Governor Malloy Calls for Bipartisan Budget Talks

On October 19, Governor Malloy called for bipartisan negotiations over the state’s continuing budget crisis, citing an additional $120 million deficit, and said he was open to the legislature going into special session later this year to address the problem. CHA released the following statement Monday from Jennifer Jackson, CEO, in response to the Governor’s statements:

We are hopeful that a special session will result from Governor Malloy calling on legislators for bipartisan talks on the growing budget hole. A budget balanced on the backs of the sick and the poor is unacceptable. We have confidence that our legislative leaders will stop Governor Malloy’s reckless cuts and tax increases to hospitals.

It is our hope and expectation that legislators on both sides of the aisle will take action to fix the budget for patients and the hospitals that care for them. That is in the best interest of our state’s economy.

The Governor’s announcement comes less than a week after a new poll reported only 32 percent of voters approve of his job performance. It also coincides with mounting criticism from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle about $103 million in rescissions to hospitals and other human services that were ordered by Governor Malloy last month.

Governor Malloy said he was open to alternative suggestions about where to cut the $103 million – of which $63.5 million was taken from hospitals – but warned that reinstating that money will make it more difficult to close the new $120 million gap.

“I’m not afraid to make these hard decisions,” Governor Malloy said, adding that lawmakers who have been critical of his cuts to hospitals and other human services will now have to make those decisions. Although the Governor ruled out additional tax increases, he said state union concessions were on the table.

Democratic lawmakers were expected to release about $100 million in alternative budget suggestions this week. Meanwhile, Republican lawmakers have been calling for a special session to cut spending.

The Governor said that a majority of the new deficit is attributed to a $109 million drop in personal income taxes. His suggestions on where to cut the $120 million will be made next week.

Connecticut Among Recipients of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic Grants

Connecticut is the beneficiary of a $980,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services to support certified community behavioral health clinics. CHA supported the grant application and its goals of improving care for adults with serious mental illness, children with serious emotional disturbance, those with long-term and serious substance use disorders, as well as others with mental illness and substance use disorders, as it is consistent with CHA's mission. CHA believes that certified community behavioral health clinics will be an important component of coordinated efforts in Connecticut to improve health outcomes for many of the most vulnerable and high-cost patients, as well as those who suffer from chronic and co-occurring health, behavioral health, and substance use disorders.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), in conjunction with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Assistant Secretary of Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), awarded a total of $22.9 million to support states throughout the nation in their efforts to improve behavioral health of their citizens by providing community-based mental and substance use disorder treatment.

Authorized under Section 223 of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014, the planning grants are part of an effort to integrate behavioral health with physical healthcare, utilize evidence-based practices on a more consistent basis, and improve access to high quality care. The planning grants will be used to support states to certify community behavioral health clinics, solicit input from stakeholders, establish prospective payment systems for demonstration of reimbursable services, and prepare an application to participate in the demonstration program.

President Takes Action to Combat Opioid Abuse

On October 21, President Obama directed all federal agencies to require employees, contractors, and clinical residents/trainees who prescribe controlled substances to complete training on appropriate prescribing of opioid medications within 18 months. Agencies that provide healthcare services or benefits also were directed to submit within 90 days a plan to address any identified barriers to accessing medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorders or practices inconsistent with reducing disorders and overdoses. State, local, and private sector organizations also agreed to increase prescriber training, access to medication-assisted treatment, and use of state prescription drug monitoring programs.

The President’s moves align with actions Connecticut has taken over the last year. In January 2015, CHA, the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS), the Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians, and the Connecticut Department of Public Health endorsed a set of voluntary opioid prescribing guidelines for Emergency Departments. The guidelines help medical staff treat...
patients with chronic pain conditions who come to the ED.

The project was initiated in 2012 by ED directors from hospitals across Connecticut who identified improper opioid use as a problem both nationally and in Connecticut. Pain is a major symptom of many patients who come to the ED, and a substantial percentage of all opioids prescribed, administered, or continued are provided through the ED. Opioids may be necessary for the relief of pain, but improper use poses a threat to the patient and to society. The guidelines reflect the fact that providers have a responsibility to diagnose and treat pain using sound clinical judgment, and such treatment may include the prescription of opioids. Providers also have a responsibility to minimize the potential for the abuse and diversion of opioids.

CHA also successfully pursued legislation during the 2015 Legislative Session that is consistent with the CHA Board-approved recommendation to support a comprehensive statewide strategy to reduce the impact of opioid addiction. This legislation mandates training in prescribing controlled substances and pain management, and requires prescribers or their authorized agents to check a patient’s record in the prescription drug monitoring program before prescribing a controlled substance under certain specified circumstances, among other changes.

Vaccination Recommended as Flu Season Begins

This week, the Connecticut Department of Public Health issued its first weekly report of the flu season, classifying influenza activity as “sporadic” since the end of August. Statewide ED visits attributed to the flu are at 4.6 percent, which is below the level of five percent statewide – generally considered the minimum threshold associated with elevated influenza-associated ED visits.

Flu vaccination is a best practice for patient and healthcare worker safety. In 2011, the CHA Board adopted a statewide policy endorsing mandatory influenza vaccination for hospital personnel as part of CHA hospitals’ commitment to patient safety. In addition to the CDC, leading expert organizations have also endorsed mandatory vaccination to protect patients, including the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA), the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), and the National Patient Safety Foundation (NPSF).

Influenza vaccination is the focus of International Infection Prevention Week, October 18-24. The week focuses on promoting engagement among patients, families, and healthcare professionals on the issue of infection prevention, including flu prevention. This week also marks the beginning of the AHA’s United Against the Flu campaign, when national healthcare organizations will promote the importance of flu vaccination.

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’s goals, all in recognition of the fact that health equity is the cornerstone of quality healthcare.

Education Updates

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.

**HRO Safety Coach Training**
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.

**2015 Nurse Leadership Forum**
Thursday, October 29, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

We are pleased and excited to announce that we have confirmed Dave deBronkart as the keynote presenter for CHA’s 15th annual Nurse Leadership Forum. Mr. deBronkart is known on the internet as “e-Patient Dave,” the author of Let Patients Help: A Patient Engagement Handbook, and one of the world’s leading advocates for patient engagement. We are equally pleased to have Ron Culberson as the closing presenter. Mr. Culberson’s presentation Managing to Be a Great (and Fun) Leader discusses how to be a successful leader. Forum sessions are also being planned on Crucial Conversations, and an overview of the current labor environment.

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

**Transitioning From Staff to Management: What’s Next?**
Monday, November 2, 2015
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 your 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 September or May 2015, this is the second course in the two-part program and provides additional development for all managers who want to continually improve their skills.

Continuing education credits will be awarded.

**Coaching Skills to Improve Performance**
Tuesday, November 3, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

What does it take for a manager to be an effective coach? Is there a difference between managing and coaching employees for improved performance? Building trust, appreciating differences, encouraging growth, providing constructive criticism, and overcoming roadblocks to goal achievement are all part of the process.

Continuing education credits will be awarded.

**HIPAA Privacy and Security Basics**
Wednesday, November 4, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

This program will review the current HIPAA Privacy, Security, and Breach Rules, with an emphasis on recent enforcement actions by the Office for Civil Rights and an overview of the newly announced government audit targeting HIPAA compliance. The program information includes strategies for maintaining continuous compliance, a review of business associates rules, and practical tips and solutions for remaining compliant with HIPAA as the transition from paper to EHR accelerates. We will also cover emerging issues in privacy liability, including costs associated with breach events and a new Connecticut Supreme Court case that is likely to increase liability and risk for HIPAA-covered entities.

Continuing education credits will be awarded.

**OSHA Guidance**
Friday, November 6, 2015
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

Representatives from OSHA will provide members with a general overview of OSHA’s recent guidance on workplace violence; musculoskeletal disorders/ergonomics; slips, trips, and falls; and bloodborne pathogens; explain OSHA’s record sharing addendum; and provide practical steps organizations must take to ensure compliance.

Continuing education credits will be awarded.

**HRO Train-the-Trainer**
Wednesday, November 11, 2015

---

*Update - Thursday, October 22, 2015*

*http://cthosp.org/press_room/update.cfm#1*
After leadership training takes place with hospitals and ambulatory practices, 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. They can include educators, front-line managers, and senior leaders.

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

**HRO Cause Analysis - Two-Day Program**
Thursday, November 12, 2015
Friday, November 13, 2015
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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 staff, safety staff, risk management staff, and other staff that respond to events.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits for this session (must attend the entire two-day session to receive these credits).