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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, these are some developments of interest to Virginia hospitals and health systems:

**VHHA, Hospital Leaders Meet with Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin**

- This week, officials from VHHA and leaders from several member health systems – **Ballad Health, Bon Secours, Carilion Clinic, Centra, HCA Virginia, Inova, and Valley Health** – met with **Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin** for a discussion of key health care fiscal and policy issues.

### **DMAS Holds Medicaid External Finance Review Committee Meeting**

- VHHA staff monitored a recent meeting of the **Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services' (DMAS) External Finance Review Committee (EFRC)**, which meets three times each fiscal year to provide updates on material differences in expenditures compared to the official Medicaid forecast to determine the program's financial status. Among the updates provided at the latest meeting, DMAS provided updates on term letters sent to MCOs whose new contracts will be effective July 1, and that Medicaid expenditures through the third quarter of the state fiscal year are at 79 percent of the total remaining Medicaid appropriation.

### **VHHA Hosts Rural Health Task Force Meeting**

- This week, VHHA held a meeting of the **Rural Health Task Force** to provide an overview of recent legislative developments with implications for rural health delivery, updates on rural health transportation considerations, and maternal health initiatives in rural communities. Contact Dave Nutter at [dnutter@vhha.com](mailto:dnutter@vhha.com) with questions about the Task Force.

### **Registration Open for VHHA-IHI Open School Quality and Patient Safety Certificate Program**

- Registration is open for the latest cohort of the [IHI Open School](#) Certificate Program in Quality and Patient Safety offered by the **VHHA Center for Healthcare Excellence**. Since the first offering in 2021, hundreds of participants have completed the 13 required courses and have been recognized at the annual **Virginia Patient Safety Summit**. Now in its fourth year, Virginia health care professionals looking to gain quality and patient safety improvement knowledge are invited to register to join the IHI Open School courses to earn a certificate in quality and safety. Content is delivered through narrative, video, and interactive discussion. There are 13 core courses to earn Basic Quality and Safety Certificate (17.75 CE credits available for the 13 courses) and [more than 30 courses](#) available in total for Continuing Education and Specialty Board Certification. The courses offer a dynamic learning environment for health care professionals of all levels and are available as self-paced online modules that are estimated to take 13-22 hours to complete. Those who register will be contacted by e-mail before June 1, 2025, with instructions about how to log in. Participants will have access to all courses from June 1, 2025-May 30, 2026. Those who complete the certificate by Jan. 31, 2026 will be recognized during the 2026 Virginia Patient Safety Summit. The VHHA group rate cost to enroll is \$199 (\$399 without the group rate). Team members from Virginia rural hospitals participating in the Flex grant are encouraged to contact [rpryor@vhha.com](mailto:rpryor@vhha.com) for pre-approval before registering. Questions can also be directed to [kburnette@vhha.com](mailto:kburnette@vhha.com). Register to participate through this [link](#).

## **News Updates**

### **Virginia Documents First Confirmed Measles Case of 2025, U.S. Hits 800 Cases**

The **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) recently reported the first measles case of the year in the Commonwealth, which involves a young patient (0-4 years) in the Northwest Region who recently traveled internationally. In connection to this case, VDH indicates there are two potential exposures sites the public should be aware of: the Kaiser Permanente Caton Hill Medical Center Advanced Urgent Care at 13285 Minnieville Road in Woodbridge on April 15 from 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.; and the Kaiser Permanente Fredericksburg Medical Center Pediatrics Department at 1201 Hospital Drive in Fredericksburg on April 16 from noon-5 p.m. Individuals who were at either location on those dates and times are advised that if they haven't received a measles vaccines, they may be at risk of developing measles and should immediately contact their health care provider. Those individuals should watch for symptoms for 21 days and contact a provider if symptoms develop. Measles is a highly contagious illness that can spread by airborne means. Its symptoms usually appear in two stages: first, an infected person may develop a fever of greater than 101 degrees and experience a runny nose, watery red eyes, and a cough from 7-14 days after being exposed; second is the appearance of a skin rash that can start 3-5 days after symptoms begin. People with measles are contagious from four days before the rash appears through four days after the rash appears. Read more [here](#). In related news, the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) recently disclosed that [800 total confirmed cases of measles have been reported](#) in 25 jurisdictions: Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York City, New York State, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, and Washington. That list does not include the recently confirmed Virginia case.

#### **U.S. Commerce Department Accepting Public Comments on Imported Pharmaceuticals Investigation**

The **U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security** (BIS) has initiated an investigation to determine the effects on the national security of imports of pharmaceuticals and pharmaceutical ingredients, including finished drug products, medical countermeasures, critical inputs such as active pharmaceutical ingredients, and key starting materials, and derivative products of those items. Interested parties are invited to submit written comments, data, analyses, or information pertinent to this investigation to the BIS Office of Strategic Industries and Economic Security by May 7. Read more [here](#).

#### **Published Reports Highlight Purported Plan for HHS Reorganization, Cuts**

News outlets including [Inside Medicine](#) and the [Washington Post](#) recently published articles about a pre-decision memo regarding a 2026 discretionary budget proposal for the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) that contemplates funding cuts that could impact a wide range of programs and agencies. HHS previously announced plans to pull back \$11.4 billion in COVID-related funding that had flowed to state and local public health departments through the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC), as well as 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](#).

#### **CMS Proposes IPPS, LTCH, IRF, IPF, SNF Payment Rules for 2026**

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently issued a series of proposed payment rules for fiscal year (FY) 2026. The Medicare inpatient prospective payment system (IPPS) [proposed rule](#) would increase IPPS rates by a net 2.4 percent, reflecting a hospital market basket increase of 3.2 percent as well as a productivity cut of 0.8 percent. The LTCH [proposed rule](#) would increase standard

rate payments by 2.2 percent, which includes a 3.4 percent market basket update reduced by a 0.8 percentage point productivity adjustment. The IRF [proposed rule](#) would increase payments by 2.6 percent, which includes a 3.4 percent market basket update reduced by a 0.8 percentage point productivity adjustment. The IPF [proposed rule](#) would increase payment by a net 2.4 percent (or \$70 million), reflecting a proposed market-basket update of 3.2 percent minus a productivity adjustment of 0.8 percentage points. And the SNF [proposed rule](#) would increase aggregate payments by 2.8 percent, which reflects a 3.0 percent market basket update, a 0.8 percentage point cut for productivity, and an increase of 0.6 percentage points for the market basket forecast error for FY 2024. June 10 is the public comment deadline. Included in the proposed rule is a request for information seeking public CMS, is including in the proposed rule a Request for Information seeking public input on approaches to streamline regulations and reduce burdens on those participating in the Medicare program. Comments may be submitted through this [link](#).

### **White House Issues Executive Order on Prescription Drug Prices**

The **White House** recently issued an [executive order](#) focused on reducing prescription drug prices. The order directs the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) to ensure grants to federally funded health centers are contingent on them offering insulin and injectable epinephrine at or below the discounted price paid by the health center grantee or sub-grantee under the 340B Prescription Drug Program to eligible patients. HHS is also tasked with evaluating and proposing regulations to ensure Medicare payments aren't encouraging a shift in drug administration volume away from physician office settings to hospital outpatient departments; conducting an acquisition cost survey for covered outpatient drugs at hospital outpatient departments and proposing adjustments consistent with budget neutrality provisions; and developing rulemaking within 60 days for a new payment model for high-cost prescription drugs.

## **Events**

### **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](#) and view the program agenda [here](#).

### **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 on 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 May 6 Webinar from AblePay on Addressing Health Care Affordability Gap

[AblePay Health](#), a [VHHA Solutions](#) endorsed partner, is hosting a webinar on May 6 at noon focused on how providers across the nation are addressing the health care affordability gap for organizations and patients. This presentation will showcase how the AblePay solution can boost revenue while enhancing overall patient experience. Real-world provider case studies offer valuable insights into how this program positively transforms patient payment behavior. Register for the webinar [here](#).

## Register for April 29 Webinar from ChartSpan on Discharge Management

[ChartSpan](#), a [VHHA Solutions](#) endorsed partner, is hosting a webinar on April 29 1 p.m. focused on how Advanced Primary Care Management discharge management works and impacts patient readmissions. Advanced Primary Care Management (APCM) brings new elements to care management, including discharge management, an APCM service component that takes the place of Transitional Care Management for APCM-enrolled patients. The webinar will cover topics including discharge management requirements, how it differs from Transitional Care Management, and starting to offer discharge services within APCM. By supporting patients when they leave the hospital or ER, discharge management can improve patient outcomes—but only when implemented correctly. Register for the webinar [here](#).

## Podcast

### VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features VCU Health Physician, Liver Disease Specialist

This episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Juan Pablo Arab**, a transplant hepatologist and Director of Alcohol Science with the Stravitz-Sanyal Institute for Liver Disease at **VCU Health**. This conversation covers liver health, insights gleaned from recent research into U.S. liver disease prevalence, the impact of early screening and targeted intervention, 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](#), [Tuneln](#), [SoundCloud](#), [Blubrry](#), [iHeart Radio](#), [Deezer](#), [Podbay](#), [Pocket Casts](#), the [Virginia Audio Collective](#), and the [World 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](mailto:pcfpodcast@vhha.com).



## Around the State

**Amy Ellis Hauser**, CFRE, has been named President of the **VHC Health Foundation** and Senior Vice President of **VHC Health**. Her most recent roles include serving as Chief Philanthropy Officer at Conquer Cancer, the ASCO Foundation, and Associate Vice President at **Children’s National Hospital**. She holds a master’s of arts degree from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Read more [here](#).



**UVA Health** has named **Mark T. Esser**, PhD, to lead the upcoming Paul and Diane Manning Institute of Biotechnology. Esser comes to UVA from AstraZeneca, where he served as Vice President for Vaccines and Immune Therapies. He obtained his doctorate degree in microbiology from the UVA School of Medicine. Read more [here](#).

**Dr. Margaret Flather**, MD, will join the Center for Women’s Health at **Augusta Health** on June 30. She will continue to see patients at her current office in Augusta Health’s Medical Office Building until June 27. Read more [here](#).

