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CHA's Unite Connecticut SDOH Referral System Held up as a National Model



The Unite Connecticut program was in the spotlight last week as a national model during a webinar to promote soon-to-be introduced social determinants infrastructure legislation by Senators Chris Murphy (D-Connecticut) and Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska). The Unite Connecticut program, which was launched in 2019 by CHA and Connecticut hospitals, served as an example of how technology can link medical and social service providers to more effectively assist with food insecurity, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Anne Diamond, President of Bridgeport Hospital, spoke during the event about how Unite Connecticut is working for patients in her community, the largest city in our state.

Murphy and Sullivan's bill, the Leveraging Integrated Networks in Communities (LINC) to Address Social Needs Act, would offer states \$150 million in grants to establish or enhance statewide or regional partnerships to better address social determinants of health. Grant dollars would enable public-private partnerships to develop referral support technology platforms to connect individuals with assistance with food, housing, child care, transportation, job training, and other needs.

Unite Connecticut, which was developed by CHA in response to member hospital feedback, uses a specialized technology platform, Unite Us, to formalize the communication and referral process between hospitals and community-based organizations in their communities to better serve patients with social needs that contribute to health problems. In its first year, this initiative has helped 1,100 unique clients address these important unmet needs.

House Approves \$1.9 Trillion COVID-19 Relief Reconciliation Bill that Includes Hospitals and Health Systems Priorities



In the early hours of February 27, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, including provisions to assist hospitals and healthcare systems.

The House bill would expand subsidies for certain forms of healthcare coverage and includes provisions to bolster the nation's COVID-19 healthcare response with additional resources for vaccines, treatment, personal protective equipment, testing, contact tracing, and workforce development. Other healthcare-related provisions would provide funding to the Department of Labor for worker protection activities. Click here for AHA's special bulletin summarizing provisions affecting hospitals and healthcare systems.

The bill now goes to the Senate, which aims to pass its own version of the legislation before March 14, when a portion of unemployment benefits from the last pandemic relief bill are set to expire.

CHA Testifies in Support of Expanded Telehealth Coverage

CHA testified last week in favor of HB 6472, which would extend the expanded Medicaid coverage of telehealth beyond the Public Health Emergency, giving it a two-year test, with an efficacy review, before making it permanent. CHA urged legislators to make coverage for the full range of telehealth modalities permanent now, or, failing that, to extend it until the end of the 2023 legislative session to allow for a full and complete public process.

CHA's testimony reiterated key principles that it has been advocating all along:

- Reimbursement on par with the same service if rendered in person
• Flexibility with respect to where the patient is located at the time of service (originating site), whether at home or in a community- or facility-based setting, and where the physician or other practitioner who provides the service is located (distant site)
• Coverage for new and established patients and the full range of telehealth modalities, including audio-only



CHA told members of the Human Services Committee that, while the expansion was made by executive order to sustain access to important healthcare services during the public health emergency, HB 6472 rightly acknowledges that telehealth is an essential method for delivering healthcare, enhancing access to underserved and hard-to-reach communities, and supporting a broad range of diagnostic and treatment services for both physician and behavioral health.

Education Updates

Issue-Based Forum: 2021 Joint Commission Update
Thursday, March 25, 2021 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

This session will provide an update on what to expect from The Joint Commission in 2021. Content will include a comparison of risks identified across the country and those found during surveys at Connecticut hospitals. Standards and survey process changes will be highlighted during the presentation as well as emerging safety and quality issues.

This CHA issue-based forum will be presented by Lisa DiBlasi Moorehead, EdD, MSN, RN, CENP, Associate Nurse Executive in the division of Accreditation and Certification Operations at The Joint Commission.

This issue-based-forum is open to CHA members only.

There is no fee for this event.

- Click [here](#) to register for this Thursday, March 25 session

High Reliability at the Sharp End

Wednesdays, through June 16, 2021 12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m.

(Please note one exception: ICU Worker Safety session has been rescheduled to Thursday)

Virtual Sessions

This important unit-specific training series is focused on clinical areas where high reliability practice is critical. High Reliability at the Sharp End will cover Intensive Care Units, Peri-operative Services, Labor and Birthing, Emergency Departments, and Ambulatory Services. The series is designed in three parts, with each specialty covered in successive weeks.

Each session in the series, which will be held from 12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m., will provide continuing education credits and will be recorded.

Please note: Continuing education credits are awarded only to those who attend the live sessions, and not to those who view the recordings.

These sessions are offered only to CHA HRO members.

High Reliability Training: Patient Safety

These patient safety training sessions will kick off the series focusing on high reliability for decreasing preventable adverse events in different settings in the organization. Attendees will learn about high reliability tools, behaviors, and practices that are specific to patient safety in their area of the organization.

- For **Emergency Department** High Reliability Training: Patient Safety, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, March 10 session
- For **Ambulatory** High Reliability Training: Patient Safety, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, March 17 session
- For **Peri-op** High Reliability Training: Patient Safety, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, March 24 session

High Reliability Training: Healing the Workforce

Part two of the series focuses on worker safety and examines how high reliability practices and principles can keep workplaces safe. Attendees will learn about high reliability tools, behaviors, and practices that are specific to worker safety in their area of their healthcare organization.

- For **Peri-op** High Reliability Training: Worker Safety, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, April 21 session
- For **ICU** High Reliability Training: Worker Safety, click [here](#) to register for the Thursday, April 22 session (rescheduled from Wednesday, April 14)
- For **Labor and Birthing** High Reliability Training: Worker Safety, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, April 28 session
- For **Emergency Department** High Reliability Training: Worker Safety, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, May 5 session
- For **Ambulatory** High Reliability Training: Worker Safety, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, May 12 session

High Reliability Training: Patient and Family Engagement

Part three of the series focuses on patient and family engagement and how high reliability practices and principles can be used to keep patients satisfied, engaged, and activated. Attendees will learn about high reliability tools, behaviors, and practices that are specific to patient and family engagement in their area of their healthcare organization.

- For **ICU** High Reliability Training: Patient Family Engagement, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, May 19 session
- For **Peri-op** High Reliability Training: Patient Family Engagement, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, May 26 session
- For **Labor and Birthing** High Reliability Training: Patient Family Engagement, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, June 2 session
- For **Emergency Department** High Reliability Training: Patient Family Engagement, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, June 9 session
- For **Ambulatory** High Reliability Training: Patient Family Engagement, click [here](#) to register for the Wednesday, June 16 session