



FYI Weekly

HEALTHCARE NEWS FOR VIRGINIA'S
HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

You are receiving this e-mail from VHHA because you requested a subscription. Questions and content submissions may be sent to jtwalker@vhha.com.

FEATURED CONTENT

[VHHA in Action](#)

[News Updates](#)

- [HRSA Requests Feedback on Potential 340B Rebate Model Pilot Program](#)
- [VHWA Accepting Applications for Summer Student Leadership Program](#)
- [Moderna: FDA to Review Seasonal Flu Vaccine After Initial Rejection](#)
- [CMS Proposes Updating Regulations on ACA Health Insurance Plan Offerings](#)
- [Organizations Appeal for Blood Donations Amid Supply Shortages](#)
- [CMS Offers Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization Program Opportunity](#)

[Events](#)

- [Last Chance to Register for the 2026 Virginia Patient Safety Summit on February 26](#)
- [Register for Virginia Medical-Legal Partnership Coalition Kickoff Webinar on March 25](#)

[Podcast](#)

- [VHHA Patients Come First Podcast Features New Riverside Smithfield Hospital Leader](#)

[Around the State](#)

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 Reaches Halftime, Budget Bills Forthcoming

- Considerable focus at the **Virginia General Assembly** is shifting to the state budget now that the midway point of the 2026 legislative session has passed. That date on the calendar – Tuesday, Feb. 17 this year – is known as “Crossover Day,” which is the annual deadline for bills to clear their chamber of origin to remain alive for further consideration during a given year. Bills that failed to advance by then are no longer viable for 2026. Many bills of concern are no longer active for this year. Among the active bills that are still being watched by VHHA after crossover are two versions of legislation related to non-compete contracts that would apply to healthcare professionals. One version, [Senate Bill 128](#), would block such contracts after July 1, 2026, but would not affect deals initiated before then. Another version, [House Bill 627](#), includes a provision that would exempt contracts involving employees whose earnings exceed a certain threshold. VHHA continues to work on that legislation as well as a measure related to medical malpractice damage awards that would amend the law so that current statutory caps don’t include interest accrued prior to a jury verdict or judge’s order. The bill, [Senate Bill 536](#), received a favorable vote in a House subcommittee this week. With crossover come and gone, the next key date on the legislative calendar is this weekend on what’s known as Budget Sunday. That is the day when the legislature’s money committees release their budget bills. Those bills are contrasting blueprints for state spending over the next two years. Out of those two versions, one compromise bill will be negotiated before the session concludes. The reconciled budget bill, along with other legislation approved by both chambers, will then be sent to the Governor for consideration. State fiscal support related to provider reimbursement adjustments, healthcare workforce development programs for future nurses and physicians, funding for psychiatric crisis program services, and reimbursement for patient examination services provided by forensic nurses are among the proposed budget amendments VHHA supports. Throughout the process, the **VHHA Government Affairs Team** continues to monitor and engage on proposed bills and budget amendments in support of hospitals and health systems.

VHHA Hosts Hospital Lobby Day at the State Capitol, Board of Directors Meeting in Richmond

- This week, VHHA hosted Hospital Lobby Day at the State Capitol as well as a meeting of the **VHHA Board of Directors** in Richmond. Lobby Day is an annual opportunity for representatives from Virginia hospitals and health systems to visit the **Virginia General Assembly** to engage in the public policy process as advocates and share firsthand experience about the healthcare delivery system. View photos from Hospital Lobby Day [here](#). Also this week, the VHHA Board of Directors met in Richmond for a discussion about issues of interest and importance to hospitals and health systems, including operational considerations, and state and federal policy issues.

VHHA Analysis: Hospital Emergency Department Visits Rise for Cannabis-Induced Abdominal Distress

- VHHA recently shared new analyses by the **VHHA Data Analytics Team** showing that annual adult patient visits to Virginia hospital emergency departments for cases of cannabis abuse, dependence, and poisoning diagnoses increased during the period from 2020-2024, as did adult emergency department visits associated with cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome (CHS). Over

that five-year period, Virginia hospital emergency department visits among adult patients for cases of CHS – a condition whose symptoms can cause recurring episodes of severe nausea, abdominal pain, and vomiting among certain individuals who are long time cannabis users – increased nearly 29 percent. There were 24,960 total visits associated with CHS; annual visits rose from 4,027 in 2020 to 5,175 in 2024. Zooming out, Virginia hospital emergency departments had 172,778 adult patient visits for cannabis abuse, dependence, or poisoning diagnoses from 2020-2024, with more than 31,000 such hospital emergency department visits each year over that period. The annual peak was 37,690 in 2022. Beyond Virginia, [several academic research studies](#) from recent years have likewise observed a rise in CHS cases resulting in hospital visits.

View Highlight Video from VHHA Centennial Celebration Event in Richmond

- VHHA recently shared a [highlight video](#) recapping the Jan. 28 Centennial Celebration event it hosted in Richmond that featured **Virginia Lieutenant Governor Ghazala Hashmi, Virginia General Assembly** members, state officials, hospital and health system executives, and other stakeholders. This year, VHHA is celebrating its milestone 100th anniversary (1926-2026) with a series of events. The Association also debuted a new logo and colors that can be viewed [here](#). View a photo gallery of images from the Centennial Celebration event [here](#) and 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 [WSET](#), [Forbes](#), [Lynchburg Today](#), [WUTR](#), [WDBJ](#), [The Hill](#), [Health Leaders Media](#), and [KFOR](#).

News Updates

HRSA Requests Feedback on Potential 340B Rebate Model Pilot Program

The **Health Resources and Services Administration** (HRSA) under the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) recently [issued a request for information](#) (RFI) regarding a potential new 340B Rebate Model Pilot Program. March 19 is the deadline for interested parties to submit information responsive to an extensive list of questions posed by the agency. The RFI seeks to gather input regarding “the potential use of rebates to effectuate the ceiling price under the 340B Program, including the standards and procedures that should govern the approval of manufacturer rebate plans and the impacts on all stakeholders.” This action follows a recent move by HHS to pull back on plans to implement a proposed 340B Rebate Model Pilot Program following a federal legal challenge and subsequent judicial decisions that did not favor the government’s position. The latest development is an indication HHS may not have fully abandoned pursuit of the rebate pilot program model.

VHWDA Accepting Applications for Summer Student Leadership Program

Through April 3, the **Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority** (VHWDA) is accepting applications for its Student Leadership Program, which is a two-week fellowship that exposes students to opportunities in healthcare leadership. During the program spanning June 1-June 12, participants will

engage with “healthcare leaders and policymakers to gain a deeper understanding of the complex problems facing Virginia’s health professionals and the delivery of healthcare services.” Program activities cover a wide range of topics and include guest lectures, informative panels, group policy projects, local tours, and social mixers. It is on-site in Richmond. Free housing is provided as are several meals and group activities. Participating student fellows will receive a stipend of \$1,200 to cover additional expenses. Visit this [link](#) to learn more and apply.

Moderna: FDA to Review Seasonal Flu Vaccine After Initial Rejection

This week, **Moderna** [announced](#) that the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) has accepted an amended biologics license application for review of its investigational seasonal influenza vaccine candidate. This follows a previous [statement](#) from the pharmaceutical company that the FDA had notified the firm that it would “not initiate a review of the biologics license application” for the flu vaccine. Subsequent to that, Moderna appealed the decision, resulting in the latest development regarding a path forward on review.

CMS Proposes Updating Regulations on ACA Health Insurance Plan Offerings

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently [announced](#) proposed regulations to rescind certain limitations on the type of health insurance plans that can be offered through Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplaces. The regulations would withdraw previous restrictions on plan types and allow insurers to offer short-term catastrophic plans as well as low-deductible plans with higher maximum out-of-pocket limits, among other changes to plan design rules. A fact sheet about the Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters proposal for plan year 2027 can be read [here](#).

Organizations Appeal for Blood Donations Amid Supply Shortages

Several leading blood donation and storage organizations are asking the public to make appointments to donate blood amid a national supply shortage. A [joint statement](#) to that effect has been issued by the **Association for the Advancement of Blood & Biotherapies** (AABB), **America’s Blood Centers**, and the **American Red Cross**. Blood donations help save lives. Visit [AABB](#), [America’s Blood Centers](#), or the [American Red Cross](#) online to schedule an appointment to donate.

CMS Offers Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization Program Opportunity

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) offers healthcare organizations a no-cost opportunity to enhance care quality for Medicare beneficiaries through the **CMS Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization** (QIN-QIO) program. QIN-QIO is the nation’s largest federal healthcare quality improvement initiative that partners with thousands of hospitals, nursing homes, physician practices, and patient advocates to improve care quality, patient safety, and health outcomes. Program participants receive direct technical assistance and advanced data analytics, tailored, evidence-based intervention recommendations, customized training, and access to quality improvement tools. Visit this [link](#) for more information.

Events

Last Chance to Register for the 2026 Virginia Patient Safety Summit on February 26

The **2026 Virginia Patient Safety Summit** is coming up next week – the free virtual event is being held Feb. 26, 2026 – so now is the time to register. 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**.

Register for Virginia Medical-Legal Partnership Coalition Kickoff Webinar on March 25

VCU Health is inviting interested individuals to attend an inaugural webinar launching Virginia’s first statewide Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP) Coalition. MLPs integrate civil legal services into healthcare settings to address health-harming legal needs – from unsafe housing and benefit denials to family instability and employment issues. MLPs improve patient health, reduce healthcare costs, and advance patient health and well-being. [VCU Health](#) has embraced this model and is helping to build a statewide movement to expand MLPs across the Commonwealth. The webinar is ideal for organizations with an MLP, those that are exploring the model, or just learning about it. The webinar is scheduled for March 25 at 1 p.m. ET. Visit this [link](#) to register. Questions may be directed to mlp@vcuhealth.org.

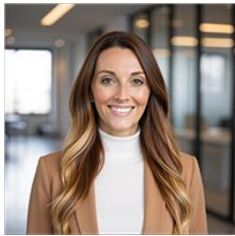
Podcast

VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features New Riverside Smithfield Hospital Leader

This episode of VHHA’s *Patients Come First* podcast features [Jessica Macalino](#), MSHA, President of the recently-opened **Riverside Smithfield Hospital**. She joins us for a conversation about her path to healthcare, the undertaking of opening a new hospital, what it means for the community in terms of enhanced access to care and positive economic impact, 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 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.



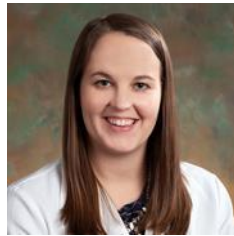
Around the State



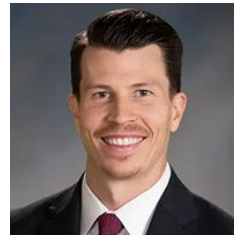
Collins



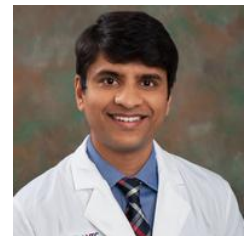
Knopf



McDaniel



McLaughlin



Reddy

Lindsay Collins, Vice President of Medicine & Oncology, Acute Care Services at **Carilion Clinic**; **Carrie Knopf**, Development Officer with the **Carilion Foundation**; **Lauren McDaniel**, Pharmacist with Carilion Clinic; **Collin McLaughlin**, Chief Executive Officer at **HCA Virginia LewisGale Medical Center**; and **Dr. Abhishek Reddy**, Physician at the **Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine** and Carilion Clinic; have been named to The Roanoker's 40 Under 40 Class of 2026. Read more [here](#).



The **University of Virginia School of Medicine** has named **Dr. Aaron S. Dumont**, MD, MBA, FACHE, FACS, FAHA, FAANS, a nationally renowned brain surgeon and experienced academic leader, to chair its Department of Neurosurgery. He will assume his new role June 1, 2026. Dumont comes to UVA from Tulane University School of Medicine, where he has served as chair of the Department of Neurosurgery since 2013, director of the Center for Clinical Neurosciences since 2016, and associate dean and vice president for health system clinical affairs since

2019. Dumont's first faculty position was at UVA, where he served as an assistant professor of neurosurgery and radiology from 2007 to 2010. Dumont earned his bachelor's degree from the University of British Columbia and his medical degree from the University of Calgary before completing a residency in neurosurgery and a fellowship in cerebrovascular, endovascular, and skull base surgery at **UVA Health**. Read more [here](#).

Katherine Y. Tossas, PhD, Associate Co-Director of Global Oncology at **VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center** and an Assistant Professor in the **Virginia Commonwealth University School of Public Health**, is one of 20 mid-career scientists, engineers, and medical professionals selected to the 2026-28 cohort of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's New Voices in Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine program. New Voices aims to expand the expertise engaged in the work of the National Academies while developing a network of U.S. leaders to address national and global challenges. Read more [here](#).



The **University of Virginia School of Medicine** has named **Dr. Michael Mazzeffi**, MD, MPH, MSc, FASA, an experienced anesthesiology leader who has served as interim chair of the Department of Anesthesiology since January 2025, as the department's permanent chair. He will assume his new role immediately. Dr. Mazzeffi joined UVA in August 2022 as a professor of anesthesiology. He came to UVA from the George Washington School of Medicine and Health Sciences, where he served as executive vice chair and director of cardiac critical care. He was previously a faculty member at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, where he was division

chief for critical care medicine, medical director of the hospital's rapid response team, and co-chair of the hospital's resuscitation committee and patient blood management committee. Read more [here](#).

Dr. Chris Frost, MD, Senior Vice President, Chief Medical Officer, and Chief Quality Officer at **Lifepoint Health**, has been named to the **American Hospital Association (AHA) Committee on Clinical Leadership**. The Committee on Clinical Leadership is one of four specialty committees to the AHA Board of Trustees. It provides clinical input to the AHA advocacy and public policy process, serves as a clinical resource on policy issues, guides the ongoing work of the AHA Physician Alliance, and advises on issues relating to standards and requirements for clinical education programs and activities. Read more [here](#).

