



Hospital Leaders Meet With Legislators in Washington

Connecticut hospital leaders joined CHA and colleagues from across the country at the American Hospital Association Advocacy Day on December 3 in Washington, DC. This important event provided a valuable forum to present a unified message about the importance and contributions of hospitals and the need to ensure their financial stability.

Hospital leadership, including Joe Connolly, Chief Marketing and Government Relations Officer, Saint Mary's Hospital; R. Christopher Hartley, Sr. VP, Planning & Facilities Development, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center; and Pam Koprowski, Corporate Director of Public Affairs, Stamford Hospital, met with members of Connecticut's congressional delegation including Sen. Chris Murphy, Sen. Richard Blumenthal's staff, Rep. Elizabeth Esty, Rep. John Larson, Rep. Joe Courtney, Rep. Jim Himes, and Rep. Rosa DeLauro's staff.

In each meeting, hospital leaders and congressional delegation members engaged in a discussion of hospital initiatives and issues. Discussion focused on the need to protect Medicare and Medicaid hospital funding and oppose efforts to repeal national budget neutrality for the rural floor. Hospital officials asked legislators to support modifications to the Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) program and reauthorize the Medicare Dependent Hospital program.

Hospital leaders also discussed the patient safety, diversity, and quality initiatives in Connecticut. Lawmakers expressed appreciation for hospitals' commitment to patients and dedication to being the state's healthcare safety net.

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Hospitals Testify at Educational Hearing on Hospital Conversions



Darlene Stromstad, President and CEO, Waterbury Hospital

On December 3, members of the General Assembly's Labor and Public Employees Committee held the third in a series of informational forums on hospital conversions, mergers, and affiliations. The informational forum focused on a number of labor-related issues, with members of the hospital and organized labor communities providing testimony. A number of other legislators, including the chairs of the Public Health Committee, attended and participated in the forum.

The hospital community was represented and provided information on issues related to quality of care, access to care, the general healthcare and hospital environment including cuts in federal and state reimbursement, economies of scale, and access to capital. Hospital representatives who testified included Darlene Stromstad, President and CEO, Waterbury Hospital; Dennis McConville, Senior Vice President, ECHN; and Trip Pilgrim, Senior Vice President of Development, Tenet HealthCare.

Presentations were given by organized labor, including representatives from AFSCME, 1199C National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, AFT CT, 1199 New England Health Care Workers/SEIU, and Community United - a union-backed community organization. Legislators engaged organized labor on issues and concerns related to mandating staffing levels, employee benefits, transparency, quality of care, business models of for-profit hospitals, access to care, the Certificate of Need (CON) process, and other regulatory oversight by state agencies. Legislators indicated the need to continue a dialogue about hospital conversions, mergers, and affiliations throughout the 2014 Legislative Session.

The [first informational forum](#) held by the Public Health Committee focused on various state agency regulatory roles and responsibilities during hospital conversions and related activities, and [the second forum](#) focused on the current state of hospitals in light of the changing landscape, both in Connecticut and across the country, with Committee members posing questions and concerns on access to capital, bundled payments for the delivery of care, the collection of data, access to care, continued viability of not-for-profit hospitals, and medical foundations.

You can watch a replay of the proceedings of this week's forum by clicking [here](#), and you can watch a replay of the proceedings of the second forum by clicking [here](#).

NBC Connecticut Holds Second Healthcare Roundtable



On December 4, NBC Connecticut brought together top decision makers from the healthcare, government, foundation, business, and insurance sectors for a collaborative roundtable discussion on the impact of health reform on Connecticut two months after the beginning of open enrollment. Marie Spivey, EdD, RN, Vice President, Health Equity, CHA, represented the Association.

The discussion, the second in a series, is part of NBC Connecticut's commitment to providing residents with critical information to enable them to make the best healthcare decisions, covered issues including how best to reach Connecticut residents eligible for coverage, challenges of implementation, the shift from payment based on volume to payment based on value, and new opportunities to improve community health and reduce health disparities. Dr. Spivey highlighted the need to better educate the uninsured populations, and to strategize on ways to better educate employers and their uninsured employees about the benefits of offering and having health insurance. Approaching these groups together, said Dr. Spivey, will help build trust.

The roundtable was not taped, but continues to inform coverage by NBC Connecticut like [this story](#) about healthcare enrollment outreach to local churches.

State Senator Beth Bye Named Senate Chair of the Appropriations Committee



On November 27, Senate President Donald E. Williams Jr. (D-Brooklyn) announced that Senator Beth Bye (D-West Hartford) will become Senate Chair of the Appropriations Committee when current Chair Toni Harp (D-New Haven) vacates her seat. Sen. Harp is expected to leave the Connecticut State Senate when she is sworn in as the 50th mayor of the city of New Haven on January 1, 2014. Sen. Bye's district includes the towns of West Hartford, Bloomfield, Burlington, and Farmington.

Sen. Bye was elected to the Senate in 2010 and currently serves as chair of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. She is a member of the Appropriations, Education, and Judiciary Committees. Prior to her election to the Senate, she served two terms in the Connecticut House of Representatives – from 2007 to 2011. In addition to her legislative duties, Sen. Bye has been a program director at Capitol Region Education Council, The University of Saint Joseph, and Trinity College. She has had a role in the development of four preschool programs in the Hartford region. Sen. Bye grew up in Greenwich and now lives in West Hartford with her spouse.

CHA congratulates Senator Bye on her appointment to the position of Senate Chair of the Appropriations Committee.

Mark Your Calendar: Employee Health and Wellness Symposium



On Monday, December 9, 2013, CHA will present an anniversary symposium in support of CHA's initiative to create a culture of employee health and wellness in Connecticut hospitals. The program will include sessions on research, strategies, and practices that hospitals can develop and implement to improve employee wellness, and to address population health management in their communities.

The symposium will feature Jeanette R. Ickovics, PhD, Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health and of Psychology at Yale University, who will deliver the keynote address. Dr. Ickovics will be joined by Jeanne Wyand, Senior Consultant at Towers Watson, who will present national survey findings on employee health strategies, Hugh Murray, III, Partner at Murtha Cullina, who will discuss the implications of the Affordable Care Act for employee wellness programs, and hospital panelists who will share their strategies for success.

The program supports *Living Our Mission: Building Healthier Choices*, a statewide initiative focused on improving employee health. The program will establish hospitals as models of good health for their communities. The initiative is based on the 2012 AHA report, *A Call to Action: Creating a Culture of Health*, which emphasizes the critical role hospitals play in their communities, the financial case for addressing employee health, and the opportunities to prepare for accountable care and population health management. The CHA Committee on Human Resources established the Subcommittee on Employee Wellness and Population Health Management, which developed the initiative.

Continuing education credits will be awarded.

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

Education Updates

Changes in CPT/HCPCS for 2014

Wednesday, December 11, 2013
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

CPT and HCPCS codes are the primary codes that describe individual hospital services that are billed to all payers. These code sets go through annual revisions with codes that are added, deleted, or revised. The workshop will include information on the E&M, Wound Repair, Breast Biopsies and Localizations (5 CPT codes deleted and 14 new CPT codes added), complete revisions to scope procedures, and other code changes. CMS has not published their HCPCS code file yet, but it is expected to have numerous new and deleted codes.

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

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

OPPS Final Rule for 2014

Wednesday, December 11, 2013
1:15 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published the Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS) Final Rule for 2014 on November 27, 2013. The 2014 OPPS Proposed Rule contained sweeping changes in packaging that—if accepted as proposed—will have far reaching impacts on your Medicare outpatient reimbursement. In addition, the Final Rule documents changes in existing OPPS components such as composite Ambulatory Payment Classifications (APCs) and E&M visits, as well as how CMS is going to address new CPT and HCPCS codes with respect to OPPS.

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

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Basics of Budgeting for Healthcare Managers

Thursday, December 12, 2013
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Many healthcare department managers have traditionally risen from the professional ranks as successful clinicians or technicians but with little or no formal business financial training. As a result, many are thrust into a chaotic environment without the necessary tools in financial management. Skills in planning and budgeting are essential if they are to achieve the institution's mission and contribute to "bottom line" results. In a very real sense, these represent survival skills for both managers and institutions.

This member-requested management development program provides managers with the skills and tools they need to prepare better budgets, identify problems and solutions, achieve the mission, and succeed in today's chaotic healthcare environment. Participants will gain a working

knowledge of operating and capital budgets, as part of developing performance planning skills.

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

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

Presumptive Eligibility Training

Friday, December 13, 2013

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, starting January 1, 2014, hospitals will have a new opportunity to better connect eligible patients to Medicaid. Each hospital will need to designate individuals they would like to be trained to work with the Department of Social Services (DSS) as part of the Presumptive Eligibility Program. The designated individual will need to attend training at CHA on either December 4 or December 13; training will be held from 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., with registration beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Starting in 2014, once staff is trained, hospitals will be able to enroll patients who are likely eligible in Medicaid immediately using presumptive eligibility, without the need to wait for an eligibility determination from the state. When a patient provides basic information about income and household size that falls within the Medicaid eligibility criteria, a hospital can determine that individual to be "presumptively eligible" for Medicaid, resulting in the hospital getting paid for the services provided as though the patient were already enrolled in Medicaid when entering the hospital.

Hospitals that want to participate in the new presumptive eligibility opportunity are required to work with Medicaid (DSS), who will provide guidelines, policies, and procedures on how the presumptive eligibility process will work. In addition to the training hospital staff will need, hospitals are required to sign an agreement with DSS to participate.

[Event Registration](#)