

# 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 held a meeting of the **Payor Advisory Committee** this week. The Committee is a forum for hospital payor relations and revenue cycle leaders to discuss priority issues and ongoing payor-related challenges. Contact Craig Connors at [cconnors@vhha.com](mailto:cconnors@vhha.com) to inquire about the committee.
- VHHA held a meeting of the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Advocacy Council (VHHAC)** this week for a discussion of public policy issues and considerations pertaining to the health care delivery system.
- This week, VHHA staff participated in the **Life Ready Expo** program held at Hermitage High School to expose middle and high school students and their families to potential career pathways and opportunities, including the health care career resources and job board listings available from [On Board Virginia](#).
- VHHA staff recently met with **U.S. Rep. Ben Cline** to discuss important hospital and health care policy considerations. View photos [here](#).
- **Sharon Alexander**, VHHA Director of Workforce Initiatives, was recently featured on the **Virginia Rural Health Association (VRHA)** podcast for a conversation about the **On Board Virginia** health care workforce development program. Listen to the conversation [here](#).
- U.S. Senators **Ron Wyden** of Oregon and **Mark Warner** of Virginia recently announced the introduction of legislation to enhance cybersecurity for the U.S. health care system, which has increasingly been the target of cyberattacks from malicious actors. The "Health Infrastructure Security and Accountability Act" would require the **U.S.**

- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** to develop and enforce a set of tough minimum cybersecurity standards for health care providers, health plans, clearinghouses and business associates, including stronger standards for systemically important entities and entities important for national security. The bill would also remove the existing cap on fines under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which prevent the regulator from issuing fines large enough to deter large corporations from ignoring cybersecurity standards, and provides funding for hospitals to improve their cybersecurity, particularly low-resource hospitals in rural and urban areas. Read more [here](#).
- This week, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** issued the “Medicare Program: Mitigating the Impact of Significant, Anomalous, and Highly Suspect Billing Activity on Medicare Shared Savings Program Financial Calculations in Calendar Year 2023” final rule. The final rule is part of a broader strategy to address significant, anomalous, and highly suspect (SAHS) billing activity in Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) reconciliation. A proposal in the calendar year (CY) 2025 Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) proposed rule addresses SAHS billing activity for CY 2024 onwards. Read more [here](#).
  - The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** recently issued a [request for information](#) seeking insight on artificial intelligence use by health care providers and other organizations that can improve health care outcomes and care delivery. Selected organizations will have the opportunity to give brief presentations on their AI products and services beginning in October. Those presentations will inform future CMS actions on AI. Responses are due by Oct. 7.
  - The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** is accepting public comments through Nov. 18 on [draft guidance](#) pertaining to “Considerations for Generating Clinical Evidence From Oncology Multiregional Clinical Development Programs.” The draft guidance provides recommendations to sponsors who are planning global clinical development programs for drugs intended to treat cancer, on improving the evidence obtained from one or more multiregional clinical trials (MRCTs) intended to support a marketing application. This draft guidance expands on principles described in the FDA’s existing guidance documents related to this topic, by providing additional recommendations for the planning, design, conduct, and analysis of an oncology MRCT that may facilitate the FDA’s assessment of applicability of the data to the U.S. population with the cancer being investigated and to U.S. medical practice.
  - 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.
  - 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](#).
  - **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.

- 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 [WHSV](#) and the [Richmond Times-Dispatch](#).

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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. VDH to Host Oct. 3 Webinar on Breastfeeding-Friendly Designation Program Updates

The **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)** is hosting an upcoming webinar regarding updates to the Virginia Maternity Center Breastfeeding-Friendly Designation (VA MCBFD) Program. The webinar, scheduled for Oct. 3 at noon, will provide program updates about the application, branding, and renewal process. Formerly known as 5-Star, the VA MCBFD Program is based on Baby-Friendly USA’s Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. These steps are a framework for birthing facilities to analyze how policies and practices promote breastfeeding. The intended audience of the webinar includes birthing hospital staff, community partners of birthing hospitals, and individuals involved in lactation care. Register for the webinar [here](#) and send questions to Fahimah Zaman at [Fahimah.Zaman@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Fahimah.Zaman@vdh.virginia.gov).

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## 4. Watch Oct. 2 Livestream of VDH, Bon Secours, VHHA Flu Shot Event

Millions of Americans contract the flu each year, which takes a physical toll on people and negatively impacts the economy. Yet only half of U.S. adults get an annual flu shot to protect against serious illness. Next week, **Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney**, **Virginia State Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Shelton**, **Bon Secours – Richmond Market President Mike Lutes**, and VHHA President and CEO **Sean T. Connaughton** will preside at an event at the **Bon Secours Sarah Jones Garland Center for Healthy Living** to promote the importance of flu shots. Several other officials including **Virginia State Senator Lamont Bagby**, **Virginia Delegate Rae Cousins**, and **Richmond City Councilmember Cynthia Newbille** are also expected to be in attendance at the event. Mayor Stoney and Commissioner Shelton will receive their flu shots live on camera during the event. The event will be held Wednesday, Oct. 2 at 9:30 a.m. EST and will be livestreamed [here](#).

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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 Children’s National Physician, Addiction Specialist

The latest episode of VHHA’s *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Sivabalaji Kaliamurthy**, director of the Addictions Program at **Children’s National Hospital**, for a conversation about his career, addiction prevention for teens, combatting fentanyl addiction, 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](#), [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 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. VNPC to Host Annual Summit Oct. 20-21 Focused on Maternal and Infant Health

The **Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative (VNPC)** is slated to host its 2024 Annual Summit – “Connecting the Dots: Action to Outcome” – Oct. 20-21 at the Wintergreen Resort. The VNPC Annual Summit offers an opportunity to hear important updates on statewide quality improvement initiatives, learn about new findings in the world of maternal and infant health, and connect with others in the field. Experts will speak on topics relevant to maternal and infant health in Virginia with an emphasis on evidence-based actions and how to continue Virginia’s progress toward improving outcomes. Hospital quality, obstetric, pediatric, nursing, health equity, and population health leaders are encouraged to attend. Learn more and register [here](#).

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## 8. Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes’ Foundation Lauds Hospital Action to Prevent Suicide Among Clinicians

During National Suicide Prevention Month, the **Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes’ Foundation** and its “ALL IN: Wellbeing First for Healthcare” national coalition announced significant gains on efforts to prevent suicide and better support health workers’ mental health. So far, 34 licensure boards and 375 hospitals

have verified their licensing or credentialing applications are free from intrusive mental health questions and stigmatizing language. Those organizations are thus designated as a [Wellbeing First Champion](#). VHHA has actively [supported](#) this work and Virginia hospitals have been leaders in this realm. Read more [here](#).

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## 9. HRSA Revamps Process for Organ Procurement and Transplant Contract Awards

The **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)** at the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** recently announced a series of multi-vendor contract awards to modernize the nation's organ transplant system. This is a new approach related to the **Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN)** to enhance the transparency, performance, governance, and efficiency of the organ donation and transplantation system for the more than 100,000 people on the organ transplant waiting list. Making awards to multiple contractors is a shift from a longtime pattern of awarding a contract to a single vendor to support OPTN operations. That change is intended to support implementation of the Securing the U.S. Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Act of 2023. Read more [here](#).

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## 10. Around the State

**Angela Mast**, Operations and Translation Manager for the Language and Disabilities Department at **Inova**, has been named to the *Becker's Hospital Review* 2024 [list](#) of 2024 63 Hispanic and Latino leaders to know.

**Tara Floyd**, MPH, BSN, RN, NE-BC, has been named as the inaugural Vice President and Associate Chief Nursing Officer for **Children's National Hospital**. She holds degrees in nursing, natural sciences, and public health and has been part of Children's National since 2003. Read more [here](#).

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