

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:

VHHA Government Relations Team Deploys for 2025 Virginia General Assembly Session

- The **Virginia General Assembly** 2025 legislative session starts next week on Wednesday, Jan. 8 and is scheduled to conclude Feb. 22. The Commonwealth has a part-time legislature that meets annually just after the start of each new year. This year's session is considered the "short" 46-day session, as compared to the "long" 60-day sessions that occur in even years. During short sessions, lawmakers consider legislative proposals and amendments to the current two-year state budget. **Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin** recently shared his recommended

amendments to the state budget for the period from July 1, 2024-June 30, 2026. The Governor's package includes a series of proposed tax cuts, enhanced funding for public schools and career and technical education, and targeted investments in health care workforce development, among other priorities. Some [key dates](#) in the upcoming session include the Jan. 17 bill filing deadline, budget Sunday (Jan. 26) when the legislature's money committees must complete their budget amendment packages, Feb. 4 – known as crossover day, which is the deadline for bills to clear their chamber of origin, **House of Delegates** or **Virginia Senate**, in order to remain active for consideration by the legislature – and the Feb. 12 deadline for each chamber to complete work on budget and revenue bills and appoint conferees to negotiate final compromise plans. After the legislature adjourns, the Governor reviews bills sent to his desk and has the option to let them become law, offer amendments, or issue vetoes. The General Assembly returns to Richmond on April 2 for the reconvened session to consider amendments and vetoes from the Governor. Throughout this time, the **VHHA Government Relations Team** will be at the State Capitol in Richmond advocating for policies that support hospitals, health systems, and public health.

VHHA, VSHP, VDH to Host Latest Installment in Drug Kit Transition Webinar Series on Jan. 9

- The **Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS)**, in collaboration with the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)** and the **Virginia Society of Health-System Pharmacists (VSHP)**, will host the next installment in a webinar series on the upcoming drug kit transition that will affect Virginia EMS agencies in 2025 on Jan. 9 at 5:30 p.m. EST. The upcoming webinar will focus on the topic of "Purchasing and Inventory Management." Register for the webinar [here](#). Registrants will receive a confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the webinar. Historically, Virginia hospitals and health systems have provided drug kit replenishment to EMS agencies. Pending federal regulatory changes at the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** and the **U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)** will result in those drug kit services being discontinued. As of now, the transition is scheduled to occur by April 15, 2025. Ahead of that, VHHA and VSHP have participated in the **Virginia Regional EMS Medication Kit Transition Workgroup** to prepare for that shift. Presentation slides from a previous webinar in the series can be accessed [here](#) and a recording can be viewed through this [link](#). Additional resources shared during that webinar included [guidance](#) from the **Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)** on handling pharmaceutical waste. Additional resources related to the upcoming Jan. 9 webinar can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).

View Recording of Webinar on Winter Weather Preparedness Activities

- The **Virginia Healthcare Emergency Management Program (VHEMP)** recently hosted a series of winter weather preparedness activities, including a communications test through the **Virginia Healthcare Alerting & Status System (VHASS)**, and a webinar featuring a **National Weather Service (NWS)** briefing on the 2024-2025 Winter Weather Outlook. VHEMP is a partnership between VHHA and the **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**. View webinar presentation slides [here](#) and a webinar recording through this [link](#).

News Updates

HHS Issues Proposed Rule on Electronic Personal Health Information Under HIPAA

The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) recently shared a [proposed rule](#) pertaining to Security Standards for the Protection of Electronic Protected Health Information under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act of 2009. The proposed regulatory changes relate to administrative, physical and technical safeguards, and organizational and documentation requirements, among other provisions, with a goal of improving health sector cybersecurity by strengthening requirements for HIPAA-regulated entities to safeguard electronic protected health information and better manage cybersecurity threats. Public comments on the proposed changes will be accepted for 60 days after the proposed rule is [published](#).

CDC Confirms First U.S. Hospitalization for Severe Bird Flu (H5N1)

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) recently confirmed a patient hospitalization associated with a severe case of avian influenza A(H5N1) virus, known commonly as H5N1 bird flu. The infection occurred in Louisiana, and it marks the first case of severe illness linked to the virus in the United States. The CDC notes that there have been 61 reported human cases of bird flu reported in the U.S. since April 2024. The hospitalized patient had exposure to sick and dead birds in backyard flocks, according to the CDC. This is the first case of H5N1 bird flu in the U.S. that has been linked to exposure to a backyard flock and it underscores that commercial poultry and dairy operations, as well as wild birds and backyard flocks, can be sources of exposure. Read more [here](#).

VDH Launches Immunization Survey, Encourages Health Care Providers to Participate

The **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) Division of Immunization has launched its second annual [Immunization Attitudes and Beliefs Survey](#). The initiative builds upon insights gained from a 2023 survey and aims to gather comprehensive data from a broader population, including health care providers. Providers' unique perspectives and experiences are invaluable in shaping effective immunization strategies and addressing public health challenges. Health care providers are invited to use the survey to share their insights through Jan. 17. The survey takes about 20 minutes to complete and is voluntary.

CMS Seeks 10 Participants for Rural Community Hospital Program

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) is seeking 10 participants for the Rural Community Hospital Demonstration program, which tests cost-based reimbursement for inpatient services for certain rural hospitals with fewer than 51 beds that don't qualify as critical access hospitals (CAH). The application deadline is March 1. New participants will be selected on a rolling basis from May 1, 2025-June 30, 2028, which is the statutory end date for the demonstration project. Learn more [here](#).

Events

Register for the 2025 Virginia Hospital Lobby Day at the General Assembly

Virginia hospital and health system team members are invited to join the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association** for the annual Hospital Lobby Day at the **General Assembly** in Richmond, VA, which is scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 22. Hospital Lobby Day is an opportunity for hospital and health system

officials to engage with state lawmakers and share their perspective on the important work of hospitals and the opportunities and challenges they face. Visit this [link](#) by Jan. 10 to register to participate in Hospital Lobby Day. VHHA will host an optional virtual Lobby Day briefing on Monday, Jan. 20 at 4 p.m. Health system government relations staff will schedule Lobby Day legislative visits and meetings for participants and guide them during the day. View this [brief video recap](#) for a glimpse of Hospital Lobby Day activities.

Register for the 2025 Virginia Patient Safety Summit

The 14th annual **Virginia Patient Safety Summit** presented by the **VHHA Center for Healthcare Excellence** and the **VHHA Foundation** is scheduled for Feb. 27 (9:30 a.m.-3:45 p.m.) as a virtual event. The theme for the upcoming Summit is “Improvement Unleashed: Strategies for Sustainable Change.” The event will be an opportunity to highlight strategies for supporting and sustaining improvements in health care quality and safety, including the use of robust process improvement methodologies. The event is being hosted in collaboration with the **Virginia Nurses Foundation**, the **Medical Society of Virginia**, the **Virginia Pharmacists Association**, and the **Virginia Society of Health-System Pharmacists**. View event registration information [here](#).

Podcast

VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Carilion Clinic Child Life Specialist, Hospital Toy Program

The latest episode of VHHA’s *Patients Come First* podcast features **Carli Holtzauer**, a **Carilion Clinic** Child Life Specialist, for a conversation about her professional journey and work, Carilion’s new Fun on Wheels program to benefit younger hospitalized patients, 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



HCA Virginia has named **Nanette Logan** as Chief Executive Officer of **Dominion Hospital**, effective Jan. 6. Logan most recently served as Chief Operating Officer at Regional Medical Center of San Jose, CA. She earned a master's of science in nursing degree from the University of San Francisco and a doctorate of nursing practice degree from the University of Nevada. Read more [here](#).

VHC Health has announced **John Nguyen**, CFP, CIMA, as Chair of its Board of Directors, and **Dr. M. Anthony Casolaro**, MD, as Vice Chair. **Dr. Russell McWey**, VHC Health Board Chairman since 2020, and Vice Chairman **Dan Knise** are stepping down from their roles but will continue to serve on the Board. Read more [here](#).



Dr. Neeral Shah, MD, of **UVA Health** is one of 12 recipients of the 2025 Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. The award recognizes faculty "who exemplify the highest standards of teaching, scholarship and service." Dr. Neeral serves as a Professor of Medicine in the gastrointestinal/hepatology division at the UVA School of Medicine and as a gastroenterologist and digestive health specialist for UVA Health. Read more [here](#).

Cassie Lewis, DNP, ACNP-BC, Chief Nursing Officer for **Bon Secours Richmond Market**, has been named among the list of 8 Nurse Leaders to Watch in 2025 by *HealthLeaders*. Read more [here](#).

