Hospitals and Continuum Partners Advocate During Healthcare Day

Hundreds of healthcare providers from across the continuum packed the state Capitol April 8 for Connecticut Healthcare Day. They emphasized to legislators the importance of adequately funding hospitals and Medicaid in the proposed state budget. Hospitals were joined by healthcare partners including Leading Age Connecticut, the Connecticut Association for Health Care Facilities, the Connecticut Association for Healthcare At Home, and the Connecticut State Medical Society.

The Governor’s 2016-2017 budget proposal will reduce Medicaid reimbursement rates for providers, expand the hospital tax, and impose new regulatory burdens on hospitals.

“Cuts will mean the loss of vital services and staff from hospitals on which we all depend,” said Jennifer Jackson, CEO of the Connecticut Hospital Association. “Cuts will mean higher hospital costs for Connecticut businesses and consumers.”

In clothing ranging from surgical scrubs to suits, with ID badges representing dozens of hospitals and organizations throughout the state, caregivers roamed the Capitol to seek out their state senators and representatives to advocate for adequate healthcare funding.

The event ended with a press conference featuring speakers representing hospitals, home health, hospice, skilled nursing facilities, and physicians. They explained how harm to one part of the healthcare system has consequences for the rest of the system.

“Providers who care for the sick, in any care setting, need adequate reimbursement to keep doing this important work,” Ms. Jackson said. “We can’t cut, tax, and regulate our way to a stronger healthcare system. We need legislators to develop strong public policy to achieve a sustainable environment for healthcare in Connecticut.”

Connecticut Hospitals Oppose Property Tax Proposal

Update - Thursday, April 9, 2015

http://www.cthosp.org/press_room/update.cfm#1

1 of 4 4/9/2015 5:07 PM
On April 5, Connecticut hospitals provided testimony in strong opposition to legislation aimed at modifying hospitals’ tax exempt status. **SB 945, An Act Concerning The Tax Exempt Status Of Certain Hospital Facilities,** was heard before the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee. The bill is Governor Malloy’s proposal to allow municipalities to levy property tax on any off-campus property owned by a hospital.

Citing the contributions made to their community and the fiscal challenges they face, David Bittner, Senior Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, told the committee that, “the solution to the revenue problems of the state and local municipalities simply can’t be to shift the burden of these revenue shortfalls to its already fiscally strapped community hospital system.” He said hospitals can’t endure more taxes or cuts. “Each hospital community needs its institution to be there to protect them when they have an emergency.”

Brian Cournoyer, Director of Government Relations, CHA, informed members of the committee that SB 945 would increase costs; divert resources from patients, programs, and staffing; and set hospitals apart unfairly from all other not-for-profit organizations in Connecticut.

Three other legislative proposals have been raised this year that address the tax exempt status of hospitals and the state Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) program. These include **HB 6965, An Act Concerning The Preservation Of Municipal Tax Bases,** a proposal 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; **SB 1070, An Act Concerning Payment In Lieu Of Taxes,** a proposal that would “tier” PILOT payments based on the percentage of exempt property in a municipality; and **SB 1, An Act Concerning Tax Fairness And Economic Development,** another proposal that would “tier” PILOT payments based on the percentage of exempt property in a municipality.

Hospital testimony submitted and posted to the Committee’s website at the time of publication include: Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, Hartford HealthCare, Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, St. Vincent’s Medical Center, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, Stamford Hospital, and Yale New Haven Health System.

**Connecticut Hospitals Provide $1.5 Billion in Community Benefits**

On April 6, CHA released its **2015 Community Benefit Report** and infographic. The report shows Connecticut’s growing investment in communities across our state. According to the report, in 2013, Connecticut hospitals invested $1.5 billion in community benefit initiatives and provided more than 12.3 million services to individuals and families. These include support services for cancer, diabetes, asthma, and other chronic conditions, mobile vans and clinics delivering primary and preventive care, healthy lifestyle education programs, and many other programs targeted to meet specific community needs.

In 2013, Connecticut hospitals spent:

- $57.2 million - community services to improve the health of the community.
- $29.3 million - research and programs to advance care for patients and the community.
- $12.4 million - donations to help support community organizations.
- $7.3 million - community building.
- $3.9 million - subsidized health services to provide care needed by the community.*
- $217.7 million – incurred cost for uncompensated care.
- $12.4 million – donations to help support community organizations.
- $1.2 billion – incurred cost due to unpaid government-sponsored healthcare.

*Most subsidized health services funds are reflected in the “unpaid costs of government programs” numbers.

Read the press release [here](http://www.chosp.org/press_room/update.cfm#1).

**CHA Op-Ed Highlights the Economic Impact of Hospitals to their Communities**

On April 2, an op-ed from Jennifer Jackson, CEO, CHA, was published in the CT Mirror. The piece, **Hospitals: Good for health, essential for a healthy Connecticut economy,** described hospitals’ critical role both in the keeping residents well and in improving our state’s economy.

Ms. Jackson discussed how hospitals are the backbones of their communities, contributing $21.9 billion annually to the state and local economies, providing more than 55,000 full-time jobs, and generating another 55,000 “ripple effect” jobs. She said this should be considered as the legislature weighs cuts, taxes, and regulations that would stifle the healthcare environment in Connecticut.

Ms. Jackson, a member of the steering committee for the **CT20x17** initiative that aims to make Connecticut a top state for business, called for legislators to make decisions that will foster growth in jobs, opportunity, and quality of life, and she encouraged them to give hospitals the tools they need to grow our economy.

**Connecticut’s Surgical Quality Leaders Hold Symposium**

On March 31, the Connecticut Surgical Quality Collaborative (CSQC), of which CHA is a participant, and the Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Surgeons (CTACS) held a symposium at the Yale School of Management on Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS). The speaker was Olle Ljungqvist, MD, PhD, Chairman of the ERAS Society and Professor of Surgery, Orebro University, Sweden.

ERAS is a perioperative care program that has been shown to improve outcomes after major surgery. First developed as a protocol, ERAS has evolved into a multi-professional, multi-disciplinary medical society. ERAS guidelines were developed initially for colonic resections but now have been established for a range of operations. The ERAS program dampens the body’s stress response to surgery.

CSQC Chairman Scott Ellner, DO, Vice Chairman of Surgery at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, welcomed the attendees with an overview of the collaborative’s history and goals. The event kicks off a
statewide, provider-sponsored rollout of ERAS. Dr. Ellner introduced Alan Meinke, MD, Chief of Surgery at Norwalk Hospital, who highlighted the importance of team-based surgical care, a fundamental tenet of the ERAS program. Robert Lincer, MD, Chairman of Surgery at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, shared his experience visiting St. Mark’s Hospital in London, where the ERAS program has demonstrated decreased complication rates and improved patient experience. Dr. Lincer then introduced Dr. Ljungqvist, who commended members of the collaborative on their plans to adopt ERAS on a statewide basis. In the United States, Connecticut would be the first state to implement the program.

The next meeting of the Collaborative will be held at CHA on Tuesday, April 28, 2015.

Education Updates

**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 include 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**

Session 1: Monday, April 20, 2015
Session 2: Monday, April 27, 2015
8:30 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.

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.

**HRO Leadership Method Training for Ambulatory Practices**
Wednesday, April 29, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
[Event Registration](#)
Leadership sessions teach the science of safety and behaviors and practices of High Reliability organizations. The ambulatory sessions for Leadership training are focused on staff who work in ambulatory areas.

**HRO Train-the-Trainer**
Tuesday, May 5, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Event Registration

Train-the-Trainer will be open to hospitals and ambulatory practices. After leadership training takes place with hospitals and ambulatory practices this spring, individuals who embody a commitment to high reliability should be chosen from those organizations. Those are the trainers of the next generation of high reliability participants.

**Facilitating Care Transitions Across the Continuum**
Wednesday, May 13, 2015
8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Event Registration

Program details will be available soon.