



Thursday, September 24, 2015

[Printer-Friendly Version](#)**In This Issue:**[CHA and Hospitals Oppose Governor's \\$192 Million in Cuts to Hospitals](#)[Court Sides with Hospitals on the 0.2% "Two-Midnight" Cut](#)[Agreement Paves the Way for Saint Mary's Health System to Join New Trinity Health Region Serving New England](#)[CHA's High Reliability Program Expands to Patients and Families](#)[Op-ed Focuses on Importance of Patient Voice](#)[Education Updates](#)**[Update Archives](#)****CHA and Hospitals Oppose Governor's \$192 Million in Cuts to Hospitals**

On Friday, September 18, Governor Malloy's budget office announced significant cuts in hospital funding. The cuts eliminate 100% of the supplemental and small hospital payments due for October 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016 (i.e., \$192 million). Combined, these two cuts increase the tax burden on hospitals from \$300.1 million to \$492 million over that nine-month period. The new cuts are \$192 million for the nine-month period, on top of the hospital tax.

Overall, the hospital tax is now \$556 million each year. Governor Malloy has effectively raised the tax by \$100 million each year he has been in office. At the same time, the state is leaving \$373 million federal dollars on the table each year.

CHA initiated a letter-writing campaign so people can contact their legislators to urge them to intervene. More than 11,000 letters have been sent to date. Please click [here](#) to make your voice heard. Radio and social media ads are running across the state telling people to oppose cuts to hospitals.

On September 22, CHA participated in a press conference to call for a special session with Senator Len Fasano and Representative Themis Klarides. Hospital participants included Pat Charmel, President and Chief Executive Officer, Griffin Hospital; John Murphy, MD, President and CEO, Western Connecticut Health Network; Bob Smanik, President and CEO, Day Kimball Healthcare; Vin Capece, President/CEO, Middlesex Hospital; Stuart Marcus, MD, President and CEO, St. Vincent's Medical Center; and Vin Petrini, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs, Yale New Haven Health System.

Ms. Jackson focused on how damage caused by the Governor's actions is not only hurting hospitals, but also hurting patients, communities, and the economy. "This is an unsustainable crisis situation," she said. "If you or anyone you know needs hospital services, know or care for someone working in a hospital, this is of vital importance to you, asking legislators to intervene and reverse these cuts. One in five Connecticut residents is a Medicaid patient, these cuts mean the loss of vital services to them."

Senator Fasano called for a special session, saying "the way you solve problems is you get in a room and have a conversation. The public needs to see us get it right." Representative Klarides thanked hospitals, saying, "To have CHA and hospital CEOs here is wonderful. They deal with this every day, and they know what the needs of their community are."

Dr. Murphy, WCHN, focused on the needs of the underserved in Connecticut communities. "The problem in running a system like ours is that these are complex environments. Preventative care services will be at risk," he said. "We are here to ask for the \$200 million to be returned back to these communities... It is not fair to take it out on the poor who need it most."

Stuart Marcus, MD, speaking on behalf of St. Vincent's Medical Center, discussed how the cuts hurt quality, staffing, and the economy. "In this state, we are cutting costs and hoping that somehow quality will miraculously appear. When these cuts take effect at the hospitals, as staff is decreased, all patients will suffer," he said. "These are devastating cuts. This essentially wipes out our margins. Many cities have reinvented themselves on healthcare, healthcare is an economic driver, but we are destroying one of the big economic drivers in the state."

Pat Charmel provided perspective on the scale of the cuts relative to other organizations, "We are advocating for a process where the legislature can look holistically at this budget... The effective tax rate we pay is four to five times what other private industries pay... The resources that we need to [care for patients] are being taken away."

Court Sides with Hospitals on the 0.2% "Two-Midnight" Cut

On September 22, a federal judge found in favor of hospitals and [rejected](#) the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) arguments that it met all legal requirements for rulemaking when the agency cut hospitals' inpatient payments by 0.2 percent in conjunction with its "two-midnight" policy. The court ordered the agency to provide further justification and additional opportunity for hospitals to comment. The permanent, prospective cut was first included in the agency's fiscal year 2014 final inpatient prospective payment system rule and took effect Oct. 1, 2013. Many Connecticut hospitals are part of an appeal on the "two-midnight" policy, which CHA helped to facilitate, and this decision means those hospitals are one step closer to a positive result.

The finding does not order the government to return immediately the withheld funds to hospitals, but instead grants it the opportunity to further explain its rationale within a specified time period. If it cannot do so, the payment cut may be set aside. Noting that the government has indicated willingness to abide by a timetable and to expedite proceedings on remand, all parties involved in the consolidated challenge – which includes a [case](#) brought by the AHA, four hospital associations, and four hospital organizations – to propose, by no later than Oct. 1, 2015, a timetable for reissuing the rule.

CMS proposed [changes](#) to the two-midnight policy in July, but did not propose rescinding the 0.2 percent cut.

Agreement Paves the Way for Saint Mary's Health System to Join New Trinity Health Region Serving New England

On September 18, Saint Mary's Health System signed an agreement with Trinity Health and Saint Francis Care that will further expand people-centered care in New England. The definitive agreement outlines how Saint Mary's membership in the new Trinity Health region, which includes the Sisters of Providence Health System in Springfield, Mass., will help provide better health, better care, and lower costs for the communities it serves.



"Today we committed to combining strengths to deliver high-quality, value-based accountable care," said Chad W. Wable, who will continue in his current role as President and CEO, Saint Mary's Health System, and hold a meaningful regional role, as well. "Together we will be able to improve patient safety, patient satisfaction, and population health in all of our communities."

The agreement with Saint Mary's was signed just before Saint Francis Care officially joins with Trinity Health, a decision announced in December 2014 and expected to be finalized in October.

(l-r) Christopher M. Dadlez, FACHE, President and Chief Executive Officer, Saint Francis Care; Chad W. Wable, FACHE, President and Chief Executive Officer, Saint Mary's Health System, and Richard O'Connell, Executive Vice President and President, East Group, Trinity Health.

"The addition of the Saint Mary's Health System to our emerging regional partnership is an exciting development that promises to dramatically expand the delivery of progressive health care in New England," said Christopher M. Dadlez, current President and CEO, Saint Francis Care, and announced to be the future President and CEO of Trinity Health's New England region. "The care we provide will be people-centered and mission-focused, and our partnership will bring us not only a shared vision but resources to strengthen us in the future."

Following the completion of all necessary regulatory approvals, Trinity Health, Saint Mary's, Saint Francis Care, and Sisters of Providence Health System will build a clinically integrated health care delivery system of high-quality providers with the goal of delivering an unequalled combination of health care quality and value to residents across Connecticut and western Massachusetts.

"As we continue building our people-centered health system, we consider aligning with quality organizations among our highest imperatives," said Scott Nordlund, Executive Vice President, Growth, Strategy and Innovation, Trinity Health. "With these partners, their capabilities and geographies, this will be a very strong region with the potential to make a significant impact on health and wellness in New England."

The New England region and its members will benefit from Trinity Health services that provide operational expertise, as well as existing programs related to clinical excellence, population health, retail healthcare, and information technology. Trinity Health benefits as well, with the opportunity to continue expanding its presence in New England through both strategic and organic growth opportunities.

"With its clinically integrated and strong ambulatory service facility network, Saint Mary's is perfectly suited to helping us reach our goals," said Richard O'Connell, Executive Vice President, East Group, Trinity Health. "I look forward to welcoming its colleagues and to seeing our new region in New England achieve all of its potential."

Among the approvals needed for Saint Mary's to join Trinity Health and Saint Francis Care are customary regulatory approvals from state and federal agencies and those granted by the Archdiocese of Hartford, as well as any other approvals required by Canon Law.

CHA's High Reliability Program Expands to Patients and Families



The high reliability safety movement, which has resulted in more than 25,000 staff and physicians in Connecticut trained in high reliability safety behaviors since 2011, is now expanding to engage patients and families in quality and patient safety.

As part of this work, hospitals and patient care advocates are collaborating, through CHA, to build and strengthen patient family advisory councils. The kickoff event for this effort is *Partnering with Patients for Better Healthcare: Establishing and Sustaining Patient Family Advisory Councils to Help Eliminate Harm*, a program that will be held at CHA on Tuesday, September 29, 2015.

The program will feature keynote speakers Kim Blanton, Volunteer Patient Advisor at Vidant Health System, and Rosemary Gibson, Senior Advisor at The Hastings Center. Two breakout sessions, presented by representatives from Planetree and the Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care, will focus on establishing and sustaining patient family advisory councils. A panel discussion with representatives from Stamford Hospital, Middlesex Hospital, and Gaylor Hospital will offer examples of successful patient and family engagement efforts. The panel will be moderated by Debra Abromaitis, Director of Quality, Regulatory Compliance and Patient Support, UConn Health John Dempsey Hospital.

There is no fee for this program, but pre-registration is required. Registration will be limited to five attendees per organization. Organizations are encouraged to register both patients and staff.

This program is co-sponsored with the Connecticut Center for Patient Safety, Qualidigm, the Connecticut Partnership for Patient Safety, and the Connecticut Association of Healthcare Executives. Continuing education credits will be awarded. See the brochure for details.

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

Op-ed Focuses on Importance of Patient Voice

As part of hospitals' commitment to introduce high reliability to patients and families, the leaders of CHA, Qualidigm, the Connecticut Center for Patient Safety, and the Connecticut Partnership for Patient Safety published the following op-ed in the CT Mirror on September 22.

Patients key to improving care at Connecticut hospitals

Connecticut hospitals, in collaboration with patient advocates and quality experts, are looking to patients to provide critical insight into how to improve healthcare. Empowering patients, providing better care, and eliminating harm are the goals of the [Connecticut Hospital Association](#) (CHA) and its member hospitals, the [Connecticut Center for Patient Safety, Qualidigm](#), and the Connecticut Partnership for Patient Safety.

Together, our organizations are focusing on partnering with patients and gaining their perspective.

We know that each patient is unique and every care experience is different. Information shared by patients helps hospitals identify any gaps in care and find ways to improve care and make it safer, and helps healthcare systems become more patient-centered. Hospitals want to know from patients how they were treated, how well caregivers communicated with them, whether their questions were addressed, and whether the care provided was appropriate, safe, and effective.

Building and strengthening Patient and Family Advisory Councils (PFACs) at hospitals across the state is critical to improving patient care. Many of Connecticut's hospitals have worked to create PFACs, composed of hospital patients, family members, and hospital staff who are committed to quality improvement and who know the value of informed input provided by patients and their families.

Patient and family engagement is part of a major patient safety movement under way in Connecticut called [High Reliability](#). High Reliability is a science involving behaviors and tools to improve safety. It has been adopted by high-risk industries such as nuclear power and naval aviation, with successful results.

Three years ago, CHA and Connecticut hospitals were the first in the nation to implement High Reliability across an entire state. Since that time, tens of thousands of Connecticut hospital staff have been trained in High Reliability, and there has been a reduction in Serious Safety Events™. Hospitals are learning, sharing, and applying nationally recognized, evidence-based practices to achieve the highest standards of quality and safety – and serving as a national model for positive culture change, innovation, and leadership.

PFACs are also an important area of focus for other patient safety initiatives under way in Connecticut and throughout the country. In its current quality improvement efforts, Medicare is focusing on patient and family engagement to promote the patient voice and the reduction of harm.

Our kickoff event, which will be held this month, will feature keynote presentations from a patient who experienced the challenges of navigating healthcare settings and who now partners with healthcare organizations to improve the patient experience. Another keynote presentation will be delivered by a national expert on how patient and family advisory councils can effectively engage patients to have a lasting impact. Representatives from [Planetree](#) and the [Institute for Patient and Family-Centered Care](#) will discuss establishing and sustaining PFACs. Finally, a number of Connecticut hospitals will provide case studies and best practices for implementation.

We know that there is more work to do to improve care and eliminate harm, but the hospital community, in partnership with patients, families, advocates, and quality experts, is committed to moving forward together to implement positive change to improve patient safety, care, and satisfaction.

Jennifer Jackson, CEO, [Connecticut Hospital Association](#)
Timothy Elwell, President / CEO, [Qualidigm](#)
Lisa Freeman, Executive Director, [Connecticut Center for Patient Safety](#)
Judith Kunisch, President, Connecticut Partnership for Patient Safety

Education Updates

CHA Nurse Preceptorship Program

Tuesday, October 6, 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, and evaluating competence.

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. Please see the brochure for more details.

HRO Using High Reliability to Improve the Patients' Experience

Wednesday, October 7, 2015

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

[Event Registration](#)

Wednesday, October 7, 2015

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

[Event Registration](#)

In Patient Family Engagement, the focus is on highly reliable staff behaviors which enhance patient satisfaction and HCAHP scores. Lynn Pierce of HPI, an alumna of Baptist Hospital in Pensacola FL (home of the 2003 Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award), will be the instructor.

We are offering Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits for this session.

HRO Fair and Just Accountability

Wednesday, October 14, 2015

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

[Event Registration](#)

Fair and Just Accountability is a session for your Human Resources Executives and anyone else who manages people. This session trains staff to review performance from a standardized perspective when there is an adverse event; to focus on the behavior rather than the outcome.

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

HRO Rounding to Influence

Wednesday, October 14, 2015

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

[Event Registration](#)

Rounding to Influence teaches leaders how to go out on the units to coach, mentor, and sustain High Reliability habits and practices.

We are offering Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits for this session.

Revenues, Costs, Resources: A Strategic Look at the New Normal

Wednesday, October 14, 2015

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

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

Like it or not, the transformation of healthcare continues to demand dramatic and fundamental changes in delivery models and payment methods. Decreasing payments, increasing regulation, and new competitive pressures frame the landscape. Scarce resources are being stretched to the breaking point. Doing more with less has become the routine. The need for a sound understanding of the "new normal" is essential for managers and leaders at all levels of healthcare organizations.

This new program provides an overview of the changes and challenges along with approaches that can help bend the cost curve at both the national and hospital level. Bill Ward, a popular and dynamic lecturer on financial management in healthcare will present this program.

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

Trauma Registrar Specific ICD-10 Training

(Two-day course)

Thursday, October 15, 2015 and Friday, October 16

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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

This two-day course includes a focused, in-depth assessment and review of the ICD-10-CM and ICD-10-PCS coding systems, with a focus on the trauma registrar's unique needs. The first day of training will focus on ICD-10-CM injuries and e-codes, while the second day will focus on ICD-10-PCS procedures.

Required Materials: ICD-10-CM: The Complete Official Draft Code Set (2014 or 2015 Edition) and ICD-10-PCS: The Complete Official Draft Code Set (2014 or 2015 Edition) are required for this course. The books should be purchased in advance (suggested vendors: Amazon, www.medicalcodingbooks.com, AAPC, or AHIMA) or may be borrowed from your hospital's medical records department. Please note: sharing manuals with a classmate is also an option.

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

HRO Leadership Method Training

Thursday, October 15, 2015

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

[Event Registration](#)

Leadership 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 seven-hour Leadership sessions are 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.

We are offering Medicine, Nursing, Quality, and Radiology continuing education credits for this session.

HRO Safety Coach Training

Friday, October 16, 2015

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

[Event Registration](#)

Friday, October 16, 2015

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

We are offering Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits for this session.

