

FYI Weekly

HEALTH CARE NEWS FOR VIRGINIA'S HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

You are receiving this e-mail from VHHA because you requested a subscription. For continued delivery of this e-mail version, please add jtwalker@vhha.com to your address book today.

Articles:

1. [VHHA in Action](#)
2. [Virginia Ranked Second Among States in National Scorecard of Hospital Patient Safety](#)
3. [Virginia General Assembly, Governor Working Towards Compromise on State Budget Plan](#)
4. [VHHA Members Encouraged to Apply for 'Earn to Learn' Nurse Education Acceleration Program](#)
5. [Register for the 2024 Virginia Behavioral Health Summit, May 16 in Richmond](#)
6. [VHHA Patients Come First Podcast Features Carilion Clinic Wilderness Medicine Physician](#)
7. [HHS Final Rule Includes Disability Discrimination Protections Under Rehabilitation Act](#)
8. [VHHA to Host May 29 In-Person Workshop on Identifying and Retaining Devoted Employees](#)
9. [White House Issues Memo on Critical Infrastructure Security, Resilience](#)
10. [Around the State](#)

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 **Executive Committee** of the **Board of Directors** this week for a discussion of issues of importance to hospital and health system members.
- This week (May 6-12, 2024) is **National Nurses Week**, an annual time to recognize, appreciate, and celebrate the many invaluable contributions nurses make to patient care and community health. This year's theme is "Nurses Make the Difference."
- The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) is seeking public comment on [draft guidance](#) regarding the Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program, which will negotiate prices with drug makers for certain high-cost, sole-source drugs and apply them beginning in 2026. The drug price program is a provision of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. July 2 is the public comment deadline. Read more [here](#).
- The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) has issued a [final rule](#) to allow young undocumented immigrants who are authorized to work in the U.S. to purchase health coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace. The rule takes effect Nov. 1, 2024.
- The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS), the **Department of Treasury**, and the **Department of Labor** recently shared information about the new process for resubmitting disputes under the No Surprises Act independent dispute resolution (IDR) process that were originally improperly batched or bundled. The new process is intended to streamline federal IDR operations and enhance user experience. Parties eligible to be resubmitted to the federal IDR process will receive an email from CMS with a unique resubmission link. Disputes will need to be resubmitted within four days of receiving the link. Read more [here](#).

- Survey responses are being collected for the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** [Maternity Practices in Infant Nutrition and Care \(mPINC\)](#) 2024 survey. Every two years, CDC invites all U.S. hospitals with maternity services to participate in the survey. Battelle, the organization conducting the 2024 mPINC survey on behalf of the CDC, continues to reach out to hospital points of contact by phone to confirm that the hospital is eligible to participate. This is an important step in the process as no link to the survey will be sent until Battelle has spoken with a hospital contact. In 2022, 55 percent of hospitals in Virginia that were eligible to respond participated in the mPINC survey. Participating in mPINC can help highlight key areas where facilities are performing well and opportunities for potential improvement in infant nutrition and care. Subscribe to the CDC mPINC listerv by sending a message to mPINC@cdc.gov that includes the sender’s name and e-mail address. Learn more about how CDC administers the mPINC survey [here](#).
- May is **Mental Health Awareness Month**, which was first established in 1949 to raise awareness about mental wellness and recovery from mental illness. It is estimated that nearly 20 percent of U.S. adults experience mental illness, which is equivalent to roughly 50 million Americans. Read more about Mental Health Awareness Month [here](#).
- The **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)** recently issued a guide to help health systems and stakeholders assess and advance equity in health care solutions that involve digital technologies. The guide addresses an array of topics including considerations such as lack of patient digital literacy or lack of broadband access (so-called “digital divide” concerns that may impact the viability of health care solutions that involve digital technologies and tools). Read more [here](#).
- The **U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** is [recommending](#) that adults 65 and older receive an updated dosage of the COVID-19 vaccine for the purpose of gaining protection against the viral variants in circulation including JN.1. A vaccine dose should be administered at least four months following a previous dosage. The CDC’s **Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)** recommended this step earlier this year.
- VHHA will host a webinar today (Friday, May 10) at noon EST to provide the health care community with timely information from the **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)** regarding the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). Register for the free webinar [here](#) and read more about HAPI through this [link](#).
- 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 the [WRIC](#), [WVEC](#), [Yahoo News](#), the [Henrico Citizen](#), the [Dinwiddie Monitor](#), and the [Augusta Free Press](#).

[Back](#)

2. Virginia Ranked Second Among States in National Scorecard of Hospital Patient Safety

Virginia has again been recognized as one of the top states in the nation for patient safety in hospitals, sitting [second overall in the Spring 2024 Leapfrog Group Hospital Safety Grade state rankings](#). The Leapfrog Group state rankings are based on the share of hospitals in each state that earn “A” grades. In all, 40 of 72 (56.3 percent) of the Virginia-based hospitals graded earned top marks in the 2024 Spring evaluation period. In addition to the Spring 2024 Leapfrog grading period, Virginia was also ranked second overall in the [Fall 2023 rankings](#), the [Fall 2022 rankings](#), and the [Spring 2022 rankings](#). The Commonwealth has consistently been a high-achieving state in the bi-annual rankings. This includes rankings of [first overall in the Fall 2021 rating period](#), fourth in Spring 2021, sixth in Fall 2020, third in

Fall 2019, second in Spring 2019, third in Fall 2018, and fifth in Spring 2018. Eight Virginia hospitals were also recently recognized on the Healthgrades list of [America's 250 Best Hospitals](#). Hospitals on the list include Bon Secours Memorial Regional Medical Center, Bon Secours St. Francis Medical Center, Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital, Chippenham Hospital (HCA Virginia)*, Inova Alexandria Hospital*, Inova Fairfax Hospital, Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, and Inova Loudoun Hospital* (an asterisk "*" denotes hospitals on the America's 100 Best Hospitals list). The hospitals on the America's 100 and 250 Best Hospitals lists are among the top 2 percent and top 5 percent in the nation for overall clinical excellence, respectively. Read more [here](#).

[Back](#)

3. Virginia General Assembly, Governor Working Towards Compromise on State Budget Plan

Leaders in the **Virginia General Assembly** and **Governor Glenn Youngkin** appear closer to achieving a budget deal now than they were in March – when the legislature approved a two-year budget plan at odds with the Governor's fiscal vision – and in April when lawmakers returned to Richmond for the annual reconvened session to consider gubernatorial legislative amendments and vetoes. The legislature-approved budget excluded provisions to support the creation of a proposed professional sports arena complex in Alexandria, VA and included tax increases that the Governor opposes. As is custom, state lawmakers returned to Richmond last month to consider hundreds of budget amendments and legislative vetoes sent down by the Governor. Since then, Governor Youngkin and legislative leaders pledged to negotiate on a consensus budget plan, with indications emerging in recent days that a deal is within reach. As of late this week, [reports emerged](#) indicating that a deal had been reached on a state budget plan for the two-year period beginning July 1, 2204. If that fully materializes, that accord could be consummated during a legislative special session set to commence next week (May 13). The **VHHA Government Affairs Team** continues to actively monitor the unfolding events and is engaging with the Youngkin Administration and legislative leaders to advocate for the interests of hospitals and health systems throughout the process. – Julie Dime

[Back](#)

4. VHHA Members Encouraged to Apply for 'Earn to Learn' Nurse Education Acceleration Program

The **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) Office of Health Equity is seeking applications for the Virginia Earn to Learn (ETL) Nursing Education Acceleration Program. For state fiscal year 2024, the **Virginia General Assembly** directed VDH to use Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA SLRF) to establish the Virginia Earn to Learn Nursing Education Acceleration Program. The funding will support education and health care facility partnerships to provide registered nurse (RN) and licensed practical nurse (LPN) students with paid employment during nursing studies to increase clinical education opportunities and the number of practice-ready new graduate nurses. See more details about the request for application opportunity [here](#). May 20 is the deadline to submit questions to Kimberly Boehme (kimberly.boehme@vdh.virginia.gov) or Olivette Burroughs (Olivette.Burroughs@vdh.virginia.gov). Applications are due by June 4 at 11:45 p.m. EDT.

[Back](#)

5. Register for the 2024 Virginia Behavioral Health Summit, May 16 in Richmond

Time is running short to register for the **2024 Virginia Behavioral Health Summit**, which is scheduled for May 16 in Richmond. The theme of the one-day event is "Connection: Building a Behavioral Health

System that Serves All” and its purpose is to expand knowledge about behavioral health treatment and access for clinicians, healthcare administrators, policymakers, and community-based providers. The Summit will feature innovative behavioral health models, patient-centered strategies, an overview of the expansion of the crisis system across the state, and the opportunity to learn about advances in technology that can improve behavioral health resources. Visit this [link](#) to register and reserve lodging accommodations. View the Summit agenda [here](#).

[Back](#)

6. VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Carilion Clinic Wilderness Medicine Physician

The latest episode of VHHA’s *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Stephanie Lareau**, a **Carilion Clinic** emergency medicine physician who is certified in wilderness medicine and serves as Director of the Carilion Clinic Wilderness Medicine Fellowship program. Dr. Lareau joins us for a conversation about her career, wilderness medicine, 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](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [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 Saturday at noon and Sunday at 10 a.m. 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. – Julian Walker

[Back](#)

7. HHS Final Rule Includes Disability Discrimination Protections Under Rehabilitation Act

The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) recently issued a [final rule](#) intended to strengthen protections for people with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The rule clarifies civil rights protections for people with disabilities, addresses discrimination in medical treatment, adds enforceable standards for accessible medical diagnostic equipment, and ensures accessible web content and mobile apps. The final rule protects individuals with disabilities from experiencing discrimination in any program or activity receiving funding from HHS, and it updates existing requirements to make them consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The rule takes effect 60 days after publication in the May 9 Federal Register. Read more [here](#).

[Back](#)

8. VHHA to Host May 29 In-Person Workshop on Identifying and Retaining Devoted Employees

VHHA is hosting an in-person workshop on May 29 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.) at its offices in Glen Allen, VA that will be facilitated by **Joe Mull**, a featured keynote speaker at the [2024 Virginia Healthcare Workforce Summit](#). The theme of the workshop is “Becoming a Destination Workplace: What Leaders Must Do to Find and Keep Devoted Employees.” Registration cost is \$50, which includes lunch and all meeting materials. Capacity is limited for this event. Register [here](#) to secure a spot. Questions may be directed to events@vhha.com. – Sharon Alexander

[Back](#)

9. White House Issues Memo on Critical Infrastructure Security, Resilience

The Administration of **U.S. President Joe Biden** recently issued a [memo](#) regarding updated critical infrastructure protection requirements, which include the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) acting as the National Coordinator for Security and Resilience, and heightening the importance of minimum security and resilience requirements within health care and other critical infrastructure sectors, consistent with the National Cybersecurity Strategy. In related news, CISA has [extended the public comment period](#) on a [proposed rule](#) that would implement cyber incident and ransom payment reporting requirements under the Cyber Incident Reporting for Critical Infrastructure Act of 2022. The rule would require critical infrastructure organizations, including hospitals and health systems, to report a covered cyber incident to the federal government within 72 hours and ransom payments within 24 hours, among other provisions.

[Back](#)

10. Around the State

Dr. Xuemei Huang, MD, PhD, has been named Chair of the Department of Neurology at the **UVA School of Medicine**. Dr. Huang comes to UVA from the Penn State College of Medicine. Huang earned her medical degree at Beijing Medical University, followed by a doctorate in pharmacology at Purdue University. She then completed a medical internship at the University of Washington-Seattle, a residency in neurology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a fellowship in movement disorders and clinical research at Emory University. Read more [here](#).

Vicki Parks, CEO of **Wythe County Community Hospital**, has been presented with the Paul Harris Award by the Wytheville Rotary Club. The Paul Harris award recipient goes above and beyond in serving their community through promoting change and understanding. Read more [here](#).

S. Henry (Hank) Creasy has been named Senior Vice President-Chief Legal Officer for **Centra Health**. Creasy is a graduate of Hampden-Sydney College and the University of Virginia School of Law. Read more [here](#). – Salinna Lor

[Back](#)
