



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:

Virginia General Assembly Adjourns 2026 Regular Session, Special Session Set on State Budget

- The **Virginia General Assembly** adjourned the 2026 regular legislative session on Saturday, March 14, having dealt with 3,637 [introduced bills and resolutions](#). Of those, 2,306 measures were passed, 671 failed, and 446 were continued to the next session. The legislature did not complete work on the state budget covering the two-year period beginning July 1. A legislative special session will be held to finish work on the budget. One item of interest that was resolved by the time of adjournment was the fate of [Senate Bill 536](#) related to Virginia's medical malpractice framework. The bill had many twists and turns as it was significantly modified during the process before ending up in a conference committee, which is a small group of legislators appointed to negotiate a compromise version of a bill. In the end, the **Virginia Senate** and the **House of Delegates** approved what's known as a [conference report](#) on SB 536 that includes data-collection requirements for entities that provide commercial and self-insured medical malpractice coverage. That conference report is considered an interim step as legislators seek to gather more information on potential changes to Virginia's medical malpractice cap. The conference report removed all proposed changes to the current medical malpractice cap and statute of limitations that were offered in a package of House amendments 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 original version of SB 536 was written to allow for the collection of pre-judgment interest accrued prior to a judge or jury damage award decision in medical malpractice cases. VHHA, hospital members, and other stakeholders expressed opposition to the House changes and mobilized an effective outreach campaign to convey that sentiment to lawmakers. The conference report version of SB 536 will be sent to the Governor for her consideration. Additional materials from VHHA summarizing state policy developments and their implications for hospitals and health systems will be distributed this Spring.

VHHA Hosts Meeting of Payor Advisory Committee

- This week, VHHA held a meeting of the **Payor Advisory Committee**. The Committee is a forum for hospital payor relations and revenue cycle leaders to discuss priority issues and ongoing payor-related challenges. Contact **Carrie Monger** at cmonger@vhha.com to inquire about the committee.

VHHA Hosts Meeting of Healthcare Safety & Security Workgroup

- This week, VHHA held a meeting of the **Healthcare Safety & Security Workgroup**. The workgroup includes hospital safety and security leaders focused on sharing experiences, ideas, and best practices regarding current and future safety, security, violence prevention, and response activities in Virginia hospitals and health systems. Contact **Abraham Segres** at asegres@vhha.com with questions about the group.

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 Hill](#).

News Updates

FDA Issues Draft Guidance on Animal Testing Alternatives for Developing Drugs

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) recently issued [draft guidance](#) for drug makers regarding new approach methodologies that can be employed in lieu of animal testing in pharmaceutical development for human use. This effort is another development in an [FDA initiative to reduce animal testing](#) as a default method for drug safety testing. Read more [here](#).

CMS Shares Acute Hospital Care at Home Initiative Data

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) has made additional data available from the Acute Hospital Care at Home (AHCAH) initiative. CMS will release data through the Research and Data Assistance Center (ResDAC). That includes data collected from April 1, 2023 through Sept. 30, 2025. Combined with previously released data spanning November 2020 through March 2023, researchers now have access to nearly five years of data on the program. CMS launched AHCAH initiative in November 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic to allow certain Medicare-certified hospitals to treat patients with inpatient-level care at home. The AHCAH initiative has been extended by Congress several times over the years with waivers and flexibilities associated with the AHCAH initiative currently extended until Sept. 30, 2030. Read more [here](#).

CDC Announces 2026 Dates for Free Mobile Health Screenings for Coal Miners

The **Centers for Disease Prevention and Control** (CDC) recently [announced](#) that the **National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health** (NIOSH) will host free, confidential screenings for early detection of black lung disease, a serious but preventable condition caused by breathing coal mine dust. This year, screenings will occur from March-May in communities across West Virginia, Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. Screenings take approximately 30 minutes and are confidential by law. Appointments are recommended but walk-ins are welcome. Those interested in participating can call 1-888-480-4042 or email cwhsp@cdc.gov to schedule an appointment. Screening locations, dates, and times are posted [here](#).

EPA Proposed Rules Would Modify Ethylene Oxide Emission Standards

The **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency** (EPA) recently [announced](#) a [proposed rule](#) to amend the 2024 National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) for Ethylene Oxide (EtO) Commercial Sterilization Facilities. EtO is used in sterilization process for many medical devices. The proposed rule would relax some previously established regulatory standards related to EtO. Public comments on the proposed rule are being accepted through May 1.

Congressional Bill Seeks to Exempt Physicians, Healthcare Professionals from H-1B Visa Fee

This week, several members of the **U.S. Congress** [introduced legislation](#) to “exempt physicians and other healthcare workers from the new \$100,000 fee for H-1B petitions. It also prohibits new H-1B fees from being imposed on health care workers that exceed the existing fees under the U.S. Code.” The [Physicians and the Healthcare Workforce Act](#) has been filed following a 2025 [presidential proclamation](#) from the **Trump Administration** that is part of a broader immigration enforcement effort. The proclamation requires employers to pay an additional \$100,000 per visa as a condition of eligibility. Physicians from other nations seeking to practice medicine in the U.S. are among the professionals who seek these visas. In recent months, the **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services** (USCIS) shared [guidance](#) regarding the fee indicating it will only apply to new visa applicants from outside the U.S. The proclamation stated that the policy does not apply to previously issued H-1B visas and does not prevent international travel by such visa holders. The **U.S. Department of Homeland Security** (DHS) has also issued a [final rule](#) modifying the H-1B non-immigrant visa process to implement a weighted selection process in lieu of the previous lottery system for selecting visa recipients. According to DHS, the new process is designed to give “greater weight to those with higher skills.” Going forward, annual H-1B visas are to be capped at 65,000, with an additional 20,000 for U.S. advanced degree holders. The final rule took effect Feb. 27, 2026, and will be in place for the FY 2027 H-1B cap registration season.

AHA Accepting Applications for the Foster G. McGaw Prize Honoring Hospitals

Through May 5, the **American Hospital Association** (AHA) is accepting applications for the 2027 Foster G. McGaw Prize, which celebrates hospitals and health systems that have demonstrated exceptional commitment to community health and well-being. Winning organizations ensure regular community health assessments are completed, community-wide planning and co-design of programs and services are conducted, and that transparent outcome metrics are tracked to ensure accountability and progress. One winner and up to three finalists will be selected for the Foster G. McGaw Prize. The award will be presented at the 2027 AHA Leadership Summit in San Diego. Learn more and apply through this [link](#).

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

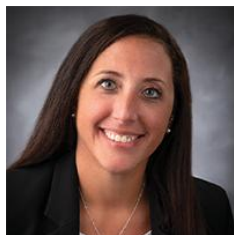
VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Chesapeake Regional Behavioral Health Unit Leader

This episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Elizabeth Cintron**, Program Director for the new Behavioral Health Inpatient Unit at **Chesapeake Regional Medical Center**, who joins us for a conversation about her professional journey and what the new unit means for the hospital and surrounding community. 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

Bon Secours St. Francis Medical Center was recently named Business of the Year by the **Chesterfield Chamber of Commerce**. This recognition celebrates the outstanding individuals driving business and communities to new heights.



Johnson



Vanhoozier

Riverside Doctors' Hospital Williamsburg (RDHW) has named **Stacey Johnson**, LCSW, MBA, ACE, as its next President. Johnson currently serves as Hospital President of **Riverside Mental Health & Recovery Center (RMHRC)**. Johnson joined Riverside in 2018 as executive director of the RMHRC and became hospital president in 2020. In that role, she has led operational and strategic oversight for the region's dedicated psychiatric hospital while advancing integration of behavioral health services within Riverside's broader care delivery system. Johnson succeeds **Adria Vanhoozier**, MHA, who has been promoted into a new system leadership role as Vice President, System Financial and Operational Integration. Vanhoozier has served as president of RDHW since 2016, guiding the hospital through significant clinical expansion. Read more [here](#).

Dr. John E. Delzell Jr., MD, MSPH, MBA, FAAFP, has been named the new Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education (GME) for the **VCU School of Medicine** and Designated Institutional Officer (DIO) for **VCU Health**. Dr. Delzell is an experienced educational leader and hospital administrator. He will begin his new role on March 29. He succeeds **Dr. Brian Aboff, MD**, who has served in the role with distinction since 2017. Dr. Delzell has 30 years of experience in academic medicine and 12 years of experience in health system leadership. He joins VCU Health from Northeast Georgia Health System in Gainesville, GA, where he most recently served as vice president of medical education and DIO. Delzell has served in a variety of organizations, including as associate medical editor for the American Academy of Family Physicians since 2008. He earned his bachelor of arts degree in biology from Baylor University, a doctor of medicine degree and a master of science degree in public health from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and a master of business administration degree from Auburn University. Read more [here](#).



Dr. John Harrington, Vice President of Quality and Safety for **Children’s Hospital of The King’s Daughters (CHKD)** has been named the recipient of the Greenberg-Serwint Award for Outstanding Leadership in Medical Education by the **Academic Pediatric Association (APA)** Region IV. The annual award recognizes an exceptional medical educator who demonstrates sustained leadership in medical education, influences learners across multiple levels of training, and plays a vital role in developing the next generation of educators and pediatric clinicians. Read more

[here](#).

Teresita Hammond, BSN, RNC-OB, Patient Experience and Community Outreach Coordinator at **Sentara Norfolk General Hospital**, was recently recognized with the Champion for Children’s Health Award from the **Consortium for Infant and Child Health (CINCH)** for her exceptional work in advancing health equity.

