



Adventure Dental and Vision of Kansas

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February 21, 2025

Subject: Urgent Need for Children's Medicaid Dental Fee Increase

Dear Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Janelle Shumaker, representing Adventure Dental & Vision, a group of children's practices in Kansas with a mission to **provide care to children in underserved communities**, including children covered by Medicaid.

I am writing to urge you to support an increase in pediatric Medicaid dental fees in this year's budget. Many of Kansas' children lack access to basic oral health care due to low provider participation in the Medicaid program. Offering an increase in Medicaid dental fees, near that of neighboring state Missouri, would give dental providers the resources needed to accept more Medicaid patients.

While I commend KS for recently expanding Medicaid adult benefits, the dentists who have been providing services the longest (to children) have not seen a shift in fees to match that of overall inflation. Over the past four years, our dental practices have incurred rising costs on dental supplies, lab fees, staff wages, rent and insurance premiums. Meanwhile, Kansas' pediatric Medicaid reimbursement rates have remained stagnant, failing to keep pace with the rising costs of providing care to Kansas' most vulnerable population.

The House just passed a \$4 million SGF increase for dental fees. The original request from the oral health community was \$16 million, which would put KS Medicaid fees in line with other nearby states. I respectfully ask that you prioritize this issue and approve a much-needed Medicaid dental fee increase, especially for the pediatric providers who have been caring for underserved kids, without increases, for years.

Thank you for your time and commitment to the children of Kansas.

Sincerely,

Janelle Shumaker
Vice President, Payor Relations
Adventure Dental & Vision