billing and
CHAMPS Webinar
January 10, 2011
12 to 1 p.m.

Board of Directors

Chris Shea
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*Cherry Street
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Janice Joseph, DDS
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which can be challenging considering the varying positions of their membership "home" groups.

As we know in Michigan, while it is difficult or impossible to come up with a plan that all groups view as perfect, we can certainly come up with a plan that can satisfy the common concerns of the group. OHK is attempting to do exactly that, as they develop their advocacy plan.

On final reflection, I want to share with you that I was proud to represent our Coalition and talk about the hard work that our organization and its members have done to motivate the reinstatement of adult dental under Medicaid. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to share our story of success, and I look forward to continuing our work to ensure the continuation - and perhaps even the expansion - of access to oral health care for Michigan's residents.

Sincerely,
Andrea Goodwin, Board Member
Smiles Across Michigan

New Program Year Membership Renewals Still in Progress!

The membership renewal process is well underway for the Coalition. As always, you may pay your dues by check or credit card. As we look ahead, we hope you will continue your involvement in the Coalition. It will be an exciting, and challenging year as we fight to maintain the adult dental benefit and begin to implement the new State Oral Health Plan. If you have any questions about membership, contact Karlene Ketola, executive director, at 517.827.0466

State News

Many New Faces in Lansing Have You Reached Out to Your Newly Elected Lawmakers?

With so many new faces coming to Lansing this January, now is the time to introduce yourself to your newly elected lawmakers, at every level, and begin educating them about oral health's impact on overall health as well as workforce as soon as possible. With a projected \$1.6 billion deficit for the FY 2012 state budget, it will be easy for cuts to be made to those areas of the budget that legislators are unaware of or that they don't understand. It is absolutely essential that we educate them now. For more information, please contact Karlene Ketola, executive director at 517.827.0466.

National News

Pew Study: "It Takes A Team" Released How New Types of Dental Providers Can Improve Access to Care and Dentists' Profits

According to a new report from the Pew Center on the States, most private-practice dentists who hire new types of dental providers can serve more patients, including more Medicaid enrollees, while maintaining or improving their financial bottom line.

Health & Wellness

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Andrea Goodwin
*Smiles Across
Michigan*

Staff

Karlene Ketola
Executive Director
*Michigan Oral
Health Coalition*

"It Takes A Team: How New Dental Providers Can Benefit Patients and Practices" applies an economic tool that Pew commissioned, the Productivity and Profit Calculator, to evaluate the impact on dental practices that hire one of these three "allied providers." The report, calculator and related materials are accessible [here](#) and individual dentists can use the calculator to evaluate the impact of allied providers on their own practices.

HHS Launches *Healthy People 2020* **Oral Health Objectives**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently unveiled *Healthy People 2020*, the nation's new 10-year goals and objectives for health promotion and disease prevention. Chronic diseases, such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes, are responsible for seven out of every 10 deaths among Americans each year and account for 75 percent of the nation's health spending. Many of the risk factors that contribute to the development of these diseases are preventable. [See Oral Health Objectives](#)

The Michigan Oral Health Coalition's mission is to improve oral health in Michigan by focusing on prevention, health promotion, oral health data, access and the link between oral health and overall health.

Michigan Oral Health Coalition

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