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Enthusiastic and Energized Crowd Turns Out for Hospital Day



Hundreds of nurses, doctors, and other employees from Connecticut's hospitals gathered yesterday in Hartford to put a face and a name on both the lifesaving care they provide to patients and the devastating impact of the state's cuts and taxes on hospitals.

The groups of people clad in hospital scrubs who converged on the Capitol for Hospital Day on March 16 brought not only their commitment to patients but a strongly worded message for the lawmakers who work under the gold dome: We need your support.

The event, which is sponsored by CHA, was attended by representatives from hospitals and systems including Bristol Hospital, Day Kimball Hospital, Griffin Hospital, Hartford HealthCare, The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, Johnson Memorial Hospital, Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, St. Mary's Hospital, Western Connecticut Health Network, and Yale New Haven Health System.

The enthusiastic turnout for Hospital Day was reflective of the dire situation hospitals find themselves in this year, many said. Not only are hospitals reeling under a \$556 million annual provider tax, but Governor Dannel Malloy has suspended nearly \$140 million in Medicaid payments due to hospitals this fiscal year. Worse, the suspension of those funds comes after years of declining state Medicaid reimbursement payments.

Hospital employees waited outside of hearing rooms to meet with their lawmakers, participated in the taping of a new commercial for CHA's advocacy campaign, attended a packed press conference, and even spoke with Gov. Malloy. Yale New Haven Health System brought members of its Patient and Family Advisory Council, who spoke to lawmakers about their opposition to the cuts and about their personal connection to the care provided by the system's hospitals.

Lawmakers listened to their constituents and expressed concern about the harm the state is doing to the healthcare sector in Connecticut and to patients. The large group from Day Kimball Hospital, led by President Robert Smanik, found support from their delegation – Republican Senator Tony Guglielmo, Democratic Senator Mae Flexer, and state Representatives Christine Randall (D-44) and Daniel Roverso (D-51). "We feel like we're on this journey with you," said Sen. Flexer to Mr. Smanik. "We fought so hard in December to restore this funding. It's just beyond frustrating, and I'm angry."

Rep. Randall said Day Kimball, which is located in Putnam, described the hospital as the Quiet Corner's own GE. "If we lose you, it would be devastating," Rep. Randall said, explaining that the jobs and services the hospital provides are invaluable to the people who live in the area. For the nurses and doctors who came to the Capitol, the support from lawmakers like Flexer and others is seen as crucial to their ability to care for patients.

Laura Sheriden, RN, a behavioral health nurse, and Jeanne Ring, RN, a nurse in ambulatory surgery – both from Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center – talked about their concerns while waiting to meet with Deputy Speaker Peggy Sayers (D-60). For Ms. Sheriden, the main concern is that budget tightening has meant fewer nurses to take care of a growing population of patients. For Ms. Ring, it's the worry that nurses will no longer receive the education they need to stay abreast of current best practices in their field. "We learn a new technique every two or three weeks. We have to stay on top of that. We take care of patients when they can't speak for themselves," said Ms. Ring. "It's definitely a patient safety issue."



Hospital Day Press Conference Draws Bipartisan Legislative Support



Mother Tina Ragland speaks to the crowd.

Approximately 35 lawmakers from both sides of the aisle stood up with hospital employees from across Connecticut yesterday as they called on Governor Malloy to release funding that is critical to patient care and to appropriately fund hospitals.

The bipartisan support on display during CHA's March 16 press conference at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford comes at a critical time for hospitals, as cuts and delays in payment of Medicaid funding and a \$556 annual provider tax continue to eat away at the financial viability of the healthcare system.

Of particular concern to hospitals is the Governor's decision to suspend about \$140 million in Medicaid payments to hospitals that are due this fiscal year. Combined with hospitals' continuing obligation to pay the provider tax, hospital officials said, the shortfall in Medicaid reimbursement threatens to damage the state's healthcare system.

Lawmakers who attended the event said they are prepared to fight for hospitals during this legislative session.

Democratic State Rep. Cathy Abercrombie, who serves as House Chair of the Human Services Committee and Subcommittee Chair of the Appropriations Committee, said she is prepared to support legislation proposed by CHA that would allow hospitals to deduct unpaid Medicaid reimbursements from their provider tax obligations.

"We're going to put some meaning behind our words. If we don't pay you what we owe you, you don't pay us what you owe us," said Rep. Abercrombie, to loud applause.

Senate Minority Leader Len Fasano, and House Minority Leader Themis Klarides, also spoke in support of hospitals. Sen. Fasano said bipartisan efforts are the key to getting hospitals the money they are owed. He urged hospitals to continue lobbying for what they need.

"It's very, very important that you come to this building like you did today," Sen. Fasano said.

The support was appreciated by the patients, employees, and hospital administrators at the press conference Wednesday, who spoke of deep concerns about the future of healthcare in Connecticut.

Stuart Rosenberg, President of Johnson Memorial Hospital, said the state's failure to pay means his hospital will lose nearly \$5 million – which includes eliminating the small hospital fund, and it will devastate "the very safety net our hospital offers to the communities we serve."

"Johnson Memorial Hospital believes in a vibrant future for the healthcare industry in this state, but that future can only be achieved if state leaders invest in that future rather than tear down existing healthcare infrastructure on which that future must be built," Mr. Rosenberg said. "We know the state is facing a challenging budget, but we have already been cut and taxed so significantly that it is hurting patient care, access, jobs, and our economy."

Pat Charmel, President and Chief Executive Officer of Griffin Hospital, said the state is boxing the hospitals into a corner with the combined impact of the provider tax, dwindling Medicaid reimbursement, and a new executive order that postpones some hospital mergers and acquisitions while a task force studies the issue.

"Add up the numbers yourself," Mr. Charmel said. "It's not sustainable. Every single day hospitals in Connecticut are losing money. Now we have a moratorium that says hospitals can't merge. If you take away their profits, and you diminish their cash balances, they have no way to survive unless there's an infusion, but you've taken away that ability as well. Help me understand what we're supposed to do?"

Lorraine Salavec, RN, Director for the Emergency Department at Norwalk Hospital, said the financial burden being placed on hospitals by the state impacts patients because it will reduce access to crucial services.

"I am very concerned about access to prevention and primary care programs as a result of these cuts as we are forced to cut back on screenings and outreach," said Ms. Salavec. "I am worried for the pregnant woman, who will deliver early because she didn't get prenatal care. Instead, she will deliver a preemie at great risk and expense."

The most moving plea came from Tina Ragland, a young mother from Southeastern Connecticut whose 10-year-old daughter had a severe asthma attack.

"What happened was that the doctors and nurses at L-and-M Hospital saved her life," said Ms. Ragland. "Laniah's heart stopped for nine minutes and, amazingly, they stabilized her, and then they Life Stared her over to Yale-New Haven Hospital so they could take care of her there."

Within three days, her daughter sat up and asked for an orange popsicle and today, Ms. Ragland said, she's healthy.

"We're here today talking about cuts and taxes. But for me, this is very personal. If my hospital doesn't have enough staff, my daughter might not have made it," said Ms. Ragland. "We are talking about the people we trust in our hour of need."

Insurance Committee Holds Final Public Hearing

This week, the Insurance and Real Estate Committee held its final public hearing, and CHA testified on two bills of interest to the hospital community. On Tuesday, March 15, CHA provided testimony in support of:

- **SB 372, An Act Concerning Clinical Review Criteria For Utilization Review And Adverse Determination Notices**, a bill that specify certain clinical review criteria health carriers may use for utilization review for the treatment of a substance use disorder or the treatment of a child, adolescent, or adult mental disorder, (2) require health carriers to post clinical review criteria on their Internet web sites, and (3) require that an adverse determination notice include a reference to the specific rule, guideline, protocol, or other criterion the health carrier relied upon to make the adverse determination. Read CHA's testimony [here](#).
- **HB 5620, An Act Concerning Insurance Coverage For Opioid Analgesics And Requiring A Study Of Impediments To Insurance Coverage For Substance Use Disorder Treatments**. HB 5620 would, among other provisions, require the Insurance Commissioner to study impediments for insureds to receive substance use disorder treatment. Read CHA's testimony [here](#).

Seven Weeks Remain In Legislative Session



With seven weeks remaining in the legislative session, lawmakers are still actively working on legislative proposals that are winding their way through committee. With all but a few committees still holding public hearings, lawmakers are currently determining which bills will be advanced and which bills will remain in committee, thus effectively "killing" them this session.

Beginning this week, several committees of importance to the hospital and healthcare communities will meet their "JF Deadline," – the day by which each committee must take action on bills or resolutions for further consideration by other committees or the full General Assembly.

On Tuesday, March 15, the General Law, Higher Education and Employment Advancement, and Public Safety and Security Committees met their JF Deadlines. Today, March 17, the Insurance And Real Estate and the Labor and Public Employees Committees will meet their JF Deadlines, and tomorrow, March 18, the Environment and Transportation Committees will meet their JF Deadlines.

Additional committees will meet their JF Deadlines in the coming weeks. The Public Health Committee's JF Deadline is March 23. The last committees to reach their JF Deadline include the Appropriations Committee on March 31 and the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee on April 1.

Legislative activity will center on Senate and House floor debate once all committees have reached their JF Deadlines. The 2016 Legislative Session ends on Wednesday, May 4.

First-Term State Representative Will Not Seek Reelection



State Representative Paul Brycki (D-Griswold) announced this week that he will not seek re-election as representative of the 45th District.

First elected in 2014, Rep. Brycki is a life-long resident of Griswold. He has served in public office for nearly 20 years, including 12 years as the First Selectman of Griswold. He is currently the Executive Director of the Griswold Housing Authority and a member of the Connecticut NAHRO (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials).

Rep. Brycki currently serves on the Finance, Revenue and Bonding, Commerce, and Housing Committees. The 45th House District includes the towns of Griswold, Lisbon, Plainfield, Sterling, and Voluntown.

Join Us for the 14th Annual Patient Safety Summit



Please join us for CHA's 14th annual Patient Safety Summit, co-sponsored with Qualidigm and the Connecticut Association of Healthcare Executives, on March 24, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The 2016 Patient Safety Summit will offer multiple sessions and perspectives on worker safety and worker engagement—the next step on the High Reliability journey.

We are pleased to announce that Pamela F. Cipriano, PhD, President, American Nurses Association (ANA), will join us for a presentation on worker mobility issues, and Rachel Kaprielian, Regional Director U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, will share information on labor and workforce development.

The Summit will kickoff with Jerolyn Ireland's story. Ms. Ireland is a nurse who suffered harm at the hands of the healthcare system. Diagnosed with a benign meningioma in her brain, she suffered a MRSA infection and, subsequently, her hospital lost a piece of her skull.

The Summit will also include presentations on workplace safety initiatives under way in long-term care facilities in partnership with Qualidigm, and a closing presentation on worker safety from Jackie Conrad, Cynosure Health Solutions. Ms. Conrad is a consultant with AHA's Partnership for Patients HEN 2.0 collaborative.

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

CHA Annual Meeting Awards - Deadline Approaching



The CHA Annual Meeting awards deadline is next Friday, March 25, 2016.

The presentation of the awards is an important part of the CHA Annual Meeting and a valuable opportunity to showcase Connecticut hospital and staff achievements. Award applications/nominations are linked below.

The 2016 John D. Thompson Award for Excellence in the Delivery of Healthcare Through the Use of Data recognizes outstanding achievement in patient care quality initiatives. It is sponsored by CHA's education and research affiliate, the Connecticut Healthcare Research and Education Foundation (CHREF). All CHA acute care and other hospital members are encouraged to apply. Note: There is a two-year period of ineligibility for previous John D. Thompson Award winners. Click [here](#) for an application.

The 2016 Connecticut's Hospital Community Service Award is an excellent opportunity for recognition of outstanding achievements in community service. The award is sponsored jointly by CHA and the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH). Note: There is a three-year period of ineligibility for previous Community Service Award winners. Click [here](#) for an application.

CHA's Healthcare Heroes Awards celebrate the invaluable contributions of healthcare workers, both to their field and to the community at large. CHA is seeking nominations from both direct patient care and nonclinical areas of CHA member facilities. Ten healthcare heroes,

selected by a panel of judges, will be awarded a \$100 cash prize. Click [here](#) for an application.

All entries must be received by Friday, March 25, 2016. Winners will be honored at the CHA Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 28, 2016.

Education Updates

2016 CHA Regulatory Compliance Conference

Wednesday, April 6, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

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

Join us for CHA's Regulatory Compliance Conference, which will feature the keynote presentation "Lessons Learned: Hospitals, Hacktivists. Hindsight." This presentation by Daniel Nigrin, MD, Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Division of Endocrinology, Boston Children's Hospital, and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School, will describe the recent experience of Boston Children's following a hacktivist attack.

Following Dr. Nigrin's keynote address and continuing the theme of privacy and security, attorney Jennifer Cox, Cox & Osowiecki, will present a session on "Patient Access in the Electronic World." Additionally, attorneys from Wiggin and Dana and Yale-New Haven Hospital will share information on the use of personal recording devices by patients, providers, and visitors, as well as cover the new rulings on employees and social media rights. The Conference will conclude with a presentation on e-discovery by Kristen Connors, Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey, on the type of information potentially available to jurors regarding Facebook posts made by plaintiffs or defendants.

This Conference is specifically designed for compliance officers, risk managers, in-house legal counsel, and others interested in privacy, security, and the impact of social media.

Basics of Budgeting for Healthcare Managers

Friday, April 8, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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Many healthcare department managers have traditionally risen from the professional ranks as successful clinicians or technicians but with little or no formal business financial training. As a result, many are thrust into a chaotic environment without the necessary tools in financial management. Skills in planning and budgeting are essential if they are to achieve the institution's mission and contribute to "bottom line" results, particularly in an environment of chronic federal and state underfunding. In a very real sense, these represent survival skills for both managers and organizations. This member-requested management development program provides managers with the skills and tools they need to prepare better budgets, identify problems and solutions, achieve the mission, and succeed in today's volatile healthcare environment. Participants will gain a working knowledge of operating and capital budgets, as part of developing performance planning skills.

Making Healthcare Safer: An Introduction to High Reliability

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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

Making Healthcare Safer: An Introduction to High Reliability will provide CHA's colleagues who are vendors, patients, allied schools and students, and partner post-acute care facilities an overview of the concepts related to high reliability. The session will be held at CHA on Wednesday, April 13, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., taught by Steve Kreiser. The cost is \$250.00 per attendee, with special pricing of \$199 for CHA members and an additional \$50 discount (\$149 per person) if you register your hospital partners by April 1, 2016. Each full PSO member gets one free registration. What a wonderful opportunity to send your PFAC leaders for training!

HRO Leadership Method Training

Thursday, April 14, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

[Event Registration](#)

Leadership Method Training is for organizations that are new to high reliability or for new management employees in organizations that are already on the high reliability journey. Both hospital and ambulatory organization leadership practices will be addressed. The leadership session is designed to teach your hospital or ambulatory leaders the concepts of high reliability science and behaviors. The sessions are structured for leaders at the manager level and above. Medicine, Nursing, Quality, and Radiology continuing education credits are being offered for these sessions.

Creating Sustainability for High Reliability Organizations

Friday, April 15, 2016

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

[Event Registration](#)

This session is designed for drivers of change in your organization and covers techniques to ensure the changes resulting from high reliability approaches are ongoing. Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Safety Coach Training

Friday, April 15, 2016

1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

[Event Registration](#)

Safety Coaches are peer mentors, designed to recognize and acknowledge good high reliability behavior and to remind people about opportunities to improve behavior that does not stay true to high reliability concepts. Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

