Free CME for License Renewal: Click here for instant access

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1891 - The first Caesarian section at Hartford Hospital was performed by Dr. Phineas Ingalls.

Follow Hartford Hospital on [facebook](#), [youtube](#) and [twitter](#)
Chief's Corner

- Dr. Jack Greene, Hartford HealthCare Regional Vice President of Medical Affairs for the Hartford Region and Hartford Hospital

Just Ask Us!

We have put in place a dedicated email box for the medical staff, called "Ask Jack." The emails will be picked up each day, and I will be responsible for making sure that you receive feedback. Send your concerns to askjack@hhchealth.org.

In addition, there is a dedicated email box to ask questions of Dr. Stu Markowitz. Send your questions or comments to StuandYou@hhchealth.org, and you'll get a response from Stu within 10 days.

Welcome To "Chief's Corner"

We recognize the need for sharing information about activities throughout the hospital more widely with our Medical Staff.

Chief's Corner will bring you highlights of activities of interest, which will be authored by our Department Chiefs. Should you have any comments or suggestions along the way, please share them with us.

Mobile CESI Brings Simulation Training to Nurses in HHC Preferred Provider Network

Stephen Donahue, Center for Education, Simulation, and Innovation (CESI)

Through a generous grant funded by Jefferson House in Newington, CESI (the Center for Education, Simulation, and Innovation) created an in-situ simulation training program for nurses and CNAs within Hartford HealthCare’s Preferred Provider Network, including Jefferson House, Southington Care, and Jerome Home.

Using a Laerdal 3G simulation manikin, participants are able to practice their assessment and communication skills in a safe learning environment. The mission of CESI’s mobile team is “to promote patient safety and quality care through expertise in simulation in a familiar environment”. In-situ training has the included benefits of training staff in their own environment with familiar equipment.

This program aims to reduce resident acute care readmissions, build staff confidence, standardize patient care, and identify areas of improvement.

The mobile team consists of a mobile simulation instructor, Shelby Greco, RN, MSN, a mobile technician, Josephine Faienza, and a manikin nicknamed Charlie Jefferson. This wireless life-size manikin presents with vital signs and symptoms of medical conditions such as a cardiac arrest, congestive heart failure, and stroke, to name a few. The participants are able to palpate pulses, check vital signs manually, auscultate heart, lung, and bowel sounds, provide chest compressions, and defibrillate the manikin.

From the President of the Medical Staff

- Dr. Stacy Nerenstone, President of the Hartford Hospital Medical Staff

Department Chiefs Elected to Serve on MEC

Congratulations to the six chiefs who were recently elected by their peers to serve on the Medical Executive Committee as voting members:

- Dr. Adam Borgida, OB/GYN
- Dr. Thomas Farquhar, Radiology
- Dr. Jeff Finkelstein, Emergency Medicine
- Dr. Ajay Kumar, Medicine
- Dr. Steve Shichman, Urology
- Dr. Witold Waberski, Anesthesiology
We look forward to their continued involvement in the medical staff issues so important to us.

Stacy

From the Administration

Dr. Stu Markowitz, Senior VP, HHC, and Hartford Region President

Healthcare industry in Connecticut is faced with unprecedented financial challenges

As you are well aware given the extensive media coverage, the healthcare industry in Connecticut is faced with unprecedented financial challenges related to the state budget. Our hospital team worked extremely hard to control costs and build a sustainable budget, and then just weeks into the fiscal year, the governor announced cuts in Medicaid payments that would adversely affect the manner in which we are able to care for the population of patients most in need.

Thanks to extensive advocacy for a special legislative session in early December, $21 million (about 38 percent) of the originally cut $55 million has been restored. For Hartford Hospital, that means a restoration of about $10 million.

This is but a small step in the right direction to assure the hospital system across Connecticut remains strong. We continue to make the case that healthcare should be a strong economic driver for our economy and should be viewed as a place for strong investment. One out of every five Connecticut residents is a Medicaid patient, and nearly one of every four transitions from our inpatient care is a Medicaid patient.

As a result of the state budget cuts, even with the restoration of part of the funding, the system as a whole must look at opportunities to grow while reducing our cost of care. When the legislature regular session begins in February, we once again will ask for your advocacy as we continue to educate our legislative representatives to work towards a different understanding of the importance of healthcare in the state of Connecticut.

Although these are difficult times for our industry, our hospital continues its long list of accomplishments, and much of that is thanks to your outstanding professionalism, skill and support. We have continued to grow in both our inpatient and outpatient sectors. We are advancing our quality and safety programs. We continue to recruit outstanding professionals to join our team, and our staff’s commitment and compassion will continue to take us on a successful path forward.

As always, thank you for what you do every day and for being a part of our outstanding team.

Top News

Dr. Amre Nouh Appointed Director of Stroke Center

Dr. Amre Nouh has been appointed as the director of the Comprehensive Stroke Center at Hartford Hospital.

Dr. Nouh joined Hartford Hospital in August 2014 as the director of the Outpatient Stroke Center, where he has worked extensively on improving patient access in addition to completing several quality improvement projects to standardize transitions of patient care from the inpatient to the outpatient center.

Dr. Nouh is an assistant professor of Neurology at the University of Connecticut and the associate director of the Neurology Residency Program. He is passionate about clinical research and teaching and has led numerous projects on stroke care with representation at national and international meetings.

He recently was appointed by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association as a representative to the Connecticut Department of Public Health Task Force, working on a statewide initiative to improve stroke care across all phases of the continuum.
Under the leadership of Dr. Isaac Silverman, Hartford Hospital's Stroke Center became the first comprehensive stroke center in New England to be recognized by the Joint Commission. We want to thank Dr. Silverman for his services over the past 15 years and commitment to the development of the stroke center. Dr. Silverman will continue to provide care to our patients as he transitions from his current position as the director to a neuro-hospitalist role.

HHC CEO Makes Case for Robust Healthcare Industry

In Hartford Business Journal's 2015-2016 Book of Lists, Hartford HealthCare president and CEO Elliot Joseph writes about healthcare as an economic engine for the state.

To read the insightful article, use this link.

Connecticut Ear, Nose & Throat Associates Pledge to Campaign for Hartford Hospital

Connecticut Ear, Nose & Throat Associates have pledged a generous gift to support Hartford Hospital, continuing the momentum for the success of the Campaign for Hartford Hospital.

“Everyone at Connecticut Ear, Nose & Throat Associates is very pleased to support Hartford Hospital and share our enthusiasm and appreciation for the capital campaign,” said Dr. Gregory Bonaiuto, chief of the Department of Otolaryngology and a member of the practice group. Connecticut Ear, Nose & Throat Associates is one of the largest otolaryngology practices in the state with eight offices in the region.

Strong participation in the campaign by Hartford Hospital's physician leaders and affiliated practice groups is a top priority to further strengthen our facilities and resources to continue delivering exceptional care to all patients in the community and region.

Peripartum Mood Disorder Program Launched at IOL

Postpartum depression is the most common complication of childbirth, affecting about 15 percent of all mothers. Every woman is at risk, regardless of her age, race, education, or financial status. Unrecognized and untreated, the ripple effect of postpartum depression and anxiety disorders impacts the health and well-being not only of mothers, but also their babies, partners, families, and our community as a whole.

A critical need was recognized by our Hartford Hospital obstetricians, who sought timely and dedicated referral services for behavioral health evaluation and treatment for these mothers.

A grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has established the Peripartum Mood Disorder program at the Institute of Living. The program is a collaboration among the Institute of Living, Women’s Health at Hartford Hospital, and OB/GYNs in the community. The program is accepting patients for evaluation and care of postpartum depression.

Specialists in the center are Dr. Sheila Gately, medical director, and Art Guerra, APRN, director. The phone number is 860.545.7104

For more details: Click here.

Read the story of Heather, an employee at Hartford HealthCare, who suffered postpartum psychosis after the birth of her second child.

Watch a media interview of Guerra and a patient on Fox CT.

Joint Commission Awards Accreditation to VAD Program

The Joint Commission has awarded an additional two-year accreditation to Hartford Hospital's ventricular assist device (VAD) destination therapy program.

The evaluation noted the excellent collaboration among team members, including cardiology, cardiac surgery, advanced providers, nursing, perfusion, palliative care, social work, finance, physical therapy, nutrition, and pharmacy. The evaluation also noted that Hartford Hospital’s length of stay (total: 23 days; post-implant, 12 days), one-year survival rate (92 percent), 30-day readmission rate (18 percent), and driveline infection rate (2.2 percent) are among the lowest in the country.

The Joint Commission accredits and certifies nearly 21,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. Joint Commission accreditation and certification is recognized nationwide as a symbol of quality.
that reflects an organization’s commitment to meeting certain performance standards.

Excellence

Dr. Hank Schwartz to Moderate Discussion on Trauma and its psychological consequences

Dr. Harold I. Schwartz, psychiatrist-in-chief at Hartford Hospital’s Institute for Living, will be moderating a discussion between Pulitzer Prize winning photo journalist Paul Watson and playwright Dan O’Brien about their friendship. O’Brien has written a play, entitled “The Body of an American” which focuses on his relationship with Watson and Watson’s experiences as a war photographer. Trauma, and its psychological consequences are a major theme.

“A Conversation with Paul Watson and Dan O’Brien” will be held on Monday, January 11, at 7:30 p.m. at Hartford Stage.

Our Physicians Are Great Sources For Local Media

Dr. Rocco Orlando is quoted in the January 4 CT Mirror article about a new law taking effect involving transparency provisions in health care. Read it here.

Dr. Orlando was also quoted in the Norwich Bulletin on December 30, 2015 about Medicare penalties at Windham Hospital. Read it here.

Dr. Andy Salner was interviewed on WTIC NewsTalk1080 AM radio about a new promising drug that fights cancer cells. It helped President Jimmy Carter go into remission and is a new tool in the fight against cancer. Watch it here.

Dr. Paul Thompson was interviewed by Runner's World about statins and running. Read it here.

You can always view a list of media interviews on the website under Hartford Hospital Making Headlines

Upcoming News Service Content; Share Your Stories

The Hartford HealthCare News Service is actively creating content with media partners across the state. Please let us know if you have great patient stories to share. Share your stories with us so we can share them to a wider audience.

Here's a look at what's coming up.

Connect to Healthier

Sundays in the 9 a.m. hour, we broadcast a two minute health segment on NBC CT.

- December 20, 2015: Tae Park, a story of hope
- December 27, 2015: How to help aging parents
- January 3: The prosthetic thumb that changed one man’s life
- January 10: Striking back at stroke

Medical Rounds

Partnership with WF SB. Weekly live interview from the HHC studio at 5:45 pm.

- December 23, 2015: Dr. Craig Allen; the New Heoin epidemic
- December 30, 2015: Dr. Pavlos Papasavas; New weight loss procedures
- January 6: Dr. Chris LaSala; Stress Incontinence Study

HealthCare Matters radio program

Every month, Elliot Joseph highlights an important health care related topic with nationally recognized experts on CBS affiliate WTIC-am, NewTalk 1080, Connecticut's largest and most popular talk radio station

**Healthier Connections**

Monthly partnership with FOX CT.

- January: Senior services

**CT STYLE**

Monthly partnership with WTNH.

- January: New options in weight loss
- February: Women’s Heart Center

Check [this link](#) for a look at the stories currently running on our HHC screens, waiting rooms and at Westfarms Mall.

*Link to contact information across the system: Hartford HealthCare Media Relations Team*

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**Research and Academics**

**Volunteers Needed for a Research Study on Statins, Creatine and Exercise**

Healthy men and postmenopausal women between the ages of 40 and 70 are needed for a research study examining how statins and the dietary supplement creatine affect a person’s response to exercise.

We are seeking individuals who do not regularly exercise, do not take medications or dietary supplements for high cholesterol, and do not use tobacco products. The 5 week protocol involves six visits to Hartford Hospital involving exercise tests on a treadmill and blood samples. Participants will be compensated $200 for their time and gain valuable health information.

If you know of any patients who may be interested, please contact Gregory.Panza@hhchealth.org or (860) 972-1507.

**Introduction to the Principles and Practice of Clinical Research**

The Research Department has partnered with the NIH Clinical Center to offer an online course called “Introduction to the Principles and Practice of Clinical Research,” that provides a comprehensive review of clinical research. The course is free and open to all HHC staff.

You may view the course remotely after registration from the course website.

In addition, members of the Research Department will host a weekly classroom "Lunch and Learn" with opportunity for discussion of the course material on on Thursdays, 12-1 p.m. in ERD 217E through March 2016.

The course is delivered by NIH Division and other leaders in the organization that speaks to regulations and current concepts that drive innovative models in research design. The topics are wide ranging, from EHR use and data management, ethical review, financial oversight, grant proposal development, health related outcomes, inclusion of women and minorities, and tech transfer.

There is no charge for the course and no attendance requirement. A Certificate of Successful Completion issued by NIH is available contingent upon passing a final exam.

For additional information on the course and registration, please visit the Research Admin website, e-mail or call the course leaders, Dr. Carolyn Hoban or Cherie Bilbie, <resadmin@hhchealth.org> or 860-972-2197.

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**Voices of Our Patients**
Voices of Our Patients: Kudos to Dr. Onyechela Ogbonna

Dear Dr. Ogbonna,

You saved my life. You ordered all the tests in order for me to find out what was wrong with me. You listened to me with loving care and empathy.

I can't tell you how much that meant to me because no one was listening.

I think about you every day and what a wonderful doctor you are. Hartford Hospital is blessed to have you.

Thank you for everything. Thank you for being you!

Operational Update

Improving Doctor-to-Doctor Communication: A Free Tool To Help You

We all want to do what is best for our patients. Problems in communication between hospital providers, consultants, and community providers has been identified as a major source of dissatisfaction for both patients and physicians. And it can lead to gaps in patient care.

Hartford Hospital has invested in a tool to help providers improve communication. It is a HIPAA compliant texting service called TigerText, and we are offering it to the medical staff at no charge.

TigerText allows a provider to send brief text messages, with patient identifiers, to another provider on the system. Examples of texts include quick reports of a procedure, notification of discharge, questions about medications, etc. There is an option to alert people if you are on vacation, and the notices that are sent are marked as read when they are opened by the recipient.

We are anxious for all of our Medical Staff to enroll in this free application. It is VERY easy to use, even for those of us who have problems with new technology. We urge everyone to register and get on this useful and HIPAA compliant system today—it will make your job easier and improve patient safety.

- Here is a TigerText Request form with directions on how to get TigerText: You can download the form here.
- For further help with this, feel free to contact John_Rogalsky@hhchealth.org (860-972-3207).
- Any problems not resolved by the TigerText Help line can be referred to Dr. Marc Palter at Marc.Palter@hhchealth.org.

TigerText Support

For Hartford Hospital users, TigerText support can be obtained by calling the Hartford HealthCare help desk at 860-545-5699 and choosing option #6; or by calling TigerText Pro support directly at 650-564-4722.

For issues related to password recovery, a helpdesk call is required and will be routed to the Mobility team.

Remind a Colleague: Wash In, Wash Out

All health care workers and patients should feel comfortable reminding any other health care worker to sanitize regardless of their role. This should always be done in a courteous and constructive manner. All health care workers should respond courteously and gratefully when reminded.

If you remind another health care worker to sanitize, and he or she responds with irritation or hostility, please notify their department chief, Dr. Jack Greene or Dr. Jack Ross, who will communicate with them to prevent recurrences.
Epic Userweb Instructions
The Epic UserWeb is a compendium of many different Epic publications, eLearnings, descriptions, a chat room, and many other things. It gives a great opportunity to begin exploring and learning. It is easy to navigate, and except for the Chat room, it is read only. Give it a try, see what the light is at the end of the tunnel.

Here are some instructions describing how to access the Epic UserWeb, and a brief description of useful areas.

- Through your web browser, enter the address https://userweb.epic.com
- Register for a log in using Hartford HealthCare as employer, and your HHC.ORG email (it will not register you if you use another email domain, ie. AOL, gmail)
- You will receive a confirmation email within 24hrs that you have been registered

The Epic UserWeb is a website that is utilized by Epic users and staff to exchange information, and as a repository for publications and presentations. A few highlights:

- On the right side is a column of links to various areas. You are free to explore any of them. Specifically, you should look near the bottom of the column, under Training at the section entitled weLearning.

weLearning are short (5-20minute) videos produced by Epic, that show actual screens and functionality. They give you a brief lesson on the topic.

On the light Blue bar near the top, choose EPIC 2014. This will show you videos that are specific for our version of Epic.

Feel free to watch any of the videos, or you can use the search box to find a specific topic of interest, such as orders, schedules, procedures, etc.

Remember that these videos are produced by Epic, and demonstrate their Foundation system, which may slightly differ from our (but will be close enough for all intents and purposes).

To go back to the Main Page, click on the Epic UserWeb icon in the upper left corner.

Other areas of interest include:

- Epic Classics (found directly under the weLearning link on the lower right side). Epic Classics are a collection of presentation from the Epic UserGroup and other meetings. They usually run 30-45 minutes, and demonstrate how other organization approached certain situations or problems. The search box allows you to narrow down by year or topic.
- Right in the middle of the Home page is a very active Chat Room, where users post questions or problems, and they are addressed by users and staff all around the world. Feel free to post your own question by clicking on the balloon in the upper right.

The Community Library is a collection of work-product from Epic users all around the world. Here, you can see what others have done: condition specific note-types, questionnaires, Smarttools, etc. Note that these cannot be directly imported into our Epic, but they can be used as “templates” for personalization. Use the search bar at the top to narrow down and filter.

Galaxy is a library of publications by Epic. Some are guides for the end users, some are for the analysts on how to build certain functions, and some are training or quick guides to certain functionality. Using the filters on the left side, choose the categories of your interest. There is also a search bar at the top. Remember that we have Epic 2014 version.

The Epic UserWeb is a very useful tool to allow you to explore the many components and functionalities that Epic has to offer. Look around and get familiar.

The UserWeb is not just for providers. There is a lot of information for medical assistants, nurses, front desk, and other roles. It contains information for Ambulatory, Acute Hospital, revenue cycle, etc.
Among the many articles are those on Dr. Tessa Balach, orthopedic oncologist; a story of two women raising awareness to fight pancreatic cancer; and Fred Bailey, the new East Region oncology director.

Educational Events and Programs Calendar Available

Click here to download.

The Hartford HealthCare Cancer Institute has published an Educational Events and Programs Calendar listing all programs and support groups available this fall.

ICP News

ICP News: New Year Challenges and Opportunities

Please see the attached January issue of ICP News.

Lead Story by Dr. Michael Pinnolis, ICP Chief Medical Officer: Beginning the New Year – Challenges and Opportunities for ICP

This month’s features:

- ICP Part in HHC Employee Campaign
- Community Practice Excellence
- Epic EHR and You
- Your January To-Do List

For a look at our previous issues, visit www.integratedcarepartners.org.

For your information: Videos from the first ICP Conference (The Mind/Body Connection: Integrating Behavioral Health and Primary Care) are posted on the ICP Web site: Click here to view.

CME Applications

Important Information Regarding CME Application Submissions

Over the last year there have been several changes to the HH CME program designed to ensure that all planned activities meet the new and more stringent standards set by the ACCME and CSMS for accredited CME. The HH CME team has met with department chairs, physician planners and others involved in this process to outline the changes and new expectations. We have also worked directly with physician planners to help educate them about the criteria required to plan an educational activity that will qualify for accredited CME.

Recently we have observed a significant increase in the number of CME applications at HH. While we are pleased to see this growth of CME offerings, we have also observed that many submitted applications have required additional attention with respect to completeness and documentation.

The required documentation is often significant and requires careful review by our team to ensure that all ACCME standards are met. We often need additional information from invited speakers and this process can sometimes take several weeks to ensure that all documentation has been received for a complete application. The committee is unable to review any incomplete applications. For this reason, the HH CME committee has decided that we must strictly enforce the following deadlines for submission of all CME applications.

Effective January 1, 2016, the CME Department will only review complete applications that are submitted 4-weeks prior to the planned activity for recurring series events such as Grand Rounds and 12-weeks prior to courses or symposia.
We have developed educational resources to assist planners with the application process. Please contact the CME office at ContinuingEd@HHCHHealth.org for further information about available planning resources. Additional support from our CME planner is available on a first come first serve basis. In order to ensure a timely review of your application, we strongly recommend advance planning for events.

Courses and symposia should be planned at least 6 months in advance and ideally up to 12 months in advance. We encourage you to contact the CME office with any questions you have regarding the timing of application submission.

As the holidays approach we would also like to set clear expectations regarding application submissions over the next several weeks. The following deadlines noted below will also be strictly enforced.

For educational activities scheduled to be held between December 21, 2015, and January 8, 2016, CME applications must be submitted by noon on Tuesday, December 15, 2015. There will be no exceptions to this deadline.

Any questions regarding these deadlines or policies should be directed to the CME Office, ContinuingEd@hhchealth.org.

State Mandated CME Renewal Available Free To HH Doctors through HealthStream LMS

State mandated CME for physician license renewal is available free on the Hartford Hospital HealthStream Learning Management System.

You will need your Employee ID to access HealthStream. If you need the CME Programs, but do not have a HealthStream ID, a Temporary ID can be provided for you.

Please email HealthStream@HHCHHealth.org and request an ID and password for CME Courses. You will receive an email with the ID, password and instructions for accessing the courses.

To access HealthStream, use the link from the intranet, or click here. Once you login, click on the Catalog tab and search for CME to view the available courses.

Once you have passed the post-test and evaluation, you will be awarded a printable CME certificate. Your CME will also be maintained and easily self-service accessed on the HealthStream site, should you need a copy in the future.

Please note that your Risk Management required activities through MRM will provide your Risk Management CME.

HH In the News

How Well Will New Rules on Health Care Cost Transparency Work?
CT Mirror, November 27

Many patients now have insurance plans that require them to pay a larger share of their medical bills. But finding out what their care will cost remains difficult. Will changes in state law taking effect this year change that?

A major state law passed last year aims to change that, with a host of transparency provisions that begin rolling out this month. They’re aimed at making it easier for patients to learn the cost of their medical care ahead of time, including any charges they might face if they seek care outside their insurer’s network.

Hospital officials in Connecticut say they’re working to ensure they comply with the new law, but say meeting some of its requirements is more complicated than it might sound.

“We’re certainly committed to transparency. We don’t want folks to be surprised,” said Dr. Rocco Orlando, chief medical officer at Hartford HealthCare, which includes five hospitals. “Where we struggle is the complexity of the actual implementation.”

St. Francis and the Hartford HealthCare hospitals – Hartford, Backus, Windham, The Hospital of Central Connecticut and MidState Medical Center – plan to include the language about facility fees on all bills, not just those that include the fees. Hartford HealthCare officials are expecting an influx of calls once those bills go out, and they have created a script for customer service representatives to help patients who call.
Hartford HealthCare has a tool that staff can use to provide cost estimates to patients, based on historical data and insurance plans, and Cindy Pugliese, the system’s vice president for revenue cycle, is looking into whether it will satisfy the law’s requirements. Staff currently get fewer than 10 requests for it a month, she said.

In the HHC System

High infection rates cost 2 hospitals Medicare funding
Norwich Bulletin, December 31, 2015

Two Eastern Connecticut hospitals will lose nearly $1 million worth of 2016 Medicare payments as a penalty for exceeding a federal threshold related to high rates of avoidable infections acquired by patients.

Lawrence + Memorial Hospital in New London stands to lose between $600,000 and $800,000, while Hartford HealthCare East Region’s Windham Hospital was docked $120,000, officials said.

The facilities are among 758 nationwide that were found to have a hospital acquired conditions score, or HAC, of 6.75 or greater, which triggers a 1 percent Medicare payment reduction, according to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Rocco Orlando, chief medical officer for Hartford Healthcare, said Windham’s HAC score was higher mostly because of catheter-associated urinary tract infections, or CAUTIs.

Windham hasn’t posted such an infection in eight months, meaning it wouldn’t be subject to a penalty based on 2015 statistics, officials said.

“There is a concentrated effort to rid hospitals of infection, with hand washing as a driver,” Orlando said. “A big hospital and little hospital are going to have different targets, but the goal is always zero.”

Orlando said Hartford HealthCare has also set up an infection control council that reviews safety procedures and implements best practices that are carried out across the system.

Read more here.

Backus Hospital sees surge in patient numbers
The Day, December 30, 2015

Over the last 2 1/2 weeks, The William W. Backus Hospital has seen some of its highest inpatient numbers in a decade.

“It’s been very, very busy, with no real rhyme or reason, no one thing,” Shawn Mawhiney, hospital spokesman, said Wednesday. “It’s been a combination of respiratory problems, GI (gastrointestinal) problems, flu.”

On Dec. 17, the hospital had 201 patients, 70 more than its normal average. While the hospital is licensed for 213 beds, it normally staffs for a much lower number, Mawhiney said. In response to the surge, Backus called in additional staff and worked extra shifts. It also rented hospital beds.

“Staff have gone above and beyond to accommodate patients,” he said.

Backus remained at high numbers until a day or so before Christmas, when numbers fell back to normal levels. After the holiday, numbers began creeping back up, Mawhiney said, hitting 166 patients on Wednesday.

Read more here.

Health Care News In the Region

Manchester Memorial Hospital Opens Behavioral Health Unit In Emergency Room
Hartford Courant, January 7

To better treat the steady influx of patients with mental illness and substance abuse problems, Manchester
Memorial Hospital has opened a behavioral health assessment area in the emergency department. The $1.2 million facility is designed to ease overcrowding in the emergency room and provide a "calming environment" for incoming patients, according to Eastern Connecticut Health Network officials. The addition will help reduce wait times, minimize delays for traditional medical emergencies and "provide an enhanced healing and therapeutic environment for all patients," officials said.

Read more here.

Hot Topics in Health Care

Six Big Trends To Watch In Health Care For 2016
Health Affairs Blog, December 30

With the upcoming Presidential election, health care is once again keeping us up at night. How much of the current debate is hyperbolic rhetoric? What policy changes are realistic in an election year? What market trends in the private sector will drive the most change?

Below are the top issues we will be watching in 2016.

1. MACRAonomics
2. Value-based contracting guarantee
3. Telemedicine
4. High-cost specialty pharmaceuticals
5. Electronic medical records (EMRs)
6. "Measurement fatigue"

Read more here.

Coming Events

January 7 (Thursday)
Medicine Endocrine Intercity Grand Round
CB139-140, 12 p.m.

Title: "Medical Treatment Options for Male Infertility"
Speaker: Dr. Jared Bieniek

April 8 (Friday)
The Fourth Annual Hartford HealthCare Patient Experience Showcase
7:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Heublein Hall, Education & Resource Center (ERC)

Learn, network and collaborate with colleagues and patients to advance the HHC patient experience.

25th Annual Black & Red

be sent to your preferred e-mail address every other Sunday. If you would like to be added to the Seymour Street Journal email list, or to receive it at a different email address, please opt-in at 98.188.110.106/SSJ. This ensures that you will receive the newsletter at your preferred email address. Back issues can be viewed here. For any questions or suggestions, please contact Dr. Stacy Nerenstone, Medical Staff president, at 860-545-3043, or editor Annie Emanuelli at 860-972-2199.