



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 systems. In the past week, these are some developments of interest to Virginia hospitals and health systems:

VHHA Hosts Healthcare Cybersecurity & Extended Downtime Summit in Newport News

- This week, VHHA hosted the **Healthcare Cybersecurity & Extended Downtime Summit**, a free in-person event held at the Newport News Marriott at City Center. The Summit presented by VHHA featured expert speakers who addressed the evolving cyber threat landscape in healthcare, highlighted vulnerabilities in medical devices, and shared lessons learned from a recent cyberattack on a Tennessee children's hospital. The program also included guidance on conducting a functional exercise to test extended downtime plans, along with practical strategies for strengthening personal cyber hygiene that can be applied at home and in the workplace.

View VHHA Documentary on Hospital Stories, Healthcare History Across the Commonwealth

- The new short film VHHA produced to honor healthcare professionals during the Association's [100th anniversary](#) is now available online. *Healing and Hope: Hospitals' Legacy of Service in Virginia* is the documentary title and the film can be viewed online [here](#). This month, the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)** hosted a series of events in theaters around Virginia to show the short film that highlights the positive economic and public health impact of hospitals, their evolving work, and their history in Virginia as told through the stories of Virginia patients and providers. Free film screening events were hosted May 11-18 in Wytheville, Glen Allen, Woodbridge, Woodstock, Hampton, and Roanoke during **National Nurses Week** and **National Hospital Week**. Read more about the project [here](#). View a documentary trailer [here](#), an accompanying program [here](#), and photos from the premiere events through this [link](#).

VHHA Hosts In-Person Meeting of Chief Nursing Officers and Nurse Leaders Forum

- This week, VHHA held an in-person meeting of the **Chief Nursing Officers and Nurse Leaders Forum** at VHHA offices in Glen Allen, VA. The meeting agenda included presentations focused on legislative updates, information about hospital financial pressures, and nurse staff well-being, among other topics. Contact **Abraham Segres** at asegres@vhha.com with questions about the group.

VHHA Hosts Inpatient Rehabilitation Administrators Forum Regulatory Review Virtual Meeting

- This week, VHHA held a virtual meeting with hospital leaders for a discussion of the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)** fiscal year (FY) 2027 inpatient rehabilitation facility proposed rule and a recently released Office of the Inspector General report regarding inpatient rehabilitation facility documentation, coverage, and billing requirements. Member feedback provided during the meeting may help inform comment letters from VHHA to federal regulators on these topics. Contact **Abraham Segres** at asegres@vhha.com with questions about the meeting.

VHHA Partners with VONL to Host Spring Conference for Nurse Leader Organization

- This week, VHHA partnered with the **Virginia Organization of Nurse Leaders (VONL)** to support the hosting of the group’s annual [Spring Conference](#), which was held at VHHA offices in Glen Allen, VA. VONL is an affiliate of the **American Organization of Nurse Leaders** that supports leadership, professional development, advocacy, and research to advance nursing practice and patient care, promote nursing leadership excellence, and shape healthcare public policy. Contact VONLstaff@gmail.com for information about VONL and membership.

VHHA Updates Interactive Virginia Hospital Location Map on Website

- The **VHHA Data Analytics Team** recently published an updated version of the interactive Virginia hospital map tool on the VHHA website. The tool provides summary information about Virginia hospitals and VHHA member organizations throughout the Commonwealth. Access the interactive map [here](#).

News Updates

Virginia Governor Signs Childcare Legislation, Budget Stalemate in the Legislature Endures

This week, **Virginia Governor Abigail Spanberger** held a ceremonial bill signing for legislation to establish the Employee Child Care Assistance program to offer matching state funding to employers that cover childcare expenses on behalf of their employees, with priority going to small businesses with fewer than 50 employees. The enabling legislation to establish the program, [House Bill 18](#) and [Senate Bill 3](#), was a policy priority for VHHA and Association staff attended the bill signing ceremony. The Governor also signed [House Bill 1208](#) and [Senate Bill 134](#) directing the state to “establish and maintain calculations for the provision of early childhood care and education services” and [House Bill 211](#) requiring the state to produce a comprehensive status report on the Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Meanwhile, the **Virginia General Assembly** has yet to find a compromise on approving a state budget for the two-year period that begins July 1. The legislature adjourned in March without approving a biennial budget bill to fund future state operations. One of the key sticking points in the budget standoff has been over tax incentives for data centers. As the budget remains unresolved, the Governor recently vetoed several bills approved by the legislature, including measures to establish a cannabis retail marketplace and permit collective bargaining by public sector workers. Subsequently, there has been speculation that the legislature could look to override the Governor by embedding some of that policy into the budget bill. Speaking to the media this week, the Governor [reportedly](#) said she is aware of that notion and said taking that approach would amount to an “abuse of the process.”

Suspected Ebola Cases Eclipse 900, 220 Deaths as U.S. Implements Advanced Airport Screenings

The **World Health Organization** (WHO) recently [shared](#) that there have been 101 confirmed Ebola virus cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and 10 confirmed deaths. The WHO further noted that more than “900 suspected cases and 220 suspected deaths” have been associated with the current outbreak, whose national risk assessment has been upgraded to “very high.” The WHO regional risk assessment remains listed as “high,” while the global risk assessment is currently deemed “low.” Meanwhile, the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) and the **U.S. Department of Homeland Security** (DHS) recently issued an [order](#) to temporarily restrict lawful permanent residents who have been in the DRC, Uganda, or South Sudan within the last 21 days from entering the United States. In a related development, [enhanced public health entry screening activities](#) for certain international travelers have been instituted at **Washington-Dulles International Airport** and **Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport**. A more recent [news report](#) indicates that the **Trump Administration** plans to send Americans exposed to Ebola while traveling internationally to a quarantine facility in Kenya rather than allowing them to fly to the U.S.

HHS, Surgeon General Issue Advisory Warning on the Dangers of Screen Time for Children

The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) and the **Office of the Surgeon General** recently issued an advisory warning about the [“Harms of Screen Use”](#) for children and adolescents. The advisory toolkit seeks to raise “national awareness about the growing risks associated with excessive and harmful screen use among young people” who are now said to “spend as much or more time on screens as they do sleeping or in school.” Read more [here](#).

FDA Announces First Approved Treatment for Chronic Hepatitis Delta Virus

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) recently approved Hepcludex (bulevirtide-gmod) injection to treat chronic hepatitis delta virus (HDV) infection in adults without cirrhosis (advanced liver scarring) or with compensated cirrhosis. Bulevirtide is the first FDA-approved treatment for chronic HDV infection, a serious and life-threatening condition that can cause rapid development of liver fibrosis (scarring), liver cancer, liver failure, and even death. HDV infection only occurs in individuals who have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection. Some risk factors for contracting HDV include unprotected sex, injecting drugs, and occupational exposure to blood. HBV vaccination protects against HBV and HDV as well. The efficacy of Hepcludex was demonstrated in a multi-center, randomized, open-label, parallel-arm phase 3 trial. Read more [here](#).

CMS Initiates Moratorium on Hospice, Home Health Agency Medicare Enrollment

This month, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) [announced](#) a six-month national moratorium on new Medicare enrollment for hospice and home health agencies. That development is part of broader anti-fraud initiative at the federal level to prevent improper billing and other system abuses. During the moratorium period, CMS will pursue targeted investigations, deploy advanced data analytics, and accelerate the removal of hospice and home health providers suspected of fraud. Read more [here](#).

American Cancer Society Updates Colorectal Screening Guidelines to Include Blood Test

The **American Cancer Society** (ACS) recently [released](#) updated guidelines for colorectal cancer screening that include a blood-based screening test that can be administered in a doctor's office, as well a new at-home screening option that looks for hidden blood and molecular markers in stool samples. The updated guidelines reflect advances in disease detection and a critical shift in public health strategy to expand screening options and lower barriers to access. Read more [here](#).

CMS Issues Proposed Rule on Changes to Medicaid Managed Care State Directed Payments

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently issued a [proposed rule](#) that would modify Medicaid state-directed payment policies and establish new requirements for certain fee-for-service supplemental payments. The proposed rule follows the 2025 passage of H.R. 1, the budget reconciliation legislation that changed Medicaid funding and policy. The proposed rule would extend limits on total payment rates for all state directed payments across service categories and facilities. It would generally link payment levels to Medicare rates and phase out certain payment categories over time. Public comments on the proposed rule will be accepted for 30 days. Read more [here](#).

CMS Directs Hospital Labs to Report Data by July 31

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently advised independent laboratories, physician office laboratories, and hospital outreach laboratories that meet the definition of an applicable laboratory under the [clinical laboratory fee schedule](#) that they must report data by July 31 based on an updated data collection period of Jan. 1-June 30, 2025. This includes applicable HCPCS codes, associated private payor rates, and volume data. Read more [here](#).

VAFCC to Host 2026 Virtual Summit on Professional Development Training June 8-12

The **Virginia Association of Free and Charitable Clinics** (VAFCC) is hosting a Virtual Summit June 8-12 focused on professional development training for grant strategy, trauma-informed care, diabetes technology, and workplace well-being. The program is affordable, flexible, and convenient. Registration for non-member organizations is \$100 for an entire team. View the full program agenda and register [here](#).

Events

Virginia Launches Rural Health Transformation Website, Set to Host Informational Webinar on June 3

The **Commonwealth of Virginia** has established a [website](#) for the Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program, a nationwide, five-year, \$50 billion federal initiative designed to strengthen healthcare access, delivery, and outcomes in rural communities. Virginia received a \$189,544,888 allocation for the first year of the program to help support a comprehensive, community-driven strategy to improve rural health across the Commonwealth. States will receive a new federal award amount annually over the course of the five-year period. The state is also hosting an upcoming webinar on "Rural Health Transformation in Virginia: Updates, Opportunities, and Next Steps" on June 3 at 2 p.m. Participants will learn about Virginia's application as well as ways to engage in program efforts. Register for the webinar [here](#).

Register for IHI Open School Quality & Patient Safety Certificate Program

The **VHHA Center for Healthcare Excellence** is again offering hospital team members the opportunity to participate in the **Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Open School Certificate Program in Quality & Patient Safety**. Through the online learning modules available, program participants have one year to complete 13 core courses (from a menu of more than 30) to earn a Basic Quality & Safety Certificate. Those courses take an estimated 13-22 hours to complete, and 17.75 continuing education credits are available for the 13 courses. The [courses](#) offer a dynamic learning environment for healthcare professionals of all levels. IHI is an independent not-for-profit organization and a leading innovator, convener, partner, and driver of results in health and healthcare improvement worldwide. Its online courses are created by world-renowned faculty in quality improvement, patient safety, triple aim for populations, person- and family-centered care, and leadership. Content is delivered through narrative, video, and interactive discussion. Access to courses will be available from June 1, 2026-May 30, 2027. Healthcare professionals including physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, hospital managers, quality, safety, risk management, patient experience, and population health staff and leaders are encouraged to apply for the program. The cost is \$199 to participate or \$399 without the VHHA group rate. Please contact **Rachel Pryor** with questions at rpryor@vhha.com.

VHHA Solutions, Opex Technologies to Host June 9 Event on AI Financial Impact on Healthcare

VHHA Solutions and **Opex Technologies** are hosting an in-person event focused on the financial impacts and opportunities of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare. The event is scheduled for June 9 from 1-5 p.m. at VHHA offices in Glen Allen, VA. The program content will explore practical AI use cases and provide networking opportunities. The session will cover topics related to how AI is shaping financial strategy and operations across healthcare to support efficiency, cost control, and risk management, as well as real-world perspectives on implementation, budgeting, and ROI considerations. Register for the event [here](#).

Virginia Health Care Foundation to Host June 9 Webinar on Mental Health Policy and Practice

The **Virginia Health Care Foundation** (VHCF) is hosting a webinar roundtable discussion on mental health policy and practice scheduled for June 9 at noon. Topics to be covered during the event include legislative updates, an overview of the federal Rural Health Transformation Program and its implications for mental health, lessons learned from launching new service lines and programs, and more. Register [here](#).

VHHA to Host June 11 Webinar on VDH Guidance for Optimizing MDRO Flags in EDCC

Patient transfers involve dozens of critical safety elements in a single handoff moment. A patient's infection status – including pending laboratory results, known colonization or active infection with a multidrug-resistant organism (MDRO), and the transmission-based precautions currently in place – is among the most critical information to convey. Non-disclosure of such details can lead to potential exposures for healthcare workers and patients, resulting in costly contact investigations for hospitals. A webinar being hosted at 10 a.m. on June 11 will provide information on two layers of protection to prevent such miscommunication: the new MDRO Communications Guide from the **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) and optimizing the use of the MDRO flags in the Emergency Department Care Coordination System (EDCC). Register for the webinar [here](#).

VHEMP to Host June 12 Webinar Briefing with National Weather Service on 2026 Hurricane Season

The **Virginia Healthcare Emergency Management Program (VHEMP)** – a partnership between the **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**, the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)**, and the four regional healthcare coalitions – is hosting a one-hour webinar on June 12 at noon featuring **Katie Carter**, Emergency Response Specialist with the **National Weather Service (NWS)**. The briefing will focus on the 2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season and available NWS resources to assist in readiness and response. Register for the event [here](#).

Register for June 18 Webinar on AI-Native Clinical Services for CMS Rural Health Transformation

Hospital, medical, and healthcare information technology leaders are featured presenters during an upcoming June 18 webinar on how AI-native clinical services can support a new model for rural care delivery that scales intelligently across large and geographically dispersed populations. Featured webinar speakers include former U.S. Chief Technology Officer **Anesh Chopra**, **Microsoft** Global Chief Medical Officer **Dr. David C. Rhew**, **Ballad Health** Chief Operating Officer **Eric Deaton**, and **Andor Health** Chief Growth Officer **Noel Khirsukhani**. The webinar will feature real-world examples from rural Tennessee and other states on strategies to improve care access and outcomes for high-risk populations, including Medicare and Medicaid dual-eligible patients, while helping clinical teams operate more efficiently without additional headcount. The webinar is scheduled for June 18 at 1 p.m. CT. Register [here](#).

Podcast

VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features Virginia State Health Commissioner Dr. Cameron Webb

This episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features **Virginia State Health Commissioner Dr. B. Cameron Webb**, MD, JD, who joins us for a conversation about his professional journey, his vision for public health in the Commonwealth as leader of the state health agency, challenges and opportunities ahead due to shifting federal health funding policy, 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](#), [Podcast Health](#), and the [World Podcast Network](#). The podcast can also be heard on the radio airwaves – episodes air Sundays at 10 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. Stephen Kates, MD, Interim Dean of the **VCU School of Medicine**, was recently inducted as President of the **American Orthopaedic Association** at the organization's annual leadership meeting in Albuquerque, NM. Founded in 1887, the AOA is the oldest orthopaedics association in the world. Members of the organization, who earn the designation fellows of the American Orthopaedic Association, make up less than 10 percent of orthopaedic surgeons around the world. Kates has been at VCU since 2015, when he arrived on the MCV Campus to serve as the James W. and Frances G. McGlothlin Chair in Orthopaedics of the VCU School of Medicine's Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. He was appointed to the role of interim dean of the School of Medicine and executive vice president of medical affairs for VCU Health in December 2025 and maintains an active orthopaedic surgery practice in addition to his leadership duties. Read more [here](#).

Twin County Regional Healthcare recently announced that **Carla Gunter** has been recognized as the facility's 2026 Mercy Award winner. The Mercy Award recognizes one employee from each **Lifepoint Health** facility who profoundly touches the lives of others and best represents the spirit and values on which the company was founded. Gunter has served at Twin County Regional Healthcare since November 1993 in roles including In-Service Educator, Stroke Coordinator, Chest Pain Coordinator, and currently Nurse Residency and Fellowship Coordinator. She is deeply engaged in the community, with a strong passion for EMS. She has served on the Board of Directors for the Southwest EMS Board, is a current member of the Virginia Stroke Systems Task Force (VSSTF) and Virginia Stroke Coordinator's Consortium. In addition, Gunter can be found throughout the community – supporting senior groups, the local Rotary club, church groups, nursing classes, teaching hands-only CPR to improve survival from heart-related emergencies and performing guest lectures for Paramedic and EMS students. Read more [here](#).



Fauquier Health recently announced that **Teena Stevic, RN, BSN**, has been recognized as the facility's 2026 Mercy Award winner. The Mercy Award recognizes one employee from each **Lifepoint Health** facility who profoundly touches the lives of others and best represents the spirit and values on which the company was founded. Stevic has been a nurse in the Fauquier Health Emergency Department since 2021, where she began her nursing career in the nursing residency program. Co-workers who nominated Stevic stated "Teena embodies the spirit of the Mercy Award through her selflessness, dedication and heartfelt compassion. She not only delivers excellent clinical care, but also uplifts those around her, creating a supportive environment for both patients and colleagues alike. She is a true asset to the Emergency Department team, our patients and the broader community." Read more [here](#).