

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:

- VHHA staff this week attended an event at **Augusta Health** honoring former Virginia **Senator Emmett W. Hanger Jr.**, who represented portions of the Shenandoah Valley during his years of service in the **House of Delegates** (1983-1992) and the **Virginia Senate** (1996-2024). Augusta Health dedicated a bench on its campus to honor Senator Hanger, who was a longtime champion for increasing health care access for Virginians and a pivotal figure in the eventual passage of Medicaid expansion by the **Virginia General Assembly** in 2018. View a recording of the event through this [link](#) and see images from the event [here](#).
- The **U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS), Labor, and Treasury** recently announced a 120-day extension for parties impacted by the **Change Healthcare** cyberattack to open disputes under the No Surprises Act independent dispute resolution (IDR) process. Parties have until Oct. 12 to file disputes and must attest that their ability to open a dispute was impacted by the incident, according to the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)**. The departments have published an [attestation](#) that parties must submit along with the standard IDR form during the extension period. Read more [here](#).
- The **Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC)** recently issued its June 2024 *Report to Congress on Medicaid and CHIP* featuring recommendations for increased transparency in Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) financing, tools that states can use to optimize state Medicaid agency contracts (SMACs), enrollment trends in Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs), and improvements to demographic data collection in Medicaid. Read more [here](#).

- The **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau** (CFPB) recently issued a proposed rule that would remove medical bills from credit reports by prohibiting credit reporting companies from sharing medical debts with lenders and preventing lenders from making borrowing decisions based on that information. The proposed rule would amend a regulation used in the implementation of Fair Credit Reporting Act. Public comment on the proposed rule is being accepted through Aug. 12. Read more [here](#).
- The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) is advising manufacturers of licensed and authorized COVID-19 vaccines that the COVID-19 vaccines (2024-2025 formula) for use in the United States should be monovalent (single strain) JN.1 vaccines to more closely match currently circulating SARS-CoV-2 viruses. This follows a recent meeting of the FDA **Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee** (VRBPAC) during which the committee unanimously voted to recommend a monovalent JN.1-lineage vaccine composition. It is expected that the updated vaccines will be available this fall. Read more [here](#).
- The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) **Office for Civil Rights** (OCR) recently announced that hospitals and health systems can require **UnitedHealth Group** to notify patients that their data was stolen during the Change Healthcare cyberattack on Feb. 22. OCR enforces the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) privacy, security, and breach notification rules that set forth requirements which HIPAA covered entities (health plans, health care clearinghouses, and most health care providers) and their business associates must follow to protect the privacy and security of protected health information and the required notifications to HHS and affected individuals following a breach. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- VHHA recently held a webinar briefing for hospital members regarding the 2024 **Virginia General Assembly** session focusing on new laws set to take effect in the near future that impact, or have applicability to, Virginia hospitals and health systems. View the webinar recording [here](#) or [here](#) and access presentation slides through this [link](#).
- VHHA recently hosted the latest installment of a quarterly webinar series to provide the health care community with timely information from the **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH). View a webinar recording [here](#) and access presentation slides through this [link](#). A recording of a previous webinar in the series about the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is available through this [link](#) and presentation slides can be accessed [here](#).
- July 22 is the deadline for submitting public comment to the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) on the information requirements associated with attestation requirements included in the Medicaid managed care access rule. Read more and submit comment through this [link](#).
- The **Disparities Solutions Center** is now accepting applications for the [2024-2025 Disparities Leadership Program](#), which is a year-long, hands-on executive education program focused on helping health care leaders achieve equity. The program is designed to help leaders translate the latest understanding of disparities into realistic solutions that can be applied within organizations. To date, more than 569 participants from 236 organizations representing 35 states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, Canada, and Switzerland have participated in the program. Letters of intent from applicants are due by July 12 and applications are due by Aug. 2. Download the necessary forms through this [link](#).
- The **Virginia Infection Prevention Training Center** (VIPTC) recently released a new training video called *Germ Center*. Featuring fun characters and engaging storylines, this video covers the latest health care wins, losses, and highlights. This is the newest installment in VIPTC's growing infection prevention training video library. Access the video [here](#) or visit the VIPTC [website](#) to learn more.

- 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](#).
- 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 [WHSV](#), [Health Leaders Media](#), and [Brightgram](#).

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2. View Recording of June 20 Webinar on Atlantic Hurricane Season Preparedness Webinar

This week, a webinar briefing about the 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season featuring **National Weather Service** officials was presented for health care providers by VHHA, the **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**, the **Central Virginia Healthcare Coalition**, the **Eastern Virginia Healthcare Coalition**, the **Northern Virginia Emergency Response System**, and the **Southwest Virginia Healthcare Coalition**. View a webinar recording through this [link](#) and access presentation slides [here](#).

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3. Virginia Hospitals, Nurses Association Endorse Nurse Staffing Committee Model

Frontline nurses play a key role in providing direct patient care across clinical settings and are often the ‘eyes and ears’ at health care facilities, giving nurses unique insight on patient needs and workload challenges. In recognition of that, the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)** and the **Virginia Nurses Association (VNA)** spent the past year developing strategies to elevate the voice of frontline nurses so that their valuable perspectives and ideas are shared with hospital leaders. The result of that work is the creation of a framework and principles for establishing Nurse Staffing Committee models in Virginia hospitals. The Committee framework provides a structured template for this work while also allowing flexibility for individual hospitals to customize plans appropriate for their unique needs. The **VHHA Board of Directors** has unanimously voted to adopt the Nurse Staffing Committee framework and implement Committees in their facilities. These formal actions affirm the importance of hospital leaders partnering with nurses on issues related to staffing and care delivery. The Nurse Staffing Committee framework has been developed to facilitate enhanced collaboration between hospital leaders and bedside nurses on the development of innovative staffing solutions to address healthcare team workload and drive quality and safety improvements within existing system constraints. The model can be customized to function within existing organizational structures at hospitals with unique features and can work alongside existing programs to engage with nurses. Framework planning and implementation will occur in close coordination with Virginia hospital chief nursing officers and nursing leaders who helped develop the model and VHHA will offer technical assistance and support to hospitals as they move forward on this work. Read more [here](#) and access the Nurse Staffing Committee toolkit through this [link](#).

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4. CDC Campaign Promotes Vaccinations During Pregnancy

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** has initiated the “From Me, To You” maternal health campaign that includes resources to encourage Black mothers to receive vaccinations during

pregnancy. Getting recommended vaccinations while you're pregnant helps your body create protective antibodies (proteins produced by the body to fight off illnesses) that you can pass on to your baby. These antibodies help protect your baby from several illnesses during their first few months of life. Visit this [link](#) to read more and access resources for patients and providers.

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5. Deadline Approaching to Participate in CDC Maternity Practices, Infant Care and Nutrition Survey

June 24 is the deadline to participate in the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** 2024 [Maternity Practices in Infant Nutrition and Care \(mPINC\)](#) survey. Every two years, the CDC invites all hospitals with maternity services in the United States and its territories to participate. 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 a 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 the contact at the hospital. 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 a facility is doing well, and areas for potential improvement in infant nutrition and care. Subscribe to the CDC mPINC update listerv by emailing mPINC@cdc.gov. Learn more about how CDC administers the mPINC survey [here](#).

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6. VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Sentara Health Sleep Specialty Physician

The latest episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Fouzia Siddiqui**, a physician and neurologist who is Director of the Sleep Center at **Sentara RMH Medical Center**. She joins us for a conversation about her career, her journey from Pakistan to the United States to pursue her passion, 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 Sunday at 9 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. – Salinna Lor

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7. VNPC Seeks Survey Feedback on Virginia Maternal Health Needs

Last year, the **Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative (VNPC)** was awarded the [HRSA Maternal Health Innovation](#) grant. The grant components include developing maternal health hubs, convening the Maternal Health Task Force with input from Virginia communities, and developing and implementing a strategic plan over the next five years. As part of an environmental scan related to this grant, the VNPC is asking partner organizations to complete a brief [survey](#) to help identify where maternal health needs exist in Virginia.

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8. CISA Issues Cybersecurity Vulnerability Warning

Health care organizations are advised to implement software patches or other mitigation strategies to address 14 cyber vulnerabilities identified by the **Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency** (CISA). The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Sector Cybersecurity Coordination Center** (HC3) advises that the vulnerabilities affect the following systems: Baxter Welch Allyn, Microsoft, Google/Android, Apple, Mozilla, Cisco, SAP, Adobe, Fortinet and Atlassian. Read more [here](#).

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9. CMS Announces that Change Healthcare Accelerated Payment Program to Conclude July 12

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently announced that payments under the Accelerated and Advance Payment (AAP) Program for the Change Healthcare/Optum Payment Disruption (CHOPD) will conclude on July 12. Launched in early March, the CHOPD payments were designed to ease cash flow disruptions experienced by some Medicare providers and suppliers, such as hospitals, physicians, and pharmacists, due to the unprecedented cyberattack that took health care electronic data interchange Change Healthcare offline in February. Read more [here](#).

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10. Around the State

Ballad Health has named **Phillip Childree** as its new Chief Financial Officer for **Norton Community Hospital, Lonesome Pine Hospital, Lee County Community Hospital, and Dickenson Community Hospital**. He holds a master's degree in accounting and a bachelor's degree in accounting and business administration from Troy University. Read more [here](#).

Eric Conley has been named Executive Vice President and President for Acute and Post-Acute Care for **Sentara Health**. He received a bachelor of science degree in hospital administration from Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania and a master of health and hospital administration degree from The Ohio State University College of Medicine. Read more [here](#).

Prasanna Mohanty has been named Executive Vice President and President for Ambulatory Services for **Sentara Health**. He received an MPH/MBA in healthcare management and finance from the Boston University Questrom School of Business, an MS in Health Informatics from the University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine, and an MS in Population Health from the University of Michigan School of Public Health. Read more [here](#).

Adam Holyk has been named the first Chief Consumer Office for **Sentara Health**. He earned a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Guelph, a master of business administration degree from York University, and a Juris Doctor degree from Osgoode Hall Law School. Read more [here](#). – Salinna Lor

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