

FYI Weekly

HEALTH CARE NEWS FOR VIRGINIA'S HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

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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:

Baxter IV Solution Update

- VHHA continued to convene calls with hospital chief medical officers, chief nursing officers, and pharmacy leaders this week regarding the reduced shipment allocation of IV fluid solution and peritoneal dialysis solution due to flooding and rain damage caused by Hurricane Helene at the **Baxter International Inc.** facility in Marion, NC. During the calls,

members discussed conservation strategies and other response measures being pursued as they contend with reduced supply allocations. VHHA is working with member hospitals and state and federal partners in response to this evolving situation. Domestic-bound supply shipments from overseas Baxter production plants have been authorized. Baxter, which has been updating a [webpage](#) with information for clinical providers, recently [announced](#) that “barring any unanticipated developments” the firm “anticipates restarting the highest-throughput IV solutions manufacturing lines within the next week.” The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) is also [sharing situational updates](#). Meanwhile, the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) has shared [updates](#) and issued [guidance for compounders](#) to help fill the gaps from the impact of Hurricane Helene on Baxter International’s North Cove facility and the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) has [shared](#) a Health Alert Network (HAN) Health Advisory to inform health care providers about the supply disruption of peritoneal dialysis (PD) and intravenous (IV) solutions due to the Baxter situation and provide guidance on response strategies. **Virginia State Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Shelton** also distributed a [letter](#) to health care providers with updates on the evolving situation.

VHHA Hosts Webinar with VDH on Hospital Licensure

- This week, the **VHHA Center for Healthcare Excellence** hosted a webinar to provide updates from the **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) Office of Licensure and Certification. The office administers state licensing programs for hospitals, outpatient surgical hospitals, nursing facilities, home care organizations, and hospice programs. It also conducts inspections to ensure compliance with state requirements, investigates consumer complaints, and evaluates compliance with state requirements. During the webinar, VDH staff shared insights gained from their inspection and survey activity in Virginia hospitals and health systems and discussed recent improvement initiatives that have been undertaken to make the licensing and survey process more efficient for health care facilities. View a webinar recording [here](#).

VDH, VHHA Collaborate on Public Health Webinar Briefing Regarding Marburg Virus

- In collaboration with the **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH), VHHA this week hosted a public health webinar to provide hospital and health system teams with a briefing on the current Marburg virus outbreak in Rwanda. Webinar topics included a travel monitoring program being implemented at Dulles International Airport, efforts and preparedness activities VDH is undertaking, and updates and information specific to hospitals. View the webinar recording [here](#) and access presentation slides through this [link](#). The Marburg virus disease (MVD) is a rare but highly fatal viral hemorrhagic fever (VHF) caused by infection with one of two zoonotic viruses: Marburg virus or Ravn virus. Marburg virus and Ravn virus are in the virus family *Filoviridae*, which also includes Ebola viruses. The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) recently [issued](#) a Health Alert Network (HAN) Health Advisory to inform clinicians about the Republic of Rwanda’s first confirmed outbreak of MVD with 36 laboratory confirmed cases and 11 deaths reported as of Oct. 2, including at least 19 cases in health care workers. A person infected with the Marburg virus is not contagious before the appearance of symptoms, which may include fever, headache, muscle and joint pain, fatigue, loss of appetite, gastrointestinal symptoms, or unexplained bleeding. MVD is spread through direct contact with broken skin or mucous membranes with the body fluids of

someone who is sick with MVD, or who recently died from their infection. It is not spread by airborne transmission. The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** has issued a [fact sheet](#) on MVD and **Virginia State Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Shelton** recently shared an [update](#) in a letter to clinicians.

HosPAC 2024 Fundraising Campaign

- **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 with any questions.

VHHA in the News

- 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 [WAMU](#) and the [Augusta Free Press](#).

News Updates

Reactor Outage Raises Concern of Radioisotope Shortage for Medical Imaging

The availability of commonly used medical isotopes for imaging procedures may be significantly reduced due to a repair-driven outage at the HFR reactor in the Netherlands which is used to produce the isotopes. In a [recent letter](#), the **Nuclear Medicine Europe (NMEU) Emergency Response Team (ERT)** indicates that during the reactor outage, shortages of 40 percent are possible. "It is advised that stakeholders communicate with their Tc-99m generator suppliers to understand the likely impact to each customer," the letter adds. "Procedures used in past shortage situations should be reactivated including the use of alternate imaging modalities where appropriate." A decay product (Tc-99m) of the radioisotope Mo-99 is commonly used in nuclear medical diagnostic procedures to evaluate heart disease, cancer, organ function, and more, according to the [National Nuclear Security Administration](#).

Medicare Open Enrollment Period Now Active

The annual [open enrollment period for Medicare](#) began Oct. 15 and continues through Dec. 7. Medicare-eligible individuals have the ability to check their enrollment status and choose or change plans (such as switching from Medicare Advantage and prescription drug plans to Original Medicare) during the open enrollment period. In September, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** [indicated](#) that "average premiums, benefits, and plan choices for Medicare Advantage and the Medicare Part D prescription drug program are expected to remain stable in 2025." In related news, CMS recently issued a [final rule](#) that establishes appeals processes for some Medicare beneficiaries who are initially

admitted for care as hospital inpatients but later reclassified as outpatients receiving observation services. The rule establishes retrospective and prospective appeal rights for Medicare beneficiaries seeking to appeal for coverage as inpatients.

CMS Issues Final Guidance on Hospital Respiratory Data Reporting Requirements

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently issued [final guidance](#) regarding the reporting requirements for the hospital respiratory data conditions of participation, which take effect Nov. 1. All Medicare and Medicaid-participating hospitals and critical access hospitals (other than psychiatric hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, psychiatric hospital distinct part units and rehabilitation hospital distinct part units) are required to make weekly electronic submissions of certain COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) data to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). CMS will evaluate compliance based on monthly reports generated by the CDC. Psychiatric hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, psychiatric hospital distinct part units and rehabilitation hospital distinct part units are required to make an annual report beginning in January. In related news, the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) is [encouraging](#) health care professionals to get influenza and COVID-19 vaccines to protect themselves and patients during respiratory virus season.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is Oct. 26

Each year, the **U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency** (DEA) sponsors [National Prescription Drug Take Back Day](#) in communities across the nation. Many Virginia hospitals and health systems also participate in this. Use this [link](#) to search for a local collection site. [Read more](#) from the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) about how to dispose of medication at home.

Health Care Professionals Can Apply for Sorensen Institute Political Leaders Program by Nov. 12

The **Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership** at the **University of Virginia** is accepting applications for the 2025 Political Leader Program until Nov. 12. The 2025 cohort program will run from March-December. Visit this [link](#) for more information and to access the program application. The previous class featured several VHHA-affiliated individuals – in 2020, VHHA [entered into a five-year partnership with Sorensen](#) to support its programming and help identify health care leaders who are strong candidates for the Political Leaders Program. Program participants are drawn from a diverse group of applicants from across the state, and will focus on Virginia politics and governing, policy issues and solutions, regional needs, ethical servant leadership, and efforts to unite the Commonwealth. This program is primarily focused on individuals who are 10-plus years removed from college. Prospective program applicants from VHHA hospitals or health systems are encouraged to contact VHHA President and CEO **Sean T. Connaughton** at sconnaughton@vhha.com to discuss this opportunity and the ways in which VHHA can support applicants.

Events

There's Still Time to Register for the 2024 VHHA Hospital and Healthcare Leaders Summit

There's still time to register for the rapidly approaching **2024 Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Leaders Summit**, which is scheduled for Nov. 6-8 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 for questions or registration assistance.

Register for Oct. 25 Webinar on Health Care Workforce Market Update from Qualivis

[Qualivis](#), a [VHHA Solutions](#) endorsed partner, will host a webinar today (Friday, Oct. 25) at noon ET examining the state of the health care workforce market and how organizations can prepare for current labor challenges and supply and demand trends. The webinar content will also focus on clinical quality and engagement as well as resource deployment plans for the upcoming holiday season. View webinar details and register through this [link](#).

Join Oct. 30 Webinar Highlighting Riverside Efforts on AHRQ Patient Safety Culture Survey

A free webinar is being hosted on Oct. 30 at 2 p.m. ET to highlight how **Riverside Walter Reed Hospital** engaged with the **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)** [Surveys on Patient Safety Culture](#) (SOPS) hospital survey to enhance its patient safety journey. Register for the webinar [here](#).

Podcast

VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Sheltering Arms Amputation Rehab Patient, Volunteer

The latest episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Sue Henneberry**, a Richmond-area woman who volunteers at **Sheltering Arms Institute**, a provider she previously encountered as a rehabilitation patient following a limb amputation. During our conversation, we learn more about Henneberry, the medical condition that led to amputation, her impressive athletic achievements since then, 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.



Around the State

Bob Bender has been selected to serve as Chief Financial Officer of **Ballad Health's Northern Region**. He has been a member of the health system for eight years. Bender earned a bachelor's degree in accountancy from Arizona State University, graduating magna cum laude, and a master's degree from Grand Canyon University. Read more [here](#).



Andy Spicknall, inaugural President of **Bon Secours Harbour View Hospital**; **Ona Omorogbe**, Nurse Practitioner and Assistant Professor at the **Sentara College of Health Sciences**; **Stephanie Zieber**, Physician Assistant and Director of Advanced Practice Provider Development with **Sentara Medical Group**; **Christopher Pierson**, Chief Operating Officer at **Sentara Norfolk General Hospital**; and **Kamron Blue**, former Coordinator for the Safer Futures program at **Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters**; have been named to the *Hampton Roads Inside Business* Top 40 Under 40 [list](#).

