

# 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:

- This week, VHHA hosted a 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 through this [link](#).
- This week, the **VHHA Center for Healthcare Excellence** hosted an in-person quality and safety symposium that brought together Virginia hospital and health system quality, safety, and clinical leaders. The event focused on the current state of health care quality and safety in the Commonwealth as well as approaches to developing collaborative improvement opportunities for the future. **Sentara Leigh Hospital** President **Joanne Inman**, a VHHA Board Member and the Chair of **VHHA Center for Healthcare Excellence Advisory Council**, moderated the event held at VHHA offices in Glen Allen, VA. Questions about this work can be directed to Abraham Segres at [asegres@vhha.com](mailto:asegres@vhha.com).
- The **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)** recently [announced](#) that the **Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN)** Board of Directors, which is the governing body that establishes national organ allocation policy, is separately incorporated and independent of the Board of the long-standing OPTN contractor: the Richmond, VA-based **United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS)**. The **American Institutes for Research** has been awarded a contract to support the OPTN Board. 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 approved a new indication for [ACAM2000](#) as a treatment for mpox disease prevention in individuals at high risk for infection. Previously, ACAM2000 was approved for smallpox disease prevention in high-risk individuals. ACAM2000 is a live replicating vaccinia virus vaccine. People who receive ACAM2000 are required to receive the medication guide approved by FDA regarding safe and effective use of the vaccine to help prevent serious adverse events and to inform vaccine recipients of serious risks relative to benefits that could affect their personal health decisions.
- VHHA recently produced a [new video](#) featuring the community health workers from **Sentara Health** and **VCU Health** explaining the importance of their work as a bridge to help build trust and relationships between patients in disadvantaged or under-served communities and clinicians and the health care delivery system more broadly. The video was shared in recognition of [National Community Health Worker Awareness Week](#) (Aug. 26-30), which is an event focused on public education regarding the role and work of CHWs, their impact on communities, and more. The **VHHA Foundation** supports certain hospital-based CHW programs through a grant sub-award from the **Institute for Public Health Innovation (IPHI)**, supported by the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** of the **U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**.
- In a recent letter to health care providers, **Virginia State Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Shelton** shared updates regarding **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)** communicable disease observations including: an increase in pertussis (whooping cough) cases, monitoring activities for an outbreak of the pathogenic avian influenza in poultry and dairy cattle, an uptick in reporting of invasive Group A Streptococcus (iGAS) cases and outbreaks across Virginia in recent years, and the ongoing mpox outbreak in Africa. Read the letter, which includes guidance for clinicians, [here](#).
- The **Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)**, the **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)**, and the **Department of Defense Cyber Crime Center (DC3)** recently issued a [joint advisory](#) about efforts by a group of Iran-based cyber actors to target U.S. organizations, including those in the health care sector, to access computer networks and deploy ransomware attacks. Read more [here](#).
- The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** recently shared a health alert network (HAN) health advisory to alert health care providers, public health agencies, and public audiences about documented increases in human parvovirus B19 activity in the United States. Parvovirus B19 is a seasonal respiratory virus. The CDC indicates there has been an observed uptick of viral cases in Europe, as well as increasing activity in the U.S. Read more [here](#).
- **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. Today is the Early Bird Rate Deadline for 2024 VHHA Hospital and Healthcare Leaders Summit

Today (Friday, Sept. 6) is the deadline to claim the early bird discount registration rate 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. 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. Nominate a Hospital Leader for 2024 VHHA Outstanding Service Awards

Now is the time 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 deadline to submit nomination materials is Sept. 13. 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. September is National Suicide Prevention Month

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. Data from the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration** (SAMHSA) shows that more than 13 million adults seriously thought about

suicide last year, nearly four million planned a suicide attempt, and nearly two million attempted suicide. And the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** reports that suicide was the second-leading cause of death among youth and young adults. One resource available to those considering self-harm is the [988 Lifeline](#), a support phone line made up of a network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States.

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## 5. 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 incarcerating 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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## 6. VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Dean of VCU School of Medicine

The latest episode of VHHA’s *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Arturo “Art” Saavedra**, a physician leader and scientist who serves as Dean of the **VCU School of Medicine**. He joins us for a fascinating conversation about his path to medicine after dreaming of an aerospace career as a youngster in Puerto Rico, his professional stops and days competing as a triathlete, the work of training future clinicians amid ongoing health care workforce shortages, 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 Recruiting Hospitals for Perinatal Mental Health Quality Improvement Project

The [Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative](#) (VNPC) is now 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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## 8. Register for VIPTC Blood Culture Stewardship Webinar on Sept. 12

The **Virginia Infection Prevention Training Center** (VIPTC) will host a free blood culture stewardship webinar on Sept. 12 at noon featuring **Dr. Valeria Fabre**, Associate Medical Director of the Antimicrobial Stewardship Program and Associate Hospital Epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins Health System, for a discussion on the rationale and evidence for blood culture stewardship and the importance of blood culture stewardship guidance in the context of recent national blood culture bottle shortages. Register for the webinar [here](#). In related news, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently issued a [statement](#) featuring remediation recommendations and noting that appropriate federal agencies are monitoring the ongoing shortage.

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## 9. FDA Grants Approval to Updated Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine

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.

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## 10. Around the State

Several Virginia hospital and health system leaders have been named to the [Virginia Business magazine Virginia 500 list](#) that recognizes industry leaders across sectors in the Commonwealth. The hospital leaders on this year's list include **Carilion Clinic** President and COO **Steve Arner**, **Riverside Health System** President and CEO **Dr. Mike Dacey**, **Bon Secours Hampton Roads** Market President **Pat Davis-Hagens**, **Chesapeake Regional Healthcare** President and CEO **Reese Jackson**, **Inova** President and CEO **Dr. J. Stephen Jones**, **UVA Health** CEO **Dr. K. Craig Kent**, **VCU Health** Interim CEO **Dr. Marlon Levy**, **HCA Healthcare Capital Division** President **Dr. William Lunn**, **Bon Secours Richmond** Market President **Mike Lutes**, **Augusta Health** President and CEO **Mary Mannix**, **Sentara Health** President and CEO **Dennis Matheis**, **Mary Washington Healthcare** President and CEO **Dr. Mike McDermott**, **Valley Health** President and CEO **Mark Nantz**, **Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters** President and CEO **Amy Sampson**, **UVA Community Health** CEO **Erik Shannon**, and **VHHA** President and CEO **Sean T. Connaughton**.

**Inova** Histology Program Coordinator and doctoral degree candidate **Nicholas Hoo-Fatt** has been named one of the [Top 55 Laboratory Professionals in the U.S. under the age of 55](#) by Medical Laboratory Observer. He also is the recipient of the 2024 Excellence in Whole Slide Imaging & Image Analysis Award, given by the National Society for Histotechnology. The award recognizes outstanding dedication and achievements in digital pathology and contributions to immunochemistry. Read more [here](#).

**Carrie White** has been promoted to Chief Nursing Officer of **Centra Bedford Memorial Hospital**. White has been a part of the **Centra Health** team for 17 years. She most recently served as Associate Chief Nursing Officer.

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