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Budget: Agreement on Concessions Announced; Unions Discussing

Last Friday, Governor Dannel P. Malloy announced an agreement on a wage and benefit state employees’ concession package. The concessions were part of the Governor’s two-year budget passed in early May by the General Assembly.

The [agreement](#) will realize a \$21.5 billion savings over 20 years and addresses both short-term and structural reforms, healthcare, and pension and wages. For the upcoming 2012-13 biennium, \$1.6 billion in savings will be realized for the two-year period (the administration was originally seeking \$2 billion in savings). The remaining \$400 million needed to balance the budget will come from a mix of unspecified additional spending cuts and existing budgeted revenues.

With the agreement reached between the Malloy administration and the State Employees Bargaining Coalition (SEBAC), rank-and-file union members are currently being asked to ratify the changes to their union contracts. If ratified, the savings will be counted to the biennium budget, thus avoiding wholesale layoffs of state employees and deep cuts in state agency programs as proposed in the Governor’s “Plan B” [budget](#).

The remaining piece of the budget puzzle needing to be completed is the drafting and passage of the budget implementer bills, the bills that specify how the budget will be implemented.

Governor Announces Plans for University “Bioscience Connecticut”

Governor Dannel P. Malloy this week announced a new jobs initiative at the University of Connecticut Health Center to provide jobs now and sustain economic growth and innovation going forward. The proposal is intended to help establish Connecticut as a leader in the bioscience industry. Governor Malloy was joined at the announcement by the Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Catherine Smith; UConn President Philip Austin; UConn President-Designate Susan Herbst; Dr. Cato T. Laurencin, UConn Health Center Vice President for Health Affairs and Medical School Dean; and, legislators and representatives from the construction and bioscience industries.

Highlights of Governor Malloy’s proposal include:

- Providing 3,000 construction jobs annually from 2012 through 2018;
- Generating a \$4.6 billion increase in personal income by 2037, including the creation of 16,400 jobs;
- Doubling federal and industry research grants to drive discovery, innovation and commercialization;
- Increasing access to high quality health care; and
- Graduating and retaining more physicians and dentists to meet forecasted workforce shortage and meet increased demand for health care services resulting from health care reform.

CHA looks forward to working with the Governor on ensuring the stability of all hospitals, given their role as economic engines and in providing access to high quality healthcare across Connecticut.

Legislative Update: General Assembly Meets in Session

With fewer than three weeks left in this year’s legislative session, both chambers of the General Assembly were scheduled to meet several times this week, with the House of Representatives meeting Tuesday through Thursday and the State Senate meeting Thursday and Friday. At time of publication, members of the House of Representatives debated, voted, and passed

only one bill of interest to the hospital community.

On Wednesday, May 18, the House passed and transmitted to the Senate, [HB 6352](#), *An Act Concerning The Membership Of The Advisory Council On Children And Families And Modifications To Statutes Concerning The Department Of Children And Families*, a bill supported by CHA, which had worked with DCF on this issue. Among other provisions, HB 6352 eliminates the requirement that the Department of Children and Families (DCF) adopt regulations concerning treatment of high-risk newborns in hospitals, and, instead, requires hospitals to disseminate information concerning discharge planning for, and ongoing DCF involvement with, high-risk newborns.

At the time of publication of *Update*, the House and Senate were organizing their daily calendars and have not passed any bills of interest to hospitals. It is expected that the Senate will be in session late into the evenings of Thursday and Friday; CHA will provide a detailed summary of any bills passed that will have an impact on Connecticut hospitals.

CHA and PeriGen Host “The Art and Science of Obstetrics Safety”

On Wednesday, May 17, CHA and PeriGen, specialists in obstetrical (OB) risk reduction, co-hosted a program that brought together national experts in the field of OB patient safety. Moderated by Dan O’Keeffe, MD, Executive Vice President of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, and Vicky Lucas, PhD, Women’s Health Care Nurse Practitioner, the program highlighted the importance of implementing high reliability principles, standardized clinical practice guidelines, team training, and decision support tools as critical elements for ensuring the delivery of safe care in the complex care environment of an OB unit.



Eric Knox, MD, (left) a founding member of the National Patient Safety Foundation, gave the keynote address, reviewing common causal factors of errors, fundamental practices of high-reliability organizations and crew resource management training techniques that are needed to improve the most essential component, team communication. Edward Funai, MD, (right) Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences; Associate Chair, Clinical Affairs and Section Chief at the Yale School of



Medicine, gave an overview of Yale’s comprehensive patient safety program. Initiatives that have been implemented include addressing the safety culture of the unit through team training and clinical protocols; developing a clear chain of command; data collection and feedback; simulation; and the hiring of a dedicated Patient Safety Nurse. Karen Brady, Clinical Nurse Specialist, St. Vincent’s Medical Center, presented their experience in “The HANDS Project” to eliminate birth trauma.

Three separate panels of experts discussed “Hot Topics in Perinatal Safety,” “Successful Implementation Strategies,” and “Enabling Technologies” in interactive discussions with participants. In addition to Drs. O’Keeffe, Knox, Funai, and Lucas, other panelists included Thomas Garite, MD, Editor-in-Chief, *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*; Emily Hamilton, MD, clinician and researcher, McGill University; Yoni Barnhard, MD, Chair of OB/GYN and Director of Maternal and Child Health, Norwalk Hospital; and Christian Pettker, MD, Assistant Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences and Medical Director, Labor and Birth, Yale-New Haven Hospital. The panelists were challenged with the question “What are the top patient safety strategies?” By overwhelming consensus, the strategies were: a dedicated patient safety unit champion; laborist (for non-teaching, community hospitals); team training; and decision support with standardized protocols and analytic ability to provide physician and nurse feedback. (Right: PeriGen participants gather before program.)



Dr. Pettker delivered the capstone address on “Crew Resource Management Best Practices.” Improving interdisciplinary communication between clinicians on the units can help to prevent untoward outcomes by allowing teams to develop common goals and anticipate the plan of care for mom and baby. According to Dr. Pettker, critical to the success of any patient safety program are strong leadership, dedicated resources, data analysis and feedback, and exceptional communication with clinical providers when implementing change.

As Dr. Garite summed up, “When the meconium hits the fan you don’t have time to communicate, so physicians, nurses, anesthesia, neonatology, and the patient must communicate in advance.”

Having Fun Saying Goodbye

Colleen Smith, RN, MSN, NEA-BC, Vice President of Nursing at Middlesex Hospital, is retiring this summer. To honor and surprise her at last week’s Nurses Week Dinner, Middlesex Hospital nurses and staff presented her with this [video](#), produced

while she was on vacation.

According to Nancy LaMonica, BSN., PCCN, nurse manager, who helped organize the video production, “We had to do this in only two takes because after all, we did have patients to care for. It was a lot of fun and a real morale booster. At Middlesex, we pride ourselves on teamwork and just about every department participated in the video, including administration, and volunteers and family members were used as extras.”

Education Updates

Building the Quality Foundation, Tuesday, May 24, 8:30 a.m. - noon

As healthcare reform continues to make clear, everyone must be involved in quality improvement and patient safety. This introductory course is designed to provide all hospital administrative, operational, clinical, and support staff with the fundamental knowledge and practical tools needed to build and sustain a culture of quality and patient safety.

Participants will gain a working knowledge of common quality terms, explore how organizational culture either permits or prevents errors, why being on the sharp end of healthcare delivery is difficult when a mistake happens, and how to avoid communication breakdown – cited as the number one sentinel event reported to The Joint Commission. This presentation will review how to build performance improvement teams, develop measures of improvement, and use evidence-based practices to investigate errors and learn from defects. Concepts and methods to improve hand-off communication will be introduced, including briefings, rounding, huddles, and other practical tools.

Alison Hong, MD, CHA's Interim Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety, will be the program's speaker.

This activity has been approved for 3.25 CPHQ continuing education credits from the National Association for Healthcare Quality, 3.25 category II credits from the American College of Healthcare Executives, and 3.25 Physician CMEs.

Click [here](#) for the brochure. Click [here](#) to register.

Sexual Harassment Prevention, Wednesday, May 25, 9:00 a.m. - noon

Connecticut law requires employers with 50 or more employees to provide training and education on the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace to all supervisory employees within six months of their hire or assignment to a supervisory position. Beyond the legal requirement, employers realize that it makes good business sense to train their supervisory staffs, and sends a clear message that respect for others is a foundational value of leaders in creating a high-performance work environment.

This program provides a practical, application-oriented, and cost-effective way for newly appointed supervisors and managers to fulfill the mandatory state training requirement. The format is highly interactive and uses group discussion, a video, examples, and case studies to teach participants how to recognize and deal with sexual harassment. Participants will learn the types of behavior that constitute sexual harassment, how to conduct an appropriate investigation into complaints of misconduct—a process that protects the rights of all parties involved, and how to take appropriate action to prevent serious problems in the organization including poor morale, absenteeism, turnover, and costly lawsuits. The format is highly interactive and uses group discussion, a video, examples, and case studies to teach participants how to recognize and take action to prevent sexual harassment.

This program has met the HR Certification Institute's criteria to be pre-approved for recertification credit (3.0 credit hours).

Click [here](#) for the brochure, and [here](#) to register.

Leaping from Staff to Management: You're a Manager. Now What?, Thursday, June 9, 8:30 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Making the transition from being a staff person one day to a supervisor/manager the next is a significant step for nearly everyone. Taking on a leadership role is far more challenging and complicated than ever before. Once you have met the challenge of simply getting oriented to what it means to be a manager/leader, you will discover that you carry the responsibility for meeting the demands of your organization for high productivity combined with financial prudence and regulatory compliance. You will discover that those tasks must be balanced with an excellent grasp of human relations skills in working closely and collaboratively with others. This program has been designed to get you started by exploring the basics of management and leadership in theory and applied practice, and to lay the groundwork for continued development of your leadership and management skills.

The program's speaker, Victor Walton, MA, is a professional educator, speaker, trainer, and leadership consultant to organizations throughout the United States. He has a deep personal involvement and interest in the professional, personal growth, and development of people in changing organizations. Participants who have attended this program in the past

routinely rate Vic as an outstanding speaker who offers practical approaches to effective leadership.

Click [here](#) for the brochure, and [here](#) to register.

Connecticut Hospital Association is an Approved Provider of Continuing Nursing Education by the Connecticut Nurses' Association, an Accredited Approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation (6.25 contact hours). This program has been approved for Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT and meets the continuing education criteria for CT Social Work Licensure renewal (6.25 credit hours). This program has met the HR Certification Institute's criteria to be pre-approved for recertification credit (6.25 credit hours).

HIPAA Privacy and Records Release, Friday, June 10, 9:00 a.m. – noon

Protection of medical information in all forms has always been an important responsibility for healthcare providers. Given the financial, legal, and reputational risks associated with using sophisticated technology to process personal health information—along with increased governmental scrutiny of how the transition from paper to electronic health record is being handled, it is imperative that hospital staff in all areas, at all levels understand federal and state laws and regulations related to medical information.

This half-day program is designed as a refresher course on the HIPAA Privacy rule, and will cover the Connecticut framework for record release and disclosure requirements; media requests, social media, and advertising privacy issues; handling highly sensitive data (e.g., HIV, mental health, substance abuse treatment data); law enforcement requests; and distinctions based on setting (clinic, physician practice, skilled nursing, etc.)

Participants will learn what the law requires, and practical steps that should be taken to improve privacy and security policies and procedures in their organizations.

The session will be presented by Jennifer Cox of Cox & Osowiecki, LLC, a Hartford law firm representing healthcare institutions and providers in regulatory, litigation, licensing, and business matters.

Click [here](#) for the brochure, and click [here](#) to register.