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With income tax revenues eroding and the state's financial forecast worsening, lawmakers are struggling to reach consensus on how to balance the current budget and resolve a projected \$5 billion budget deficit anticipated over the next two years.

According to forecasts released on May 1 by the Office of Policy and Management and the legislature's nonpartisan Office of Fiscal Analysis, anticipated revenues for the next two fiscal years have been reduced by \$1.46 billion, which means projected revenues will now fall up to \$2.3 billion short of the funding needed to maintain current state services in 2017-18. The drop in revenue is largely due to eroding income tax receipts, state officials said. In addition, nonpartisan analysts project an operating deficit of \$2.7 billion in 2018-19, the second year of the biennial budget.

As a result, House Speaker Joe Aresimowicz (D-Berlin) announced this week that lawmakers must consider every possible solution to the budget crisis, including an increase in the income tax on the wealthy and middle class. The Malloy administration is also trying to negotiate \$700 million in labor savings with state employees, rather than activate a labor-savings plan that would result in more than 4,000 layoffs in more than 50 state departments and agencies.

CHA will continue to press for no new taxes on hospitals and for an equitable long-term solution to the Medicaid reimbursement and provider tax issues.

As legislative leaders and the administration scramble to address the state's budget crisis, the normal work of the legislature continues. The Appropriations Committee met its JF Deadline on April 27, and the Finance Committee met its JF Deadline on April 28.

[Update Archives](#)**World Asthma Day Celebrated This Week**

On World Asthma Day, which was celebrated on Tuesday, May 2, and throughout the month of May, which is Asthma Awareness Month, organizations dedicated to asthma control and education work together to increase knowledge about a disease that impacts millions of Americans.

One such event is the [Department of Public Health Statewide Asthma Conference](#), which will take place on Thursday, May 11, 2017. The event will feature a keynote address by Michelle M. Cloutier, MD, Connecticut Children's Medical Center, as well as sessions on air pollution and asthma, in-home air quality, the impact of asthma on school absenteeism and student performance, and the role of tobacco use in asthma.

Connecticut hospitals have already taken a significant step toward addressing the asthma care and outcomes through the Connecticut Asthma Initiative (CAI), which is based on the vision that no one should die of asthma or have to limit his or her life unnecessarily due to the disease. Since its inception in 2015, the CAI has striven to accomplish some key goals, such as establishing hospital-community partnerships and implementing measures that would lead to a reduction in Emergency Department visits due to asthma.

The CAI comprises members from 94 organizations across the continuum including hospitals, community organizations, commercial payers, state government and educators. The initiative has made progress on several key goals, such as reducing Emergency Department visits due to asthma by more than 4 percent statewide. It has also led to a steady increase in the creation of the hospital-community partnerships that are integral to the success of the CAI, increases in the number of hospitals training their staff in the proper use of inhalers and providing that education to patients, and the number of hospitals providing a warm hand-off to primary care providers, and encouraging the use of asthma action plans.

Additionally, a dedicated website, [CTAsthma.org](#), was created to provide information – including an interactive resource map – for clinicians, patients, and families.

World Asthma Day is supported by the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA), which works with healthcare groups around the world to help raise awareness for asthma, as well as the World Asthma Foundation. It was established in 1998; the first event coincided with the first World Asthma Meeting (WAM) in Barcelona, Spain, with more than 35 countries participating.

According to the CDC, 24 million people living in the United States are affected by asthma, including more than six million children. It causes three in five people living with asthma to limit their physical activity or miss days at school or work, and costs the nation \$56 billion each year. The World Health Organization estimates that 235 million people around the globe have the disease.

## New Report Finds Connecticut Ranks Low on Health Indicators



Connecticut ranks worse than half of all states on some key health indicators, such as high blood cholesterol, asthma, and excessive alcohol consumption, according to a recently released Department of Public Health report.

The [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\) Report](#) compares certain state health indicators and risk factors to national statistics, and tracks the changes from 2011 to 2015. Data are collected through an ongoing statewide voluntary phone survey of Connecticut residents aged 18 and over. The study is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with support from many grant sources, including the State Innovation Model (SIM), in all 50 states. It has been implemented in Connecticut since 1989.

Although the report highlights some key areas of concern, such as the prevalence of asthma, it also found that Connecticut ranks among the best ten states in the nation for prevalence of flu vaccinations, health insurance coverage, and obesity. More specifically, it also found that Connecticut has made significant improvements over past years on health insurance coverage for adults age 18-64, cigarette smoking, the consumption of vegetables, and flu vaccinations.

The report also found that certain groups were more at risk than others. For example, non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic adults were at significantly greater risk than whites of having a disability and limited healthcare coverage. They were also at a significantly greater risk of having no leisure time physical activity in the past week, and not always wearing a seatbelt. Further, the report found that they were significantly less likely to have routine checkups, dental visits, and flu and pneumococcal vaccinations.

Other groups that showed increased risk for poor health indicators were disabled adults, adults in the low-income category, adults without health insurance, and adults with a high school degree or less.

The data from the annual report enable the state health department, and other health and education agencies, to monitor risk behaviors related to chronic diseases, injuries, and death. The goal is for the information to be used in developing public health programs and informing priorities of the state.

## Pulitzer Prize-Winning Columnist to Provide CHA Annual Meeting Keynote Address



Pulitzer Prize-winning *Washington Post* columnist and MSNBC analyst Eugene Robinson will deliver the keynote address at CHA's 99th Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 14, 2017.

Mr. Robinson is on the front lines of news coverage every day. His twice-weekly column is syndicated in 145 newspapers across the nation. In his three decades at the *Washington Post*, Mr. Robinson has been city hall reporter, city editor, foreign correspondent in Buenos Aires and London, foreign editor, and assistant managing editor in charge of the paper's award winning Style section. He has written books about race in Brazil and music in Cuba, covered a heavyweight championship fight, witnessed riots in Philadelphia and a murder trial in the deepest Amazon, sat with presidents and dictators and the Queen of England, trusted and parried with hair-proud politicians from sea to shining sea, handicapped three editions of *American Idol*, acquired fluent Spanish and passable Portuguese and even, thanks to his two sons, come to an uneasy truce with hip-hop culture.

Mr. Robinson's remarkable storytelling ability has won him wide acclaim, most notably as the winner of the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for his commentary on the 2008 presidential race.

Mr. Robinson's insights on the current political realities and the impact on healthcare are free of the usual inside the beltway jargon. While media outlets may be tempted to churn out news served on a platter by candidates and companies, Mr. Robinson takes a step back not only to look at the big picture, but to focus on deeds—not just words. Whether he's assessing politicians, cliffhanging events on Wall Street, or handicapping elections, he reminds us that politics may not be for the faint of heart but sure can be fun to watch.

The theme of this year's Annual meeting is *Connecticut Hospitals: Building a Healthier Connecticut*. The theme reflects hospitals' 2017 advocacy focus on building a healthier state – with healthier people, healthier communities, and a healthier economy that comes from a strong hospital and healthcare sector.

## AHA Asks Hospitals to Participate in #MyHospital Campaign



With National Hospital Week around the corner, the American Hospital Association (AHA) is asking healthcare organizations to spread the word about the important work done by hospitals.

The AHA is asking hospitals to join its [#MyHospital campaign](#) by sharing photos or videos on social media that highlight the role hospitals play in their communities, and then tagging them #MyHospital. The AHA will promote the posts during National Hospital Week, which is May 7-13, 2017, through its own social media platforms and on [Advancing Health in America](#).

Additionally, as part of the campaign, AHA, in conjunction with the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE), has scheduled a Twitter chat on Thursday, May 11, 2017, to discuss the many ways that hospital employees are helping hospitals change and advance health in the U.S. AHA is running the chat with AONE because National Hospital Week and National Nurses Week overlap this year.

## Education Updates

### Transitioning From Staff to Management: What's Next?

Wednesday, May 10, 2017

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

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

Whether recently assigned to the role of manager or a seasoned veteran, it is important for healthcare professionals to determine how well their problem solving, critical thinking, and decision making skills are keeping pace with the changing healthcare environment. For those who attended *Staff to Management: Starting the Transition* in March or September, this is the second course in the two-part program and provides additional development for all managers—those who are new to the role and those who want to continually improve their skills.

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

### Leading in Turbulent Times

Thursday, May 11, 2017

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

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

The scope and pace of change in healthcare is unrelenting. Turbulent times is synonymous with VUCA, an acronym that describes an environment that is Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous—a military term that was created during the Cold War and reused during the Middle East conflicts. Healthcare fits the description perfectly and, as the landscape continues to evolve, learning the strategies and principles of VUCA Leadership will enhance focus and agility. This workshop will blend didactic and experiential material, giving leaders practical tools to engage their employees in shaping organizational culture and achieving outcomes that drive operational excellence.

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

### Leadership CHAMP Refresher Course

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

[Event Registration](#)

This year, CHA worked with HPI/Press-Ganey to design a refresher course for hospital leaders and managers, and is hosting the Leadership CHAMP Refresher Course. The course is for leaders and managers who want to reinvigorate their role as high reliability leaders. It will include error prevention highlights, such as the tools and the science; rounding to influence; top 10 prioritization; and Fair and Just Accountability.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for these sessions.

### Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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

Join CHA on May 16 for the Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) launch. The launch will include presentations on perinatal opioid use, the empathic attachment model for a mother-infant dyad affected by NAS, treating NAS by emphasizing mother-baby engagement and minimizing morphine, and implementing the NAS model in a community setting. This program will also include a group discussion.

### HRO Cause Analysis - Two-Day Training

Wednesday, May 17, 2017

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 18, 2017

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

[Event Registration](#)

Cause analysis teaches staff how to evaluate events, patterns of events, and causes of events, and then helps staff ascertain how to implement solutions. The sessions are for quality, safety, risk management, and other staff who respond to events.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for these sessions.

