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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:

Virginia General Assembly Reconvenes April 2 to Consider Governor's Legislative, Budget Changes

- The **Virginia General Assembly** returns to Richmond on April 2 for a scheduled one-day reconvened session to consider amendments and vetoes **Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin** made to legislation and the [budget bill](#) approved during the 2025 regular legislative session during the winter. In a [news release](#), the Governor indicated he has acted on “916 bills sent to him during the 2025 General Assembly session.” He “signed 599 bills, amended 159 bills, and vetoed 157 bills.” On the budget, the Governor authored “205 amendments and eight item vetoes.” The Governor’s budget amendments include several actions related to hospital supplemental payments. On legislation, the Governor amended a bill related to medical debt collection, and vetoed bills to impose criminal penalties on individuals who knowingly bring firearms, large knives, or dangerous weapons into a hospital. The Governor also signed into law several bills that are legislative priorities for VHHA, including measures on insurance prior authorization reform and transparency, behavioral health, and critical access hospital swing beds, among others. Beyond the reconvened session, there is also the potential for a legislative special session this year regarding federal policy and funding action that could impact the Commonwealth, its budget, or programs and services. The **VHHA Government Affairs Team** successfully worked on a variety of bills and the budget during this year’s regular legislative session and, in the lead up to the reconvened session, engaged with the Youngkin Administration on budgetary and policy issues of importance to hospitals and health systems.

Virginia Hospitals Earns National Recognition for Patient Safety and Clinical Excellence

- Nineteen Virginia hospitals have earned positive acclaim for being leaders in patient safety excellence in the [2025 Patient Safety Excellence Awards](#) from *Healthgrades*. This recognition continues a trend for Virginia hospitals, which in recent years have been highly ranked by several organizations that conduct annual and bi-annual assessments of the clinical and patient safety performance of hospitals across the nation. The *Healthgrades* awards recognize the top hospitals in the nation for patient safety. Several Virginia hospitals that earned 2025 Patient Safety Excellence Awards have also been named among the [best overall hospitals](#) in the nation. Read more [here](#) to see the full list of hospitals.

VHHA Solutions Enters Strategic Partnership with Loyal Health

- **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association** (VHHA) affiliate [VHHA Solutions](#) has entered a new strategic partnership with [Loyal](#), a leading provider of patient engagement solutions. Loyal’s Care Activation Platform provides scalable, real-time solutions that enhance every stage of the patient journey – from provider search and scheduling to personalized outreach and engagement. Loyal recognizes that a one-size-fits-all approach to patient engagement no longer meets the needs of modern healthcare. The company’s Care Activation Platform includes a range of engagement solutions that can be used individually or together, providing the flexibility and scalability that health systems require to thrive in today’s competitive environment. With seamless electronic health record (EHR) integration, industry-leading provider data management, and a suite of patient engagement solutions, Loyal ensures health systems have the data and infrastructure they need to power personalized, high-converting engagement strategies. VHHA Solutions will work with Loyal to showcase the value that its platform and engagement solutions can bring to healthcare organizations across Virginia. Read more [here](#).

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 work is reflected in recent coverage from [VPM](#) and [340B Report](#).

News Updates

DEA, HHS Delay Effective Date of Final Rule on Telemedicine Buprenorphine Prescribing to Dec. 31

The **U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)** and the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** recently [announced](#) a further delay of the effective date of final rules regarding telemedicine prescribing of buprenorphine. The effective date is now scheduled for Dec. 31. This is the second delay announced; the initial effective date was Feb. 18 and the second date was March 21. A White House [memo](#) from Jan. 20 announced the regulatory freeze pending further review. Waiver provisions included in previously extended telemedicine flexibilities regarding the prescribing of controlled substances remain in effect through Dec. 31.

Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation Campaign: 'Health Workers Have the Right, Too'

The **Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation** recently unveiled a new [initiative](#) to empower health workers to access the mental health care and support they may need, while equipping employers, policymakers and other decision-makers with resources to eliminate systemic barriers to mental health care. Building on the success of the coalition's [Wellbeing First Champion Challenge](#) program, Health Workers Have The Right, Too brings together the health care community to change stigmatizing policies and practices that discourage health workers from seeking mental health care. The initiative calls for six actions to improve access to mental health care for health workers. Read more [here](#).

CDC Data: 378 Confirmed Measles Cases Across 18 U.S. Jurisdictions

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** continues to monitor an outbreak of measles cases, which number 378 across 18 jurisdictions – Alaska, California, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York City, New York State, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, and Washington – according to a recent count. The CDC data shows three outbreaks (defined as three or more related cases) reported in 2025, with 90 percent of cases (341 of 378) outbreak-associated. For comparison, 16 outbreaks were reported during 2024, and 69 percent of cases (198 of 285) were outbreak-associated. Read more [here](#).

AHA Update: FBI Investigation Did Not Identify Specific Credible Threat Against Hospitals

A recent investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) did not identify “any specific credible threat targeted against hospitals in any U.S. city,” according to the **American Hospital Association (AHA)**. Along with the **Health Information Sharing and Analysis Center (Health-ISAC)**, AHA recently issued an information bulletin regarding a [social media post](#) indicating the threat of active “planning coordinated, multi-city terrorist attacks on U.S. hospitals in the coming weeks.” At the time, the organizations said the FBI is aware of the threat, though wasn’t “information is available to corroborate or discount this threat’s credibility.” The AHA now notes that FBI “will immediately advise

any identified potential targets and, if appropriate, alert the broader health care sector” if credible threat information materializes.

Washington Plans to Withdraw COVID-19 Funding for States, HHS Restructures

This week, the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) announced plans to pull back \$11.4 billion in COVID-related funding that had flowed to state and local public health departments. The expectation is that the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) will soon begin the process of recovering the funds. The HHS statement indicated that since the pandemic period has passed, continued funding would waste taxpayer dollars. The funding cuts will [reportedly](#) result in the early termination of several grants awarded to the **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) that will affect “current staffing and ongoing projects.” In related news, HHS also announced several moves to reduce staff and consolidate agency operations. The overall actions will result in “total downsizing from 82,000 to 62,000 full-time employees” and collapse 28 agency division into 15 as part of efforts to generate taxpayer savings. Read more [here](#).

Individual COVID-19 Case Reporting No Longer Required by VDH

The state requirement for reporting suspected or confirmed individual cases of COVID-19 has been lifted by **Virginia State Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Shelton**. The [variance](#) granted to those reporting requirements applies to physicians, medical care facility leaders, and local health directors. Directors of laboratories, including laboratories that hold Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Certificates of Waiver, are still required to report all positive SARS-CoV-2 cases. Suspected or confirmed COVID-19 outbreaks or clusters of cases should continue to be reported to local health departments as [required](#). Read more in a [letter](#) Commissioner Shelton shared with Virginia clinicians.

VNPC Accepting Hospital Applications for Participants in Substance Use Disorder Project

The **Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative** (VNPC) is accepting hospital applications to join its latest quality improvement initiative: “Evidence-Based Dyad Care for Substance Use Disorder.” The project aims to enhance policies and practices for mothers and babies affected by substance use disorders. Running until October 2026, this initiative offers opportunities for learning, resource connection, and the implementation of innovative techniques to improve care within Virginia's birthing facilities. Enrollment is open until May 16. Contact Brittany Watson at Brittany.watson@vcuhealth.org for more information or complete the enrollment form at this [link](#).

VDH Seeks Survey Responses to Improve Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Awareness

The **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) is seeking survey responses to improve public health reporting and surveillance of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), which is a condition that affects newborns exposed to opioids or addictive substances in the womb, causing them to experience withdrawal symptoms during their first few days of life. By participating in this brief survey, clinicians will help identify key areas where additional support or resources are needed. This survey will provide valuable insights into the challenges and barriers faced when reporting NAS cases, helping VDH develop better educational tools to support health care providers across the state. All responses will be used for VDH's evaluation efforts and any data shared will be reported in aggregate to ensure privacy. Survey questions may be sent to **Julie Keeney**, CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellow, at juliana.keeney@vdh.virginia.gov or

Dr. Dane De Silva, Director of the Division of Population Health Data, at dane.desilva@vdh.virginia.gov. The survey is available through March 28. Access the survey through this [link](#).

Events

Registration Open for VHHA Emergency Preparedness Summit on April 16

Registration is open for the **2025 Virginia Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Summit** being hosted by VHHA and the **VHHA Foundation** on April 16 at The Westin-Richmond. “Today’s Challenges, Tomorrow’s Impact” is the theme for this in-person event, during which participants can engage with speakers, sponsors, and support organizations from across the Virginia health care community about opportunities to strengthen the Commonwealth’s preparedness for threats to the health care delivery system including severe weather, active aggressor incidents, crisis standards of care, and special pathogens response. Participants will have an opportunity to earn EMT continuing education credits and up to five ACHE qualifying education hours toward initial certification or recertification of the **Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives** (FACHE) designation. Visit this [link](#) to register.

Register for the 2025 Virginia Healthcare Workforce Summit, a Virtual Event on May 13

VHHA’s **2025 Virginia Healthcare Workforce Summit** will explore innovative strategies for hospitals to adapt their practices, focusing on developing, recruiting, retaining, and supporting team members in a rapidly changing workplace. Sessions will delve into engaging and retaining a multi-generational workforce, building flexibility to meet evolving needs, fostering internal mobility and career development, and adopting cutting-edge models to address workforce challenges. Additional topics include advancing virtual nursing, leveraging artificial intelligence for workforce planning, and refocusing leadership approaches to empower teams. Register through this [link](#).

VHHA to Host April 30 Webinar Providing State Legislative and Budget Updates for Hospital Leaders

The **VHHA Government Affairs Team** will host a webinar on April 30 at noon to provide a recap of the 2025 Virginia General Assembly session, including a briefing and policy and budget developments of concern to Virginia hospitals and health systems. The session will also feature a preview of Virginia’s upcoming election cycle and a discussion of the evolving political landscape and how those changes could shape and impact health care policy. The webinar is open to all Virginia hospital and health system leaders. Register [here](#).

Register for April 3 Webinar in EMS Drug Kit Transition Series

The latest webinar in a series focused on the upcoming drug kit transition affecting Virginia’s EMS agencies in 2025 is being held April 3 at noon. This installment in the series is focused on “Shared Insights from Rural and Urban Agencies.” Register for that webinar [here](#). The webinar series is hosted by 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)**. A previous webinar in the series focused on hazardous medication waste and disposal. A recording can be viewed [here](#).

Podcast

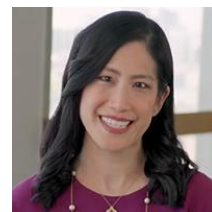
VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Fauquier Health President, Hospital 100th Anniversary

This episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Rebecca Segal**, the President and CEO of **Fauquier Health**, a **Lifepoint Health** facility located in Warrenton, VA. She joins us for a conversation about her career in health care, the work of Fauquier Health, which recently celebrated its centennial anniversary, 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 pcfpcast@vhha.com.



Around the State

UVA Health has named **Cindy Bo**, MBA, FACHE, as the inaugural Chief of **UVA Health Children's Hospital**. Bo comes to UVA Health Children's Hospital from Boston Medical Center Health System, where she has served as Senior Vice president and Chief Strategy Officer. She previously spent 10 years as Senior Vice President for Nemours Children's Health in Delaware. She earned her master's degree in business administration from Columbia Business School. Read more [here](#).



Shirley Gibson, DNP, MSHA, RN, FACHE, has been promoted to the position of Vice President of Real Estate for **VCU Health**. Gibson previously served as the health system's Vice President of Support Services and Planning. She earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees in health care administration from VCU before earning a doctor of nursing practice degree in nursing administration from American Sentinel College. Read more [here](#).

Twin County Regional Healthcare Chief Executive Officer **Sudandra Ratnasamy** has been recognized as the Advocacy Champion of the Year by **Lifepoint Health**. She received this prestigious award at the 2025 Lifepoint Health Leadership Meeting, held Feb. 10-13 in Nashville, TN. Ratnasamy was honored for her exceptional leadership in advocating for health care by engaging government officials from



both sides of the aisle in meaningful discussions about the needs of the health care system. Read more [here](#).