

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

VHHA Hosts In-Person Workforce Steering Committee Meeting

- This week, VHHA hosted an in-person meeting of the **Workforce Steering Committee** that focuses on health care workforce development, recruiting, and retention strategies. Virginia

state **Delegate Rodney Willett** of Henrico County attended the meeting and offered remarks on “Advancing Virginia Health Workforce Priorities.” Willett is the Chair of several key legislative panels including the **Joint Commission on Health Care**, the **Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority**, and the **House Select Committee on Advancing Rural and Small Town Health Care**. Other topics covered during the meeting included current workforce challenges and opportunities, workforce legislative strategy, and more. View event photos [here](#). Contact **Sharon Alexander** at salexander@vhha.com for more information about the Committee.

VHHA Hosts In-Person Workshop on Clinician Satisfaction, Patient Experience

- This week, VHHA hosted an in-person workshop called “Beyond Burnout: Bridging Patient Experience and Clinician Engagement for Sustainable Healthcare Excellence” at its offices in Glen Allen, VA. The workshop was facilitated by **Stacy Palmer**, Senior Vice President and COO at **The Beryl Institute**. Event programming focused on providing actionable insights about creating a culture that elevates patient and provider voices, mitigates burnout, and drives system-wide transformation. View event photos [here](#).

VHHA Data Analyses Show Rise in Hospitalizations for Patients Diagnosed with Depression, PTSD

- New analyses of Virginia inpatient hospital data show that the volume of patients with two distinct behavioral health diagnoses – depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – have progressively increased during the five-year period spanning 2020-2024. One analysis conducted by the **VHHA Data Analytics Team** shows that inpatient hospital admissions involving a patient with a depression diagnosis rose from 141,507 in 2020 to 178,000 in 2024, representing a nearly 26 percent increase over five years. Deeper analysis of the depression hospitalization data shows that a significant share of the growth in hospitalizations is concentrated in older adults. Over five years, Virginia inpatient hospital admissions involving a depression diagnosis in patients 60 and older rose from 59,077 in 2020 to 82,381 in 2024, a 39 percent increase. That subset of older adults (many of whom are Medicare eligible) in the data accounts for nearly 44 percent of the total Virginia hospital inpatient population with a depression diagnosis over the five-year period. A separate analysis of Virginia inpatient hospital data shows that PTSD diagnoses have increased from 17,726 in 2020 to 25,731 in 2024, a 45 percent rate of growth over five years. Both analyses are based on a review of the Virginia hospital inpatient database. Records analyzed involve those in which inpatients who received hospital care had a documented diagnostic code consistent with the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Chronic Conditions Data Warehouse** standards.

VHHA Seeks Hospital Staff Input in 2025 Member Feedback Survey

- The **2025 VHHA Member Feedback Survey** is an annual opportunity for individuals who work in VHHA member hospitals and health systems, as well as other stakeholders engaged with the Association, to share their insights and observations about the VHHA, its work, programming, and engagement activities. Survey responses help VHHA improve its service to members. Please take a moment to complete the survey and share feedback about VHHA [here](#).

VHHA Encourages Hospital Staff to Consider Applying for Sorensen Political Leaders Program

- As part of its active partnership with the **Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership** at the **University of Virginia**, VHHA encourages hospital staff and leaders to apply for the 2026 Political Leader Program. Applications are being accepted until Nov. 12. The 2026 cohort program will run from March-December. Visit this [link](#) for more information and to access the program application. In 2020, VHHA [entered into a partnership with Sorensen](#) to support its programming and help identify health care leaders who are strong candidates for the Political Leaders Program. The program draws applicants from across the state and it focuses on Virginia politics and governing, policy issues and solutions, regional needs, ethical servant leadership, and efforts to unite the Commonwealth. This program is primarily focused on individuals who are 10-plus years removed from college. Prospective program applicants from VHHA hospitals or health systems are encouraged to contact VHHA President and CEO **Sean T. Connaughton** at sconnaughton@vhha.com to discuss this opportunity and the ways in which VHHA can support applicants.

VHHA Issues Call for 2026 Patient Safety Summit Poster Abstract Submissions

- Ahead of the **2026 Virginia Patient Safety Summit**, VHHA invites staff from member hospitals and health systems to submit poster abstracts showcasing evidence-based quality and safety improvement projects. Submitted abstracts topics may include patient safety, quality improvement, and safety culture; care coordination, patient experience and patient-family engagement; population and community health; and workforce safety and well-being. Abstracts should be 400 words or less and should include tables, graphs, control charts, process maps, or key program drivers. Abstracts should contain data – those that don't will be excluded from consideration – and describe the problem, the intervention, results, and conclusions. The authors of selected abstracts will have the opportunity to record a video slide presentation with VHHA prior to the Summit and those videos will be shared on the online conference platform for attendees to view on-demand during the 2026 Patient Safety Summit, whose theme is "Safe Care, Every Step of the Way: Advancing a Culture of Safety in Healthcare." Submissions will be accepted from Oct. 6, 2025 to Oct. 24, 2025. An e-mail with a submission link will be distributed on Oct. 6. Contact Rachel Pryor at rpryor@vhha.com with questions.

Nominations Open for 2025 VHHA Outstanding Service Awards

- VHHA is accepting nominations for the **2025 VHHA Outstanding Service Awards**. The awards recognize individuals who have made a real difference to Virginia's hospitals and health systems, and to health care in general through selfless, energetic, and passionate service. Awards are presented in the following categories: the Distinguished Service Award (given to past or present chief executive officers), the Meritorious Service Award (given to non-CEO health care leaders), and the Excellence in Governance Award (given to members of hospital or health system governing bodies). Each award recognizes those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to contribute to Virginia's hospitals and health systems. The deadline to submit nomination materials is Sept. 26. The nomination form with submission instructions can be accessed through this [link](#). Read more about VHHA awards and see lists of past recipients [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 the [Henrico Citizen](#), the [Virginia Star](#), [WHSV](#), [News Break](#), [WWBT](#), and [WVIR](#).

News Updates

Application Period Open for Federal Rural Health Transformation Program State Funding Requests

This week, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** [announced](#) the opening of the [application period](#) for state funding proposals through the Rural Health Transformation Program created under H.R. 1, the budget reconciliation legislation known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. The program is seeded with \$50 billion in funding that will be disbursed to states in \$10 billion annual increments from fiscal year 2026 through fiscal year 2030. The intent of the funding is to mitigate the impact of Medicaid spending reductions in rural areas. States must apply, and be approved, for program funding. Half of the program funds will be distributed equally among approved states. The other half is competitive and will be allocated by CMS based on several factors. VHHA has actively worked with member hospitals and health systems to identify innovative proposals that align with the principles of the Rural Health Transformation Program. The Association is also collaborating with the Administration of **Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin** as part of the state application submission process. Earlier this month, the Governor issued [Executive Directive 12](#) on the Rural Health Transformation Program that calls on key state officials to work with stakeholders such as health care providers to leverage funding acquired to “support quality access to health care in rural Virginia.” State agencies including the **Office of Health and Human Resources Secretary**, the **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**, and the **Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)** are collaborating on the state’s rural health transformation strategy. The federal deadline for state application submissions is Nov. 5.

FTC Sends Non-Compete Contract Letters to Health Care Organizations

The **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** recently [sent letters](#) to large health care employers and staffing firms that advise them to review employment agreements – including any non-compete agreements – to ensure they are compliant with the law. The letters come after the FTC recently [voted in favor of a planned course of action to vacate](#) a previous 2024 non-compete [final rule](#) banning arrangements prohibiting workers from pursuing employment after a contract with an employer ends. The Commission also took steps to halt litigation pertaining to the rule. In a related development, the FTC recently issued a request for public comment to assess the scope and extent of “employer noncompete agreements, as well as to gather information to inform possible future enforcement actions.” The current public comment deadline is Nov. 3. Read more [here](#).

VHCF Announces New Maternal Health Initiative: ‘It Takes a Village’

The **Virginia Health Care Foundation (VHCF)** recently [announced](#) the launch of a new maternal health program designed to bridge gaps in mental health care for moms across the Commonwealth. The [‘It Takes a Village’](#) initiative exists to facilitate support for mothers by partnering with behavioral health providers to offer telehealth and in-person counseling to pregnant or postpartum mothers experiencing persistent feelings of sadness, anxiety, loneliness, hopelessness, or confusion. The program partners with participating organizations to help moms in need find counseling services.

Virginia DEQ Shares Guidance on Regulated Medical Waste Packaging and Labeling

The **Virginia Department of Environmental Quality** (DEQ) has shared compliance assistance [guidance](#) regarding the Commonwealth's [medical waste management regulations](#). The regulations took effect in March 2023 and were [updated](#) through an [amendment](#) this year. The regulations apply to all generators of medical waste who are subject to requirements for general handling, packaging, labeling, storage, reusable container cleaning, spill cleanup, disposal, and recordkeeping. View more information [here](#).

CDC Vaccine Advisory Panel Meets to Consider Revised Immunization Recommendations

This week, the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) **Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices** (ACIP) met on [Sept. 18-19, 2025](#) to consider updated immunization schedule recommendations. According to [published reports](#), the panel voted “to no longer recommend the combined measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (MMRV) vaccine before 4 years of age” and “against approving the updated Vaccines for Children (VFC) resolution for the MMRV vaccine.” The latter decision may indicate the MMRV vaccine could continue to be covered under the VFC program for children under 4, though that was not immediately clear after the vote. Other ACIP decisions related to vaccines for hepatitis B and COVID-19 had not yet occurred as of Friday morning. In a related development, the **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) issued an early September [statement](#) advising pharmacists that they may administer the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine two ways: “under the direct authorization of a medical provider” or “following the Virginia Board of Pharmacy’s statewide pharmacy protocols.” That statement was issued prior to this week’s ACIP meeting, meaning state guidance may be subsequently updated. In other news, **U.S. Health and Human Services** (HHS) **Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.** previously [announced](#) that the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) has approved a new round of COVID-19 vaccine doses for this season for more limited use – specifically among adults 65 and older, children, and adults with a medical condition that puts them at risk for serious illness. Kennedy also said the vaccines would be “available for all patients who choose them after consulting with their doctors.” In the past, CDC has broadly recommended COVID shots for people six months and older.

Events

Register for VHHA 2025 Virginia Behavioral Health Summit on Sept. 25

Register now for the **2025 Virginia Behavioral Health Summit** scheduled for Sept. 25 as an in-person event at The Westin – Richmond. “Community: Building an Accessible System of Care Across the Continuum” is the theme for the event that 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. The Summit programming lineup includes keynote remarks on compassionate behavioral health and addiction care as well as sessions on emergency department innovations in behavioral health access, the role of AI in enhancing care, crisis services, autism care, primary care integration, employee engagement, and law enforcement community relationships. View the program agenda [here](#) and register through this [link](#).

Register for Sept. 19 Webinar on ‘Locums with Purpose: Shifting Strategy and Controlling Costs’

Register for an upcoming webinar featuring [VHHA Solutions](#) endorsed partner, [Qualivis](#), that will explore how locum tenens can be used as a strategic lever for financial and clinical stability during a time of heightened economic pressure. The webinar is scheduled for today (Friday, Sept. 19) at noon. Register through this [link](#).

Premier to Host Sept. 19 Webinar on Health System Resilience

VHHA Solutions endorsed partner **Premier** is hosting a webinar today (Friday, Sept. 19) to present hospital leaders with revenue resilience, smarter consolidation, and targeted growth strategies for adapting to H.R. 1 (One Big Beautiful Bill Act) and related developments including Medicaid funding cuts, expiring ACA subsidies, and rising uninsured rates that drive uncompensated care, margin erosion, and service line consolidation. The webinar is scheduled for Sept. 19 at 11 a.m. Register through this [link](#).

Register for APIC-VA Educational Conference Oct. 1-2

The **Virginia Chapter of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology** (APIC-VA) is hosting its 50th annual conference Oct. 1-2 at the Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa Short Pump. APIC-VA members include nurses, physicians, technologists, public health administrators, military personnel, and others involved in infection control and epidemiology. It is a multi-disciplinary voluntary organization committed to mentorship of members, support of best practices, and ultimately, improvement of the quality of health care throughout the continuum of varied practices. Learn more about the organization [here](#) and view the conference program agenda as well as exhibitor and registration information through this [link](#).

Register for the VONL Virtual Fall Conference on Oct. 3

Nurse leaders from across the Commonwealth are coming together for the virtual **VONL Fall Conference** scheduled for Oct. 3 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. The theme for the event is “Humanity and Innovation – Leading the Future of Compassionate, Accountable Care.” The theme represents a concept at the heart of modern nursing leadership – balancing cutting-edge innovation with the timeless commitment to compassionate care. The conference is being hosted as a virtual event with the intent of expanding access to nurse leaders for whom travel and time commitments associated with in-person events can be an impediment to participation. Register through this [link](#) and contact VONLstaff@gmail.com with any event questions.

Podcast

VHHA Podcast Features Candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General

As Virginians prepare to head to the polls this fall to vote for the Commonwealth’s next Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Attorney General, the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA) is sharing a new series of recorded podcast interviews with the major party nominees for those offices. VHHA’s *Patients Come First* podcast series is releasing a series of individual interviews recorded with Virginia Lieutenant Governor [Winsome Earle-Sears](#) (the Republican nominee for Governor), former Congresswoman [Abigail Spanberger](#) (the Democratic nominee for Governor), state Senator [Ghazala Hashmi](#) (the Democratic nominee for Lieutenant Governor), businessman and broadcaster [John Reid](#) (the Republican nominee for Lieutenant Governor), former state Delegate [Jay Jones](#) (the Democratic

nominee for Attorney General), and Virginia Attorney General [Jason Miyares](#) (the Republican nominee for Attorney General). Podcast episodes can be accessed through the links above or the linked episode graphics below. Read more about this series [here](#). 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](#), [Pocket Casts](#), the [Virginia Audio Collective](#), and the [World Podcast Network](#). The podcast can also be heard on the radio airwaves – episodes air Sundays 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. Send questions, comments, feedback, or guest suggestions to pcfpodcast@vhha.com.



Around the State



The **University of Virginia** has appointed **Dr. Mitchell Rosner, MD**, to a three-year term as UVA's Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and Chief Executive Officer of **UVA Health**. Dr. Rosner had been serving in an interim leadership capacity for seven months until being named to the position during a recent meeting of the UVA Board of Visitors. His appointment was endorsed by more than two dozen chairs and leaders at UVA Health in a letter sent to the UVA rector and interim president. Dr.

Rosner has been a faculty member at the UVA School of Medicine for 21 years and served as chair of the Department of Medicine before being selected to lead the health system. He earned an undergraduate degree from Harvard University and his medical degree from the Medical College of Georgia. He

completed his residency and fellowship in nephrology at **UVA Health University Medical Center**. He has published seven books and more than 200 journal articles. Read more [here](#).

Steve Arner, President and CEO of **Carilion Clinic** and a member of the **VHHA Board of Directors**, and **Dr. Marlon F. Levy, MD**, CEO of **VCU Health System** and Senior Vice President for **VCU Health Sciences**, have been named to the *Becker's Hospital Review* list of 95 academic medical center CEOs to know. Read more [here](#).

