



# FYI Weekly

HEALTHCARE 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 Centennial Celebration and Board Meeting in Richmond, Unveils New Logo**

- This week, the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)** held a Centennial Celebration commemorating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary as the first event in a series of activities planned this year to recognize a century of service to the Commonwealth in support of hospitals and public health. The event was held on Wednesday, January 28 on the Carpenter Theatre Stage at the Dominion Energy Center and featured distinguished guests including **Virginia Lieutenant Governor Ghazala Hashmi**, **Virginia General Assembly** members, state officials, hospital and health system executives, and other stakeholders. View a photo gallery of images from the Centennial Celebration event [here](#). During the event, VHHA also unveiled its new logo and organizational colors – the mark incorporates a stylized design of Virginia, the VHHA acronym, and a color palette of blues commonly associated with hospitals. This updated imagery reflects the purpose and direction of the Association. It honors history while embracing a modern, forward-looking vision. The symbolic move of debuting a new logo helps mark the Association’s transition into a new century of service, advocacy, and partnership with hospitals and health systems across the Commonwealth in pursuit of a shared goal to make Virginia the healthiest state in the nation. View the new VHHA logo [here](#). The Virginia Hospital Association was established in 1926 by 13 hospital leaders with a common purpose “to promote the welfare of the people through the development of hospital and outpatient service.” VHHA continues that legacy today by working with 26 health systems representing 117 acute care, children’s, psychiatric, long-term care, rehabilitation, and specialty hospitals that provide essential medical care 24/7/365 to patients and families across Virginia. Recently, **U.S. Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan** of Richmond authored a [formal congressional record proclamation](#) recognizing VHHA’s centennial anniversary. Throughout this year, VHHA will celebrate its centennial anniversary and 100 years of working alongside Virginia’s hospitals, health systems, policymakers, and community leaders to advance healthcare across the Commonwealth. Read more [here](#). The **VHHA Board of Directors** also met this week in Richmond for a discussion of issues of concern to hospitals and health systems.

### **Bills to Ban Weapons in Hospitals, TDO Process, Class Action Lawsuits Advance in the Legislature**

- The pace of action on legislation of interest to the healthcare community quickened this week in the **Virginia General Assembly**, which is now in the second full week of a scheduled 60-day session. The **Senate Courts of Justice Committee** advanced [Senate Bill 173](#) that would criminalize possession of firearms, certain knives, or dangerous weapons such as explosives or stun guns in a hospital that provides mental health or developmental services, including emergency medical care. The legislation would make such infractions a Class 1 misdemeanor. The bill has been sent to the **Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee** because it has a potential state fiscal impact. [Similar legislation](#) has advanced out of a subcommittee in the **House of Delegates**. [Legislation](#) that would permit hospitals under certain circumstances to keep a patient for up to two hours pending a magistrate’s decision on a temporary detention order advanced out of a House subcommittee this week. At the request of VHHA, the bill also adds any licensed health professional, licensed hospital, or security personnel assisting a licensed health professional involved in the detention of a person to the list of those with liability protections in such cases. Proposed site neutral payment policy [legislation](#) has been revised to focus on an evaluation of the function of the **All-Payer Claims Database**. As amended, it calls on the state to develop a report with recommendations on enhancing the APCD. The revised bill has advanced out of a House committee. An amended version of [Senate Bill 72](#) clarifies that a patient care consulting committee can make healthcare decisions on behalf of an

incapacitated patient when no next of kin is available. The bill has been sent from the floor back to a Senate committee. A [Senate bill](#) to exempt maternal and perinatal health projects from the certificate of public need (COPN) process has been tabled by a Senate committee. Yet another measure, [Senate Bill 229](#), to modify standards for class action lawsuits has advanced out a Senate committee. Members of the business community, including VHHA, have expressed concerns about that legislation. The **VHHA Government Affairs Team** is monitoring and engaging on those bills and many other pieces of legislation in support of hospitals and health systems throughout this year's session.

## **VHHA Report Shows Hospitals Provide \$4.5 Billion in Community Benefit, Have a \$68.8 Billion Economic Impact**

- Virginia hospitals and health systems provided \$4.5 billion in community support to the Commonwealth in 2024 and generated \$68.8 billion in positive economic impact across the state, according to the newly released [2026 Annual Report on Community Benefit](#) from VHHA. Across Virginia, hospitals and health systems provide essential health services and medical treatment to patients and families in need 24/7/365. Their teams of doctors, nurses, technicians, caregivers, and support staff always answer the call by prioritizing patient well-being and focusing on sustaining and restoring quality of life through necessary medical interventions. Hospitals provide community support in many ways including \$1.2 billion in government payment shortfalls due to the difference between Medicare reimbursements and the actual cost of care. Hospitals provide \$457 million in charity care, which includes the cost of free and discounted care to serve individuals who cannot afford to pay for care. And acute care Virginia hospitals provided \$650 million to cover the state share of Medicaid expansion costs in 2024, which enabled hundreds of thousands of Virginians to gain health care coverage. In 2024, Virginia hospitals accommodated 4.45 million patient days, accepted more than 813,000 inpatient admissions, and handled 91.6 percent of all voluntary and involuntary behavioral health admissions. View VHHA's interactive Community Benefit tool [here](#) and read the full report through this [link](#). Read more [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 [Virginian Review](#), [WHSV](#), multiple [articles](#) from [WRIC](#), and the [Middleneck News](#).

# **News Updates**

## **Congress Pursues Legislation to Continue Funding Federal Government Programs Beyond Jan. 30**

With a Jan. 30 deadline approaching to extend funding for federal government programs, the **U.S. Senate** is [working late this week](#) to approve legislation to accomplish that goal and avoid a partial government shutdown. Last week, the **U.S. House of Representatives** [approved a legislative package](#) to continue funding certain federal government operations beyond Jan. 30 when current funding is set to expire. That deadline was established last year when **Congress** and the **White House** reached a November deal on a continuing resolution to end a five-week government shutdown that began Oct. 1.

Healthcare policy was a sticking point in deliberations during the shutdown, with some Democrats insisting on revisiting Medicaid policy and funding changes made in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act budget reconciliation package last year as well as action to extend expiring enhanced premium tax credits to help individuals purchase ACA marketplace insurance plans. Those policy questions were not directly addressed in the short-term funding measure approved to end the shutdown. If approved, the recent legislation would provide funding related to the **U.S. Departments of Defense Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Homeland Security**, among other programs. The **U.S. Senate** needs to approve the package before it is sent to the President to be signed into law.

### **CMS Issues Final Rule on Provider Tax, DOE Shares Proposed Rule on Student Loan Standards**

This week, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** issued a [final rule](#) intended to address provisions of a regulatory statistical test applied to state proposals for Medicaid tax waivers. The test is designed to ensure that non-uniform or non-broad-based health care-related taxes, authorized under a waiver, are generally redistributive. The new rule seeks to close a loophole that allows some health care-related taxes, especially taxes on managed care organizations, to be imposed at higher tax rates on Medicaid taxable units than non-Medicaid taxable units. In another development, the **U.S. Department of Education (DOE)** has shared a [proposed rule](#) that would define the terms “professional student” and “graduate student” to determine federal student loan amounts available depending on a student’s program of enrollment. The proposed rule would enable students enrolled in designated professional degree programs for pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary medicine, chiropractic, law, medicine, optometry, osteopathic medicine, podiatry, theology, and clinical psychology to qualify for up to \$50,000 in federal loans annually, with a \$200,000 limit. Graduate students would be eligible for up to \$20,500 in federal student loans each, with a \$100,000 limit. Some advocates have made the case for a more expansive approach that includes degree programs for nursing, physician assistants, physical therapy, social work, and other health professions. Under the current proposal, the new rule is set to take effect July 1.

### **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 additional information can access [license verification services](#) through the **Virginia Department of Health Professions (DHP)**. The free [E-Notify](#) service from the **National Council of State Boards of Nursing** is also a relevant resource for hospitals.

## **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 free 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**.

## Podcast

### VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Endocrinologist and Free Clinic Volunteer

This episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Dr. Kelsey Salley**, an endocrinologist who volunteers with the **Health Brigade** in Richmond through the **Virginia Association of Free and Charitable Clinics**. She joins us for a conversation about endocrinology as a specialty, her work and volunteerism, and much 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](mailto:pcfpodcast@vhha.com).



## Around the State



**Michelle Strider**, Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer at **UVA Community Health**, has been named a nominee for the 2026 Prince William Living Influential Women Awards in recognition of her exceptional leadership, community impact, and commitment to strengthening healthcare and public safety across Greater Prince William. Based in Manassas, Strider oversees nursing leadership for **UVA Health** community medical centers and clinics in Northern Virginia and Culpeper. Beyond hospital operations, Strider plays an active role in shaping healthcare policy, safety, and workforce development throughout the region. She serves as a voting member of the Board Quality Committee at University Medical Center, represents Northern Virginia on multiple

VHHA committees. Locally, she serves on several Prince William County domestic violence workgroups, helping develop trauma-informed systems that support survivors and strengthen community safety. Read more [here](#).

**Dr. John E. Alex**, Medical Director of the **Riverside Health Simulation Training Lab**, is being inducted as a **Fellow of the Society for Simulation in Healthcare**. Dr. Alex is a **U.S. Navy** veteran. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and served as a cryptology officer before attending medical school at the University of Miami under the Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP). After finishing flight surgeon training in 2007, he served with Carrier Air Wing 17 out of Naval Air Station Oceana. Dr. Alex retired from the Navy in 2020 after 20 years of service and joined the Riverside team to continue his work in emergency medicine and simulation education.



*Conley*



*Graves*

Two **Sentara Health** Leaders are serving as key leaders with the **National Association of Health Services Executives** (NAHSE): Sentara Executive Vice President of Acute and Post-Acute Care **Eric Conley** (a **VHHA Board of Directors** members) is the NAHSE Board Chair and **Dana Weston Graves**, Sentara Senior Vice President and Acute Care Market President for the Southeast Market-Norfolk, is the NAHSE Treasurer. As an

organization, NAHSE's mission is to make sure the people leading healthcare reflect the communities they serve as a means to improve health disparities and create care that works for everyone. Read more [here](#).