



MSSC NEWS

June 2026

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SEDGWICK COUNTY

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State sees spike in uninsured children

Kansas had the highest percentage increase in the nation between 2022 and 2024 in the number of children under 6 years old who don't have health insurance, according to a study released this month by the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. It also had the second-largest increase in the rate of uninsured children under 6.

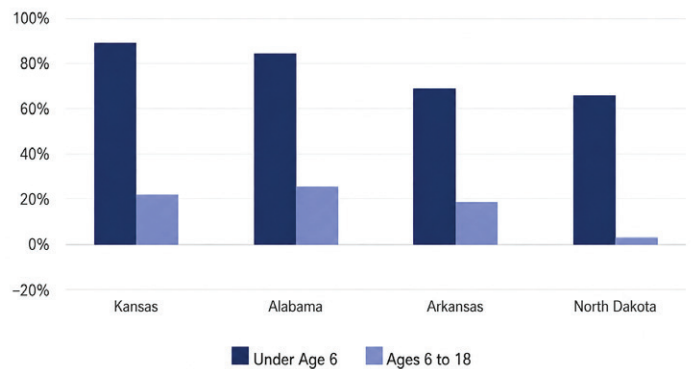
Kansas saw an 87.4% increase in the total number of children under 6 who don't have health insurance: from 7,900 in 2022 to 14,700 in 2024. Nationally, the average increase was 23%.

The percentage of children in Kansas under 6 without health insurance was 7.2% in 2024, a 3.5-percentage-point increase from 2022. Only North Dakota had a higher rate increase (4.5 points).

Kansas' 7.2% uninsured rate was the ninth highest in the nation, according to the report. The national average was 5.3%.

The study said increases in uninsured children were "likely due at least in part to the unwinding of the Medicaid continuous coverage protection that had been in place during the COVID-19 pandemic."

Percent Growth in Number of Uninsured Children Under Age 6



Source: Georgetown University Center for Children and Families analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 2022-2024 American Community Survey (ACS) data, Table S2701: Selected Characteristics of Health Insurance Coverage in the United States.



Emergency medicine residency starting

Wichita is launching an emergency medicine residency program on July 1 with a goal of being a local pipeline for ED docs, KU School of Medicine-Wichita reported.

"The emergency medicine residency will help build a future base of physicians who are more likely to stay in Wichita or the surrounding areas of Kansas," said MSSC member William Salyers, Jr., MD, MPH, chair of the KUSM-W Department of Internal Medicine, which will oversee the program.

The residency is a partnership between KUSM-W, the Wichita Center for Graduate Medical Education, Wesley Healthcare and CarePoint, the company that staffs the Wesley Emergency Department.

MSSC member Christopher Cassidy, MD, with CarePoint said the idea for the residency began several years ago as a way to help address the challenge of attracting emergency medicine physicians to Wichita. A key step was determining that Wesley could reallocate the program unused residency slots from other HCA facilities around the country. More than 350 people applied for the six residency spots.

KUSM-W had 98 total residency slots open this year, and all of them were filled. It also has fellowship programs in addiction medicine, child and adolescent psychiatry, gastroenterology and sports medicine.

Many rural hospitals at risk

Kansas has the second-highest number of rural hospitals in the nation, but it also has the highest percentage of rural hospitals at risk of closing, according to a new report by the Center for Healthcare Quality & Payment Reform, a policy center focused on redesigning healthcare payment and delivery systems.

Kansas currently has 100 rural inpatient hospitals. Only Texas has more (154). Of those 100 hospitals, 69 are at risk of closing. Twenty-eight hospitals face immediate risk of closing, according to the report.

The report cited losses on patient services and low financial reserves as putting the hospitals at risk. Seventy-nine Kansas rural hospitals are losing money on services, according to the report.

MSSC member Turi McNamee, MD, associate dean for graduate medical education at KUSM-W, said Wichita GME is poised for significant growth in the next five years, both by expanding current programs and adding new ones.

"Graduate medical education training programs are one of the best recruitment mechanisms a community can have," she said.

Serving physicians, patients and our community



CHADY SARRAF, MD
June President's Message

As I approach the halfway point of my term as president of the Medical Society of Sedgwick County, I find myself reflecting on the work we have accomplished over the past six months and

the exciting initiatives that continue to move forward.

When I began this journey, I shared a simple vision: to serve our physicians, our patients and our community. That vision continues to guide every conversation, every meeting and every project we undertake.

One of the greatest privileges of this role has been working alongside what I believe is the most dedicated MSSC Board I have ever been part of. Our monthly meetings consistently achieve nearly perfect attendance, and each gathering is filled with thoughtful engagement, respectful debate and meaningful discussion.

Serving our physicians

Supporting physicians remains at the heart of MSSC's mission. Advocacy continues to be one of our highest priorities. We regularly engage with local legislators to keep them informed about the challenges and opportunities facing healthcare in our community. At the state level, we work closely with the Kansas Medical Society on legislative issues that directly affect physician practice and patient care.

Earlier this month, I had the opportunity to meet with outgoing AMA President Bobby Mukkamala, MD, in Chicago. I shared our excitement about hosting him at the MSSC annual meeting on Dec. 1 and the valuable opportunity for our members to engage directly with national physician leadership. His visit will provide a forum for physicians to share their perspectives and discuss the role organized medicine plays in supporting their professional lives.

We also are preparing for the future of healthcare through innovation. Under the leadership of MSSC Immediate Past President Jany Moussa, MD, our artificial intelligence committee is exploring ways to educate physicians about the rapidly expanding role of AI while identifying opportunities to improve healthcare delivery through thoughtful adoption of emerging technologies.

Professional development remains another important focus. MSSC is investing in physician leadership by developing a unique leadership training program in partnership with local community organizations. Our goal is to help cultivate the next generation of physician leaders who will shape healthcare in our region for years to come.

Equally important is our work to strengthen collaboration across the healthcare workforce. Through partnerships with nursing organizations and educational institutions, we are working to improve nurse recruitment and retention. Together, we strive to make Wichita and Sedgwick County among the best places in the country for healthcare professionals to practice, collaborate and thrive.

This year, MSSC also had the privilege of hosting one of the first public discussions regarding Wichita State University's ambitious plans to develop a new health sciences institute. This transformative project has the potential to significantly impact healthcare education, workforce development and patient care throughout our region.

Serving our patients

While MSSC is a physician organization, our advocacy is ultimately centered on patients.

We are committed to bringing patient priorities into every

discussion with policymakers. Our strategy has been simple: Help legislators recognize that healthcare issues are constituent issues. Patients represent the largest voting bloc in every community, and their voices deserve to be heard.

Prior-authorization reform is one example of this work. Delays created by prior-authorization requirements continue to interfere with timely access to care and place unnecessary burdens on both patients and physicians. MSSC remains actively engaged with state and federal leaders to advocate for improvements that put patient care first.

Another source of pride for our community is Project Access. This remarkable program continues to serve as a national model for coordinated charitable healthcare. Through the generosity of our physician members and partnering hospitals, thousands of patients have received essential medical services they otherwise could not afford. It is a powerful example of what can be accomplished when a medical community comes together in service of its neighbors.

Serving our community

Giving back to our community remains one of MSSC's most important responsibilities.

We are committed to serving as a trusted voice on healthcare issues by providing information grounded in science, evidence and expert medical opinion. At a time when healthcare information can be overwhelming and sometimes confusing, our community deserves reliable and credible medical guidance.

To further that mission, MSSC has invested significantly in expanding our social media presence. As a result, we have recently achieved some of the highest engagement levels of any medical society in the country. Our platforms celebrate the achievements of our members, share important healthcare information and strengthen our connection with the community we serve. We envision these channels becoming an increasingly valuable healthcare resource for the public.

We also are investing in the future healthcare workforce. MSSC Secretary Kesha Crichlow, MD, MPH, is working with MSSC member Rebecca Reddy, MD, and the YMCA to champion a youth jobs program that allows high school students to explore healthcare careers during the summer. The initiative will provide meaningful exposure to healthcare professions while creating opportunities for MSSC members to support and sponsor student experiences.

MSSC also has been engaged with USD 259 to encourage its students to consider careers in healthcare. In recent years MSSC and Past President Maurice Duggins, MD, have partnered with the Family Medicine Interest Group at KU School of Medicine-Wichita to host "Doc for a Day" events.

Looking ahead

Many of MSSC's accomplishments happen behind the scenes and are not always visible to our membership. Yet every day, dedicated physicians and volunteers work to advance our mission.

As I reflect on the past six months, I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together and even more excited about what lies ahead.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not recognize Phillip Brownlee, our executive director. Phillip works tirelessly behind the scenes to coordinate, organize and execute countless initiatives that make MSSC successful. His dedication, professionalism and commitment to our mission have been instrumental in helping turn ideas into action.

Thank you for your continued engagement, support and trust. Together, we will continue serving our physicians, advocating for our patients and strengthening the health of our community.

Boyce receives Lifetime Achievement Award



▲ JOE SLITER, MD, WESLEY GOODRICH, DO, MPH, AND MATTHEW LOUIS, MD



▲ PHILLIP BROWNLEE, MSSC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND MSSC PRESIDENT CHADY SARRAF, MD



▲ PHILLIP TWIST AND KATIE TWIST, MD



▲ KATERINA MARTINEZ AND KEN WONG, MD



▲ NATALIE FARHA, MD, AND TESSA ROHRBERG, MD



Dr. Boyce

MSSC member Mary Boyce, MD, received the 2026 Kansas Family Physician Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians.

"Dr. Boyce's career is not defined by a single accomplishment, but by a lifetime of consistent service, leadership and care," her nomination said. "Kansas family medicine is stronger because of her."

Boyce, who practices with the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita Family Medicine Residency at Wesley Healthcare, did her residency at Wesley Family Medicine before joining the KUSM-W faculty in 1994 and going on to advise more than 140 resident physicians.

MSSC member and KUSM-W colleague Aaron Sinclair, MD, said of her: "As a teacher and mentor, Dr. Boyce is the person others turn to when they need guidance, perspective or simply someone who will listen."

In Brief ▶▶▶ New and noteworthy

2027 MSSC Roster deadline

Aug. 15 is the deadline to pre-order copies and update information for the 2027 MSSC Roster, which will be published in December. The roster details the names, specialties and contact information of MSSC's 1,000-plus practicing physician members, also listing Kansas hospitals and area pharmacies as well as fellows, residents and med students.

To pre-order copies, go to mssconline.org (click on News, then Publications/Forms and Roster Order Form). To update listings or add physicians to the membership in time for the 2027 roster, contact Rhonda Welch at (316) 683-7557 or email her at rhondawelch@med-soc.org.

Via Christi names new CEO

Ascension Via Christi named Tripp Owings as the new CEO of its Kansas ministry market. Starting July 6, he will oversee more than 5,650 associates, six hospitals and more than 75 other sites of care across the state.

Owings has more than 16 years of healthcare leadership including seven years in hospital leadership with Wesley Healthcare, where he served as CEO for Wesley Woodlawn Hospital & ER. He returns to Kansas from Florida, where he most recently served as CEO for HCA Florida Brandon Hospital.



Owings

Docs receive promotions

A dozen MSSC members who teach at KUSM-Wichita were awarded promotions as the spring semester ended.

To professor (clinical track): **Kyle Vincent, MD**, surgery.

To clinical professor (clinical track): **Mahdi Alsaleem, MD**, pediatrics; **Darren Farley, MD**, OB-GYN; **J. Mark Melhorn, MD**, orthopedic surgery.

To associate professor (clinical scholar track): **Stephanie Murray, MD**, and **Jennifer Thuener, MD**, both family medicine.

To associate professor (educator track): **Ali Jahansooz, MD**, internal medicine. To associate professor (clinical track): **Jane Gitau, MD**, internal medicine.

To clinical associate professor (clinical track): **Sarah Corn, MD**, surgery; **Saba Fatima, MD**, pediatrics; **Byron "Blake" Gorman, DO**, anesthesiology; **Jackson Sobbing, DO**, OB-GYN.

KHSU receives state grant for telehealth

The Kansas Health Science University in Wichita received a \$677,248 grant as part of the state's 2026 Rural Emergency Hospital Conversion and Transformative Capital Investment Program.

KHSU will deploy two complementary telehealth technologies: a Drone Slit Lamp System for remote ophthalmology exams and a second diagnostic platform, in partnership with Bascom Palmer Eye Institute and the Kansas College of Osteopathic Medicine.



In Brief ▶▶▶

New and noteworthy

Coltrain adding new features

Communication between clinicians can be challenging — especially when they work at different locations or practices and use different electronic medical records. That is why MSSC encourages its members to download and utilize a free, HIPAA-certified app called Coltrain.

The app, created by MSSC member **Sanjay Khicha, MD**, with another physician, feels like iMessage but is designed specifically for clinical care. Physicians can pick up their phone, find the right clinician and start a conversation. But underneath that simplicity are features that matter: HIPAA-compliant messaging, the ability to share imaging and clinical documents, group conversations across a care team, and coordination tools built around the way physicians think through a case.

Some of the improvements to Coltrain that have occurred since MSSC first encouraged its use include AI integration to enhance workflow; a library to store medical content, articles and PDF files; and video or audio conference calls directly within a Coltrain case.

Improvements currently being developed include e-consult billing codes for the work physicians are already doing but not capturing, on-call schedules so users can avoid the page operator, and an AI agent working on physicians' behalf.

"The goal has always been a tool that gets out of your way and lets you focus on the patient," Khicha said.

Sign up at coltrain.io or reach out to sanjay@coltrain.io.

STITCHES

AN MSSC ORIGINAL WORD GAME

Find the names of seven (actually, eight) MSSC members who share a specialty. The names can go up and down, diagonally and in reverse. (It is OK to cheat and use the MSSC roster.) The answers are in the roster update section.

CLUE: Start from scratch

E	E	J	N	S
D	L	O	H	O
R	O	L	I	N
L	F	C	A	T
E	K	S	H	Z
S	O	H	C	N
H	U	A	R	E
O	L	P	P	E
E	D	O	U	R
R	B	R	G	H



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ROSTER UPDATE

Keep your 2026 roster current with this information.

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

NEW MEMBERS



Katelyn Graf, MD

[R] Dermatology
Heartland Dermatology and Skin Cancer Center, PA
(7/27/26)
OFF: 316-612-1833 | FAX: 785-363-0526
9300 E 29th St N Bldg 300 S-310, 67226
NPI: 1801526793

Medical education obtained at KUSM-Wichita 7/2018-5/2022. Internship in Internal Medicine at KUSM-Wichita 7/2022-6/2023. Residency in Dermatology at Saint Louis University School of Medicine/SSM Health 7/2023-6/2026.



Daoyu Yang, MD

[BC] Internal Medicine
Sound Physicians
OFF: 316-268-6976 | FAX: 316-291-4396
929 N St Francis, 67214
NPI: 1952902421

Medical education obtained at Shantou University Medical College, Shantou, Guangdong, China 9/2010-

6/2015. Residency in Internal Medicine at St Francis Medical Center (Capital Health), Trenton, NJ 8/2020-8/2023.

CHANGES

Fadi Al Muhaisen, MD

C. Randy Blue, MD

Rabah Daoud, MD

Lina A.M. Saadeh, MD

Children's Mercy Wichita
3150 N Greenwich Rd, 67226
Same phone, fax numbers

Ellen E. Borst, DO

[BC] Family Medicine
[AT] Obesity Medicine
Sound Physicians (7/9/26)
OFF: 316-268-6976 | FAX: 316-291-4396
929 N St Francis, 67214
Wichita Weight & Metabolism
OFF: 316-370-2819 | FAX: 316-320-0781
8110 E 32nd St N S-125, 67226
<https://wichitaweight.com>

Mark H. Bowles, MD

Cypress Heart, PA (7/1/26)
OFF: 316-858-9000 | FAX: 316-858-9005
9840 E 21st St N, 67206

Gregory R. Boxberger, MD

Cypress Heart, PA
OFF: 316-858-9000 | FAX: 316-858-9005
9840 E 21st St N, 67206

Andrew C. DeClerk, MD

[BC] Vascular Surgery
Wichita Surgical Specialists, PA

Kent L. Heady, MD

Mid-America Orthopedics (7/1/26)
Focus: Foot/Ankle
OFF: 316-630-9300 | FAX: 833-641-2418
1923 N Webb Rd, 67206
OFF: 316-630-9300 | FAX: 833-641-2419
12112 W Kellogg Dr, 67235

Karina Ortman, MD

Meghan Ross, MD
Associates in Women's Health, PA
FAX: 316-685-0317

Ragnar Solo Peterson, MD

HaysMed Southwind Surgical (7/1/26)
Focus: General & complex abdominal wall surgery
OFF: 785-623-5945 | FAX: 785-623-5949
2500 Canterbury Dr S-202
Hays, KS 67601

RETIRING

M. Kent Cooper, MD – 5/1/26

William C. Simon, DO – 4/4/26

Randolph R. Whitely, MD – 6/1/26

DROPPING

Taylor L. Bertschy, DO – Moving out of state

Kirsten A. Bjorkman, MD – Moving out of state

Carla Burford, MD – Moving out of area

Regan M. DeHart, MD – 5/15/26

Marie M. Hand, MD – 5/15/26

Rogena K. Johnson, MD – 5/15/26

Deepthi Patnaik, MD – 5/15/26

Jessica B. Tanner, MD – 5/15/26

In Brief ▶▶ New and noteworthy

High rates of Parkinson's disease

Kansas has the second-highest rate of Parkinson's disease diagnoses, according to a recent study.

Epic Research examined more than 46 million adult patients across 49 U.S. states who had at least three outpatient visits between 2020 and 2025. When looking at unadjusted incidence rates, it found that Nebraska (620 per 100,000 patients) and Kansas (596 per 100,000 patients) had the highest rates of newly diagnosed Parkinson's during the study period. After adjusting for patient age, time in the study, sex, race, ethnicity and comorbidities, Nebraska and Kansas remained the highest with 561 diagnoses per 100,000 patients and 517 diagnoses per 100,000 patients, respectively.

Parkinson's disease is considered a multifactorial disease influenced by genetic factors, comorbidities and environmental exposures. The study hopes that understanding geographic patterns of Parkinson's diagnosis might offer clues about potential environmental contributions, such as air pollution and chemicals used in manufacturing and agriculture.

Stitches answers: Dermatologists Brough, Capper, Housholder (Anne and Martha), Johnson, Lee, Litzner, Shackerford

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