

# KANSAS HEALTH POLICY PRIORITIES

The REACH Healthcare Foundation was established in 2003 with a mandate to increase access to health care coverage and services to improve the health of uninsured and medically underserved individuals in our service area. To accomplish this, we believe it is essential to advocate for a strong health and human service safety net system and public policies that support individual and community health.

## IMPLEMENT STATE-BASED APPROACH TO HEALTH COVERAGE

The REACH Foundation supports expansion of KanCare or other state-based solution to provide health care coverage for low-income, working adults and families so that they can secure the health care they need.

*Nearly 150,000 Kansans are unable to secure health coverage because restrictive state Medicaid eligibility rules put them into an insurance coverage gap – without coverage options and unable to secure subsidies through the health insurance marketplace. Affordable health coverage supports healthy families and a productive economy. States increasingly have developed alternative solutions to help their residents in the coverage gap. We urge our lawmakers to adopt a Kansas solution.*

## INVEST IN THE ORAL HEALTH OF KANSANS

The REACH Foundation urges lawmakers to address statewide oral health care shortages by adopting the dental therapist model as a practical and proven solution for increasing access to dental care in underserved communities.

*The dental workforce shortage is well-documented in Kansas. States with similar challenges have looked to a cost-effective model that expands the dental team. The dental therapist works under the supervision of a dentist to provide safe and quality services in underserved communities. As a result of the success of this model elsewhere in the U.S., the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) approved standards for the preparation and practice of these providers. We encourage lawmakers to adopt this commonsense solution for improving oral health across the state.*

## ADOPT A BALANCED FISCAL APPROACH

The REACH Foundation encourages state government leaders to enact sound tax and budget policies that preserve core services and ensure the availability of a dependable safety net system that provides critical assistance for families in need.

*Elected leaders set budget priorities and make spending decisions in ways that profoundly affect core services that families and communities depend on and that contribute to a high quality of life in Kansas. We encourage Kansas lawmakers to adopt fiscal policies that stimulate economic growth without placing undue burden on hard-working families.*