Ebola Preparedness Update

As part of an Ebola drill, Bristol Hospital Chief Medical Officer Kenneth Rhee, MD, gives instructions to General Support Services Associates Adrianna Cardoso and Sara Lanza.

Since the first report of an Ebola case in the U.S., interdisciplinary teams of caregivers from the state’s acute care hospitals have been reviewing and testing their emergency and healthcare response plans and conducting emergency preparedness drills and exercises. All acute care hospitals in Connecticut have completed drills in line with the Governor’s directive, and they will continue to drill in the coming weeks and months as guidance and best practices evolve.

Through CHA, Connecticut hospitals participate in weekly statewide hospital meetings and calls to share learning and coordinate approaches on issues ranging from pre-hospital care to screening protocols and PPE. They are also accessing extensive national resources and discussing new developments and best practices in the detection, prevention, and treatment of Ebola. As they have from the beginning, Connecticut hospitals continue to work closely with DPH to ensure that efforts statewide are coordinated.

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro Discusses Emergency Preparedness Needs at CHA

On October 24, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (CT-3) held a roundtable discussion with representatives of more than 20 hospitals from across the state to talk about the impact of cuts to hospital preparedness programs funded by the federal government. Congresswoman DeLauro expressed that the impact of these cuts has been more evident than ever because of Ebola.

“This is a trying time for our hospital preparedness system, which is at the center of the effort to control the spread of Ebola,” said Congresswoman DeLauro. “But federal support has been moving in the wrong direction. The deep cuts we have seen over the last four years are a danger to the public health. Congress has a responsibility to provide the federal funding public health agencies need to properly respond to, and be prepared for, whatever emergencies may arise. I have been fighting these cuts and will continue to do so. I am glad to hear from the hospital administrators present today, who represent every corner of Connecticut. I will take the feedback I received today back to Washington and continue to fight for the resources those on the front lines need to confront all possible epidemics.”

Hospitals discussed the resources needed to prepare for and cope with any type of emergency that would put stress on the healthcare delivery system. They highlighted the cost issues related to Ebola, which include ongoing training, exercises, medical response supplies including personal protective equipment (PPE), and coordination with other local, regional, and statewide emergency response providers. Hospitals discussed the concept of regionalizing the inpatient treatment of Ebola patients, as well as the need for careful planning and coordination with emergency medical services (EMS) responders.
Second Meeting of State Tax Panel

On October 27, the State Tax Panel met on the campus of Central Connecticut State University (CCSU). This was the second meeting of the panel, established under Section 137 of PA 14-217. Among its other charges, the panel will evaluate the feasibility of creating a tiered property tax payment system that includes any property owned by the state and not-for-profit hospitals, colleges, and universities for which the state made a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) to the host municipality or any not-for-profit entity. The panel may consider assessing a “community benefit fee” on any tax-exempt property, thus taxing property of not-for-profit hospitals, colleges, and universities, and requiring these entities to report the value of their real and personal property.

The main focus of the meeting on October 27 was to receive presentations from Joe Brennan, Senior Vice President, CBIA; Joe McGee, Vice President, Business Council of Fairfield County; and Nick Perna, Economist, Yale University.

Mr. Brennan focused his comments on how the business community seeks tax policies that promote transparency, consistency, ease of compliance, and predictability. Mr. McGee highlighted the need for tax, economic development, and state bonding policy to align with building a strong infrastructure. Mr. Perna provided a national, regional, and state overview of the current state of the economy.

Other business before the panel included the announcement that two members stepped down from serving on the panel. The panel then moved to fill those empty positions with the two alternates, namely David Nee, a board member for Connecticut Voices For Children and Melinda Agsten, partner at Wiggin & Dana. Ms. Agsten is the Past Chair of Wiggin and Dana's Health Care Department and Chair of its Tax Exempt Organizations Practice Group.

The panel is scheduled to meet again on Wednesday, December 3, 2014, at 3:00 p.m. at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. It is expected that the panel will hear presentations from staff members of the Department of Revenue Service (DRS) and the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) on various aspects of Connecticut's tax code.

Connecticut Hospitals and Nurses Honored at CNA Awards

On October 21, the Connecticut Nurses’ Association held Its Diamond Jubilee Awards, at which it recognized Connecticut nurses and hospitals who lead the profession in practice, research, education, and professional contributions.

Among the winners were Cheryl B. Hoey, RN, Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President, Patient Services, Connecticut Children’s Medical Center. Ms. Hoey was a recipient of the Doris M. Armstrong Award for Outstanding Contributions to Nursing Administration. In her time at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, Ms. Hoey developed a shared governance model for nursing, implemented a nurse residency program, launched a Nurse Leadership Academy, partnered with quality colleagues to implement a culture of safety program in conjunction with CHA, and collaborated with UCONN School of Nursing to develop the Institute for Nursing Research at CCMC.

MidState Medical Center’s Advanced Wound Care and Hyperbaric Medicine and Yale-New Haven Hospital’s Division of Nursing were awarded the Excellence in the Workplace Award. This award recognizes work or practice settings in which nurses have professional autonomy, control over the nursing practice, and/or an enhanced work environment.

The UCONN Urban Service Track (UST), an interprofessional program dedicated to serving Connecticut’s underserved urban populations, won the CNA Public Service Award. The award is given to individuals or groups for making notable contributions to the advancement of nursing, public health, or healthcare in Connecticut through public service, public education/advocacy, public policy, or organizational leadership. UST is sponsored by the CT Area Health Education Center Program and partner schools at the University of Connecticut and Quinnipiac.

Education Updates
Medication Safety: Your Role on the Team  
Monday, November 10, 2014  
12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
View Brochure | Event Registration

According to the FDA, it has received more than 30,000 reports of medication errors since 1992. Medication errors can occur at any point in healthcare, and involve patients, families, and professionals. Please join us for a multi-stakeholder approach to Medication Safety: Your Role on the Team. This program is open to consumers, patients, and families; hospital providers; continuum of care providers; retail pharmacies; Boards or senior leadership; healthcare organization staff; policy makers and staff of policy makers; media; and students and instructors in professional schools.

Speakers will include patient advocate Marian Hollingsworth from San Diego, discussing her father’s death and polypharmacy; clinicians from Yale University School of Medicine, Brown University, and University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy; nursing advocates from long-term care and home health care; representation from the Office of the Healthcare Advocate, and our keynote speaker, Dr. Allan Vaida from the Institute for Safe Medication Practices. Attendees will participate in break-out sessions to discuss a strategy for making Connecticut the safest state for medication use.

Continuing education credits will be awarded.

This program will be held at the Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine at Quinnipiac University.

Extended-Release and Long-Acting Opioid Analgesics Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS)  
Monday, November 10, 2014  
5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.  
View Brochure | Event Registration

The Extended-Release and Long-Acting Opioid Analgesics Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS) program will be held at the Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine at Quinnipiac University.

This program is brought to you in collaboration with DPH.

HRO Ambulatory Design Day  
Wednesday, November 12, 2014  
12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Event Registration

As hospitals, to sustain our implementation of High Reliability, we need participation by our partners who take care of patients. High Reliability needs to be utilized at every point in the care continuum. Join us for this session to help us design the curriculum for ambulatory practices and long-term care. This session is open to High Reliability Level 2 and Level 3 hospitals.

HRO Fair and Just Accountability  
Wednesday, November 12, 2014  
8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
Event Registration

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

Continuing education credits will be awarded.

CHA Nurse Preceptorship Program  
Tuesday, November 18, 2014  
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, evaluating competence, and delegating effectively. 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.

Honoring Patients’ Goals for End-of-Life Care: Addressing Life-Prolonging Care, Limited Care, and Comfort Care  
Wednesday, November 19, 2014  
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Event Registration

We invite you to join us for the fourth program in our end-of-life care series, designed to expand providers’ existing skillset to engage patients and their families in discussing their goals for end-of-life care. We are extremely pleased to have Angelo Volandes, MD, MPH, of ACP Decisions, as the keynote presenter, discussing strategies and tools to facilitate meaningful dialogue with patients on fulfilling their wishes.

Speakers will also provide an update on Connecticut’s MOLST Pilot program, Qualidigm’s Interact tool, and Middlesex Hospital, Hospice and Home Care’s research-based Palliative Care screening tool. VITAS Healthcare’s Hospice Medical Director Clare Cherney, MD, will present suggestions and examples on when and how to start the difficult end-of-life care conversation.

This program is presented by Connecticut’s Collaborations of Care partners: the Connecticut Hospital Association, the Connecticut Association for Healthcare at Home, the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities, the Connecticut State Medical Society, and LeadingAge Connecticut.