Human Services and Public Health Committees Take Action on Bills

This week, the Human Services Committee and the Public Health Committee took action on a number of bills of interest to hospitals.

On March 24 the Human Services Committee met and voted to release with a JFS Report, HB 6550, An Act Concerning Medicaid Provider Audits, a bill supported by CHA and other healthcare providers across the state. HB 6550 would establish: clear parameters governing the use of extrapolation in Medicaid provider audits; specific minimum standards for statistical sampling, including a minimum error rate and types of statistical sampling that may be used; acceptable methods by which providers may challenge extrapolated findings of overpayment; and requirements concerning transparency, outreach, and education by the Department of Social Services to reduce provider errors.

The Committee also took action on other bills of interest to hospitals. Specifically, it referred to the Appropriations Committee HB 6846, An Act Implementing The Governor's Budget Recommendations For Human Services Programs. The Committee voted to release with a JFS report HB 6960, An Act Concerning Medicaid Prescriptions Written By Hospital Resident Physicians And Interns And The Implementation Of Electronic Health Record Standards, a CHA-proposed bill.

The Public Health Committee met three times this week to take action on a number of bills prior to its April 1 Joint Favorable (JF) reporting deadline. Specifically, the Committee voted to release with a Joint Favorable (JF) Report:

- SB 258, An Act Concerning Infant Safe Sleep Practices, a bill that would require hospitals to provide informational materials regarding recommended safe sleep practices for infants, including American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations concerning safe sleep practices, to parents after the birth of a child at the hospital.
- SB 954, An Act Concerning Transparency Of Executive Pay In Certain Hospital Transactions, a bill that would require additional transparency during certain hospital transactions, including financial disclosures by hospital leadership.
- HB 5907, An Act Concerning Notification To Emergency Medical Services Organizations Regarding Patients Diagnosed With An Infectious Disease, a bill that would expand the protections to emergency medical services personnel who may have been exposed to a potentially life-threatening infectious disease.
- HB 6938, An Act Concerning The Delivery Of Quality Health Care And Modernization Of Health Care Facilities, a bill that would require several state entities to study the feasibility of allowing hospital access to certain state programs and resources.
- HB 6281, An Act Concerning Organ And Tissue Donation Awareness, a bill that would allow for the establishment of an organ and tissue awareness donation fund that would be used by various organizations to promote organ and tissue donation awareness.
- HB 5782, An Act Authorizing Pharmacists To Dispense Or Administer Opioid Antagonists, a bill that would allow licensed pharmacists to dispense or administer opioid antagonists such as naloxone hydrochloride (naloxone or Narcan) to reverse the respiratory depression caused by opioid overdose.

The bills were referred to their respective chambers for further action.

The Committee also voted to release with a Joint Favorable Substitute (JFS) Report:

- SB 953, An Act Concerning Facility Fees, a bill that prohibits facility fees in certain circumstances. CHA continues to have concerns with SB 993.
- HB 5913, An Act Concerning Persons Who Decontaminate Reusable Medical Instruments Or Devices, a bill that would establish licensure requirements for persons who decontaminate, inspect, assemble or package and sterilize reusable medical instruments or devices in a healthcare facility.
- HB 6856, An Act Concerning Substance Abuse And Opioid Overdose Prevention, a bill that would implement the Governor's budget recommendations relating to substance abuse and opioid overdose prevention programs.

The Committee is scheduled to meet next on Friday, March 27, 2015. All CHA testimony can be accessed here.

CHA Op-Ed Highlights the Importance of Hospital Sustainability

On March 20, an op-ed from Jennifer Jackson, CEO, CHA, was published in the CT NewsJunkie. The piece,
Shaking the Foundation of Connecticut Hospitals, described how the proposed state budget currently under consideration by our legislature risks the high-quality care for patients that Connecticut’s hospitals provide.

Ms. Jackson described how the proposed cuts would harm patients, employees, businesses, and everyone in Connecticut’s communities. Moreover, proposed cuts to the mental health system would shred that safety net at the very time Connecticut residents are demanding improvements. She also described how additional proposed regulatory burdens would add more obstacles to providing access and high quality care.

In the op-ed, Ms. Jackson asked legislators to stop and re-examine the healthcare environment in our state, and take action to sustain it, rather than cut and tax hospitals and add regulatory burdens.

She encouraged members of the public to take a moment to support hospitals by sending a message to legislators at www.CareWeCanCountOn.org.

Take Action to Help Preserve Hospitals’ Property Tax Exemption

Connecticut hospitals and private colleges continue to have concerns about legislative proposals that would compel them to pay property tax. They have come together to oppose legislative proposals that would levy property taxes on newly acquired properties. HB 6965, An Act Concerning The Preservation Of Municipal Tax Bases, is a bill supported by House Speaker Brendan Sharkey (D-Hamden) that would allow municipalities to tax any real and personal property acquired after July 1, 2016 by not-for-profit hospitals, colleges/universities, free-standing chronic disease hospitals, and certain urgent care facilities.

Should this bill be made law, Connecticut would become the first state to levy property taxes on hospitals, and it could set a precedent that could open the door for the taxation of other not-for-profit organizations. Hospitals and other not-for-profit organizations have earned their tax exemption due to the nature of their mission. Patients, programs, and hospital employees will all be impacted if hospitals have to use their resources to pay taxes rather than invest those funds in patient access and quality of care.

You can take action by telling your legislators that hospitals, colleges, and other not-for-profit organizations should keep their property tax exemption. Click here, and then click on “advocacy campaign,” to take action.

Please contact Brian Cournoyer, CHA’s Director of Government Relations, at cournoyer@chime.org for additional information on the advocacy campaign.

Healthcare Leaders Honored at Black Heritage Ball

On March 21, leaders in Connecticut healthcare were honored at the Connecticut Black Heritage Ball, including three hospital leaders.

Marie M. Spivey, EdD, RN, Vice President, Health Equity, Connecticut Hospital Association, received a Lifetime Achievement Award for her leadership in healthcare and health equity. “It has been a great experience to work with hospitals throughout the state, to increase diversity in governance boards, and to foster hospital and community collaborations,” said Dr. Spivey.

Curtis D. Robinson, Founder of the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity at Saint Francis, received the Humanitarian Award for his work. The Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity partners with more than 30 faith-based and community organizations to provide patient education, early detection screenings, access to advanced treatment options, and continued support for men at risk for prostate cancer.

Ena M. Williams, RN, VP Patient Services and Associate Chief Nursing Officer, Yale-New Haven Hospital, received the Pioneer Award for her leadership in nursing and her lifelong dedication to patient care.

CHA congratulates the award winners.

CHA Annual Meeting Awards - Deadline Friday, March 27, 2015

The deadline for the CHA Annual Meeting awards entries is Friday, March 27, 2015. 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 2015 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.

The 2015 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.

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.

Winners will be honored at the CHA Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 30, 2015. If you have questions, please contact Michele Sharp at (203) 294-7213 or via e-mail at sharp@chime.org.
Education Updates

**Sterile Compounding: A Blueprint for Best Practices (for Hospital Engineers)**
Tuesday, March 31, 2015
8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
[View Brochure] [Event Registration]

This training—which is designed for hospital engineers—will include an explanation of current facility, environmental, and personnel metrics requirements for compounding sterile preparations in compliance with USP and the CETA Guidelines. A description of how primary and secondary engineering controls contribute to airflow velocity, direction, and ultimately ISO classification will also be provided.

Registration for this session includes access to CriticalPoint’s eLearning course Engineering Controls for Sterile Compounding. These two lessons and post tests must be completed by all participants prior to the scheduled training. *Login information will be e-mailed to all registrants.

This live-training session has been approved for 3.5 Contact Hours or .35 CEUs by NEHES via AHA.

**Sterile Compounding: A Blueprint for Best Practices (two-day training for Hospital Pharmacists)**
Tuesday, March 31, 2015
Wednesday, April 1, 2015
8:00 a.m. - 5:15 p.m.
[View Brochure] [Event Registration]

This two-day, interactive training is designed for hospital pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, and will provide best practice education and the skills necessary to perform USP Chapter <797> compliant sterile compounding. Specific areas that will be addressed are: the rationale for sterile compounding quality management systems (historical perspective), an overview of USP <797> as well as best practice standards.

Registration for this session includes access to CriticalPoint’s eLearning courses Fundamentals of Sterile Compounding and Engineering Controls for Sterile Compounding, comprising 12 lessons and post tests (14 hours of ACPE-approved CE). The 12 lessons and post tests must be completed by all participants prior to the scheduled training. *Login information will be e-mailed to all registrants.

This live-training session has been approved for 13 hours of ACPE-approved CE (12 hours of Live and 1 hour of Law) for either pharmacists or technicians.

**Basics of Budgeting for Healthcare Managers**
Tuesday, March 31, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
[View Brochure] [Event Registration]

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. In a very real sense, these represent survival skills for both managers and institutions.

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 chaotic healthcare environment. Participants will gain a working knowledge of operating and capital budgets, as part of developing performance planning skills.

Continuing education credits will be awarded. See the brochure for details.

**2015 Corporate Compliance Conference**
Thursday, April 2, 2015
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
[View Brochure] [Event Registration]

Join us for CHA’s Corporate Compliance Conference, which will feature the keynote presentation “The Era of Compliance Transparency – Ensuring Compliance Professionals Can Stay Ahead of the Curve” by Greg Radinsky, Vice President and Chief Corporate Compliance Officer for the North Shore-LIJ Health System (NS-LIJ) in New York.

The full-day conference will include additional presentations on high-stakes communication and key compliance issues in physician practices.

Please see the attached brochure for program details.

Continuing education credits will be awarded. See the brochure for details.

**HRO Using High Reliability to Improve the Patients' Experience**
Tuesday, April 7, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
[Event Registration]
Tuesday, April 7, 2015
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
[Event Registration]

Lynn Pierce of HPI, an alumna of Baptist Hospital in Pensacola FL (home of the 2003 Malcolm Baldridge Quality Award), will be our instructor.

**Overview of USP Chapter <797> Sterile Compounding (for Quality Professionals and Infection Preventionists)**
Friday, April 10, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
[View Brochure] [Event Registration]

This half-day program will provide the history and an overview of the <797> standards. This session is intended for the accreditation, regulatory, and quality/infection prevention experts in your organization who oversee survey preparedness for your hospital, as well as anyone else who wants an introduction to the standards.

This training will be provided by Attorney Jennifer Osowiecki of Cox & Osowiecki, LLC, a Hartford law firm representing all levels of healthcare
institutions and providers in regulatory, litigation, licensing, and business matters.

This session has been approved by the National Association for Healthcare Quality for 2.0 continuing education hours.

CHA Nurse Preceptorship Program
Tuesday, April 14, 2015
8:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.
View Brochure | Event Registration

Supporting and strengthening the work of nurse preceptors is critical to the development of new nurses and retention of the highly skilled staff registered nurses who teach them at the bedside.

Curriculum for the Nurse Preceptorship Program, was developed by a team of educators from hospitals and schools of nursing and is designed to provide core content that is foundational for the role of nurse preceptor. This one-day program includes presentations and interactive sessions that cover topics such as roles and responsibilities, characteristics of a professional role model, basics of teaching and learning, tools and strategies for effective communication, principles of constructive feedback delivery, evaluating competence, and delegating effectively. The Nurse Preceptorship Program will serve to start new nurse preceptors off with critical information and also may be of interest to nurse preceptors that have not had this content, or would like to be refreshed on these concepts.

Continuing education credits will be awarded. See the brochure for details.

Cross Cultural and Diversity Inclusiveness Training
Monday, April 20, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
View Brochure | Event Registration

In partnership with the Hispanic Health Council, the Saint Francis Center for Health Equity, and the Connecticut Association of Healthcare Executives, 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. With over 150 members completing the training, program evaluations have been consistently positive about the value of this training.

Diversity Collaborative team members are encouraged to attend as a way to help achieve team goals in their organization.

The second session will be held on Monday, April 27, 2015.

This program is being held at the Connecticut Institute for Primary Care Innovation (CIPCI) in Hartford.

HRO Leadership Method Training for Hospitals
Monday, April 27, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Event Registration

This Leadership session is for new Level 3 hospitals and any new hires in previously trained Level 3 hospitals. Leadership sessions teach the science of safety and behaviors and practices of High Reliability organizations.

HRO Fair and Just Accountability
Tuesday, April 28, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Event Registration

Fair and Just Accountability is for anyone who manages people and the course trains staff how to use the Performance Management algorithm and why Fair and Just Accountability is important to creation of a safety culture.

HRO Safety Coach Training
Tuesday, April 28, 2015
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Event Registration

Safety Coaches are peer mentors who help remind employees about the safety practices and behaviors that your organization has adopted.