



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 In-Person Meeting of Board of Directors

- This week, the **VHHA Board of Directors** gathered for an in-person retreat to discuss issues of interest and importance to hospitals and health systems, including operational considerations and state and federal policy issues.

VHHA Foundation Provides Virtual 'Office Hour' Sessions for Hospital Members on Rural Health Grants

- The **VHHA Foundation** team is offering virtual consultations to hospital members seeking technical assistance and guidance on pursuing grant funding for graduate medical education and remote patient monitoring projects under the federal Rural Health Transformation Program. Visit this [link](#) to book time for a graduate medical education session and this [link](#) for an appointment on remote patient monitoring.

VHHA Quality Leader Moderates Panel During AHA Summit in Denver

- **Abraham Segres**, MHA, FACHE, Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety at VHHA, recently moderated a panel at the **American Hospital Association (AHA) 2026 Leadership Summit** in Denver, CO. The panel topic was "From Vision to Results: How Quest for Quality Honorees Advance Safer Care" and it featured hospital leaders from Connecticut, Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Segres is Chair of the AHA Quest for Quality Prize Committee. The prize honors hospital and health system leaders who lead the way in quality, safety, and community health.

Watch Video Recap of 2026 Virginia Emergency Preparedness Summit

- A video recap of the 2026 **Virginia Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Summit** held in April at The Westin-Richmond can be viewed online [here](#). "The Preparedness Crossroads: Integrating Legacy Challenges with Emerging Global Threats" was the theme for the Summit hosted by the **Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA)** and the **VHHA Foundation**. During the Summit, an audience of more than 250 attendees engaged with Summit programming 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, and supply chain

management during disasters. Participants were also eligible to earn continuing education credits. Read more about the event [here](#), view the program brochure at this [link](#), and see an event photo gallery [here](#).

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 available online. *Healing and Hope: Hospitals' Legacy of Service in Virginia* is the documentary title and the film can be viewed online [here](#). In May, 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 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 [Virginia Mercury](#), [WSLS](#), [WCAV](#), [River Towns Magazine](#), and [Madison County Magazine](#).

News Updates

CMS Issues 2027 Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule, Public Comments Accepted by Sept. 14

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently shared information on the calendar year (CY) 2027 physician fee schedule proposed rule, which would establish separate conversion factors for qualified alternative payment (QP) model participants and for physicians and providers who aren't QP. The proposed rule would decrease physician payments by reducing the QP conversion factor by 1.19 percent and the non-QP factor by 1.68 percent in CY 2027 relative to 2026. The agency also proposes changes to the Medicare Shared Savings Program and it is seeking to adopt new Merit-based Incentive Payment System Value Pathways under the Quality Payment Program. Public comments on the proposed rule are being accepted through Sept. 14. Read more [here](#).

HHS, CMS Launch 'Make Hospital Food Healthier' Pledge

The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) and the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently [launched](#) the "Make Hospital Food Healthier Pledge" as a national campaign focused on healthy, nutritious meals served in hospitals. It is a voluntary initiative that encourages hospitals to prioritize nutrient-dense food options over processed foods. CMS previously pushed efforts [encouraging](#) hospitals to sign the voluntary pledge focused on healthy food offerings earlier this year. The pledge follows a CMS [memorandum](#) regarding hospital patient food and nutrition service expectations under the federal [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) (DGA) 2025-2030. The guidelines focus

on prioritizing whole and minimally processed foods. They are intended to help inform patient nutrition services and related hospital protocols. Under the federal Conditions of Participation, hospitals are advised to ensure that their menus meet patient nutritional needs in accordance with recognized dietary practices, qualified dietitian oversight, maintenance of a current therapeutic diet manual, and integration of dietary services into Quality Assessment and Performance Improvement (QAPI) processes.

HRSA Accepting Applications for Grants to Support Rural Health Providers

Through Aug. 6, applications are being accepted for [grants](#) under the Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement Program under the **Health Resources and Services Administration** (HRSA). As many as 20 grant awards worth up to \$250,000 may be awarded through the program, whose thrust is to “strengthen the quality improvement culture in small rural healthcare facilities by building capacity to effectively collect and use clinical data while implementing evidence-based approaches to improve health care quality with a particular focus on improving chronic disease outcomes.”

CDC Reports 1,645 U.S. Cases of Cyclosporiasis Illness Across 34 States, Including Virginia

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (CDC) recently reported there have been 1,645 confirmed domestic cases of cyclosporiasis since May 1, noting that the agency is aware of more than 5,100 cases that require further analysis to confirm the illness as domestically acquired cyclosporiasis. Those cases have been documented in 34 states, including Virginia, where the **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) has reported [10 cases](#). Across the nation, there were 249 reported cases in 2025. Among current year cases, available information indicates 141 (9 percent) resulted in hospitalization. The CDC is investigating a multi-state [outbreak](#) across Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and West Virginia. Cyclosporiasis is an infection of the intestines caused by a parasite. It is not spread directly from person-to-person. The parasite can infect someone by entering the body through the mouth, typically by eating or drinking something that is contaminated with *Cyclospora*, which infects the intestines and usually causes watery diarrhea. Other symptoms can include loss of appetite, weight loss, bloating, increased gas, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, muscle aches, low-grade fever, and fatigue. The illness can be severe but it is not typically considered life-threatening. Symptoms usually appear within one week after exposure. If not treated, the illness can last from a few days to a month or longer. Individuals with cyclosporiasis symptoms are encouraged to contact a healthcare provider.

KFF Analysis: 14 Percent Median Proposed Increase for ACA Marketplace Insurance Plans

A new KFF [analysis](#) of publicly available data indicates that insurers offering Affordable Care Act (ACA) insurance marketplace plans are seeking a “median proposed premium increase of 14 percent” for 2027, representing a second consecutive year of double-digit premium increases. The analysis is based on information from 16 states and Washington, D.C. with publicly available data. Virginia is not among the states included in the analysis. However, the Commonwealth received significant rate increase proposals from insurers last year. In 2025, many of the 10 insurers that planned to participate in Virginia’s individual market for 2026 [proposed](#) increases of 20 percent or more.

Public Comment Deadline is July 21 on CMS Proposed Changes to State Directed Payment Program

July 21 is the deadline to submit public comments on a [proposed rule](#) by the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) to modify Medicaid state-directed payment policies (DPP) 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 potentially go beyond the budget legislation and further 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. There is a 30-day public comment period on the proposed rule. Changes to DPP under H.R. 1 and the proposed rule would have significant financial implications for the Commonwealth and its hospitals, costing billions annually in federal funding reductions that could impact access to care, public health, and the economy. VHHA is working with members and engaging with federal policymakers to express concern about the scope of the proposed rule. Read more [here](#).

CMS Issues CY 2027 Hospital Outpatient, Home Health Prospective Payment System Proposed Rules

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) recently issued proposed rules reflecting policy changes under the [home health prospective payment system](#) (PPS) and the [hospital outpatient and ambulatory surgical center](#) (ASC) PPS for calendar year (CY) 2027. The hospital outpatient proposed rule calls for an increase of Medicare rates by a net 2.4 percent in 2027 compared to 2026. The proposal also seeks to expand site-neutral payment policy to certain imaging services performed in off-campus hospital outpatient departments. It would apply the physician fee schedule (PFS) equivalent payment rate for any healthcare common procedure coding system (HCPCS) codes assigned to imaging without contrast ambulatory payment classifications (APC) when provided at off-campus provider-based departments (PBD). It is estimated this would reduce outpatient PPS spending by \$260 million in 2027. Another proposed change would significantly reduce payments for drugs acquired under the 340B program. It is estimated this reduction would cut original Medicare drug payments by \$4.55 billion dollars and beneficiary drug payments by \$1.15 billion in the first year. Federal law requires the policy to be implemented in a budget neutral manner, so the proposal would be offset by increasing OPPS payments for non-drug services by an equivalent amount. Read more [here](#). On home health, the rule proposes a 2.4 percent update, which includes a 3.1 percent market basket update, reduced by a 1.0 percentage point cut for productivity, as well as a 0.3 percentage point increase related to outlier payments. Read more [here](#). Public comments are being accepted on the proposed rules. Aug. 31 is the deadline to submit comments.

New Laws Take Effect on July 1: Workplace Violence Reporting, Test Results, Non-Compete Contracts

In Virginia, July 1 marks the start of a new state fiscal year. It is also the effective date for several new laws enacted by the **Virginia General Assembly**. Among them is a [law](#) that amends an existing statute to clarify reporting requirements for incidents of workplace violence in hospitals. The legislation also directs the state **Board of Health** to promulgate regulations to implement its provisions and calls on VDH to publish a report on healthcare workplace violence statistics by the end of next year. Another [law](#) requires healthcare entities to wait 72 hours before disclosing test results that may indicate malignancy or genetic health markers in a patient's health records, with some exceptions. New state [laws](#) also restrict employers from initiating or enforcing non-compete contracts with healthcare professionals. Additional information about new state laws approved by the legislature, including their effective dates and implications, is available on the [VHHA website](#). A summary of many of those statutory changes is also available in a VHHA [webinar recording](#) recapping legislative developments from this year.

HosPAC Launches '100 for 100' New Donor Push, Contributions Help Support Hospital Advocacy

The start of July coincides with the effective date of several new state laws that apply to hospitals, healthcare providers, and the communities they serve. From workforce development and reimbursement policies to regulatory changes and public health initiatives, decisions made in Richmond influence how hospitals deliver care, support staff, and meet patient needs. Sustained advocacy efforts that reflect the voice of hospitals are a critical part of the process. The work of **HosPAC**, the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association's political action committee, helps advance that engagement. In honor of the VHHA centennial anniversary in 2026, HosPAC has launched the "100 for 100 Campaign" with a goal of welcoming 100 new donors as the Association celebrates 100 years of leadership, partnership, and advocacy on behalf of Virginia's hospitals. That proud legacy is a foundation to build a strong future in the next century. Each first-time contribution represents another voice supporting Virginia hospitals and health systems at the **Virginia General Assembly**. Growing the community of hospital advocates strengthens HosPAC's ability to build relationships with policymakers and ensures that hospitals have a strong, unified voice on healthcare advocacy. Read more about the campaign [here](#) and visit this link to contribute [today](#). Questions about HosPAC can be directed to **Hannah Coley** at hcoley@vhha.com.

Events

Virtual Sessions on Hospital Requirement to Report Sickle Cell Diagnoses Set for July, August

[State law](#) requires hospitals, health clinics, and independent laboratories to report patients diagnosed with sickle cell disease to the Virginia Statewide Sickle Cell Disease (SSCD) Registry. The **Virginia Department of Health** (VDH) is now expanding statewide implementation of the registry and has informed healthcare providers of the obligation to begin consistently reporting applicable patient data by August 2026, including eligible cases dating back to July 1, 2024. VDH has scheduled informational webinars on [July 21](#), [July 27](#), and [Aug. 6](#), each starting at 4 p.m. Virtual technical assistance sessions will be hosted on [Aug. 11](#) at 4 p.m., [Aug. 19](#) at noon, and [Aug. 27](#) at 4 p.m. Questions regarding the registry or reporting requirements can be directed to sicklecellregistry@vdh.virginia.gov.

Save the Date for the Virginia Behavioral Health Summit on Sept. 24 in Richmond

The **2026 Virginia Behavioral Health Summit** is scheduled for Sept. 24 at The Westin-Richmond. The theme for this year's Summit is "Innovating with Purpose: Building a Resilient Behavioral Health System." The annual Summit is a daylong event that brings together providers, patient advocates, administrators, policymakers, and other stakeholders to explore practical strategies for strengthening behavioral health care across the Commonwealth. Summit sessions will focus on topics including mental health and substance use treatment, workforce and wellbeing initiatives, patient and staff safety, crisis response, and innovative approaches to care delivery. Additional details and registration information will be available soon.

Save the Date for Virginia Hospital Leaders Summit in November, Early Registration Starts in August

As VHHA continues to celebrate its 100th anniversary this year, plans are underway for the **2026 Virginia Hospital Leaders Summit**, whose theme is "100 Years Strong: Honoring Our Past. Shaping the Future." For a century, Virginia's hospitals and health systems have served as the heartbeat of communities, providing compassionate care and leading through times of challenge and opportunity. From Nov. 4-6 at The Omni Homestead Resort, VHHA and hospital officials from across the Commonwealth will gather to

celebrate a century of service, honor the leaders who have shaped healthcare in Virginia, and look ahead to the next 100 years. Mark your calendar today. Early registration opens Aug. 6.

DMAS, DSS to Host Aug. 13 Virtual Town Hall on H.R. 1 Changes Related to Medicaid and Non-Citizens

The **Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)** and the **Virginia Department of Social Services (DSS)** are hosting a virtual town hall at noon on Aug. 13 regarding changes to Medicaid under H.R. 1 of 2025 that may impact non-citizens. H.R. 1 is the budget reconciliation package of 2025 known as the One Big Beautiful Bill. It cuts nearly \$1 trillion in Medicaid funding over a decade and makes changes to enrollment and eligibility standards. The upcoming virtual session will provide an overview of the changes that will take effect in October 2026, which include updates related to non-citizen eligibility, what these changes may mean for Medicaid members, and where to find additional information and resources. Use this [link](#) to join the virtual session.

Podcast

VHHA *Patients Come First* Podcast Features VHC Health Physician on Joint Disease Therapies

This episode of VHHA's *Patients Come First* podcast features a conversation with **Dr. Robert Hong**, a physician with **VHC Health**, about emerging trends in rheumatologic care, advancements in treatment and diagnostics, and how evolving therapies improve outcomes for patients with chronic joint disease. 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



Amber Price, Senior Vice President and System Chief Nursing Officer for **Sentara Health**, has been selected as a Fellow of the **American Academy of Nursing**, one of the highest honors in nursing. Fellows are selected based on their outstanding contributions to improve health locally and globally. The newest Fellows, selected from a competitive pool of candidates, represent 39 states, the District of Columbia, and 17 countries. Price oversees nursing practice and clinical care across Sentara, including patient safety, infection prevention and control, professional

practice, emergency management, employee health, accreditation and regulatory matters, and clinical education. Last year, she oversaw the rollout of an innovative technology platform, including a virtual nursing system, as part of efforts to reduce the administrative burden on bedside nurses and enhance patient care. Price joined Sentara Health in 2022 as president of **Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center** in Williamsburg, VA. In this executive role, she drove clinical innovation by launching a trauma program, an obstetric hospitalist program, and a minimally invasive gynecologic surgery program. A champion for patient-centered environments and workforce advocacy, Price also designed clinical spaces that promote respectful maternity care and inclusion for individuals with disabilities and sensory needs, while simultaneously advancing robust employee wellness initiatives. Read more [here](#).

Diana Cantor has been elected to serve as Chair of the **VCU Health System Authority Board of Directors** for a term through June 30, 2028. Cantor had been serving as acting chair. She was first appointed to the board in 2023 and reappointed in 2026. The election was held in accordance with a state law that updates board structure and governance. Cantor is a certified public accountant and an attorney. She is a member of the Investment Committee and the Board of Managers of Alternative Investment Management LLC, was the founding chief executive officer of the Virginia College Savings Plan, and is a past board chair for the Virginia Retirement System. In related developments, several board officers and committee chairs were elected. Read more [here](#).



In 2022, the **American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)** launched the Magnet with Distinction program to recognize the world's highest-performing Magnet organizations. Since then, 95 hospitals in the U.S. and one in Saudi Arabia have achieved the designation. The ANCC, a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association, awards hospitals Magnet designations based on quality patient care and nursing excellence. To earn the recognition, hospitals must undergo a comprehensive application and review process. Hospitals with the award typically have high nurse job satisfaction, low levels of RN turnover and lower 30-day mortality rates. Fewer than 10 percent of the hospitals in the U.S. have earned Magnet status, and only a select few hospitals will earn the new "with Distinction" honor to recognize an "elite level" of performance, according to the ANCC. **Inova Loudoun Hospital, Sentara Leigh Hospital, Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital, Sentara Northern Virginia Medical Center, and Sentara Princess Anne Hospital** are among the Virginia hospitals that have earned this distinction.

Sentara Health has become the first health system in the nation to have all 10 of its family maternity centers earn the **Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN)** Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) bronze designation, a national honor recognizing its commitment to equitable, evidence-based, and person-centered maternity care. Read more [here](#).