

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:

Virginia General Assembly 2026 Legislative Session Commences, Inauguration Forthcoming

- The **Virginia General Assembly** 2026 legislative regular session commenced this week and is scheduled for 60 days from Jan. 14-March 16. During that period, lawmakers will consider several thousand bills and are tasked with developing a new two-year state budget. This weekend (Saturday, Jan. 17), **Virginia Governor-Elect Abigail Spanberger, Virginia Lieutenant**

Governor-Elect Ghazala Hashmi, and **Virginia Attorney General-Elect Jay Jones** will be sworn in to serve four-year terms. The results of November's elections mean Democrats will control Virginia's executive and legislative branches, including a broadened majority in the **Virginia House of Delegates**. On the policy front, VHHA will monitor and engage on budget language and legislation of concern to hospital members. This includes the impact of the federal budget reconciliation package on healthcare funding, healthcare workforce development, insurance prior authorization reform, remote patient monitoring, site neutral payment policy, forensic nursing reimbursement, and much more. Throughout the session, the **VHHA Government Affairs Team** will be engaged in work at the State Capitol advocating for the interests of hospitals, health systems, the healthcare delivery system, public health, and patients. Click this [link](#) to view a video recap about the start of the legislative session featuring VHHA Vice President of Government Affairs **Julie Dime**.

VHHA Hosts Meeting of Board of Directors' Executive Committee

- This week, the **Executive Committee** of the **VHHA Board of Directors** met for a discussion about issues of interest and importance to hospitals and health systems, including operational considerations, state and federal policy issues, and the 2026 **Virginia General Assembly** session.

VHHA Hosts Meeting of Hospital Communications Officers Committee

- VHHA recently held a meeting of the **Virginia Hospital Communications Officers Committee**. The Committee is a forum for hospital communications and marketing leaders to discuss matters related to hospital perception management as well as communication and marketing strategy. Contact **Julian Walker** at jtwalker@vhha.com to inquire about the committee.

VHHA Invites Hospital Staff, Partners, Stakeholders to Jan. 28 Centennial Celebration in Richmond

- This year, the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association** (VHHA) is celebrating its centennial anniversary and 100 years of working alongside Virginia's hospitals, health systems, policymakers, and community leaders to advance healthcare across the Commonwealth. Throughout 2026, VHHA will honor and celebrate a century of impactful work during a series of events this year. This month, VHHA is hosting a celebration in Richmond to reflect on that legacy and look ahead to the future we're building together. The VHHA Centennial Celebration event is scheduled for Jan. 28 at 5 p.m. on the Carpenter Theatre Stage at the Dominion Energy Center in Richmond, VA. Please use this [link](#) to RSVP to attend the event by Jan. 20. Questions may be sent to centennial@vhha.com.

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 [WVEC](#), [Axios](#), the [Lynchburg News & Advance](#), [WDBJ](#), [WVIR](#), the [Virginia Mercury](#), [WWBT](#), [WTVR](#), [WCAV](#), the [Augusta Free Press](#), and the [Henrico Citizen](#).

News Updates

President Trump Calls on Congress to Approve Health Policy Plan on Drug, Insurance Costs

This week, **U.S. President Donald J. Trump** challenged the **U.S. Congress** to enact his [“Great Healthcare Plan”](#) policy framework that the **White House** described as focusing on lower drug prices, lower insurance premiums, insurance company accountability, and price transparency. It includes a call to codify the most-favored-nation (MFN) prescription drug pricing model championed by the President, a cost-sharing reduction program for health insurance plans intended to benefit taxpayers as well as reforms that apply to pharmacy benefit managers (PBM), requirements on health insurers to post online information about rate and coverage comparisons in understandable language as well as revenues paid for claims versus operational costs, profits, and claim rejection rates. For health providers and insurers that accept Medicaid and Medicare, the this plan would require them to prominently post price and fee information at their facilities. Read more about the President’s plan [here](#).

Hampton Roads and Central Virginia Health Systems Share Flu Messaging

Faced with rising cases of influenza and respiratory illness leading to growing demand for hospital services, health systems in Hampton Roads and Central Virginia recently shared public messaging offering timely public health and safety guidance. The messaging included guidance on mask wearing when visiting healthcare facilities for respiratory illness care and personal safety precautions people can take in an effort to reduce the risk of contracting an illness. The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) recently [estimated](#) that through early January there have been at least 15 million illnesses, 180,000 hospitalizations, and 7,400 deaths from flu this season. The **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) this week [announced](#) the first pediatric flu death of the season involving a preschool aged child in the Commonwealth’s Eastern Region. Flu season typically spans the fall and winter months, with cases often peaking in winter. Common flu symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, chills, fatigue, and, in some cases, vomiting or diarrhea. If symptoms are not serious or life threatening, patients are encouraged to visit a primary care doctor or urgent care facility for treatment of flu and respiratory virus symptoms. Taking this approach can prevent unnecessary emergency room visits, which preserves capacity for patients with serious illness or injury. Patients and visitors experiencing flu-like symptoms are also encouraged to consider postponing non-essential visits to hospitalized loved ones when possible. Individuals infected with the flu can spread the virus before symptoms are fully apparent, making awareness and early precautions critical.

Virginia Among the States Taking Enforcement Action Against Fraudulent Nursing Licenses

State nursing licensure bodies across the nation, including the **Virginia Board of Nursing**, are taking enforcement action against individuals with fraudulent nursing diplomas under an ongoing multi-state initiative known as [Operation Nightingale](#). That effort is targeting educational programs and individuals alleged to have sold fake nursing diplomas and transcripts. According to state officials, Virginia has already adjudicated approximately 150-200 cases related to that scheme with roughly 50 additional cases presently under investigation. Many of the Virginia-based individuals implicated in this situation have worked in long-term care settings as licensed practical nurses, with many of the cases concentrated in Northern Virginia. Virginia hospital officials seeking more information about this developing situation can sign up for notifications through the **Virginia Department of Health Professions** (DHP) and subscribe to relevant services. VHHA will provide members the appropriate links for these services when they are furnished by DHP. The free [E-Notify](#) service from the **National Council of State Boards of Nursing** is also a relevant resource for hospitals.

VDH Accepting Public Comments on Update to Regulations for Durable Do Not Resuscitate Orders

The **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) is accepting public comments through Jan. 28 on proposed changes to state regulations pertaining to Durable Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) Orders. The regulatory action is being taken to ensure regulatory compliance with state law and conformity with the Virginia Administrative Code. The proposed changes are deemed non-controversial and are focused on updating the “clarity and consistency of the regulation” to “help ensure that health care personnel, emergency medical services providers, and residents of the Commonwealth can effectively access and understand the regulation governing DNRs.” Feb. 12 is the scheduled effective date of the updated regulations. Read more [here](#). Questions may be directed to **Mohamed G. Abbamin**, MPA, Senior Policy Analyst, Office of Emergency Services, Virginia Department of Health, at (804) 980-6984, or mohamed.abbamin@vdh.virginia.gov.

Events

Register for the 2026 Virginia Patient Safety Summit in February

Registration is open for the **2026 Virginia Patient Safety Summit**, which will be held as a virtual event on Feb. 26, 2026. The Summit will highlight innovative work in Virginia and across the nation to advance a culture of safety and continuous improvement in healthcare with a focus on how shared values and behaviors can minimize errors, improve outcomes, and enhance the overall quality and experience of care. Beginning in 2026, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) will require all U.S. hospitals participating in Medicare or Medicaid to attest to patient safety structural measures that assess strategies to strengthen systems for safety, including leadership commitment to eliminating preventable harm, supporting a culture of safety and learning in health systems, accountability and transparency, and patient and family engagement. Register through this [link](#). The **VHHA Center for Healthcare Excellence** is hosting this event in partnership with the **Virginia Nurses Association** and the **Virginia Nurses Foundation**, the **Medical Society of Virginia**, the **Virginia Pharmacists Association**, and the **Virginia Society of Health-System Pharmacists**.

VASHRM to Host Free Jan. 22 Webinar on Risk Management Tools for Event Analysis

The **Virginia Chapter of the American Society for Healthcare Risk Management** (VASHRM) is hosting a free webinar on Jan. 22 at noon on “Analyzing Events: Which Tool Is Best? RCA, ACA, or FME.” The webinar will feature Risk and Patient Safety Consultant **Anne Huben-Kearney**, BSN, MPA, DFASHRM, CPHRM, CPHQ. Continuing education credits for this event are pending. Register through this [link](#).

Register for Jan. 22 ChartSpan Webinar on Care Management Compliance Challenges

ChartSpan, a [VHHA Solutions](#) endorsed partner, is hosting a Jan. 22 webinar focused on overcoming common compliance challenges in care management programs. Webinar topics will include patient engagement requirements, staff licensure, visit timing, provider supervision, enrollment documentation, and more. Whether care is managed in-house or through a vendor, this session helps prepare participants for key hurdles and ensure reimbursement opportunities aren’t missed. Learn more and register [here](#).

DHS to Host Jan. 28-29 Webinars on Combatting Human Trafficking

During National Human Trafficking Prevention Month, the **U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)** is hosting a pair of free webinars offering tips on how to recognize and report potential human trafficking cases. The “From Awareness to Action: Recognizing and Reporting Human Trafficking” webinars are scheduled for Jan. 28 at 2:30 p.m. EST (English language presentation) and Jan. 29 at 2:30 p.m. EST (Spanish language presentation). Register for the English language webinar [here](#) and for the Spanish language presentation through this [link](#).

Podcast

VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Virginia General Assembly Legislative Preview

This episode of VHHA’s *Patients Come First* podcast features VHHA Vice President of Government Affairs **Julie Dime** for a conversation previewing the **Virginia General Assembly 2026** legislative session when the legislature will work with a new Governor to adopt a two-year state budget and deal with scores of other bills impacting healthcare 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](#), [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



Dr. Vanessa Blumer, MD, DACC, FHFSa, Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Cardiologist who serves as Associate Director of Heart Failure Research at **Inova Schar Heart and Vascular**, has received the Heart Failure Collaboratory Site-Based Research Top Principal Investigator Award. She previously worked as an Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Cardiology Fellow with Cleveland Clinic and Duke Clinical Research Institute. She served as an Internal Medicine Resident and Chief Resident at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and earned her doctorate in medicine degree at Universidad Central de Venezuela.

Bryce Burkett is the new Associate Vice President of Real Estate Services for **VCU Health**. In this position, Burkett works directly with the Real Estate Team and is responsible for the design and construction of capital projects for the health system. He began his new role on Jan. 5. Burkett is a healthcare real estate and construction leader and brings more than 15 years of experience in large, complex systems to VCU Health. He previously served as director of real estate services project management at Baylor Scott & White Health, overseeing a large territory across Central Texas and managing both internal and third-party project teams. His background spans general contracting and owner-side project management with deep healthcare expertise. Burkett earned a bachelor of science degree with a focus on construction management from the University of Houston and has been a national speaker on best practices in capital project budgeting and digital transformation in healthcare construction. Read more [here](#).



Brittany Poore, DNP, MHA, RN, NEA-BC, is the new Associate Vice President of Ambulatory Access and Innovation for **VCU Health**. Poore is a seasoned executive leader who served in the role temporarily and was promoted to the position on Dec. 21, 2025. Poore has been with VCU Health since 2019, serving in ambulatory and nursing leadership roles, including director of nursing for the **VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center**. Prior to joining VCU Health, she held a series of leadership roles at **Bon Secours Health System**. She earned her bachelor of science in nursing degree from the University of Virginia, her master of healthcare administration degree from Walden University, and her doctor of nursing practice degree from Baylor University. Read more [here](#).

Children's National Hospital, Inova Fairfax Hospital, and UVA Health have been named to the *Becker's Hospital Review* [list](#) of 100 great hospitals in America. These hospitals stand out for their exceptional clinical performance, unwavering focus on patient safety, and dedication to innovation, research and education. Their commitment to delivering outstanding patient experiences has earned them national recognition.