

# MSSSC NEWS

## Overdose deaths decline in Kansas, nation

There were 644 drug overdose deaths in Kansas in 2023, a decline of 13% from the previous year, according to the state's recently released 2023 Annual Summary of Vital Statistics. However, the number of deaths remains high compared with other years.

### Drug deaths by type nationwide

DRUG TYPE*	(ESTIMATED DEATHS 2023)	(ESTIMATED DEATHS 2022)
Synthetic Opioids (fentanyl)	74,702	76,226
Psychostimulants (including methamphetamine)	36,251	35,550
Cocaine	29,918	28,441
Natural/semi-synthetic	10,171	12,135

\*Deaths may involve multiple drugs, while others might not specify any specific drug. As a result, the sum of deaths attributed to specific drugs may not equal the total number of drug overdose deaths. SOURCE: CDC

The number of overdose deaths resulting from opioids, including fentanyl, dropped 17%, from 497 fatalities in 2022 to 414 in 2023. There were 262 deaths in 2023 related to psychostimulants such as amphetamine and methamphetamine, a 19% drop from 322 deaths in 2022.

The decline follows a spike in overdose deaths in recent years. In 2021, overdose deaths in Kansas totaled 679, a 42% jump from the previous year's total of 479. In 2022, the total increased an additional 9% to 739 deaths. The 2023 drop was the first year-over-year reduction since 2016, though the 644 overdose deaths in 2023 were more than double the 310 deaths in 2016.

The state's decline mirrors a national drop in overdose deaths. Provisional federal data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention projected overdose deaths dropped 17% from June 2023 to July 2024.

Experts and policymakers attribute the decline in part to harm-reduction policies. In 2023, the Kansas Legislature legalized fentanyl test strips and sought to expand access to Narcan, an over-the-counter drug that can block an opioid overdose. There also was additional federal support for mental health and addiction services. The Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office and others also launched "One Pill Can Kill" fentanyl-awareness campaigns.

## Expect old issues in new legislative session

The 2025 Kansas legislative session convened Jan. 13, and some issues from the previous session likely will return.

Nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) plan to renew their push to expand their scope of practice. Unlike the limited expansion approved in 2022 for APRNs, the CRNAs want to practice without any restrictions, which could include surgery and other invasive procedures.

Optometrists also seek an expanded scope that would allow for multiple procedures that overlap into the practice of medicine. The Kansas Medical Society and MSSSC oppose these scope expansions.

One highlight of last session was the 9% increase in the Medicaid physician pay schedule. KMS and MSSSC will continue to advocate for increased rates.

Medicaid expansion remains a priority of Gov. Laura Kelly, and KMS and MSSSC also support it. However, GOP legislative leaders oppose it, making it difficult for any bill to advance.

Kelly also supports medical marijuana. Kansas is now surrounded by states that have approved marijuana use in some form. KMS and MSSSC oppose medical marijuana, because marijuana is not an FDA-approved drug and is not administered with the evidence-based protocols used for prescription medicines.

The 2024 elections expanded Republican control of the Legislature. As a result, it is likely some bills that

Kelly vetoed last year will be reintroduced, such as banning gender-affirming care for minors.

Kevin Hoppock, MD, leads MSSC's Legislative Committee, which meets every other Friday at 7 a.m. via Zoom during the first two months of the session. If you would like to participate, contact MSSC. To look up bills, follow hearings and listen to live proceedings, visit <http://kslegislature.org>.

Another good way to engage is to attend the KMS Advocacy Day in Topeka on Jan. 29. In addition to hearing from top legislative leaders, you'll be able to interact with state lawmakers. Register at <https://kmsonline.org/advocacyday>.



Dr. Hoppock



▲ REP. TOM SAWYER, REP. BRIAN BERGKAMP, KATIE ROSELL, MD, AND LINDSAY STRADER, DO



January 2025

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# Goals include more mental health resources



**JANY MOUSSA, MD**  
January President's Message

It is an honor and privilege to serve this year as the president of the Medical Society of Sedgwick County. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such a talented and dedicated group of medical professionals, and I look forward to the meaningful initiatives we will undertake together.

For those who don't know me, I'd like to share a bit about myself. I was born in Ohio, and in 1969, when I was 2 years old, my family returned to Syria. I grew up in Syria and completed my medical education at Aleppo University.

At the age of 26, I returned to the United States to continue my professional journey. I conducted research at Loma Linda University and completed my residency in Wichita, followed by a fellowship in Nephrology at the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Kansas City.

I have had the pleasure of serving the Wichita community since joining the Wichita Nephrology Group in 2002. In 2013 I was honored to become its president.

Involvement in medical education is one of my greatest passions but also is essential to promoting the success of our future physicians. As a clinical associate professor with the KUSM-Wichita departments of Internal Medicine and Family Medicine, I participate in the education of medical students and residents on a daily basis. I also serve as the medical director for Internal Medicine Education for the Via Christi Family Practice Program, a role that allows me to contribute to the education and develop-



▲ YVONNE AND JANY MOUSSA, MD, IN DECEMBER

ment of future physicians.

On a personal note, my wife, Yvonne, and I are proud to be the parents of two wonderful daughters. Reema is a second-year medical student at the University of Oklahoma, and Nicole is a second-year pre-med student at the University of Tulsa.

Outside of medicine, I am a devoted fan of the Kansas City Chiefs, the Shockers and Liverpool Football Club. I also enjoy playing tennis and playing keyboard with my band, Band MD.

As MSSC president, my goals for the coming year include expanding mental health resources in our community and increasing awareness about the outstanding medical environment in Wichita. I want to highlight why Wichita is a fantastic place to practice medicine and how our city provides a supportive and rewarding atmosphere for physicians.

I look forward to working together to achieve these goals, engaging with each of you, and continuing to strengthen our medical community. Thank you for your trust and support. Let's make this a year to remember.



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**SARAH MARTINEZ, APRN**  
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## In Brief ▶▶▶ New and noteworthy

### MSSC discussing private equity

MSSC's next membership meeting will be a thought-provoking panel discussion on how private equity is reshaping healthcare. The March 4 meeting at Wichita Country Club will look at private equity's impact on patient care and physician job satisfaction, as well as resources to help physicians stay independent.

For those considering a buyout — whether by private equity, a hospital system or a management group — we'll discuss how to evaluate potential partners and structure agreements effectively. Don't miss this opportunity to gain valuable insights and connect with colleagues about this controversial topic.

### New email service

MSSC switched recently to Constant Contact to send out large-volume emails. If you have trouble receiving MSSC newsletter emails, legislative updates or event notices, contact Denise Phillips at [denisephillips@med-soc.org](mailto:denisephillips@med-soc.org) or (316) 683-7558.

# In Brief ▶▶▶

## New and noteworthy

### MSSC milestone members

2025 is a milestone year for those physicians who joined MSSC in 1975, 1985 or 1995 and continue as practicing members. All told, 52 active and 150 retired physicians have been MSSC members for 40 or more years. MSSC is proud of their support of the organization and grateful for their dedication to patients and the practice of medicine. Congratulations to those celebrating milestone anniversaries:

#### Celebrating 50 years with MSSC

Jerry B. Cohlmlia, MD



Dr. Cohlmlia

#### Celebrating 40 years with MSSC

Samuel W. Amstutz, MD  
Gregory R. Boxberger, MD  
Jed E. Delmore, MD  
James F. Hesse, MD  
Rodney L. Jones, MD  
Arun Kumar, MD  
Stephen F. Lemons, MD  
John F. McMaster, MD  
David W. Niederee, MD  
Mary L. Nielsen, MD  
Sheldon H. Preskorn, MD  
John L. Shellito, MD  
Lindall E. Smith, MD  
Jesus E. Val Mejias, MD



Dr. Jones

#### Celebrating 30 years with MSSC

Daniel R. Alvarez, DO  
Dasa V. Gangadhar, MD  
Scott S. Johnson, MD  
Vijay K. Khurana, MD  
Kenneth L. Kovach, MD  
Bon Nola, MD  
Scott W. Porter, MD  
Robert A. Schmaltz, MD  
James M. Shaw, MD  
Scott L. Stringfield, MD  
Robert R. Wittler, MD



Dr. McMaster



Dr. Nielsen

### KUSM-W hosting SUD training

The KUSM-W Department of Family & Community Medicine is hosting substance use disorders training on Feb. 6 from 3-6:30 p.m. The virtual course, which is supported by MSSC, is intended to meet the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts' Category 3 requirement for licensure as well as meet 3 hours toward the Drug Enforcement Administration requirement. The cost is \$90. Registration closes on Jan. 23. Register at [www.eeds.com/live/401131](http://www.eeds.com/live/401131).

### Elder is CEO of GraceMed

MSSC member Julie Elder, DO, was appointed last month as the new CEO of GraceMed Health Clinic. She had been interim CEO since March and has practiced internal medicine with GraceMed for more than 11 years.



### JayDoc Clinic celebrates 20 years

JayDoc Community Clinic, which is operated by KUSM-W medical students, is celebrating its 20th anniversary with an awards and fundraising banquet. The Feb. 8 event at the Petroleum Club hopes to raise at least \$30,000 to help support translation services. In 2024, 73% of the 491 patients who received care were Spanish speaking.

MSSC member and sports medicine specialist Jennifer Koontz, MD, helped launch JayDoc Community Clinic when she was a third-year medical student in 2005.

### Kellerman profiled in magazine

MSSC member Rick Kellerman, MD, was profiled last month in the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians' magazine, timed to the end of his 27-year run as chair of the KUSM-Wichita Department of Family & Community Medicine. He remains a professor during his phased retirement.



Kellerman has won many awards and served in national roles, including president of the American Academy of Family Physicians and AAFP board chairman. MSSC member Gretchen Irwin, MD, who is the new department chair, credited Kellerman with creating "a whole generation of family physicians who are doing amazing work."

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# ROSTER UPDATE

Keep your 2025 roster current with this information.

Key: [BC] Board Certified [F] Accredited Fellowship [R] Residency [AT] Additional Training [F\*] Unaccredited Fellowship

## CHANGES & CORRECTIONS

**Amin Ahmed, MD**

**Chad P. Ammar, MD**

**Matthew A. Arneson, MD**

**Brett E. Grizzell, MD**

**Bethany G. Harpole, MD**

**Steven A. Hutchinson, MD**

**Sanjay G. Khicha, MD**

**Jason D. Woolard, MD**

Wichita Surgical Specialists, PA

OFF: 316-858-5000

FAX: 316-858-1026

1947 Founders Cir, 67206 (through 5/5/25)

**Wichita Urology Group, PA**

West Wichita location, 7570 W 21st St N Bldg 1014A, closed for remodeling through May

**Ammar Al-Obaidi, MD**

[BC] Hematology

[BC] Medical Oncology

Cancer Center of Kansas, PA

**Ashley L. Barks, MD**

[BC] Neurological Surgery

Abay Neuroscience Center

**Conner D. Baus, MD**

[BC] Internal Medicine

KUSM-Wichita Hospitalists

**Laura M. Birkholtz, DO**

[BC] Obstetrics & Gynecology

Ascension Medical Group Via Christi OB/GYN

**Geoffrey Andrew Boisvert, MD**

[BC] Surgery

[BC] Surgical Critical Care

Kansas Surgical Consultants

**Kristen Y. Giefer, DO**

[BC] Obstetrics & Gynecology

Associates in Women's Health, PA

**James H. Gilbaugh, III, MD**

[BC] Urology

Center for Reproductive Medicine

Focus: Male Infertility

OFF: 316-687-2112

FAX: 316-687-1260

9300 E 29th St N S-102, 67226



**Keck R. Hartman, MD (not retired)**

Infectious Disease Consultants, PA

OFF: 316-264-3505

FAX: 316-264-0908

310 S Hillside, 67211

NPI: 1912902685

**Lana N. Hattar, MD**

**Mayssa Zayat, MD**

Ascension Medical Group Via Christi Pediatric Gastroenterology

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Same phone, fax

**Michael G. Hudson, MD**

[BC] Emergency Medicine

Vituity

**Ann E. Hutchison, MD**

[BC] Surgery

[BC] Surgical Critical Care

NMC Health Surgical Specialists

**Manish Kumar, MD, PhD**

[BC] Hematopathology

Southcentral Pathology Laboratory, PA

**Brandon H. Layton, MD**

[BC] Pediatric Anesthesiology

Wichita Anesthesiology, Chtd

**Ahmed H. Mohamed, MD**

[BC] Interventional Cardiology

Heartland Cardiology

**Trang X. Pham, MD**

Wichita Urology Group, PA

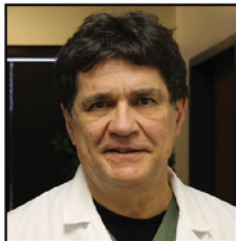
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# ROSTER UPDATE *continued*

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Key: [BC] Board Certified [F] Accredited Fellowship [R] Residency [AT] Additional Training [F\*] Unaccredited Fellowship

## **Alisha Sanchez, MD**

[BC] Pediatrics  
Mid-Kansas Pediatric Associates, PA  
OFF: 316-634-2000  
FAX: 316-634-2321  
9825 E Shannon Woods, 67226  
OFF: 316-719-2001  
FAX: 316-719-2020  
1635 E Freedom St S-500  
Derby, KS 67037  
www.midkspeds.com

## **Hannah M. Scoville, DO**

Ascension Medical Group Via Christi East 21st  
OFF: 316-274-4501  
FAX: 316-274-4473  
9211 E 21st St N, 67206

## **Collin M. Smith, DO**

[BC] Internal Medicine  
CarePoint Healthcare  
OFF: 316-962-7190  
FAX: 316-962-7100  
550 N Hillside, 67214

## **Nora M. Strong, MD**

[BC] Infectious Disease  
Infectious Disease Consultants, PA

## **Nicholas A. Wasinger, DO**

[BC] Emergency Medicine  
Vituity

## **Lisa A. Weber, MD**

[BC] Nephrology  
[BC] Internal Medicine  
Lisa Weber Nephrology Care, LLC  
OFF: 316-799-5069  
Email: lwebertransplant@gmail.com

## **Kelly Winter, MD**

[BC] Colon & Rectal Surgery  
Wichita Surgical Specialists, PA

## **Abraham Zabih, DO**

[BC] Pediatric Cardiology  
Children's Mercy Wichita

**Hylo Urgent Care East** (formerly Immediate Medical Care East)

**Hylo Urgent Care Maize** (formerly Immediate Medical Care Maize Rd)

**Hylo Urgent Care West** (formerly Immediate Medical Care West)

Same addresses, phone numbers

## RETIRING

**Usha Challa, MD** – 1/1/25

**Rosalie R. Focken, MD** – 12/31/24

**Laurie A. Gwyn, MD** – 1/31/25

**DeAnn R. Jenkins, MD** – 12/1/24

**Debra L. Wade, MD** – 12/31/24

**Lin Xu, MD** – 12/13/24

## DROPPED

**Ignacio A. DeCicco, MD** – Moved out of state

**Gregory A. Esparza, MD, PhD** – Moved out of area

**Mark R. Fesen, MD** – 1/9/25

**Jordan R. Meyer, MD** – 1/3/25

**Nathan B. Norris, MD** – 1/8/25

**Melissa V. Ortiz, MD** – Moved out of state

## In Remembrance

*MSSC extends its condolences to the families of Drs. Mortensen and Moufarrij.*

### **Steen E. Mortensen, MD**

Longtime rheumatologist Steen E. Mortensen, MD, died Nov. 26. He was 82.

Mortensen was born in 1942 in Copenhagen, Denmark. He initially studied engineering at the University of Copenhagen. In his 20s, after a catastrophic motorcycle accident, the inspiration of his mother, Ingrid, to become a physician influenced Mortensen to pursue a career in medicine, his family said. He began his studies at Copenhagen University Hospital and ultimately earned his medical doctorate from Odense University Hospital in Odense, Denmark. When Mortensen graduated in 1972, he belonged to the first graduating class from the now prestigious medical school.

Mortensen completed his medical residency and subsequent fellowship at Loma Linda University and moved to Wichita in 1993, when he joined the MSSC. He retired in 2018. Mortensen served as a MSSC president in 2008 and as a KMS board member. He also served on four MSSC committees, including 28 years on the Legislative Committee. Mortensen served as chief of rheumatology for both Loma Linda University in California and the Wichita Clinic (Ascension) and was a fellow at the American College of Rheumatology.

Mortensen is survived by his wife, Jette, and their three children: Erik Mortensen and Per Mortensen of Kansas and Annika Mortensen of Oregon; and one grandchild.



DR. MORTENSEN

### **Nazih A. Moufarrij, MD**

Neurosurgeon Nazih Afif Moufarrij, MD, died on Dec. 6. He was 68.

Born in Beirut, Lebanon, Moufarrij attended the American University of Beirut Medical School in 1976, followed by an internship in surgery, a residency in neurosurgery and a fellowship in cerebrovascular surgery at the Cleveland Clinic from 1981-1988. He was board certified in Neurological Surgery in 1991.

Moufarrij joined MSSC in 2000, when he began practice with Wichita Surgical Specialists, PA.

"He lived a life rich in service, humility and love," his family said. "Known for helping so many Kansans with his skilled surgical hands, mentoring medical students and tirelessly caring for his community, Nazih was a beacon of light and hope."

Moufarrij is survived by his wife, Sarah; sons, Iain and Noah; and brothers, Ramzi and Walid.



DR. MOUFARRIJ

# MSSC NEWS

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**MAHEEDHAR  
GEDELA,**

M.D., F.A.C.C., F.S.C.A.I.

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