CHA Joins AHA’s United Against the Flu Campaign

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) is participating in the sixth annual United Against the Flu campaign, which uses social media outreach to bring national attention to the need for flu vaccinations.

The American Hospital Association is partnering with national healthcare, patient advocacy, and other organizations for the four-month campaign encouraging the public to get an influenza vaccination. The campaign will peak during the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Influenza Vaccination Week, Dec. 1-7, 2019.

The 2018-2019 influenza season was moderately severe, according to the CDC, and the 21-week season was the longest in 10 years. There were 78 deaths related to the flu in Connecticut, according to the state Department of Public Health.

Influenza vaccination coverage among healthcare personnel in the United States remained high in 2018-2019, with more than 78 percent of healthcare employees reported receiving a flu vaccination, according to the CDC. As in previous seasons, coverage was highest among healthcare personnel working in hospital settings (91.9 percent), followed by those working in ambulatory care (75.1 percent), other clinical settings (74.9 percent), and long-term care settings (67.4 percent).

The CDC, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee recommend that all healthcare workers get vaccinated annually.

In 2011, the CHA Board of Trustees adopted a statewide policy endorsing mandatory influenza vaccination for hospital personnel as part of CHA hospitals’ commitment to patient safety. The vast majority of CHA acute care member hospitals have implemented a mandatory participation or mandatory vaccination program.

Connecticut Reports 31 Cases of Vaping Illness

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) has reported that six more Connecticut residents are ill with lung injuries possibly related to using e-cigarettes or vaping, bringing the total to 31 cases that have been reported to DPH. Three patients remain in the hospital.

On Friday, October 11, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new guidance for clinicians whose patients might have lung illnesses related to vaping. The CDC reports that there have been 26 deaths across the country – including one in Connecticut – since the outbreak started early this summer, and more than 1,200 cases nationwide. Along with the guidelines, the CDC also named the vaping-related illness EVALI, which stands for e-cigarette, or vaping, product use associated lung injury.

In Connecticut, the 31 cases involve residents from seven of the state’s eight counties, with patients ranging in age from under 18 years old to 35 years of age and older. Of the 31 patients, 29 were hospitalized between June and October 2019, one patient was hospitalized in December 2018, and one patient was not hospitalized, according to DPH.

“I am very concerned that we continue to see new cases of vaping-related lung injury, and this outbreak of illnesses and deaths appears to be far from over,” said DPH Commissioner Renée Coleman-Mitchell. "I am asking Connecticut residents not to use e-cigarettes or vaping products that contain THC.”

According to the CDC, patients experienced symptoms such as cough, shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and fever. Many patients were hospitalized and required intensive medical treatment. All patients reported using e-cigarette or vapor products and many patients reported using products that contain cannabinoids, such as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). The investigation has not yet identified any single substance or product that is linked to all cases.

CHA Health Equity Symposium to Focus on Bias and the Impact on Disparities in Health Outcomes

CHA’s 8th annual HIIN 2019 Health Equity Collaborative Symposium: Bias and the Impact on Disparities in Health Outcomes will be held on Tuesday, October 29, 2019. Please register here.

The day-long symposium will feature a keynote presentation from Mona Hanna-Attisha, MD, MPH, FAAP, the physician, scientist, and activist who uncovered the water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

Dr. Hanna-Attisha will deliver a personal account of her research and activism to identify, expose, and mitigate the effects of the Flint water crisis. Her story, from how she used science to prove that children in Flint were affected by high levels of lead to the aggressive backlash she faced after going public with her findings, will inspire participants to safeguard their communities.

Following Dr. Hanna-Attisha’s keynote presentation, Jaymie Campbell, PhD, AccessMatters, will present a workshop on racial awareness and strategies to eliminate institutional racism. Through lecture, media, and experiential activities, participants will learn to recognize subtle, often unintentional negative racial messages, also known as microaggressions. Dr. Campbell will guide participants through the self-reflective process of evaluating how racial microaggressions impact maternal child health.

The program is aimed at healthcare leaders, including clinical and operational staff, social workers, and case managers from hospitals and community based organizations across Connecticut.
The program is being presented as part of the Partnership for Patients HIIN educational series.

Education Updates

Safe Patient Handling Forum
Wednesday, October 23, 2019
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
View Brochure | Event Registration

The Safe Patient Handling Forum is a full-day program offered in partnership with PMA Companies as part of CHA’s statewide Safer Hospitals Initiative. The Initiative is focused on providing healthcare staff with strategies and practices to improve worker safety, minimize workplace violence, and facilitate the adoption of peer-to-peer support programs.

The Forum will feature data-driven best practices, industry standards, and new strategies for reducing patient handling injuries. Attendees will have an opportunity to view and learn more about safe patient handling equipment currently in use at hospitals and available on the market.

Issue-Based Forum: FEMA Center for Domestic Preparedness Health Sector Emergency Preparedness Training
Tuesday, November 5, 2019
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
View Brochure | Event Registration

This session is only offered to CHA members.

This day-long course is intended to assist healthcare providers and suppliers in achieving the four core emergency preparedness elements outlined in the September 2016 CMS Emergency Preparedness Requirements for Medicare and Medicaid Participating Providers and Suppliers Rule.

The course provides instruction, guided discussion, best practice tools, and resources to conduct a risk assessment; guidance on the development of an emergency plan, as well as associated policies and procedures; guidance on the creation of a communications plan; and best practices on the training and testing of the plans, policies, and procedures.

Transitioning From Staff to Management: What’s Next?
Thursday, November 7, 2019
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 to determine how well one’s problem solving, critical thinking, and decision making skills are keeping pace with the ever-changing healthcare environment. For those who attended Staff to Management: Starting the Transition in March or last 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 improve their skills.

Emotional Intelligence and Its Impact in the Workplace
Friday, November 8, 2019
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
View Brochure | Event Registration

Research has indicated that Emotional Quotient is an important leadership competency, and is essential to driving performance improvement—beyond “book knowledge” alone. Understanding and improving personal and social competence will enable participants to develop new insights and key behaviors that improve organizational culture.

2019 Nurse Leadership Forum
Wednesday, November 13, 2019
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
View Brochure | Event Registration

The 2019 Nurse Leadership Forum will focus on a range of issues impacting the transformation under way in healthcare, including a keynote presentation by author, researcher, and filmmaker Ron Galloway on The Disrupters: How Amazon, Apple, CVS and Other Tech Companies Will Change Healthcare.

Additional presentations will focus on dealing effectively with stressful situations and how best to develop an effective and engaged multi-generational workforce.

Lean Principles: Project Charter Preparation and Planning
Thursday, November 14, 2019
9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
View Brochure | Event Registration

Lean principles and methodology are valuable in improving healthcare, but evidence shows that learning about the principles and methodology is simply not enough. To get the desired results, the principles must be applied.

This program—a follow-up to CHA’s two-part Lean Principles: Process Flow and Value Stream Mapping in Healthcare—provides an overview of the methodology and tools needed for planning and implementing process improvement initiatives.

This is a “how to make it happen session,” and will explain (and provide examples of) the elements of an effective project charter, a pre-requisite to any successful improvement initiative. When properly prepared, the charter focuses the team on the business case, problems, objectives, and outcomes, and is a major factor in preventing project scope creep.

Participants are asked to bring with them a process improvement opportunity currently under consideration at their facility, enabling them to create a draft charter as part of their actionable plan toward their process improvement initiative.

NOTE: This program is designed for those who attended CHA’s Lean Principles: Process Flow and Value Stream Mapping in Healthcare—or those with a basic understanding of Lean principles and familiarity with the terminology. Clinical leaders, operational managers, quality professionals, continuous improvement coordinators, and other change agents will benefit from learning this methodology to plan team oriented improvement initiatives.

Financial Analysis Tools for Managers
Financial Analysis Tools for Managers provides managers and clinicians with tools they can use to answer questions about current performance and opportunities they are considering. Bill Ward, a popular and dynamic lecturer on financial management in healthcare returns at member request to present this program.

Managing the Operating Budget
Thursday, December 5, 2019
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Event Registration

Managing the Operating Budget will introduce managers to a variety of analytic tools (revenue and spending analysis, volume adjusted variance analysis, work process and root cause analysis, revenue and expense forecasting) as well as a number of strategies to improve revenue and expense performance. Bill Ward, a popular and dynamic lecturer on financial management in healthcare, returns at member request to present this program.