Hospitals Testify in Opposition to Governor's Budget

On Friday, February 22, hospital leaders from across the state gathered at the Legislative Office Building (LOB) in Hartford to voice unified opposition to the Governor's biennium budget proposal—a proposal that cuts more than $550 million from hospitals over the next two years. Nearly all Connecticut hospitals provided testimony during the six-hour hearing before members of the Appropriations Committee. Testimony has been published by the state and can be viewed [here](#). Read the testimony of Stephen Frayne, Senior Vice President, Health Policy, CHA, [here](#).

During the public hearing, hospital leaders stressed that the cuts proposed by the Governor, if allowed to pass, would have a devastating impact on the state's healthcare safety net. Testimony covered a wide range of challenges affecting hospitals, patients, and communities, including the impact of the proposed cuts on services and people, the potential cuts hospitals will be forced to make to needed services, the vulnerability of the hospital sector right now with major federal funding changes, the impact of the hospital tax, the particular risk to behavioral health services, workforce supply issues, the reality of hospital losses caring for Medicaid and Medicaid Low Income Adult (MLIA) patients, and the impact of the cost shift on Connecticut employers and employees. The hospital community was joined by members of the business community who testified on behalf of their Chambers of Commerce in opposition to the proposed cuts to hospital funding.

Subcommittees of the Appropriations Committee will now meet to provide an in-depth review of budget items under their purview. If you haven't already done so, we urge you to click [here](#) to write to your legislators on the budget issue.
Hospital Leaders Meet With Congressional Delegation in Washington

On February 26, Connecticut hospital leaders and CHA met with Connecticut’s congressional delegation in Washington, D.C., during the AHA Advocacy Day. The important advocacy event was a critical forum to address proposed cuts at the state and federal levels.

Hospital leaders included Dianne Auger, Senior Vice President, St. Vincent’s Medical Center; Ray Baldwin, President and CEO of St. Vincent’s Special Needs Services, St. Vincent’s Medical Center; Kyle Ballou, Administrative Director, Community & Government Relations, Yale-New Haven Hospital; Marna Borgstrom, President and CEO, Yale New Haven Health System, and CEO, Yale-New Haven Hospital; R. Christopher Hartley, Sr. VP Planning & Facilities Development, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center; Peter Karl, President and CEO, Eastern Connecticut Health Network; Pam Koprowski, Corporate Director of Public Affairs, Stamford Hospital; and Dan McIntyre, President and Executive Director, The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital.

They met with Sens. Chris Murphy and Richard Blumenthal and Reps. Elizabeth Esty (CT-5), Joe Courtney (CT-2), John Larson (CT-1), and Rosa DeLauro (CT-3), presenting a unified message from hospitals about the need for stable funding during a time of rapid change in healthcare.

In each meeting, hospital leaders and Congressional delegation members engaged in a discussion about the impact sequestration would have on hospitals and healthcare, the importance of continued medical education funding, and the severe funding cuts hospitals will face if Governor Malloy’s budget passes as is.

Crisis at the Hospitals – Special Broadcast on WDRC Radio

On Monday, February 25, WDRC’s Brad Davis radio show hosted a special broadcast, “Crisis at the Hospitals,” featuring a live discussion with Darlene Stromstad, President and CEO, Waterbury Hospital; Kimberly Lumia, President and CEO, Sharon Hospital; Kurt Barwis, President and CEO, Bristol Hospital; David Morgan, President and CEO, Johnson Memorial Hospital; Dr. Michael Marks, President, Norwalk Hospital Physicians and Surgeons and VP, Business Development, Norwalk Hospital; and R. Christopher Hartley, Sr. VP, Planning & Facilities Development, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

Calling the Governor’s proposed budget a “crisis” for hospitals, Brad Davis told listeners that “something has to be done… If there are priorities,
healthcare is number one. It's got to be. Where are any of us if we are not healthy?"

Mr. Hartley discussed how hospitals are there to care for Connecticut residents 24 hours a day, no matter the conditions. “In the past year three years, Connecticut has seen its fair share of severe weather with Hurricanes Irene, Sandy, and Winter Storm Alfred,” he said. "During multiple times of lengthy power outages, hospitals served as emergency shelters by feeding, sheltering, and keeping large numbers of people safe. Hospitals became the only large refuge of last resort during these storms, proving they are viable and functional facilities that are there for the community 24/7."

Dr. Marks said, “Hospitals exist to ease the pain of patients who are very ill or very hurt. Now we are asking our patients to advocate to ease the pain of the extraordinary financial hardship the Governor is trying to impose on our hospitals.”

Hospitals discussed how, if the cuts go through, services that lose money will be looked at first for possible elimination. These are mainly extrinsic programs that keep communities healthier by offering preventive care and care for the needy, so peoples’ health problems don’t reach the point where hospital care is required. Cutting such services will result in more hospital emergency room visits and a sicker population overall.

“We are in the midst of reform,” said Ms. Stromstad. “We want to be leaders in change, but if we have to face these cuts, we can’t help our community be all it can be in the future.”

Panelists discussed how the state is training the next generation of medical staff and needs people to stay in Connecticut; job loss as a result of the proposed cuts will discourage students and cause them to look elsewhere for employment.

Ms. Lumia said Sharon Hospital is already as tightly staffed as possible, and additional staffing changes would alter nurse-to-patient ratios—overstretching nurses and affecting patients.

“We need the public to call their delegation, take action, and be a part of this,” said Kurt Barwis. “Look at the economic vibrancy hospitals bring. Hospitals are the fabric of this state.”

“It's up to us. It's up to our citizens. It's up to our legislature,” added Mr. Morgan. "We will be walking over a cliff together."

At the end of the 90-minute program, Brad Davis reminded listeners that hospitals treat all comers, whether they can afford to pay or not. “[Hospitals] don’t look at people as poor,” he said. “They look at them all the same – as patients.”

Visit www.protectmyhospitalct.org to see how cuts would hurt each hospital, and to write to your legislators. You can listen to the program by clicking on the links below:

Brad Davis Hospital Special - Part 1
Brad Davis Hospital Special - Part 2
Brad Davis Hospital Special - Part 3
Brad Davis Hospital Special - Part 4
Brad Davis Hospital Special - Part 5

CHA Submits Testimony on Healthcare Bills

This week, CHA submitted testimony on numerous bills of interest to hospitals and the healthcare community.

On Tuesday, February 26, CHA provided testimony to the Human Services Committee in opposition to HB 6367, An Act Implementing The Governor’s Budget Recommendations For Human Services Programs. Among other provisions, HB 6367 does not include an annual market basket update as is standard practice in the Medicare program. It uses an emergency regulation procedure for a non-emergency situation. It does not have a multi-year transition from the current system to the new, nor does it require that the transition be budget neutral. Additionally, in several instances it gives the Department of Social Services unfettered authority to make adjustments for utilization. Also of interest to hospitals, HB 6367 proposes the elimination of the Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council.

On Wednesday, February 27, CHA provided testimony on four legislative proposals before the Public Health Committee. CHA testified in opposition to HB 6000, An Act Concerning Complaints About Patient Care In Hospitals. CHA testified in opposition to HB 5445, An Act Concerning Certificates Of Need For PedCAT Imaging Equipment. CHA testified in opposition to SB 361, An Act Concerning Certificate Of Need Requirements For Medical Devices, Equipment And New Technology. CHA provided testimony in support of HB 6004, An Act Concerning Health Care Services For The Uninsured At Community Hospitals, a bill that seeks to provide healthcare services to those who cannot afford to pay for the services and for those who are uninsured.
At CHA Summit, Healthcare Leaders Address Unprecedented Change

Nearly 80 hospital leaders attended the CHA 2013 Healthcare Executive Summit on February 26. The program focused on the unprecedented strategic and operational challenges triggered by health reform that healthcare leaders must address.

Delivering a thought-provoking keynote session, Rob Reilly, Chief Marketing Officer, GE Healthcare, examined emerging new healthcare models based on the pressures of massive provider consolidation, rapid growth in consumerism, the care setting shift outside hospitals, and intense reimbursement pressure. He discussed GE’s perspective on the threats and opportunities it faces to provide health benefits to its 600,000 employees, while managing almost $3 billion in health-related costs. Finally, Mr. Reilly explained GE’s solutions for managing employee healthcare.

Susan Keane Baker, author and nationally recognized speaker, presented HCAHPS and Willingness to Recommend: What Senior Leadership Can Do Next. She discussed tangible actions senior leaders can take to improve HCAHPS rankings including how to create consistently memorable patient experiences, engage and involve the workforce, and encourage questions and concerns.

Joint Commission President to be Keynote Speaker at CHA Patient Safety Summit

Please join us for the eleventh annual Patient Safety Summit on Friday, March 8, 2013. The Summit will mark the first anniversary of the start of CHA’s statewide initiative to eliminate all cause preventable harm using high reliability science to create a culture of safety. The Summit will feature keynote speaker Mark R. Chassin, MD, FACP, MPP, MPH, President of The Joint Commission. In this role, Dr. Chassin oversees the activities of the nation’s predominant standards-setting and accrediting body in healthcare. The Joint Commission is endorsing the use of high reliability science in hospitals.

Dr. Chassin is also president of the Joint Commission Center for Transforming Healthcare. Established in 2009 under Dr. Chassin’s leadership, the Center works to address healthcare’s most critical safety and quality problems including healthcare-associated infection (HAI), hand-off communications, wrong site surgery, and preventing avoidable heart failure hospitalizations. In keeping with its objective to transform healthcare into a high reliability industry, The Joint Commission is sharing proven effective solutions with the more than 20,000 healthcare organizations and programs it accredits and certifies.

Continuing education credits will be awarded. Please see the brochure for details. The program is co-sponsored with Qualidigm.

Connecticut Hospital Safety Leaders to Participate in Second National Fellowship

In collaboration with CHA, champions of quality improvement from Connecticut hospitals have been invited to participate in the 2013 Improvement Leader Fellowships offered by the Health Research & Educational Trust (HRET), the not-for-profit research and educational arm of the American Hospital Association.

The fellowship program, held in Chicago, will teach the science of improvement, measurement, and culture/teamwork to build a cadre of front-line improvement leaders armed with best practices to engage their teams, overcome challenges, and spread sustainable improvement strategies. More than 40 leaders from Connecticut hospitals participated in the 2012 fellowship.

The HRET Improvement Leader Fellowship program is part of Partnership for Patients, a national initiative designed to reduce preventable inpatient harm by 40 percent and readmissions by 20 percent. Partnership for Patients is being conducted by CHA in partnership with HRET. All Connecticut acute care hospitals are involved in this program.
Connecticut Receives SIMS Grant

Connecticut has been awarded a State Health Care Innovation Model Design grant, and will receive up to $2,852,335 over the next six months to develop its State Health Care Innovation Plan. The state will collaborate with public and private stakeholders to design a transformed healthcare delivery system that incorporates promotion of integrated care models, use of the Health Insurance Exchange to inform and connect consumers to coverage, expanded supply of primary care physicians and other professionals, and increased engagement among regulators, providers, and consumers.

CHA supported the state’s grant application, writing in a September letter to Governor Malloy, “The grant will provide the opportunity for the state to develop a much needed high-value, integrated plan for delivery system reform and transition. This type of reform requires full stakeholder participation – government, providers, payers, employers, patients, and community members – in all aspects of development and implementation. Connecticut is in the unique position to continue and enhance already existing collaborations in the state. With federal support and collaboration, we will be able to move from having a vision to actually achieving the improved well-being of all Connecticut residents.”

The State Health Care Innovation Plan will result in a payment and delivery system model that advances alignment across multiple payers on contracting and payment strategies that promote value over volume, allows for consistency in quality and other performance metrics, and expands primary care.

Read more here.

Education Updates

Cross Cultural and Diversity Inclusiveness Training
Monday, March 11, 2013
9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

In partnership with the Hispanic Health Council, CHA is again pleased to offer Cross Cultural & Diversity Inclusiveness Training (CC&DIT)—a unique, comprehensive, and interactive program to achieve the goal of improving cultural competence in the delivery of care and addressing healthcare disparities. The CC&DIT curriculum was developed in direct response to member requests for help in providing diversity education and is structured as a two-module program, each session five hours in duration—delivered once each week over a two week period. Training content is based on current research that emphasizes the idea that cultural competence is not achieved through a single training event—but is a lifelong commitment to learning, and professional skills development. Diversity Collaborative team members are encouraged to attend as a way to help achieve the team goals in their organization. The second session date is Monday, March 18th.

Continuing education credits will be awarded. Please see the brochure for details.

View Brochure | Event Registration

Conflict Prevention and Management
Thursday, March 21, 2013
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

It is clear to almost everyone that conflict is inevitable in life—in our personal lives as well as in the workplace. Different personalities, different work styles, cultural/ethnic norms, and differences in generational mix, all lead to an endless possibility of conflict surfacing at work. What is not so clear, is the role conflict plays in the process of change and effective team problem solving—both major factors in improving organization performance. How can we recognize and manage the sources and trigger points of conflict? When is conflict healthy—what makes it destructive? How can we reduce or defuse unnecessary conflict? What are the various styles of dealing with conflict, and the risks and benefits of each approach?

Continuing education credits will be awarded. Please see the brochure for details.

View Brochure | Event Registration

Coaching Skills to Improve Performance
Friday, March 22, 2013
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

What does it take for a manager to be an effective coach? Is there a difference between managing and coaching employees for improved performance? Building trust, appreciating differences, encouraging growth, providing constructive criticism, and overcoming roadblocks to goal achievement are all part of the process.
Continuing education credits will be awarded. Please see the brochure for details.

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