



Thursday,
January 26, 2012

5th Congressional Candidate Lisa Wilson-Foley Visits CHA



On Friday, January 20, Lisa Wilson-Foley, a Republican candidate for the 5th Congressional District seat, met with members of the CHA Board of Trustees Committee on Government. Ms. Wilson-Foley is the third candidate for the 5th Congressional District seat to visit CHA. The seat is being vacated by Democrat Congressman Chris Murphy, who is running for the US Senate. Other candidates to have met with members of the committee include Speaker of the House Chris Donovan (D-Meriden) and Senator Andrew Roraback (R-Goshen), ranking member of the Finance Committee.

Christopher Hartley, senior vice president of Planning and Facilities Development at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, introduced Ms. Wilson-Foley as a physical therapist with a master's degree in public health from Yale University, and as the winner of *Hartford Magazine's* Business Leader of the Year in 2011. Ms. Wilson-Foley provided members with an overview of a number of policy issues facing the country, the state, and the hospital and healthcare communities. CHA members engaged Ms. Wilson-Foley in a conversation relating to federal budget and healthcare policy issues, including potential cuts to the Indirect Medical Education (IME) reimbursement program, the implementation of federal healthcare reform, pension reforms, and behavioral health and provider payments in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

In 2010, Ms. Wilson-Foley ran as a candidate for Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut. She holds degrees from Ithaca College, Yale University, and the University of Connecticut, and is currently working toward her doctorate in physical therapy.

Dannel Malloy Cuts \$79 Million from State Budget: No Cuts to Medicaid

Using his authority to make unilateral budget [cuts](#), on Tuesday, January 24, Governor Dannel Malloy issued nearly \$79 million in cuts to the current fiscal year budget. The reductions are due to a drop-off in revenue, most notably income tax projections, which are down more than \$169 million from the revenue forecast. There were no direct cuts to hospital funding or changes to the Medicaid program.

Budgets for the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) were cut the most, with \$28.4 million coming from DCF and \$14.5 million coming from DMHAS. DMHAS Commissioner Pat Rehmer, in a call with providers, indicated that she is reviewing her agency's reductions and will be attempting to develop a plan that limits the impact of the reductions on patients and providers.

Cuts will be partially achieved through a delay in filling vacant positions in DCF, DMHAS, and other agencies. Benjamin Barnes, secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, announced a new higher standard to fill any vacant positions. Namely, public health and safety must be at stake; the position must be necessary to gain or sustain revenue greater than the cost of the position; or the position is required to ensure compliance with federal and state laws, or court orders.

Existing law grants the governor limited authority to unilaterally rescind allocations in many line items by up to 5 percent, though municipal aid cannot be touched, and the state's share of funding for Medicaid, an entitlement, cannot be reduced without federally-approved changes in coverage. The cuts issued on Tuesday do not reflect the maximum reduction the governor could have made, thus allowing for further rescissions to be made before June 30, 2012, should revenues continue to decline.

Governor Malloy will reveal his 2012 legislative proposals and FY 2013 budget adjustments when the General Assembly convenes for the 2012 legislative Session on February 8, 2012.

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President Delivers 2012 State of the Union Address with Little Mention of Health Insurance Reform

On Tuesday, January 24, President Obama delivered his 2012 [State of the Union Address](#) and briefly mentioned healthcare reform during his hour-long speech.

“I will not go back to the days when health insurance companies had unchecked power to cancel your policy, deny your coverage, or charge women differently than men,” said President Obama.

Mentioning Medicaid and Medicare, President Obama said: “As I told the Speaker this summer, I’m prepared to make more reforms that rein in the long-term costs of Medicare and Medicaid, and strengthen Social Security, so long as those programs remain a guarantee of security for seniors.”

President Obama spoke of the need for both parties to work together to form a consensus on major policies for the betterment of the country. “I’m a Democrat,” he said. “But I believe what Republican Abraham Lincoln believed: That government should do for people only what they cannot do better by themselves, and no more. That’s why my education reform offers more competition, and more control for schools and states. That’s why we’re getting rid of regulations that don’t work. That’s why our healthcare law relies on a reformed private market, not a government program.”

Watch the video [here](#).

Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Program Celebrates First Year of Operation

On Thursday, January 26, the Connecticut Judicial Branch, Office of Victim Services’ (OVS) Gail Burns-Smith Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFE) Program held a reception to commemorate its first operational year of service. This state-run program provides participating hospitals with on-call nurses and doctors who have been specially trained in evidence collection. These skilled SAFEs ensure that sexual assault exam kits are conducted in a timely, compassionate, and patient-centered manner.

During the 2009 Legislative Session, CHA worked closely with OVS and Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS) to pass legislation to establish the SAFE Program. CHA also serves as a member on the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee.

Guests of the celebration included members of the Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Advisory Committee, sexual assault forensic examiners, partnering hospital staff, sexual assault victim advocates, law enforcement, and other community partners.

Though OVS plans to expand program services to be available to all Connecticut hospitals, the SAFE Program currently provides SAFEs to six participating hospitals: Hartford Hospital, The Hospital of Central Connecticut, Manchester Memorial Hospital, Middlesex Hospital, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, and Windham Hospital. At those institutions, SAFEs can be dispatched 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. The SAFE Program, named after Gail Burns-Smith, former executive director of CONNSACS and a longtime advocate for sexual assault victims, is funded through a federal Justice Assistance Grant and Violence Against Women funding.

Read more about [Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services](#).

CHA Diversity Collaborative Educational Program

On Tuesday, hospital teams participating in the **CHA Diversity Collaborative: *From Intent to Impact*** took part in the first team call to discuss the [Diversity and Cultural Proficiency Assessment Tool for Leaders](#) and review case studies on strengthening diversity.

This was the first in a series of educational programs offered by the CHA for Diversity Collaborative teams from acute care hospitals across the state. Hospitals will work together to identify improvement strategies and interventions, share best practices, and implement critical initiatives to improve diversity and strengthen hospital cultural competency.

Eliminating disparities, increasing diversity, and achieving health equity are top priorities of CHA Board of Trustees. The Diversity Collaborative, which launched in October 2011, was developed by a special CHA Board subcommittee and is overseen by the Committee on Human Resources of the CHA Board.

We invite you to read more about the Diversity Collaborative and watch a [video](#) about the October Kickoff Symposium.

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, Johnson Memorial Hospital Announce Affiliation

Johnson Memorial Medical Center (JMMC), the parent organization of Johnson Memorial Hospital, Evergreen Health Care Center and Home & Community Health Services; and Saint Francis *Care*, the parent organization of Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, intend to enter into an affiliation agreement designed to maintain JMMC as an independent source of high-quality healthcare and expand its clinical services in north central Connecticut.

Under terms of the agreement, JMMC will become a Saint Francis *Care* Partner, but both JMMC and Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center will continue to be separately licensed institutions, each with separate Boards of Directors. Saint Francis *Care* will be invited to participate in JMMC's Board and has committed to provide capital to support daily operations at JMMC for up to five years. There would also be a clinical integration of the two hospitals' medical staffs and a review of JMMC's opportunities for business development, growth, and process improvement.

By accessing Saint Francis *Care*'s resources, JMMC will enhance its continuum of care and realize substantial operational efficiencies. JMMC will also have immediate access to administrative and strategic support from Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

The affiliation agreement is subject to regulatory approval.

Congressman Joe Courtney Opposes Medicare Cuts to Physicians

Congressman Joe Courtney (CT-2) spoke on the floor of the US House of Representatives this week in opposition to Medicare cuts to physicians. In his remarks, Congressman Courtney spoke about the need to find a solution to the proposed physician reductions that does not include reducing funding from hospitals.

Also in his remarks, Congressman Courtney spoke about a recently released [survey](#) from the Connecticut Medical Society, which detailed the impact Medicare cuts will have on access to care.

Watch the clip [here](#).

Education Updates

Member Briefing on the CHA Statewide Policy on Mandatory Influenza Vaccination February 7, 2012, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Last month, the CHA Board of Trustees adopted a statewide policy endorsing mandatory flu vaccination of hospital staff as part of Connecticut hospitals' commitment to patient safety. Several Connecticut hospitals have already made influenza vaccination mandatory, requiring all employees regardless of position to be vaccinated unless a valid medical reason contraindicating vaccination exists, in which case the employee must wear a mask.

A multidisciplinary panel of representatives from those hospitals will share information on how they developed and implemented their policies, including how they addressed medical staff considerations and human resources/union issues, and developed their communications and public relations strategy. The program will also include ample Q&A and discussion time.

Please plan to join us for this timely and practical session, which is offered exclusively to CHA provider members. For more information, click [here](#). To register, click [here](#).

Reducing Heart Failure Readmissions Collaborative Learning Session February 10, 2012, 7:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

We are very pleased to announce the sixth learning session for the Reducing Heart Failure Readmissions Collaborative, which began in February of 2010. Hospital teams and their community partners will share the improvement work they have conducted over the past 24 months, and key lessons learned as participants in the collaborative.

The keynote speaker will be Christine Beechner, RN, vice president of patient and guest relations at Greenwich Hospital. Ms. Beechner will share successful strategies for building a lasting culture of service, measurably improving quality and patient safety, and implementing innovative ideas and concepts utilized by leading healthcare organizations.

[Click here to access the registration form.](#)

Webinar: Assessing Your Vendors for ICD-10 Readiness
February 15, 2012, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

With a project as big as the ICD-10 transition, virtually no provider is undertaking the transition without an external partner. And no transition plan is complete without a thorough assessment of the ICD-10 readiness of your current vendors and payers. Choosing the right partner or having an existing partner who may not be ready in time can mean the difference between success and failure. Knowing how to leverage your partnerships will be invaluable to the success of your transition plan.

This session, the final in a four-part series, will focus on asking the right questions and knowing the right facts about your current vendors, and in selecting any new vendors.

For more information, click [here](#). To register, click [here](#).