



Thursday, January 18, 2018

[Printer-Friendly Version](#)

#### In This Issue:

[Connecticut Hospitals Launch Test Project to Focus on Social Determinants of Health](#)

[Governor Vetoes Medicare Savings Plan Fix](#)

[Special Election Scheduled](#)

[Influenza Widespread in Connecticut](#)

[Education Update](#)

[Update Archives](#)

### Connecticut Hospitals Launch Test Project to Focus on Social Determinants of Health

Four Connecticut hospitals have begun testing ways to find out if patients have needs related to housing, employment, food insecurity, and transportation – factors that are not traditionally part of medical care but have significant impact on health – and refer them to appropriate resources.

The screening and referral work will be conducted at Bristol Hospital, Day Kimball Hospital, MidState Medical Center, and Saint Mary's Hospital as part of a Connecticut Hospital Association initiative to identify ways to address the social determinants of health for hospital patients. The Connecticut Social Health Initiative project is funded by a grant from the Connecticut Health Foundation.

"Hospitals are in a unique position to assess patients' needs at the point of care. Testing different approaches will help us learn the most effective ways hospitals can refer people to critical resources, which is the ultimate goal of the project," said Jennifer Jackson, CEO, CHA. "We are pleased to work in collaboration with the Connecticut Health Foundation on this project."

"We know that housing, transportation, food security, and other social factors have a big influence on patients' health outcomes, so it's important that identifying these needs become part of medical care," said Tiffany Donelson, Vice President of Program at the Connecticut Health Foundation. "By testing different approaches to identifying these needs in health care settings, Connecticut hospitals will be able to determine what models are most effective and how to best incorporate them into their care."

The information gathered will be used to determine the most effective approach to identify patient needs and connect patients to services, as well as the feasibility of applying the approach more broadly.

Social determinants of health, which comprise social, behavioral, and environmental influences, account for 60 percent of a person's health. Genetics and healthcare comprise the other 40 percent, according to McGinnis et al., (2002). According to experts, addressing social determinants of health will result in better health outcomes and will improve population health.

McGinnis, J. M., Williams-Russo, P., & Knickman, J. R. (2002). The case for more active policy attention to health promotion. *Health Affairs* (Millwood), 21(2), 78-93.

### Governor Vetoes Medicare Savings Plan Fix

On Tuesday, January 16, Governor Dannel Malloy [vetoed HB 7601, An Act Concerning Adjustments To The State Budget Regarding The Medicare Savings Program And Eligibility Therefor](#), a recently passed bipartisan bill that reverses newly established eligibility standards for the Medicare Savings Program (MSP).

MSP provides financial assistance to low-income seniors to pay for their Medicare Part B premium. The new eligibility standards were passed as part of the FY 2018-2019 budget in an effort to save about \$54 million.

The Governor's veto comes after he independently delayed changes to the MSP for FY 2018 in an effort to get the General Assembly to take action on the \$220 million FY 18 deficit.

HB 7601 passed both the House and Senate with a veto-proof margin, and the General Assembly will have the opportunity to override the Governor's veto prior to the start of the 2018 Legislative Session, which begins on February 7, 2018. However, at time of publication, legislative leaders had not confirmed nor scheduled a vote on a veto override.

### Special Election Scheduled



On Friday, January 12, Secretary of the State Denise Merrill received a Writ of Special Election from Governor Dannel Malloy, calling for a Special Election to be held on Tuesday, February 27, 2018. The Special Election is being held to fill the House of Representatives seat vacated as a result of the resignation of State Representative Laura Hoydick (R-Stratford) who was elected Mayor in November.

The 120th House District covers the town of Stratford.

Under state law, the Governor is required to issue a Writ of Special Election within ten days of a vacancy in the General Assembly, and a special election must take place 46 days after its issuance.

The winner of the Special Election in February will serve the remainder of the term, which runs until January 2019. The Governor's writ can be found [here](#).

## Influenza Widespread in Connecticut



Influenza cases have been rising across the nation and here in Connecticut. The Connecticut Department of Public Health is reporting that flu cases are now widespread across the state.

Statewide ED visits attributed to the “fever/flu syndrome” are at 7.4 percent, which is well above the level of five percent statewide, generally considered the minimum threshold when there are elevated influenza-associated ED visits. There have been 15 flu-associated deaths, and 456 hospitalizations due to the flu so far this season.

The predominant influenza viruses identified so far this season are Type A, although there is a small percentage of Type B influenza viruses in circulation.

Vaccination is a best practice for patient and healthcare worker safety. In 2011, the CHA Board adopted a statewide policy endorsing mandatory influenza vaccination for hospital personnel as part of CHA hospitals' commitment to patient safety. To date, the vast majority of acute care CHA member hospitals in Connecticut have implemented a mandatory participation or mandatory vaccination program.

CHA is participating in the fourth-annual *United Against the Flu* campaign, which uses social media outreach to bring national attention to the need for flu vaccinations. United Against the Flu is a collaborative effort undertaken by several national healthcare organizations, including the American Hospital Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to emphasize the importance of being vaccinated.

## Education Update

### Decreasing Early Elective Deliveries

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

In partnership with CHA, the March of Dimes, and the Anthem Foundation, the Improving kNowledge to Decreasing Early Elective Deliveries (INDEED) project is working to decrease the average early elective delivery rate of 3% in Connecticut—which is above the national average of 2%. CHA's Connecticut Perinatal Quality Collaborative is pleased to offer a conference on January 23 providing best practices to achieve this goal.

This conference is designed for prenatal care providers, obstetricians, labor and delivery nurses, and others who work with this patient population.

### Prematurity Prevention: Increasing the Utilization of 17-Hydroxyprogesterone and Low Dose Aspirin Among Eligible Pregnant Patients in Connecticut

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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Premature birth is a complex issue, for which many of the causes are still being researched. However, there are a handful of evidence-based interventions that have proven beneficial for a great number of eligible patients. Join CHA's Connecticut Perinatal Quality Collaborative and the March of Dimes to engage with other prenatal care providers, women's healthcare advocates, support systems, administrators, and policy makers across Connecticut to work collaboratively to increase identification of women at risk for preeclampsia and repeat pre-term birth, and collectively inform efforts aimed at the elimination of barriers to access these treatments.

Jay Iams, MD, Emeritus Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Ohio State University, Wexner Medical Center, Obstetrical Lead, Ohio Perinatal Quality Collaborative, Principal Investigator, OSU NICHD Maternal Fetal Medicine and Nullipara Research Networks, will present the keynote presentation at this conference.

17-hydroxyprogesterone (17P) and low dose aspirin are among the eight interventions promoted nationally by the March of Dimes, with an aim to reduce the U.S. pre-term birth rate to 8.1% by 2020 and 5.5% by 2030.

### 2018 Joint Commission Standards and National Patient Safety Goals Update

Wednesday, January 31, 2018

9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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National expert Diana Scott, Sr. Director, Vizient, will present CHA's annual full-day program outlining The Joint Commission's new standards and national patient safety goals for 2018 and challenges from 2017 with strategies for compliance. Ms. Scott will also review survey process changes, patient safety and Sentinel Event alerts and tips, and CMS focus areas, as well as best practices for a successful survey. CHA is also pleased to have Mark A. Crafton, MPA, MT(ASCP), Executive Director of State & External Relations, at The Joint Commission (TJC), and Jennifer M. Hoppe, MPH, Senior Associate Director, State and External Relations at TJC, join the

program. Their presentations will include an overview of the new process for surveyors to determine the severity of non-compliance with all accreditation and certification requirements, and a new report format that will more clearly illustrate priority issues impacting patient safety. Attendees will also receive information on compliance data on challenging accreditation standards in Connecticut hospitals.

### **Lean Principles: Project Charter Preparation and Planning**

Thursday, February 1, 2018

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

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Lean principles and methodology are valuable in improving healthcare, but evidence shows that learning about the principles and methodology is simply not enough. To get the desired results, the principles must be applied. This program—a follow-up to CHA's two-part Lean Principles: Process Flow and Value Stream Mapping in Healthcare—provides an overview of the methodology and tools needed for planning process improvement initiatives.

This is a “how to make it happen session” and will explain (and provide examples of) the elements of an effective project charter, a prerequisite to any successful improvement initiative. When properly prepared, the charter focuses the team on the business case, problems, objectives, outcomes, and is a major factor in preventing project scope creep.

Participants are asked to bring with them a process improvement opportunity currently under consideration at their facility, enabling them to create a draft charter as part of their actionable plan toward their process improvement initiative.

NOTE: This program is designed for those who attended CHA's *Lean Principles: Process Flow and Value Stream Mapping in Healthcare*—or those with a basic understanding of Lean principles and familiarity with the terminology. Clinical leaders, operational managers, continuous improvement coordinators, and other change agents will benefit from learning this methodology to plan team-oriented improvement initiatives.

