



FYI Weekly

HEALTHCARE NEWS FOR VIRGINIA'S
HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

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FEATURED CONTENT

[VHHA in Action](#)

[News Updates](#)

- [Virginia Joins Northeast Public Health Collaborative Alongside Other State and Local Health Agencies](#)
- [White House Issues Executive Order Targeting Cybercrime, Directs Agencies to Take Action](#)
- [CMS Issues Guidelines on Organ Donation Process that Apply to Donor Organizations and Hospitals](#)
- [Public-Facing Adverse Event Search Tool Launched by FDA](#)

[Events](#)

- [Register for Virginia Medical-Legal Partnership Coalition Kickoff Webinar on March 25](#)
- [Register for the Virginia Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Summit on April 22 in Richmond](#)

[Podcast](#)

- [VHHA Patients Come First Podcast Features Ballard Health Behavioral Health Service 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 Evaluates Senate Bill 536 in Finals Days of the 2026 Legislative Session

- As the **Virginia General Assembly** approaches the end of the 2026 legislative session, the fate of [Senate Bill 536](#) related to Virginia’s medical malpractice framework remains unresolved. The original version of the legislation was written to allow for the collection of pre-judgement interest accrued prior to a judge or jury damage award decision in medical malpractice cases. The bill was substantially modified by the **House of Delegates** during the legislative process. The House added amendments that proposed sweeping changes to Virginia’s medical malpractice system. That included provisions to more than double the malpractice cap to \$6 million by 2027, and to extend liability exposure through broader discovery rules, creating major financial and legal uncertainty for healthcare providers across the Commonwealth. The amended bill would apply across the continuum of care including to hospitals, doctors, dentists, nurses, optometrists, podiatrists, physician assistants, chiropractors, physical therapists, social workers, and other healthcare professionals. Those proposed changes inspired a strong response from healthcare professionals concerned that the legislation could lead to higher malpractice premiums, reduced insurance availability, and increased health care costs, ultimately threatening access to care – especially in rural and underserved communities. The **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)** and its members sent thousands of messages to state lawmakers expressing opposition to the House version of SB 536. This week, the House passed the amended bill. Then the **Virginia Senate** rejected those changes and the bill was sent to a conference committee. That process involves a small group of legislative negotiators who are appointed to reconcile competing versions of SB 536. What that all means is the work around this legislation isn’t finished. It is still possible that significant changes to Virginia’s medical malpractice framework may occur. At this moment, it is important for healthcare professionals to continue making their voices heard. Use this [link](#) to easily send a message to your district legislator. This year’s legislative session is scheduled to adjourn on Saturday, March 14. Based on the current state of play, however, the session may extend into overtime to complete outstanding work. Another item still unresolved is the state budget. The budget serves as a fiscal blueprint for government spending in the Commonwealth over a two-year period starting July 1, 2026. As of press time, negotiators from the House and Senate remained in conversation about striking a budget deal. One reported point of contention is contrasting views on subsidies for data centers. In the closing days of the legislative session, the **VHHA Government Affairs Team** remains on the ground at the State Capitol in Richmond working on a range of legislative and state budget issues of interest to hospitals and health systems.

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 [Daily Press](#) and [WTVR](#).

News Updates

Virginia Joins Northeast Public Health Collaborative Alongside Other State and Local Health Agencies

The **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) recently announced that the Commonwealth has joined the **Northeast Public Health Collaborative** (NEPHC), which is a voluntary regional coalition of public health agencies and leaders that collaborate to share “expertise, improve coordination, enhance capacity, strengthen regional readiness, and promote and protect evidence-based public health.” In addition to Virginia, state and local public health departments that are NEPHC members include Boston, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, New York City, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Read more [here](#).

White House Issues Executive Order Targeting Cybercrime, Directs Agencies to Take Action

U.S. President Donald J. Trump recently issued an [executive order](#) focused on combating “cybercrime, fraud, and predatory schemes” impacting Americans. The order directs federal officials across several agencies to “determine what operational, technical, diplomatic, and regulatory tools could be improved to combat transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) engaged in cyber-enabled crime and predatory schemes.” It requires the development of an action plan that proposes solutions to prevent, disrupt, investigate, and dismantle such criminal operations. It also includes provisions related to criminal prosecutions, training, a victim restoration program, and work with foreign governments to target such criminal operations. Hospitals and the healthcare sector are among those that have been targeted with ransomware cyberattacks. Read more [here](#).

CMS Issues Guidelines on Organ Donation Process that Apply to Donor Organizations and Hospitals

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently issued new guidance regarding the organ donation process that clarifies the responsibilities of Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs) and donor hospitals to provide full medical care regardless of potential donor status and to allow families the time to make decisions regarding organ donation without coercion. Read more [here](#) and access a policy memo through this [link](#).

Public-Facing Adverse Event Search Tool Launched by FDA

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) recently launched a platform – the [FDA Adverse Event Monitoring System \(AEMS\)](#) – for analyzing adverse event reports submitted to the FDA for drugs, biologics, vaccines, cosmetics, and animal food. The information will be available for review in a dashboard format. In the months ahead additional information including historical adverse event data will be incorporated into AEMS. The goal is for AEMS to contain real-time adverse event reports for all FDA-regulated products by the end of May 2026. Read more [here](#).

Events

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.

Register for the Virginia Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Summit on April 22 in Richmond

Register now for the **Virginia Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Summit**, which is scheduled for April 22, 2026 at The Westin-Richmond. “The Preparedness Crossroads: Integrating Legacy Challenges with Emerging Global Threats” is the theme for the Summit being hosted by the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)** and the **VHHA Foundation**. Summit programming will feature local, state, and national speakers sharing insights on topics related to strengthening the Commonwealth’s preparedness for threats to the healthcare delivery system including cyber-attacks, outpatient center safety and preparedness, continuing operations during a water interruption, department level business continuity, tracking costs during disasters, and supply chain management during disasters. Visit this [link](#) to register and view additional program information.

Podcast

VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Ballad Health Behavioral Health Service Leader

This episode of VHHA’s *Patients Come First* podcast features **Tammy Albright**, Vice President and Chief Executive Officer for Behavioral Health Services at **Ballad Health**. She joins us for a conversation about the work to enhance access to behavioral health and substance use treatment across the Appalachian Highlands, including a recently announced Strong Futures residential treatment program for women and families in Norton, VA. 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](#), [Podcast Health](#), 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

Carilion Clinic, **Inova**, **Sentara Health**, **UVA Health**, and **VCU Health** have been named to the *Becker’s Hospital Review* 2026 list of the 165 top places to work in healthcare. Read more [here](#).



Ballard



Kull



Sapra



Wiegand



Williams

Barbara Ballard, Chief Information Officer with **Valley Health**; **Matt Kull**, Chief Information and Digital Strategy Officer for **Inova**; **Sonney Sapra**, Chief Information Officer with **UVA Health**; **Ellen Wiegand**, Senior Vice President and CIO for **VCU Health**; and **Leigh Williams**, Vice President and CIO at **Augusta Health**; have been named to the *Becker's Hospital Review 2026* list of 135 hospital and health system CIOs to know. Read more [here](#).



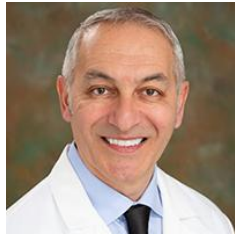
Dr. Mariana Gomez, MD, an infectious disease expert at **Carilion Clinic** and professor at **Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine**, has been named a Health Equity Champion. Led by the Infectious Diseases Society of America's Inclusion, Diversity, Access, and Equity Committee, the Health Equity Champions initiative celebrates Society members who are contributing bold solutions to help reduce health disparities and advance health equity in ways that inspire meaningful change. Read more [here](#).

Carilion Clinic has named **Dr. Rosemarie Fernandez**, MD, as Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine for Carilion Clinic and the **Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine**. Dr. Fernandez joins from the University of Florida, where she served as Executive Vice Chair for the Department of Emergency Medicine and the Research Director for the Center for Experiential Learning and Simulation. Dr. Fernandez attended Rutgers University, earned her medical degree from the University of Michigan Medical School, completed her residency in Emergency Medicine at the University of Cincinnati, and was a Howard Hughes research fellow at the University of Michigan Medical School. Read more [here](#).



Carilion Clinic has named **Connette Gill**, MBA, MSN, RN, NE-BC, CPPS, as Assistant Chief Nursing Officer at **Carilion Medical Center**. Gill comes from Central Carolina Hospital, where she served as the Chief Nursing Officer. Previously, she also served as the Assistant Chief Nursing Officer and Director of the Cardiovascular ICU at Frye Regional Health Center. Read more [here](#).

Carilion Clinic has named **Dr. Grant Greenberg**, MD, as Chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine at Carilion Clinic and the **Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine**. He joins from Lehigh Valley Health Network, where he served since 2016 as the Leonard Parker Pool Endowed Chair of Family Medicine. Over the past three years, he also held the role of Chief Medical Executive for the Primary Care Service Line. Dr. Greenberg spent 16 years at the University of Michigan, where he served as Medical Director of the Chelsea Health Center and earned a master's degree in health systems administration. Dr. Greenberg received a master's degree in Ecology and Environmental Biology at Indiana University. Read more [here](#).



Carilion Clinic has named **Dr. Habib Samady**, MD, as Senior Vice President and Carilion's inaugural Director of the Cardiovascular Institute. Dr. Samady most recently served as the President of the Cardiovascular Service Line and co-founder and President of the Georgia Heart Institute at Northeast Georgia Health System. Previously, he also served as a Professor of Medicine, Director of Interventional Cardiology, and Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory at the Emory University School of Medicine. Read more [here](#).