

FYI Weekly

HEALTH CARE NEWS FOR VIRGINIA'S HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

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1. VHHA in Action

Each day, VHHA actively works on behalf of its members, their employees, and Virginians to advance the interests of Virginia's hospitals and health care systems. In the past week, here are some developments of interest to Virginia hospitals and health systems:

- VHHA President and CEO **Sean T. Connaughton** and **Sentara Leigh Hospital** President **Joanne Inman**, a VHHA Board of Directors member, were featured participants in the [2024 Virginia Health Care Conference](#) in Richmond presented by the **Virginia Chamber of Commerce**. Inman offered conference opening remarks and Connaughton moderated a panel on health care workforce development. Representatives from **Bon Secours**, **Carilion Clinic**, **Riverside Health System**, **Sentara Health**, and **UVA Health** also participated in conference programming. See the full agenda [here](#).
- VHHA recently held a webinar briefing for hospital members regarding the 2024 **Virginia General Assembly** session focusing on new laws set to take effect in the near future that impact, or have applicability to, Virginia hospitals and health systems. View the webinar recording [here](#) or [here](#) and access presentation slides through this [link](#).
- Today (Friday, June 7) is the eighth annual #HAVhope Friday, a social media campaign that this year is focused on highlighting how hospitals and health systems combat workplace violence. This initiative is part of the ongoing Hospitals Against Violence campaign. The **American Hospital Association** (AHA) has provided [digital assets](#) that can be shared on social media. In Virginia, hospitals have worked with state officials to make it a crime to threaten harm to health care professionals doing their jobs. VHHA has also launched the ["Help Us, Help You"](#) campaign to raise awareness about the [heightened risk of workplace violence faced by health care professionals](#), produced a [workplace violence prevention toolkit](#) for members, and established a **VHHA Healthcare Safety & Security Workgroup**.

- VHHA has produced a short video that highlights some of the sights and sounds from the recently held **2024 Virginia Behavioral Health Summit**, which attracted hundreds of health care professionals and stakeholders for a one-day conference in Richmond. View the recap video [here](#). The theme of the event was “Connection: Building a Behavioral Health System that Serves All” and it featured programming on innovative behavioral health models, patient-centered strategies, an overview of the expansion of the crisis system across the state, and the opportunity to learn about advances in technology that can improve behavioral health resources. View a Summit brochure [here](#), view Summit photos [here](#), and read more about the event through this [link](#).
- July 22 is the deadline for submitting public comment to the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) on the information requirements associated with attestation requirements included in the Medicaid managed care access rule. Read more and submit comment through this [link](#).
- To encourage recent nursing school graduates to establish their careers in Virginia, [On Board Virginia](#) has launched a geographically targeted marketing campaign showcasing hospital employment opportunities in the Commonwealth. The campaign is centered on promoting hospital nursing career opportunities to graduates of nursing programs at Virginia-based colleges and universities as well as nursing programs at educational institutions in neighboring jurisdictions such as Maryland, North Carolina, Washington, D.C., and West Virginia. This initiative is the latest project of On Board Virginia, an effort the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA) and its members [established in 2022](#) to promote health care workforce recruitment and retention amid ongoing workforce shortages across clinical roles. Read more [here](#).
- The **Virginia Infection Prevention Training Center** (VIPTC) has released a new training video called *Germ Center*. Featuring fun characters and engaging storylines, this video covers the latest health care wins, losses, and highlights. This is the newest installment in VIPTC’s growing infection prevention training video library. Access the video [here](#) or visit the VIPTC [website](#) to learn more.
- The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) has reported that 109 people from 29 states have gotten sick from *Salmonella* after touching or caring for backyard poultry, resulting in 33 hospitalizations. Among those infected in this outbreak, 43 percent are individuals younger than 5 years old. Backyard poultry, such as chickens and ducks, can carry *Salmonella* germs even if they look healthy and clean. These germs can easily spread to anything in the areas where the poultry live and roam. People may get sick from touching backyard poultry or anything in their environment and then touching their mouth or food and swallowing *Salmonella* germs. Read more [here](#).
- The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) recently announced that Medline Industries, LP, a firm marketing and distributing Chinese-made plastic syringes sold within the U.S., initiated a recall to stop using affected products which includes unauthorized plastic syringes made in China. The FDA also announced that Jiangsu Shenli Medical Production Co. Ltd, a China-based manufacturer of plastic syringes, initiated a recall to stop using its unauthorized plastic syringes. The FDA recommends that providers should immediately transition away from using plastic syringes made by the following China-based manufacturers, unless use of these syringes is absolutely necessary, until the transition to syringes that are not manufactured in China is complete: Jiangsu Caina Medical Co. Ltd., Jiangsu Shenli Medical Production Co. Ltd., Shanghai Kindly Enterprise Development Group Co. Ltd., and Zhejiang Longde Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. Read more [here](#).

- The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** is seeking public comment on [draft guidance](#) regarding the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program, which will negotiate prices with drug makers for certain high-cost, sole-source drugs and apply them beginning in 2026. The drug price program is a provision of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. July 2 is the public comment deadline. Read more [here](#).
- VHHA actively engages with the news media to share public messaging and coordinate member media appearances to showcase the important work done by Virginia hospitals. That includes recent coverage from [Cap Edge](#), [SWVA Today](#), [WAVY](#), [Yahoo News](#), and the [Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star](#).

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2. View Recording of VHHA, VDH June 5 Webinar for Health Care Providers

This week, VHHA hosted the latest installment of a quarterly webinar series to provide the health care community with timely information from the **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**. View a webinar recording [here](#) and access presentation slides through this [link](#). A recording of a previous webinar in the series about the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is available through this [link](#) and presentation slides can be accessed [here](#).

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3. Applications Being Accepted for Yearlong Disparities Leadership Program for Health Care Executives

The **Disparities Solutions Center** is now accepting applications for the [2024-2025 Disparities Leadership Program](#), which is a year-long, hands-on executive education program focused on helping health care leaders achieve equity. The program is designed to help leaders translate the latest understanding of disparities into realistic solutions that can be applied within organizations. To date, more than 569 participants from 236 organizations representing 35 states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, Canada, and Switzerland have participated in the program. Letters of intent from applicants are due by July 12 and applications are due by Aug. 2. Download the necessary forms through this [link](#).

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4. HHS: Impacted Hospitals Can Delegate Patient Breach Notifications to UnitedHealth Group

The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** Office for Civil Rights (OCR) recently announced that hospitals and health systems can require UnitedHealth Group to notify patients that their data was stolen during the Change Healthcare cyberattack on Feb. 22. OCR enforces the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) privacy, security, and breach notification rules that set forth requirements which HIPAA covered entities (health plans, health care clearinghouses, and most health care providers) and their business associates must follow to protect the privacy and security of protected health information and the required notifications to HHS and affected individuals following a breach. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

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5. FDA Allows Labs to Use Conjunctival Swabs in Bird Flu Testing

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** recently granted enforcement discretion for laboratories to use conjunctival swabs as part of human testing for H5N1 bird flu given that two human cases only

showed symptoms of conjunctivitis before confirmation. For patients who meet CDC epidemiologic criteria and either clinical or public health response criteria for testing, local laboratories must submit the conjunctival swabs along with nasal swab samples to state laboratories. Conjunctival swabs must be collected and transported using the same media as the paired nasal swabs used with the current kit authorized by the CDC. Read more [here](#).

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6. VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Inova Population Health Leaders

The latest episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Henna Qureshi**, a physician with **Inova Health System**, and **Leigh Guarinello**, Director of Community Health programs with Inova, for a conversation about their careers, Inova's community health efforts, how the Unite Us Platform is leveraged to support patient needs, and more. Listen to the episode [here](#) and hear past episodes through this [link](#). Podcast episodes are also available through these podcast apps and networks: [Apple Podcast](#), [Amazon Music](#), [Spotify](#), [Pandora](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Stitcher](#), [TuneIn](#), [SoundCloud](#), [Blubrry](#), [iHeart Radio](#), [Deezer](#), [Podbay](#), [Overcast](#), [Pocket Casts](#), the [Virginia Audio Collective](#), the [Public Health Podcast Network](#), the [World Podcast Network](#), and the [Family Podcast Network](#). The podcast can also be heard on the radio airwaves – episodes air each Sunday at 9 a.m. on 100.5 FM, 107.7 FM, 92.7 FM, and 820 AM across Central Virginia and 1650 AM in Hampton Roads, 105.1 FM and 1050 AM in Lynchburg, and Wednesdays at 1 p.m. on 93.9 FM in Richmond. Send questions, comments, feedback, or guest suggestions to pcfpodcast@vhha.com. – Julian Walker

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7. CMS Accepting Applications for Accountable Care Organizations Primary Care Flex Model

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** is accepting applications for the voluntary Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) Primary Care Flex Model that focuses on primary care delivery in the Medicare Shared Savings Program. The model will test how prospective payments and increased funding for primary care in ACOs impact health outcomes, quality and costs of care. Interested organizations must [apply](#) as a new or renewing ACO by June 17. The ACO PC Flex Model will launch Jan. 1, 2025, and run for five years. CMS is hosting an informational webinar about the model on June 6 at 2 p.m. EST. Register for the webinar [here](#) and read more program details [here](#).

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8. FDA Issues Recall Notice for Infusion Pump Due to System Failure Issues

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** has issued notice about a Class I recall, the most serious type of recall, of OptumHealth Care Solutions' Nimbus II Plus infusion pumps due to multiple potential failure modes that may include battery failure, upstream blockage (occlusion), system errors, drug product leakage, high or low flow rate, or damaged housing. The Optum Nimbus II Plus (also known as the Nimbus II – Optum Homecare Infusion), is an ambulatory infusion pump system intended to deliver medications or fluids to a patient under the direction or supervision of a doctor or other certified health care professional. These devices are used for infusions under the skin (subcutaneous), in the spaces between nerves (perineural or epidural), or into blood vessels (intravenous). The pumps are sometimes used for patients to deliver their own pain medications (patient-controlled analgesia or PCA). Nimbus infusion pump systems are used in hospitals, other health care facilities, and in non-clinical environments such as patient homes. The recalled devices will not be available or supported after June

20, 2024. Using affected pumps could cause infection from microbial contamination after loss of the sterile barrier (leakage), interruptions or delays in therapy from unnoticed occlusions or leaks may lead to underdosing of vital medications and fluids resulting in dangerous changes in blood pressure, dehydration (water loss), and electrolyte imbalance; seizures, shock and organ failure may occur. Use of these products may lead to serious injury or death. Read more [here](#).

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9. FDA Approves New RSV Vaccine for Older Adults

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) recently approved mRESVIA (Respiratory Syncytial Virus Vaccine) for the prevention of lower respiratory tract disease (LRTD) caused by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in individuals 60 years of age and older. The mRESVIA medication is an mRNA-based vaccine that is manufactured by Moderna.

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10. Around the State

Augusta Health is one of two national awardees recently honored with a Health Equity Award by the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) at the Health Equity Conference. Augusta Health is recognized for improving access to health care in vulnerable communities. Read more [here](#).

Robin Pack, MSW, CPPS, Executive Director of Quality and Risk Management for **Twin County Regional Healthcare** has been recognized as the facility's 2024 Mercy Award Winner. The Mercy Award recognizes one employee from each of Lifepoint Health's facilities who profoundly touches the lives of others and best represents the spirit and values on which the company was founded. Read more [here](#).

Elizabeth Gravely, who works in the surgical services department at **Wythe County Community Hospital**, has been recognized as the facility's 2024 Mercy Award winner. The Mercy Award recognizes one employee from each of Lifepoint Health's facilities who profoundly touches the lives of others and best represents the spirit and values on which the company was founded. Read more [here](#).

Marna Borieux, DHA, Vice President and Chief of Staff at **Inova Health System**; **Sharon Brickhouse Martin**, Vice President of Health Services Integration at **VHC Health**; **Phyllita Bolden**, Director of Community Health at **Bon Secours Hampton Roads**; and **Dr. Tracy Downs**, MD, Chief Diversity and Community Engagement Officer at **UVA Health**, have been named to the *Becker's Hospital Review* [2024 231+ Black healthcare leaders to know list](#). – Salinna Lor

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