



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

JOINT COMMITTEE ON HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES OVERSIGHT

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President & CEO

Chairman Bethell, Vice Chair McGinn, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this morning on the important issue of dental service in Kansas.

The issue of dental service in Kansas is certainly not a new one. Kansas has taken several actions to compensate for the fact that it lacks a dental school, perhaps the most significant being the development of a reciprocity agreement that allows Kansans to study dentistry at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) dental school at in-state tuition rates. Several allied health programs in the field of dentistry have also been developed at different institutions to provide support personnel for the dental profession.

In addition, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) administers the Kansas Dental Recruitment Program. This program provides recruitment assistance that includes outreach, a dental job clearinghouse, and a Dental Workforce Cabinet that directs the efforts of the recruitment program.

Kansas-Missouri Reciprocity Agreement

In 1964, Kansas and Missouri established a reciprocal tuition agreement that includes dentistry, optometry and architecture. Students receive an out-of-state tuition waiver that allows them to pay in-state tuition. The current agreement reserves 85 slots for Kansans in the University of Missouri-Kansas City dentistry programs. This agreement expires June 30, 2011 and we have begun the process of re-negotiating it.

Kansas residents may enroll in two different dental programs at UMKC: 1) they may enter the DDS program for students wanting a degree so they can become dentists; or 2) they may pursue a graduate certificate program after having earned their DDS degree. Typically three to four Kansas students enroll in one of six graduate certificate programs and receive tuition waivers each semester. The six graduate certificate programs are: 1) Advanced Education in General Dentistry; 2) Endodontics; 3) Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology; 4) Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery; 5) Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics; and 6) Periodontics.

★ LEADING HIGHER EDUCATION ★

Under the terms of the reciprocity agreement:

- The University of Missouri-Kansas City dental school reserves 85 slots for Kansas students.
- Out-of-state tuition is waived for those students.
- Twenty new students enter the program annually.

From the fall of 2006 to the present, all 85 slots have been filled each semester, and an average of 23 new applicants annually apply to receive the waiver. There is no service requirement that Kansas residents who receive waivers to study dentistry at UMKC work as dentists in Kansas following graduation.

Ad Hoc Task Force on Oral Health in Kansas

In 2004-2005, the Wichita State University (WSU) College of Health Professions convened an Ad Hoc Task Force on Oral Health in Kansas. That task force produced a white paper on the state's dental needs that included the following observations:

- 91 of 105 Kansas counties are designated as "health professions shortage areas" for dentistry by federal government's Health Resources and Services Administration.
- From 1990-2002, an average of 15 UMKC dental graduates each year chose to practice in Kansas. Most who did so chose to work in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area
- The report stressed that Kansas needs to do two things: 1) increase the number of dental graduates choosing to practice in Kansas; and 2) increase the number of dental graduates choosing to practice in under-served areas of the state.

The white paper did not include a recommendation to establish a dental school in Kansas, focusing instead on strategies to increase the number of dentists practicing in Kansas, in particular in under-served areas, and on the feasibility of introducing educational options like the Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD) that has been implemented at WSU.

Dental Programs in Kansas

Kansas currently has five programs training dental assistants and five educating dental hygienists. We also have one graduate certificate program, located at WSU.

Dental Assistant

Five Kansas schools currently offer dental assistant programs: Flint Hills Technical College in Emporia, Salina Area Technical College, Wichita Area Technical College, Advanced Dental Assisting School in Olathe, and Dental Careers of Kansas City.

Dental assistants in Kansas are not required to be licensed or have formal training to practice. Most dental assistants are trained on the job, though certificate programs do exist for those who desire postsecondary training. From 2005 through 2009, 276 students completed the dental assistant certificate program at the five institutions.

Dental Hygienist

There are five dental hygienist programs in Kansas. Colby Community College, Johnson County Community College, Flint Hills Technical College, and Manhattan Area Technical College offer associate degrees in dental hygiene. WSU offers an undergraduate degree in dental hygiene.

To practice in Kansas, dental hygienists must have graduated from an approved dental hygienist degree program and be licensed by the Kansas Dental Board. From 2005 through 2009, 358 students completed a dental hygienist degree at the six institutions.

Graduate Certificate

WSU offers the Advanced Education Program in General Dentistry (AEGD), and in the fall of 2009 WSU admitted its first class (seven students) to the program. The program is similar to a medical residency and is a one-year postdoctoral education program which offers dentists an opportunity for advanced comprehensive clinical experience in a variety of clinical settings.

Institutional Responses

I have consulted with the University of Kansas (KU) and WSU on the question of establishing a dental school in the state.

KU administrators note that establishing a dental school would be very costly. They estimate start-up costs of between \$15 million and \$87 million, depending on the scope of the project.

WSU supports a full public policy debate on the need for a dental school in Kansas. It further takes the position that if there is to be a dental school in Kansas, the logical place to locate the school would be at WSU because:

- WSU currently has the only accredited graduate dental program in the state (AEGD).
- A new building to house the AEGD program is under construction at WSU. This facility is supported fully by local donors interested in general education, indicating strong support for dental education in Wichita.
- Wichita is the largest city in Kansas and host to a wide variety of dental specialties in addition to general practice dentists.
- WSU has strong connections to rural Kansas through the WSU Regional Institute on Aging, which focuses on health issues related to Kansans aging in place.
- The WSU College of Health Professions includes a program in dental hygiene.
- The current Dean of the WSU College of Health Professions has experience in dental school administration. Thus, WSU has resident expertise in dental curricula and programs.
- The exact cost of starting a new dental school is unknown. However, WSU would collaborate to develop a full proposal for a school when such a proposal is appropriate.

Advantages of Establishing a Dental School

Possible advantages of establishing a dental school in Kansas include the ability to:

- Attract Kansas students who are more likely to remain in Kansas upon graduation;
- Develop programs that target rural dental care; and
- Maintain a student clinic that could provide services to individuals who might otherwise not receive them.

Disadvantages of Establishing a Dental School

Disadvantages of establishing a dental school in Kansas include the fact that such an action:

- Is a very expensive proposition—more expensive, in fact, than establishing a medical school according to experts at the KU Medical Center;
- Entails the added burden of recruiting and retaining faculty and administration; purchasing, maintaining and replacing equipment; and building and maintaining facilities; and
- Does not resolve the issue of retaining graduates both in Kansas and in under-served areas.

Other Options

Some other possible options, if we do not wish to pursue a dental school, are:

- *Enact a service requirement for Kansas residents attending UMKC dental programs and receiving out-of-state tuition waivers.*

The estimated value of the waiver for the 4-year DDS degree is approximately \$98,803 per student, based on current tuition rates.

The estimated value of the waiver for the 4-year DDS degree for 85 students is approximately \$8.4 million, based on current tuition rates.

- *Establish a scholarship program for dental students that pays the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition at dental schools other than UMKC. These scholarships would come with a service requirement that might include additional incentives to work in under-served geographic areas.*

Dental programs exist in other Midwest states (Nebraska, Iowa, Colorado, Oklahoma, Indiana, Ohio, etc.) and negotiations could be undertaken to secure seats for Kansas residents. Scholarships should not be awarded to Kansas residents attending UMKC since they can take advantage of the tuition waiver.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the invitation to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions the Committee might have.