

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 Successful 2025 Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Leaders Summit

- This week, VHHA hosted the **2025 Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Leaders Summit** from Nov. 5-7, 2025 at the Omni Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, VA. “Insight. Innovation. Impact.” was the theme of the Summit presented by the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)** and the **VHHA Foundation**. Summit program highlights included keynote remarks from *National Journal* Editor-in-Chief **Jeff Dufour**, who provided an overview of the national political landscape in the wake of Virginia’s statewide election and examine the broader forces shaping Washington and its approach to health policy; **NextMed Health** Founder and Chair **Dr. Daniel Kraft**, whose remarks focused on how advances in technology including AI, virtual reality, and robotics are transforming the landscape of biomedicine; and **Phlow Corp.** Co-Founder and CEO **Dr. Eric Edwards**, who shared how healthcare leaders can catalyze innovation, lessons from Phlow’s pioneering model, and strategies to build a more resilient healthcare ecosystem. Additional Summit program highlights included a panel discussion on the work to make Virginia the healthiest state in the nation, updates from VHHA affiliates VHHA Solutions and VHHA Foundation, and a presentation recognizing **American College of Healthcare Executives** award recipients. During the Summit, a ceremony was held to honor 2025 VHHA Outstanding Service Award recipients during a luncheon event presented with support from Dominion Energy. **Augusta Health** President and CEO **Mary N. Mannix** served as master of ceremonies for the awards luncheon honoring the following leaders: **Valley Health** Chief Human Resources Officer (retired) **Elizabeth Savage** (Meritorious Service Award); **VHC Health** Chief of Medical Imaging **Dr. Russell McWey**, a member of the VHC Health Board of Directors (Meritorious Service Award); **Ballad Health** Board of Directors member **David Lester** (Excellence in Governance Award); and **Qualivis** President Emeritus **Sherry Kolb** (Excellence in Partnership Award). VHHA extends its thanks to these generous Summit sponsors: [Premier](#), [Qualivis](#) (Elite Industry Partners); [Dominion Energy](#), [McKesson](#), [RCM&D](#), [VHHA Solutions](#) (Specialty Sponsors); [Bank of America](#), [Truist](#) (Platinum Sponsors); [Acemapp](#), [AHAPAC](#), [ApolloMD](#), [ChartSpan](#), [Hancock Daniel](#), [KII Consulting, Inc.](#), [Loyal](#), [Martti](#), [Meadows & Ohly](#), [Mid-Atlantic CMS QIN-QIO \(Region 2\)](#), [SCP Health](#), [Stryker](#), [US Acute Care Solutions](#), [VCU College of Health Professions](#), [Virginia Rural Health Association](#), [Vituity](#), [W.M. Jordan Company](#), [WittKieffer](#) (Exhibiting Sponsors); and [Andor](#), [Troutman Strategies](#), [Whitecoat](#), and [Wize Solutions](#) (Supporting Sponsors). View the Summit program brochure [here](#) and see more information about the Summit agenda, speakers, and sponsors through this [link](#). View the awards luncheon program [here](#) and read more about the VHHA Outstanding Service Awards, including past winners, through this [link](#). Read more about the event [here](#) and view a Summit photo gallery through this [link](#).

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

- As part of its 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 Leaders Program. Applications are being accepted until Dec. 5 under an [extended deadline](#). 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 professionals who are strong candidates for the Political Leaders Program. The program draws applicants from across the state and 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 member 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 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 is reflected in recent coverage from the [340B Report](#), [Blue Virginia](#), [Virginia Business](#), and the [Virginia Star](#).

News Updates

Virginia Voters Elects First Woman Governor, New LG, AG, and State Delegates

This week, Virginia voters elected **Abigail Spanberger**, a former Congresswoman and CIA officer, as the next Governor of the Commonwealth for a four-year term beginning in January 2026. Spanberger, a Democrat, defeated her Republican rival, **Lieutenant Governor Winsome Earle-Sears**, by more than 14 points, according to [unofficial results](#). The gubernatorial contest was one of three statewide races on the November ballot. Democrats swept all three races. In the race for lieutenant governor, state **Senator Ghazala Hashmi** (D) defeated businessman and radio personality **John Reid** (R) by more than 10 points. And in the attorney general election, incumbent **Attorney General Jason Miyares** (R) was defeated by former state **Delegate Jay Jones** (D) by more than 5 points. Also on the ballot were all 100 seats in the **Virginia House of Delegates**, the lower chamber in the **Virginia General Assembly**. Prior to the election, Democrats held a narrow 51 seat advantage in the state House where members are elected to two-year terms. [Unofficial results](#) indicate Democrats gained 13 seats in the election, resulting in a 64-36 partisan split in the state House when newly elected lawmakers begin their terms in January. One of the things that may confront them in the near term is a [reported](#) need for “a record \$3.2 billion increase in state funding for Medicaid over three years and an additional \$964 million to support K-12 public education . . . amid rising costs and economic uncertainty.” A recent state Medicaid forecast projects Medicaid cost increases of \$410 million in the current fiscal year and nearly \$2.8 billion over the following two-year state budget cycle. Those projections follow the July passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act that includes Medicaid policy and funding changes that many forecasts suggest will lead to significant health coverage losses and sharp health funding reductions, which would have implications for state budgets and hospital operations.

Deadline Arrives for State Funding Submissions Under Rural Health Transformation Program

This week (Nov. 5) marked the deadline for state governments to submit funding proposal [applications](#) to the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) for financial support through the [Rural Health Transformation Program](#) created under H.R. 1, the budget reconciliation legislation known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA). 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. 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. Earlier this year, VHHA 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 also collaborated with the Administration of **Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin** as part of the state application submission process. CMS, which [announced](#) that all 50 states submitted funding applications, is expected to identify funding recipients by the end of the year.

CMS Issues CY 2026 Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently issued the calendar year (CY) 2026 physician fee schedule final rule that includes changes to Medicare Part B payment policies as well as new policies for: the Medicare Prescription Drug Inflation Rebate Program under the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022; the Ambulatory Specialty Model; updates to the Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program expanded model; updates to drugs and biological products paid under Part B; Medicare Shared Savings Program requirements; updates to the Quality Payment Program; updates to policies for Rural Health Clinics and Federally Qualified Health Centers; update to the Ambulance Fee Schedule regulations; codification of the Inflation Reduction Act and Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 provisions; updates to the Medicare Promoting Interoperability Program. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

White House Announces GLP-1 Deals, Several Drug Makers Selected for HRSA 340B Pilot Program

This week, the **White House** [announced](#) deals with two pharmaceutical companies on lowering the cost of several popular drugs including medicines that aid in weight loss. The deals with **Eli Lilly and Company** and **Novo Nordisk** are intended to significantly reduce prices for drugs indicated in the treatment of conditions including diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. The price reductions under this deal would apply to drugs including Ozempic, Wegovy, Zepbound, and Orforglipron. The deal is also said to enable Medicare and Medicaid to cover obesity drugs for adults at dramatically lower costs. It comes after **U.S. President Donald Trump** previously [announced](#) deals with pharmaceutical maker **AstraZeneca** to provide state Medicaid programs with most-favored-nation (MFN) pricing and discounted prices when selling medication directly to American patients, and **EMD Serono**, a leading maker of in vitro fertilization fertility treatments to [provide MFN pricing](#) to American women. The President has also made a deal with **Pfizer** on a MFN [agreement](#). And the **Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of American** (PhRMA) [announced](#) new domestic infrastructure investment, financial assistance supports for patients, and a new [website](#) to connect patients with manufacturer direct purchase programs. Those developments occurred after the President warned drug makers in a [social media post](#) that his Administration would impose significant tariffs on those that didn't pledge to build pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity in the U.S. as well as the issuance of an [executive order](#) on lowering drug prices. In another development, the federal **Health Resources & Services Administration** (HRSA) recently announced that a small group of drug manufacturers has been selected for the 340B Rebate Model Pilot Program. The 340B Rebate Model Pilot Program consists of a small group of drug manufacturers who have submitted plans meeting specific criteria that HRSA has approved. Eight drug plans have been approved for participation. The Pilot Program will help to inform the development of a process for approving future models that are consistent with the 340B statute and the Administration's goals. Under the 340B Rebate Model Pilot Program, covered entities must continue to make purchases through their 340B wholesaler account and ensure they are only requesting rebates on the drugs dispensed to 340B eligible patients after a purchase is made. Read more [here](#).

CFPB Indicates Federal Law Preempts State Law Regarding Medical Debt Inclusion on Credit Reports

Recent [guidance](#) from the federal **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau** (CFPB) indicates that the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) "generally preempts state laws that touch on broad areas of credit reporting." This clarification follows action from May 2025 when CFPB withdrew a previous July 2022 interpretive rule that allowed for "substantial state regulation of consumer reports and consumer

reporting agencies.” Under the new guidance, medical debt can be included on credit reports for individuals even in states with laws that restrict the inclusion of that information in credit reports.

ACA Marketplace Health Plan Enrollment Period for 2026 Coverage Now Open to the Public

The [open enrollment period](#) for people to purchase 2026 health coverage plans on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) health insurance marketplace recently began and continues until Jan. 15, 2026. In 2025, nearly 389,000 Virginians enrolled in coverage through [Virginia’s Insurance Marketplace](#). What is different about this cycle is that the enrollment period is two weeks shorter than last year and fewer people may have access to financial support that helps subsidize the cost of purchasing coverage. For the past several years, enhanced premium tax credits (EPTC) approved by Congress have helped qualified individuals purchase coverage on the marketplace. Those EPTCs are set to expire at the end of this year if Congress doesn’t extend them. Anticipating EPTC expiration, health insurance companies that offer marketplace plans have proposed rate increases for plan year 2026 in Virginia and beyond. In August, the **Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC)** [announced](#) that many health insurers offering individual and small group coverage marketplace plans have requested rate increases, with many proposing average increases of 20 percent or more. It has been projected that as many as one-fourth of the Virginians who now have marketplace plans could lose coverage if the enhanced premium tax credits expire. Nationally, an [analysis](#) by Peterson-KFF showed that “across 312 insurers participating in the ACA Marketplaces from the 50 states and the District of Columbia” there is “a median proposed premium increase of 18 percent.” The study indicates that is a sharp increase from last year and “the largest rate change insurers have requested since 2018.” The SCC also noted that insurers requested an average 11.2 percent rate increase for small group rates in 2026. A debate between Democrats and Republicans in Congress over EPTC extension is one of the issues that remains in contention as part of the ongoing federal government shutdown that began Oct. 1.

Medicare Annual Enrollment Period Active Through Dec. 7

The [Medicare open enrollment period](#) for 2026 recently began and continues through Dec. 7. During this period, eligible individuals can enroll or disenroll from Medicare Advantage plans, change drug plans, and more. Earlier this year, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** [indicated](#) that it anticipates premium and drug plan cost stability for 2026 coverage. In 2025, [CMS data](#) shows that of the 69 million Americans enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B, about 51 percent were in Medicare Advantage plans. VHHA has additional information about Medicare on its website, including official government documentation, and educational resources on plan feature comparison charts, frequently asked questions, and more. Visit this [link](#) to learn more and access the available resources.

Events

VHHA to Host Nov. 18 ‘Earn While You Learn’ In-Person Workshop for Virginia Hospitals

Hospitals seeking to fill allied health vacancies are encouraged to participate in an upcoming workshop whose programming is focused on supporting hospitals in meeting evolving workforce needs through the innovative “Earn While You Learn” model. During the workshop, representatives from the **UVA Health** “Earn While You Learn” team will deliver a presentation about their program designed to help fill a range of health care roles from entry-level support positions to advanced clinical pathways, including allied health positions. Workshop participants will learn how that model can be adapted and applied by

other organizations in a tailored way to meet specific workforce needs. The in-person workshop is scheduled for Nov. 18 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at VHHA offices in Glen Allen, VA. Visit this [link](#) to register. Contact VHHA Director of Workforce Initiatives **Sharon Alexander** at salexander@vhha.com with any questions.

VAFCC to Host 2025 Annual Conference Nov. 16-18 in Roanoke

The **Virginia Association of Free & Charitable Clinics (VAFCC)** is scheduled to host its 2025 Annual Conference from Nov. 16-18 in Roanoke, VA. The conference theme is “Sustaining Care in Turbulent Times: Bolstering the Healthcare Safety Net” and the event will focus on equipping free and charitable clinics with the tools, insights, and partners needed to build long-term financial and operational sustainability. That includes putting a spotlight on strategies and practices that fuel clinic growth, empowering them to move beyond survival and toward long-term impact despite rising demand and limited resources. Registration is open through Nov. 3. Learn more through this [link](#).

Podcast

VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Chesapeake Regional Trauma Center Physician Leader

This episode of VHHA’s *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Martin O’Grady**, Medical Director of the Trauma Center at **Chesapeake Regional Medical Center**, for a conversation about the hospital recently earning a Provisional Level III Trauma Center Designation from the state, the work that went into that, and what that means for patient care. 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](#), [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



Talreja

Dr. Deepak Talreja, Clinical Chief of Cardiology for **Sentara Health** and the Director of the Cardiovascular Division at **Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital**, has been named the John J. Krueger Foundation 2025 Physician of the Year. Dr. Talreja is also an associate professor at Eastern Virginia Medical School, has been published extensively in peer-reviewed journals, volunteers his time at the Beach Health Clinic as well as the Krueger Foundation, and shares countless hours with students considering a future in medicine. Read more [here](#).



Jones



Bolte



Hisaoka

Several leaders from **Inova** have been named to the [list](#) of “The 50 Most Influential People in Northern Virginia in 2025” by *Northern Virginia Magazine*. That includes Inova President and CEO **Dr. J. Stephen Jones**, MD, MBA, FACS; **Inova Health Foundation** Chief Philanthropy Officer and President **Sage Bolte**, PhD, LCSW, CST, FAOSW; and Inova Health Foundation Board of Trustees Chair **Robert G. Hisaoka**.



Cannon

Kelly Cannon, CEO of the **VHHA Foundation**, has been named one of six Co-Chairs for the Transition Team of **Virginia Governor-elect Abigail Spanberger**. Cannon is an accomplished nonprofit executive and public policy leader with extensive experience advancing health equity and community wellbeing across Virginia. In her role with the VHHA Foundation, she oversees statewide initiatives that strengthen healthcare access, workforce development, and population health through collaboration among hospitals, policymakers, and community partners. Cannon is a graduate of the College of William & Mary and a Fellow of the University of Virginia’s Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership. She has been recognized by *STYLE Weekly* as a “Top 40 Under 40” honoree in recognition of her civic leadership, and she serves on the Children’s Health Insurance Program Advisory Council.