

# 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:

- The **Executive Committee** of the **VHHA Board of Directors** met this week for a discussion of issues of interest and importance to hospitals and health systems.
- A meeting of the **VHHA Workforce Steering Committee** held this week featured discussion about legislative priorities, health care workforce supply and demand projections, an update on the Earn While You Learn program, and more. Contact Sharon Alexander with questions about the committee at [salexander@vhha.com](mailto:salexander@vhha.com).
- This week, VHHA held an in-person meeting of the **Healthcare Safety & Security Forum**, whose members include hospital safety and security leaders focused on sharing experiences, ideas, and best practices regarding current and future safety, security, violence prevention, and response activities in Virginia hospitals and health systems. Contact Abraham Segres at [asegres@vhha.com](mailto:asegres@vhha.com) with questions about the group.
- This week, VHHA hosted an in-person meeting of the **Virginia Chief Nursing Officers and Nurse Leaders Forum**, which brings together hospital and health system nurse leaders for discussion of issues relevant to care delivery. The meeting agenda included a focus on implementing the Nurse Staffing Committee model. Contact Abraham Segres at [asegres@vhha.com](mailto:asegres@vhha.com) with questions about this work.
- VHHA recently hosted a webinar in the quarterly public health webinar series for Virginia hospitals and health systems. The webinar series is hosted by VHHA in collaboration with **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) officials who provide updates on key topics including disease surveillance, modeling, influenza, RSV, and unique pathogens, among others. View

presentation slides [here](#) and a webinar recording of the most recent installment through this [link](#).

- The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) is accepting [public comments](#) through Nov. 12 pertaining to a proposed plan for data collection and audit requirements for Medicaid Advantage plans related to compliance with the calendar year 2024 Medicare Advantage [final rule](#).
- The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently posted updated guidance about BD BACTEC™ blood culture media bottle supply shortages. Read more [here](#).
- The 2024-2025 Respiratory Disease Season Outlook from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) projects a “similar or lower number of combined peak hospitalizations” from COVID-19, influenza, and RSV compared to last season. Read more [here](#).
- The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) recently [granted](#) emergency use authorization (EUA) for an updated version of the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine that targets currently circulating viral variants and protects against serious consequences of COVID-19 such as hospitalization and death. The updated vaccine is authorized for use in individuals 12 and older. It includes a monovalent (single) component that corresponds to the Omicron variant JN.1 strain of SARS-CoV-2. The FDA previously granted EUA to updated formulations of the COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna.
- **HosPAC**, the political action committee of VHHA, is in the midst of its 2024 fundraising campaign and needs support from members of the health care community. Financial contributions of any amount, large or small, help HosPAC support candidates for state office who are committed to strengthening the health care delivery system in Virginia by growing the health care workforce, promoting access to care, and investing in public health. By supporting candidates from both parties who champion these values, HosPAC helps advance the voice of the health care community in state public policy development. Please consider contributing to HosPAC to support this important work on behalf of Virginia hospitals, health systems, and their teams. Visit this [link](#) to make contributions and contact Hannah Coley at [hcoley@vhha.com](mailto:hcoley@vhha.com) with any questions.

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## 2. Register for the 2024 VHHA Hospital and Healthcare Leaders Summit, Nov. 6-8

Now is the time to register for the **2024 Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Leaders Summit**, scheduled for Nov. 6-8 at The Omni Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, VA. The theme for this annual VHHA event is “Come Home to Healthcare.” The Summit programming agenda is centered around topics of interest and opportunities for networking and engagement with fellow leaders and national experts. Former **U.S. Representative Harold Ford Jr.** of Tennessee is confirmed as a Summit keynote speaker. Summit participants are also eligible for continuing education credits. Visit this [link](#) to register and contact [events@vhha.com](mailto:events@vhha.com) for questions or registration assistance.

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## 3. Today is the Deadline to Nominate a Hospital Leader for 2024 VHHA Outstanding Service Awards

Today (Friday, Sept. 13), is the deadline to submit nominations for the **2024 VHHA Outstanding Service Awards**. The awards recognize individuals who have made a real difference to Virginia’s hospitals and health systems, and to health care in general, through selfless, energetic, and passionate service.

Awards are presented in the following categories: the Distinguished Service Award, the Meritorious Service Award, and the Excellence in Governance Award. Each award recognizes those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to contribute to Virginia’s hospitals and health systems.

- The **Distinguished Service Award** is given to past or present chief executive officers of member institutions who have long records of performing outstanding, valuable, and unique services to the hospital and health system community.
- The **Meritorious Service Award** honors people other than chief executive officers affiliated with member institutions who have a history of making significant contributions to the health care field – on both a state and local level – through commitment to service and leadership. Nominees must be recognized as leaders in health care management and policy issues and be involved in health care from the perspective of management or providing support for delivering health care services.
- The **Excellence in Governance Award** honors people from member hospital or health system governing bodies who have a history of making significant contributions to the health care field – on both a state and local level – through commitment to service and leadership. Nominees must be or have been involved in health care from the governance perspective.

The nomination form with submission instructions can be accessed through this [link](#). Read more about VHHA awards and see lists of past recipients [here](#).

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#### 4. Federal Agencies Issue Final Rule on Health Plan Compliance with Mental Health, Addiction Law

The **U.S Department of Labor, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**, and the **Treasury Department** recently issued a [final rule](#) to promote commercial health plan compliance with the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 that requires mental health and substance use disorder benefits at the same level as medical and surgical benefits. Provisions in the final rule set standards for determining network composition and out-of-network reimbursement rates; adds protections against restrictive non-quantitative treatment limitations (NQTL) in coverage; and prohibits plans from using non-objective information that may negatively impact access to mental health or substance use disorder care when applying NQTL.

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#### 5. Register for Oct. 9 Webinar on Healthcare Preparedness for 2024 Elections, Civil Unrest

The **Virginia Healthcare Emergency Management Program (VHEMP)** – a partnership between the **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**, VHHA, and the four regional healthcare coalitions – is hosting an hourlong webinar Oct. 9 at noon focused on medical facility operational planning in the lead up to the 2024 election cycle and the role of medical intelligence in anticipating potential issues. Recent years have seen an increase in civil unrest events across the nation, which can unfortunately impact health care operations in several ways including the potential for mass casualty events. This year’s elections have the potential to spark protests or other conduct that could have public health implications. The webinar will feature **Scott Cormier**, Vice President of Emergency Management and Safety with **Medxcel**. Register for the webinar [here](#).

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#### 6. VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features UVA Health Children’s Hospital Safe Sleep Physician

The latest episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Rachel Moon**, a **UVA Health Children's Hospital** pediatrician and safe-sleep expert, who joins us for a conversation about her career, and to share information about safe sleeping practices to safeguard the health of infants. 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](#), [Stitcher](#), [Tuneln](#), [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 noon 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](mailto:pcfpodcast@vhha.com).

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## 7. CMS Issues Updated Guidance on Rural Emergency Hospital Participation Conditions

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently issued revised guidance on participation conditions and the conversion process for facilities to participate in Medicare and Medicaid as a rural emergency hospital, a provider designation established in federal law in 2020 in response to rural hospital closures and to promote health care access in rural communities. When eligible facilities convert to a rural emergency hospital they are permitted to provide emergency department services, observation care, and other services as elected provided the average annual patient length of stay is less than 24 hours. Medicare pays rural emergency hospitals an extra 5 percent above the hospital outpatient prospective payment system rate to provide emergency, observation, and other outpatient services to Medicare patients. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

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## 8. VNPC Recruiting Hospitals for Perinatal Mental Health Quality Improvement Project

The [Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative](#) (VNPC) is recruiting hospitals for its perinatal mental health quality improvement project, SMILE, which is fully aligned with the associated [AIM patient safety bundle](#). For hospitals that need support to achieve the CMS “birthing friendly” designation, engagement in this project would satisfy the perinatal quality collaborative participation requirement. Enrollment ends Oct. 1. Contact [info@goVNPC.org](mailto:info@goVNPC.org) for more information about the program, including enrollment.

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## 9. VHHA Members Eligible for Discounted Registration to ‘Beyond Gunshots’ Conference Sept. 16-17

**Real Life**, a Richmond, VA-based organization that works with men and women exiting incarceration who want to make positive change in their lives, is hosting the in-person “Beyond Gunshots: Pathways to Safer Communities” conference Sept. 16-17. The conference will feature speakers and presentations focused on research, trends, and evidence-based strategies to strengthen public safety and reduce community violence. The agenda also includes a panel discussion about the work of Hospital-based Violence Intervention Programs (HVIP) to prevent future community violence. VHHA members can use the code “VHHA” to receive a substantial registration discount. Visit this [link](#) for more details and to register.

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## 10. Around the State

**Dr. Mark Romness**, MD, an associate professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery with a secondary appointment in the Department of Pediatrics at the **UVA School of Medicine**, recently received the **Virginia Orthopaedic Society** Career Award. Read more [here](#).

**Donna Morris**, CRA, BS, RT (R) (MR), Director of Clinical Operations, Imaging, Pathology, and Laboratory Services for **Mary Washington Healthcare**, has been appointed to the AHRA Board of Directors by the **Association of Medical Imaging Management**.

**Cynthia Taylor**, Chief Financial Officer of **Bon Secours Mary Immaculate Hospital**, has been named to the 2024 [list](#) of 156 women hospital and health system CFOs to know by *Becker's Hospital Review*.

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