Hospitals Continue Advocacy in Opposition to Governor’s Cuts

CHA and hospitals continue to meet with legislators and urge them to intervene and stop the $192 million in hospital cuts. Meanwhile, nearly 40,000 letters have been sent to legislators and the Governor since he made the rescissions on September 18. (Join the campaign here).

This week, the Governor said that Connecticut hospitals made a profit of $916 million in 2014. CHA issued the following statement in response:

The Governor’s statement that hospitals had a $916 million profit in 2014 is misleading for two reasons. First, it fails to disclose that a substantial portion of the $916 amount relates to extraordinary accounting transactions. Second, it implies that nothing much has changed since 2014 for hospitals – glossing over the fact that the Governor has significantly stepped up his gouging of the sick and hospitals that care for them since then.

In 2014, the entire University of Connecticut Health Center recorded in non-operating income $459 million in state appropriations including its academic and research institutions not related to patient care. In addition, WCHN recorded an addition to non-operating income of $297 million related to Norwalk Hospital and its related organizations becoming part of the Western Connecticut Health Network. These transactions are one-time events. Removing them, the picture for 2014 is half as rosy as the Governor portrays.

Second, in 2014 the state taxed hospitals $134 million a year. The Governor doesn’t mention that in 2015 the he doubled that amount to $268 million. He also doesn’t mention that his latest changes more than double the amount again to $556 million in 2016.

The Governor’s latest moves, if left to stand, will have increased the tax on the sick by $422 million since 2014 – taking nearly every dime hospitals have.

CHA Board Endorses #123forEquity Pledge to Act to Eliminate Health Care Disparities

On September 29, the CHA Board endorsed CHA and Connecticut hospitals taking #123forEquity Pledge to Act to Eliminate Health Care Disparities. The American Hospital Association is a partner in the pledge, along with the American College of Healthcare Executives, America’s Essential Hospitals, the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the Catholic Health Association of the United States.

The pledge is part of a national call to action to eliminate healthcare disparities with a focus on increasing the collection and use of race, ethnicity, and language preference data; increasing cultural competency training; and increasing diversity in governance and leadership. It is based on the fundamental concept that health equity is essential for performance excellence and improved community health.

These are shared goals of the CHA Health Equity Collaborative, which launched in 2011 (as the CHA Diversity Collaborative) as Connecticut hospital leaders recognized that across the nation and in this state, diversity, health equity, and the delivery of culturally competent care are persistent issues that need to be addressed. Examining the social and economic factors that impact people’s health and well-being, it became clear that many Connecticut residents, particularly in medically underserved and socioeconomically deprived communities, are experiencing disparities in healthcare and outcomes in addition to poverty and unemployment. Taking the #123forEquity Pledge to Act to Eliminate Health Care Disparities reinforces Connecticut hospitals’ commitment to improve health equity.

For more information on the pledge, click here.

CHA to Present Health Equity Collaborative Symposium

On Monday, October 26, 2015, CHA will present the Health Equity Collaborative Symposium – a program to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Diversity Collaborative and its transition this year to a focus on health equity. The Symposium will feature a keynote presentation on The Skin You’re In by Thomas A. LaVeist, PhD, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, a presentation on Cultural Competence in Healthcare by Troy Cicero, MulticultuReal, and a session on approaches to increasing supplier diversity.

In 2011, Connecticut hospitals launched the CHA Diversity Collaborative as part of their demonstrated commitment to ensuring integrated, equitable care, eliminating disparities, and improving health equity. Continuing to build from a strong foundation of work, this year CHA’s Diversity Collaborative began a transformation this year to a broader focus on health equity, reflected in the Collaborative’s new name: the CHA Health Equity Collaborative. This multi-year, statewide initiative is designed to engage hospitals in educational programs, implementation of improvement strategies, sharing best practices, and measuring and tracking progress to achieve the Collaborative goals, all in recognition of the fact that health equity is the cornerstone of quality healthcare.

Day Kimball Healthcare and Hartford HealthCare Suspend Affiliation Talks Due to State Budget Cuts
This week, Day Kimball Healthcare (DKH) and Hartford HealthCare (HHC) announced that severe and unexpected cuts by the state of Connecticut to Medicaid payments have affected progress they were making toward a strategic partnership.

In July, the two organizations announced that they had agreed to work together to outline the terms of a proposed affiliation. The immediate goal was to allow HHC to provide management support for select operations determined by DKH. These agreements would have offered economies of scale to help DKH reduce its cost structure.

"Given the magnitude of the state's cuts, it would be imprudent for us to consider moving forward with such a partnership at this time," said James Blazar, Hartford HealthCare's Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Transformation Officer. "This reckless slashing of Medicaid funding makes it difficult for HHC to create a path forward with Day Kimball Healthcare right now. Both our organizations have just taken a gut punch."

According to state estimates, HHC would stand to lose $55 million in the cuts and, as a result, needs to curtail major capital expenditures at this time. DKH expects these cuts to result in a $5.6-million loss in state funding to its revenue in this fiscal year.

"Partnering with HHC represented a real opportunity for us to benefit patients and strengthen our finances. We are disappointed that these budget cuts affected HHC's ability to work towards this opportunity at this time," said Robert Smanik, FACHE, DKH's President and Chief Executive Officer. "In addition to this lost opportunity, the budget cuts also caused DKH to lose the small hospital funding that our legislators were successful in restoring just months ago. Despite these challenges, DKH is working diligently to mitigate these revenue losses, and will continue to explore all strategic opportunities for continued growth and expansion."

Blazar praised DKH's administration and board for their collaboration in the partnership exploration, and held out the possibility that — with restored funding or under calmer financial circumstances — an affiliation is still desirable.

Education Updates

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.


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

Wednesday, October 28, 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.

Cultural Competence at its Core  
Friday, October 23, 2015  
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
View Brochure | Event Registration

Cultural Competence at its Core involves peeling back layers of biased behavior, and examining positive and negative attitudes, intense emotions, and deep-rooted core values, in order to establish key principles of trust, openness, understanding, communication, respect, and collaboration—for the sake of achieving health equity, unbiased care, and true inclusion.

In this workshop, participants will have the opportunity to examine the many “cultural factors” that affect the healthcare experience. Understanding the stages of new awareness and growth from unconscious incompetence to conscious competence will be factored into this full-day workshop.

Expect a highly interactive, insightful, instructive, and inclusive workshop that will be both fun and informative, from Troy Cicero, a dynamic and highly-rated CHA instructor.

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

HRO Creating Sustainability for High Reliability Organizations  
Wednesday, October 28, 2015  
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 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.

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

2015 Nurse Leadership Forum  
Thursday, October 29, 2015  
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
View Brochure | Event Registration

CHA's 15th annual Nurse Leadership Forum, is focused this year on patient engagement, aligning operational and clinical goals, and addressing employee engagement challenges. Speakers will present creative leadership strategies to integrate the patient voice in care improvement, communicate effectively with employees, and establish an organizational culture that will successfully navigate the dramatically changing healthcare landscape. We are particularly pleased to have Dave deBronkart as our keynote speaker.

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