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Seymour Street Journal



What's news...

From the Offices of Stuart Markowitz, MD and Stacy Nerenstone, MD

[Free CME for License Renewal](#): Click here for [CME Information](#)

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March 5, 2017

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*"Wherever the art of medicine is
loved,
there is also a love of humanity."*

1959: The first successful traumatic thoracic
aortic repair in the U.S. was performed at Hartford

Hospital by Dr. Max Zehnder.

- Hippocrates

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.

Providing Coordinated Care: Please Refrain From Telling Patients They Are Ready For Discharge

In reviewing our patient feedback with respect to their experience, one area of concern is the perception that we are not providing coordinated care by the health care team.

Patients perceive that providers from different services are not communicating well resulting in the patient receiving mixed messages. One specific area is the fact that a consultant may tell a patient he/she is ready for discharge, but the primary admitting team may not be ready due to other psychosocial reasons. When the patient does not transition out of the hospital, they are frustrated by the mixed messaging.

We are asking that consultants refrain from telling a patient that they are ready for discharge, but instead state that the patients is doing well from the consultant's perspective, but the primary attending will determine the discharge status. However, we encourage consultants to communicate with primary hospitalists and nurses regarding their care plan.

Your support will help us improve coordination and patient care.

No More 1-800-DOCTORS;

We Now Use 1.855.HHC.HERE For Referrals and Community Education Registration

For referrals and community education registration, we no longer use 1.800.DOCTORS. Instead, we are using 1.855.HHC.HERE.

Hartford HealthCare Medical Group also has a phone number that new patients can use to schedule an appointment with one of our primary care providers. For an HHC MG primary care provider, call 1-877-707-4442, and our representatives can assist with scheduling a new patient visit.

Epic E-prescribing Update: important Medication Safety Notice Regarding Rivaroxaban (Xarelto)

Dr. Marc Palter

When e-prescribing medications with loading and maintenance doses (ex. rivaroxaban (Xarelto), steroids, or any medication that you want to specify a start date):

In the Epic discharge process the provider is able to select a start and end date for medications. For medications commonly prescribed with a loading and maintenance dose (ex. rivaroxaban Xarelto) the start and end date is important for directing the patient how to continue therapy.

When these prescriptions are e-prescribed, **the receiving pharmacy does NOT see these dates** and may dispense both to the patient. This may result in the patient taking both the loading and maintenance dose simultaneously.

When e-prescribing, start and stop dates are not transmitted to the receiving pharmacy. This functionality is currently not available.

When prescribing discharge medications with defined start and end dates or medications with loading and maintenance doses prescribed at the same time (ex. rivaroxaban (Xarelto), steroids, etc) utilize the patient sig to further define when to initiate therapy. Information found in the patient sig is always sent when e-prescribed or printed.

From the President of the Medical Staff

- [Dr. Stacy Nerenstone](#), President of the Hartford Hospital Medical Staff

Pilot of eVisitor Pass System at Hartford Hospital Begins

When Hartford Hospital started its managed access program in March 2015, it was well received. It was simply the right thing to do for the safety of our patients, our staff and the guests of our campus.

With that said, the process at times has been cumbersome, which has led to occasional lines in our lobbies and a delay in getting guests connected with our patients and providers. Having a manual check in process was a necessary first step to ensure that the right access was given with our new standards.

To enhance the safety on our campus and reduce wait times, we are piloting the use of the “eVisitor Pass” for our customers entering from the main lobby and the Bone & Joint Institute. This system, using a scan from a driver’s license or manual photo, will help to both automate and expedite the interactions in our lobbies. If this pilot is deemed effective, we will roll this software out to our other hospital entrances.

If you have any questions, comments or feedback, please feel free to email David Fichandler at david.fichandler@hhchealth.org.

From the Hospital President

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

Malloy's Budget Plan Would Add More Than \$52 Million in Costs to HHC

Once again, hospitals in Connecticut are facing potential budget cuts through new tax proposals in Gov. Dannel Malloy's budget plan, which calls for eliminating hospitals' property tax exemption and using Medicaid funds for property tax payments in local cities and towns rather than using the funds as they were intended: to pay for the care of those who rely on Medicaid.

The plan would add more than \$52 million in costs to Hartford HealthCare in addition to taxes we already pay, resulting in higher healthcare costs for our patients and in higher costs for other employers in the state who help fund employees' health benefits. Hartford Hospital, which owns more than two dozen tax-exempt properties in the city, would a tax bill of about \$33.8 million, according to estimates provided by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM.)

The governor's proposal hurts the most vulnerable members of our community and fails to address the state's serious budget issues. In addition, this policy would be imposed before we know what changes will be implemented in federal healthcare policy.

Hartford Hospital, as part of Hartford HealthCare, is working with elected officials, healthcare advocates, businesses, other not-for-profit organizations, and our state hospital association to find a better path forward.

Our hospital is one of the state's largest employers, and Hartford HealthCare is the third-largest employer in the state. We strongly believe that healthcare is an economic engine for Connecticut and should be pursued as such. Adding to healthcare costs is not the answer.

This is the fifth year Connecticut's hospitals have taken a big hit in the state budget. As in the past, I am asking you to reach out to your state legislators and show your support. When lawmakers hear from their constituents, it has a much greater impact than statements from hospital leaders in the press. Your advocacy and that of our employees have made a huge impact in the past and we expect it to make a difference once again.

The following link will take you to the Voter Voice site with a pre-written message (that you can personalize). With just a few clicks, your message will get to your legislators. Every voice matters: <https://votervoicenet/hhc/campaigns>

Thank you for your support.

Top News

HHC Pioneers Mazor X™ Robotic-assisted Technology for Spine Surgery

Hartford HealthCare (HHC) will become the first healthcare system in the state of Connecticut and the Northeast to pioneer the latest robotic technology for spine surgery. The new robotic system, called the Mazor X, gives surgeons the most advanced resources to enhance patient safety and accuracy before and during lower spine surgeries.

Mazor X robotic surgery will be available at Hartford Hospital, the Bone & Joint Institute and MidState Medical Center. Surgeons will use the technology for spinal fusion procedures to treat conditions like spinal stenosis and spondylolisthesis.

Patients with these conditions often suffer with debilitating symptoms like low back pain, leg pain and sciatica. Over time, they will apply it to the thoracic and cervical vertebrae and then to correcting spinal deformities such as scoliosis.

During surgery, bone tissue, screws and plates are placed in the problem area of the spine, and the body's natural bone growth gradually fuses the vertebrae. The procedure requires precise placement of surgical screws and implants, and that's where Mazor X comes in. Surgeons can develop a detailed

plan well before the surgery takes place.

"The patient has a preoperative CT scan, and the images are downloaded to the Mazor X software," explains Hartford Hospital's Bone & Joint orthopedic surgeon **Dr. W. Jay Krompinger**. "On the computer, the surgeon positions screw images in the spine image. You get a 3-dimensional image you can rotate on the screen to make sure it's what you want."

Seeing the patient's complete spine in three dimensions prior to surgery increases the efficiency of the operation, because the surgeon won't encounter anything unexpected once the procedure is underway. It also helps with more accurate placement of the hardware.

A possible complication of spinal-fusion surgery in the past has been that the vertebrae above the fused area could develop problems over time. This may occur because implants at the top of the fused area irritate adjacent joints. Mazor X helps avoid that complication.

"Hartford HealthCare has a long tradition of using robotic technology to improve patient care. We're committed to providing the most advanced technologies along and are excited to bring this revolutionary technology to patients across Connecticut," said Hartford Hospital neurosurgeon **Dr. Andrew Wakefield**.

The first cases are anticipated in March.

Malloy's Budget Would Allow Towns to Tax Hospitals

Elliot Joseph, chief executive officer for Hartford HealthCare, said HHC was "morally opposed to the use of federal funds meant to be used for the poor to instead balance the budgets of the state's cities and towns." At least twice the state promised adequate funding for Medicaid services, and both times that promise was broken, Joseph said.

http://www.journalinquirer.com/politics_and_government/malloy-s-budget-would-allow-towns-to-tax-hospitals/article_2087df9e-eed5-11e6-af85-13e7005ea76b.html

Delegation From Our Sister Hospital in China Visits HH

This year marks the 26th year of Hartford Hospital's relationship with its sister hospital in the Shangong Province in China - Qilu Hospital of Shandong University.

Dr. Stu Markowitz hosted a delegation from the hospital as they visited Hartford Hospital Jan. 12. Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin issued a proclamation in honor of the visit, calling the day Hartford Qilu Scholar Exchange Day to recognize the outstanding scholar program that Hartford Hospital provides and illustrating our appreciation for understanding Chinese culture.

The visit began with a presentation by **Dr. Hank Schwartz**, psychiatrist in chief, Institute of Living, who talked about the history of the IOL and how care of the mentally ill has evolved over the years.

The group also toured CESI and the new Bone & Joint Institute.

Eye Surgery Center Uses Newest Cataract Surgery Technology

The Hartford Hospital Eye Surgery Center is using the newest technology available for cataract surgery. ORA VerifEye™ uses real-time scans to help ophthalmologists more accurately determine lens implant powers during cataract surgery, which leads to less dependency on glasses.

Lens implants come in a variety of sizes and powers, and ophthalmologists must select the best power and size for every patient's individual eye. The ORA VerifEye™ also allows surgeons to custom

correct astigmatism during cataract surgery.

The tailored approach of ORA VerifEye™ means patients have a better visual outcome right out of surgery - as opposed to having to wait weeks to see how vision improves. More than 90 percent of patients can achieve their targeted correction when the ORA VerifEye™ system is used. Without ORA VerifEye™, it is less than 70 percent.

Volunteers Needed for No One Dies Alone Program

Join the 70 volunteers who are currently volunteering for the nationally-recognized program called No One Dies Alone (NODA).

A “compassionate companion” volunteer provides reassuring presence to patients who would otherwise die alone. With the support of the nursing staff, companions are able to help provide patients with that most valuable of human gifts: a dignified death.

Attendance at a three-hour training session is required. The next training will be March 15 from 9 a.m.-12 noon in the Special Dining Room.

If you are able to attend, please complete a volunteer application at this link:

<http://hartfordhealth.vsyshost.com/vsys/app/HQGL45AS0GY1II7N>

For questions regarding the program, please contact the Volunteer Department at 860-972-2182 or email: Kelley.boothby@hhchealth.org

eLearning Available on the intranet for Pending Work Orders

We have an eLearning available on the intranet for pending work orders. Below is the link you are able to click on to view the eLearning.

<https://intranet.hartfordhealthcare.org/organizations-departments/system-support-office/by-department/careconnect/training>

Once you click on the link you will go to the CareConnect Training intranet page. You may be asked to log in.

Next, you will scroll down to the video training at the bottom of the page and click on “Pending Orders Workflow”. This will launch the video.

Excellence

Hartford HealthCare Establishes Office of Experience

Hartford HealthCare has established the Office of Experience to create *one* exceptional patient experience across the system. In addition to managing patient complaints and grievances, the work of the team is to advance the six best practices that fall under our three strategies of Service Excellence, Environment, and Communication:

1. Leader Interactive Rounding
2. Clinical manager Rounding

3. Hourly Intentional Rounding
4. Patient Journals
5. Patient & Family Advisory Councils
6. Experience Education

The team includes a chief experience officer, a director and regional advisors and advocates.

Dr. Peter Yu: Immunotherapy May Need to Have Its Own Value Model

The average release price of a new therapeutic agent in oncology “is north of \$10,000 a month,” **Peter P. Yu, MD**, the physician-in-chief of the Hartford HealthCare Cancer Institute, told attendees at the SITC meeting.

<http://www.newswise.com/articles/immunotherapy-may-need-to-have-its-own-value-model>

Research and Academics

Research on Prevention of Delirium

The Division of Geriatrics, in collaboration with the Emergency Department, Pharmacy and Research Administration, has begun a research project focused on prevention of delirium.

The trial titled, “Randomized Double Blind Placebo-Controlled Clinical Trial Evaluating Ramelteon in the Prevention of Delirium”, funded by HH Medical Staff, will enroll 240 subjects on admission.

We anticipate the study will require 4 months to complete enrollment. Ramelteon, a melatonin-like drug approved by the FDA for treatment of insomnia, was chosen based on prior studies suggesting a reduction in delirium rates.

The ADAPT program at HH provides an outstanding platform in which to conduct these and other important investigations. The ADAPT Team thanks our entire HH staff for making this possible.

Please call or email Robert Dicks, principal investigator, with questions: 860-622-1999, or robert.dicks@hhchealth.org. Trial is registered at ClinicalTrials.gov.

Volunteers Needed for a Research Study Aiming to Detect Cancer Earlier

HHC is conducting a research study to determine if a new blood test can be used to detect cancer earlier than standard screening tests.

We are seeking participants to make a study-related blood donation for laboratory analysis.

Participants may qualify if they:

- are at least 20 years of age
- are not pregnant
- do not feel feverish or have an inflammatory disease
- have never had cancer before (skin cancer other than melanoma is acceptable) or have recently been diagnosed with cancer but have not yet started treatment

Qualified participants will receive a \$25 check card after their blood donation. To participate please

contact 860.972.1588.

Clinical Trials Being Offered at HHC

Research is a critical aspect of our being the destination for innovative and complex care.

Through our membership in the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Alliance, Hartford HealthCare is now offering more than 20 clinical trials to our patients, giving them access to innovative new treatments right here at home.

Our Neuroscience Center also is offering a number of clinical trials in our overall efforts to improve patient outcomes.

Accepting New Patients? We Can Help

Help New Patients Find You

Hartford HealthCare offers physicians a free powerful tool to help reach potential patients. The system-wide "Find A Doctor" search feature on our website helps potential patients connect with appropriate physicians when they need care.

Patients' searches lead to doctors' online profiles, which are based on information physicians provide to the Medical Staff Office. Details on education, specialty, office locations, languages spoken, biography and any promotional videos are displayed, helping patients make vitally important decisions in choosing a physician.

The HHC Planning and Marketing team is committed to making sure this online information is correct. Please spend a few moments reviewing your profile at HartfordHealthCare.org/verify. Click the "Physician Feedback Form" on the right hand side of your profile to submit changes.

You will need your NPI number to verify your identity. The "Accepting New Patients" filter is set as the default to help patients connect with physicians who are taking new patients. If you are no longer accepting new patients, please let us know. Changes to your profile will be made within three business days.

Operational Update

Patients in Need of Financial Assistance

Do you know a patient who is in need of financial assistance?

Hartford HealthCare can provide help to patients in need. Learn more about the program and how to assist patients on HHC Connect: <https://intranet.hartfordhealthcare.org/inside-hhc/patient-support>

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.

Improving Doctor-to-Doctor Communication: TigerText

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.

Hartford Hospital Media Coverage

Media Coverage Wrap-Up

Dr. Craig Allen appeared on FOX 61/Meriden Police Press Conference on Narcan Training: <https://youtu.be/GiX5Kbe8hpk>

Patty O'Brian, HHC Senior Services, did a live interview on NBC CT on the topic of Dementia after actor David Cassidy's reported diagnosis. <https://youtu.be/SvtyDvEJ39U>

Pat Rehmer was interviewed live on FOX 61 March 2. She spoke about HHC's treatment options for opioid addiction - highlighting the MATCH program (Medication Assisted Treatment Close to Home). <http://fox61.com/2017/03/02/new-treatment-options-available-for-opioid-abuse-in-hartford/>

Rehmer was also interviewed on WTIC AM radio Feb. 24 about the high number of opioid-related deaths released in the State Medical Examiner's report. <https://soundcloud.com/hartford-healthcare/rehmer-02242017mp3/s-BBd2V>

Dr. David Tolin appeared live on the Colin McEnroe show on WNPR. The topic: Disorders related to "shyness." <http://wnpr.org/post/shyness-not-faint-their-racing-heart>

Connect to Healthier on NBC-CT

HHC's two-minute "Connect to Healthier" segment airs each Sunday at 9:20 a.m. and it's posted fresh each Monday on HHC Connect, our Intranet.

TAVR

This segment focused on TAVR, and the first time doctors at HH utilized a new approach through the carotid artery. <https://youtu.be/GtzteutnfUI>

The Gift of Life

They are called "Good Samaritan" donors-organ donors who are unrelated to the recipient, and they are life savers. There is an extensive screening process to ensure all potential donors are medically and psychologically suitable. This is one woman's story. <https://www.dropbox.com/s/wbmyjt4ciu8evnf/122416%20CTH%20Transplant%20Gift.mov?dl=0>

Resident Wish Come True

This is about making a lifelong dream come true, more than a New Year's Resolution. HHC Senior Services teamed up with a local recording studio to grant a wish for one of their residents who always wanted to make a record. <https://hartfordhealthcare.org/locations-partners/hartford-healthcare-senior-services>

Pain Treatment Center

Debilitating pain can affect every aspect of someone's life. One woman was nearing the end of her rope when she discovered the Hartford Hospital Pain Treatment Center.

<http://media.hartfordhealthcare.org:80/ermweb/player?id=eh6CkUyG>

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/e9nulcag768usi7/120416%20CTH%20PAIN%20TREATMENT.mov?dl=0>

Hartford Hospital Pain Treatment Center

<https://youtu.be/3inFYqT4UMM>

Recap of the Bone & Joint ribbon cutting

<https://youtu.be/S3POcBVx4WM>

Holiday eating and eating disorders

https://youtu.be/eZ_GpjF9QrM

Helping Adult Caregivers

Being a caregiver can be tough, but newer programs like Movies & More are helping adult caregivers connect with their aging parents.

<https://youtu.be/rlwCACcLuRQ>

New Technology to Treat Sleep Apnea

Jaime Fernando Ortiz couldn't stand his CPAP machine and was one of the first in the state to use a new technology to treat sleep apnea. Hypoglossal nerve stimulation or INSPIRE. <https://youtu.be/2xOdLfl1VH8>

Running the Marathon With Cancer

Every year, thousands flock to the Hartford Marathon to compete. One man this year- showed us he could tackle anything: 26 miles, even while fighting something else.

John Hayes looks like any athlete training to run a marathon. What you would never suspect is that John has cancer.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/4mc3gjingt4kd8j1/101616%20CTH%20Marathon%20Runner.mov?dl=0>

<http://media.hartfordhealthcare.org:80/ermweb/player?id=dmw6agYU>

Healing After an Aneurysm

This is the story of one inspirational young woman who made remarkable progress after an aneurysm ruptured and affected her ability to speak. She and her team never gave up.

The patient made a trip all the way from London to visit with the team on the neurointensive floor that saved her life and her voice.

<http://media.hartfordhealthcare.org/ermweb/player?id=9ED911uI>

Featuring A Roundup of HHC News

A remarkable achievement for Dr. Brian Grosberg; a grand opening for HHCMG in Bloomfield; and Breast Cancer awareness month. <https://youtu.be/9ztEDTzSOi8>

Sunday's Connect to Healthier segment on NBC CT highlighted the following events/accolades across HHC:

A remarkable achievement for Dr. Brian Grosberg, a grand opening for HHCMG in Bloomfield and Breast Cancer awareness month.

<https://youtu.be/9ztEDTzSOi8>

Introducing Hartford HealthCare's News Hub

Hartford HealthCare's new online health news site delivers lively, informative and useful health news

in a whole new way. Look for print, video and audio stories produced by HHC's News Service, as well as timely tips on nutrition, fitness, health and wellness, and medical innovations.

<http://healthnewshub.org/p/health-news-hub/>

Read the latest health news or sign up for our e-newsletter at: healthnewshub.org

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.

[Connect to Healthier](#)

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

[Medical Rounds](#)

Partnership with WFSB. Weekly live interview from the HHC studio at 5:45 p.m.

[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.

[CT STYLE](#)

Monthly partnership with WTNH.

HHC YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/user/HartfordHospitalCT>

[Link to contact information across the system: Hartford HealthCare Media Relations Team](#)

Voices of Our Patients

Kudos to Drs. Burns and Kainkaryam

To Hartford Hospital,

I am writing this letter to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Hartford HealthCare Health Center team located at 85 Seymour Street, Suite 125.

*On September 29 of last year I underwent knee surgery with one of the best surgeons, **Dr. Jeffrey Burns**. The days and weeks that followed were difficult for me. I experienced physical discomfort and pain as my body went through the healing process.*

*I am extremely grateful to my primary care physician, **Dr. Vasanth Kainkaryam** and my health coach Jessica Ramos who went above and beyond their call of duty. Dr. Kainkaryam and Ms. Ramos both took the time to visit me at my home, they carefully listened to me, and made sure I was doing well. They both made me feel as if I was the only patient that existed in that moment.*

My family and friends are truly thankful for their home visit and attentiveness.

The healthcare center couldn't have a better leader at the helm. I would like Hartford Hospital to know we are blessed to have a director who treats his patients with compassion. I pray that God will continue to strengthen him and his team, and allow him to remain humble.

Thanks you and warmest regards,

Novelette Shields

CME Applications

Interested In Hosting a CME Event?

In order to ensure that your educational event meets the standards established by the ACCME and the CSMS, the HHC CME department has established the following deadlines for submission of CME applications.

To ensure a timely review of your application, we strongly recommend advance planning for all events.

- Complete applications for a recurring series such as Grand Rounds must be submitted **at least 4 weeks prior** to the planned activity.
- For a conference, course, or symposia, a complete application must be submitted **at least 12 weeks prior** to the event. We strongly encourage activity planners to contact the HH CME department at least 6 to 12 months prior to the date of the course in order to begin the planning process.

We have developed educational resources to assist planners with the application process. Please contact the HHC CME office at ContinuingEd@HHHealth.org or (860) 972-5816 to schedule an appointment with our team to discuss your CME needs.

CME Offerings on HealthStream Temporarily Unavailable

As we continue to enhance our eLearning through our new system-wide version of HealthStream, we will also be enhancing our online CME offerings.

As of December 1, the current CME programs are no longer available via HealthStream. Once we have completed the upgrade, we will announce their availability and instructions on how you can access them.

We appreciate your patience during this transformation.

HH In the News

City of Hartford Could Reap \$56M From Hospital Property Taxes; \$34 Million From Hartford Hospital

Hartford Hospital, which owns more than two dozen tax-exempt properties in the city, would face the

largest tax bill of about \$33.8 million, according to estimates provided by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM).

St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center and its sister Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital would see a combined \$30 million tax bill. Meanwhile, Connecticut Children's Medical Center would have to pay \$2.5 million, OPM said.

<http://www.hartfordbusiness.com/article/20170220/PRINTEDITION/302169897>

Letter to the Editor: State Doesn't Keep Its Promises To Hospitals

Hartford Courant

Hartford Hospital is among the largest employers of Hartford residents, and Hartford HealthCare is the third-largest employer in the state. In Hartford and across Connecticut, we are providing jobs, investing in capital projects and serving all our patients -- including the poorest and most vulnerable.

The state has already decreased Medicaid payments and continues to collect hospital taxes. Now Gov. Dannel Malloy is calling for tax-exempt hospitals to pay property taxes to their cities and towns.

This latest scheme, unveiled in his proposed budget this past week, calls for federal Medicaid reimbursement -- funds intended to provide health care for the poor -- to instead be used to pay new municipal taxes. Setting aside the major issue that this surely looks like a misuse of federal funds, there is this stark truth: The state has failed twice to keep its promises to return the hospital taxes to the hospitals, to offset the cost of providing care to the needy.

The governor feels strongly that the legislature should pass a lockbox for transportation revenues to get our bridges and roads repaired. Will he demand a similar lockbox for hospitals so that they can continue their legacy of caring?

Andrew L. Salner, M.D., Bloomfield

The writer is medical director of the Hartford HealthCare Cancer Institute at Hartford Hospital.

In the HHC System

Medical Examiner: Overdose Deaths In Connecticut Up 25 Percent

Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network President Patricia Rehmer says this increase was larger than expected. "I was stunned at how much this [number] went up," she said.

<http://connecticut.cbslocal.com/2017/02/24/medical-examiner-overdose-deaths-in-connecticut-up-25-percent/>

Malloy's Budget Plan Would Be Costly for L+M, Backus

The Day

The region's two hospitals are bracing for a possible increase in state taxes over the next two years, after the Connecticut Hospital Association assessed the impact of Gov. Dannel P. Malloy's proposed budget, estimating it would add \$156 million to the tax burden of all the state's hospitals over the next two years.

“The new formula for calculating the hospital tax represents a significant impact to Hartford HealthCare,” the parent of The William W. Backus Hospital in Norwich, spokesman Shawn Mawhiney said Tuesday. “We estimate this would add \$15 million of new cost annually, on top of the \$52 million a year in new property tax payments we would pay under the governor’s budget plan.”

On top of taxes the hospital network already pays, Hartford HealthCare’s total state tax liability would be \$187 million, Mawhiney said.

The hospital association on Friday shared its analysis of Malloy’s budget with its 27 member hospitals. According to the analysis, state tax increases, along with a separate Malloy plan to allow municipalities to levy property taxes on hospitals, would add about \$580 million in new taxes to the hospitals over the next two years. The analysis was given in preparation for a public hearing at noon Thursday before the state Legislature’s Human Services Committee. The hearing, in Room 2C of the Legislative Office Building, will consider one of the pending bills that would implement the governor’s budget plan.

Malloy’s proposal would also eliminate an \$11.8 million grant pool for small hospitals. In addition, the governor’s proposal would reduce the numbers of people eligible for Medicaid coverage, leaving the hospitals with more bad debt, and would change the way the hospital tax is calculated so that hospitals would end up paying more, the hospital association said.

Currently, the 27 hospitals pay a combined state tax of \$556 million. That would rise to \$623 million in fiscal 2017, and \$625 million in fiscal 2018-2019 under the governor’s plan, according to the hospital association.

The hospital provider tax was first imposed on hospitals in 2011 as a means of leveraging more federal Medicaid dollars. That year, the state collected \$350 million in taxes on hospitals, and returned \$400 million to them in supplemental payments. Since then, however, the supplemental payments have been reduced substantially. Now, hospitals get back just \$117 million on the \$556 million they pay in state taxes.

The governor’s budget plan would also cut the state’s payment in lieu of taxes, or PILOT, funds paid to municipalities that host nonprofit hospitals. The state currently pays cities and towns about 75 percent of the assessed value of hospital property. Under the plan, municipalities would be able to tax hospital property. To offset the local property taxes, hospitals would receive \$250 million in supplemental payments from the state that would be used to leverage additional Medicaid reimbursements to the state, according to the proposal.

The hospital association and its members, however, oppose the property tax change, citing its previous experience with diminishing supplemental payments and uncertainty about the future of Medicaid under the Trump administration.

Health Care News In the Region

Southington Health Fair Features Interactive Technology

Record Journal, February 26

Sunday’s eighth annual Healthy Family Funfest featured a heavy dose of technology. The event, sponsored by Hartford HealthCare, the Southington YMCA and the Main Street Community Foundation, included about 300 vendors that filled the Aqua Turf Club to provide information about healthy eating, healthy minds, aging well and sports medicine. It also offered giveaways and free screenings, demonstrations and activities for everyone from children to senior citizens.

“The vendors have tweaked their booths to try to make them more interactive this year,” noted John Myers, executive director of the Southington YMCA. “It’s more than people just stopping by a booth, grabbing a handout and moving on. We’re trying to engage people.”

Erica Stinson, director of marketing and planning for Hartford HealthCare, said organizers expected about 3,000 people to visit the Funfest. Community organizations, such as the Southington United Way, the Southington Town-wide Effort to Promote Success (STEPS) and Southington Bread for Life also participated. The Southington Police Department braved the cold outside to ensure children's car seats were properly installed and up to code.

The YMCA's children area gave youngsters the opportunity to exercise, play with Lego bricks and challenge Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader to light saber duels.

"This festival gives people access to things that are available in their community to make them healthier and live a healthier life," Stinson said.

It also featured cutting-edge technology. Wendy Nichols, a physical therapist for Hartford HealthCare, used an application called Dartfish to capture video of people throwing baseballs from a mound and hitting golf balls into a net. The technology allows health experts to break down pitching and swinging motions frame by frame to identify areas of stress on the body. Nichols offered advice for improvement and was able to email their slow-motion videos to participants.

"They love it, especially people who are really into golf or baseball," Nichols said. "A lot of Little Leaguers have come through. Everyone wants to be the next star athlete and this technology can help them improve."

Stephen Donahue, program director for the Center for Education, Simulation and Innovation at Hartford Hospital, manned a booth that gave patrons the opportunity to perform CPR on a high-tech mannequin with an accelerometer to measure the depth and rate of chest wall movement.

"Once people get over the scariness of the mannequin - because he can open his eyes, he can blink, he can talk - they see how sophisticated he is," Donahue said. "He can measure their performance on how well they're doing CPR. They really like the feedback. People want realism. Just like a pilot spends time in a flight simulator, this is what we use. This is our flight simulator."

Laura Bunker, a music therapist at Jefferson House, a nursing home in Newington, introduced the Beamz system. It uses lasers and a computer that allows clients to play about 100 different musical instruments by waving their hands and wiggling their fingers.

"They are almost in disbelief that you can play without touching an instrument," she said. "A musical instrument can sometimes be intimidating, but this is so approachable."

Laurel Whalen, a physical therapist at the Jerome Home in New Britain, oversaw a booth offering fall risk prevention screenings using a portable Biodex balance system. Patients stepped on the device, which is similar to a scale, and it measured their balance point and risk of falling.

Patients of all ages seemed to embrace the technology, she said. "We just screened someone in her 90s and she jumped right on it," Whalen said.

Hot Topics in Health Care

A Burnout Epidemic: 25 Notes on Physician Burnout in the US

Herbert Freudenberger, a German-American psychologist, was one of the first to describe and study symptoms of professional burnout among physicians and mental health workers in the 1970s.

He coined the term "burnout" in his 1974 book, "Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement."

<http://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hospital-management-administration/a-burnout-epidemic-25-notes-on-physician-burnout-in-the-us.html>

'Massive Confusion' Abounds for insurers as GOP Wavers on Obamacare Redo

Kaiser Health News

Premiums for Obamacare plans sold by New Mexico Health Connections could rise as little as 7 percent next year, says Martin Hickey, the insurance company's CEO. Or they might soar as much as 40 percent, he said. It all depends on what happens in Washington. Such is the vast uncertainty about how the Trump administration and Republican-controlled Congress are approaching their promises to repeal, repair and replace the Affordable Care Act.

There is "pretty massive confusion," said Hickey, whose 45,000-member plan is one of the few nonprofit insurance "co-ops" created by the ACA to be still in business. "The more uncertainty they create, the higher the rates" will be for 2018.

Insurers have a hard-enough time making the normal predictions of who will get sick and how much it will cost. Now the usual fog of rate setting is compounded by the possibility that basic rules of coverage could get overhauled or even disappear before anything takes their place. Consumers and patients could ultimately pay the price.

The stakes include how much plans sold through the health law's online marketplaces and similar coverage will cost next year - or even whether insurance will be available. Challenges during the recently completed enrollment period, in which some carriers canceled plans and rates rose 20 percent on average, increase the urgency, executives say.

Coverage for 2017, which has already been finalized, will not be changed. Nor will people covered through job-based insurance or the Medicare plan for seniors be much affected by the uncertainty. In some states, preliminary 2018 rates are due in less than two months. But prospects for policymaking clarity recede each day that Republicans deliver contradictory messages or fail to agree on a plan, industry officials say.

While some in the party want to go slow on an overhaul and ensure they've thought out a replacement before abolishing the health law, others favor immediate repeal. If the administration and Congress scrap the ACA's coverage requirement for most people or its subsidies helping people buy care, the market could deteriorate or collapse, say insurance consultants and executives.

A month ago President Donald Trump [told](#) the New York Times that Obamacare is "a catastrophic event," adding, "we have to get to business" in repealing it. On Feb. 5 he seemed to advocate a more measured approach, telling Fox News [that](#) "at least the rudiments" of a replacement would be in place by 2018.

Even that could spook insurance executives contemplating plans for next year in the Obamacare marketplaces, also known as exchanges. They want to know the rudiments of a replacement plan now and details not much later.

Big, national insurers have said it would be hard to commit to the marketplaces next year unless they get a much better idea of what they'll look like. Several had already [scaled back](#) coverage for this year, leaving many parts of the country with only one company selling through the marketplaces. Continued uncertainty could prompt even those holdouts to bail, said Fitzgerald.

The Trump administration has proposed regulations, initiated in the last days of the Obama regime, intended to steady the market. Tweaks may include crackdowns on sick consumers who join plans outside open-enrollment periods and allowing insurers to charge slightly more for older members, Huffington Post and Politico have reported.

Coming Events

Volunteer Training for No One Dies Alone Program

Wednesday, March 15

9 a.m.-12 noon in the Special Dining Room

Attendance at a three-hour training session is required to volunteer for the nationally-recognized program called No One Dies Alone (NODA).. The next training will be March 15 from 9 a.m.-12 noon in the Special Dining Room.

If you are able to attend, please complete a volunteer application at this link:

<http://hartfordhealth.vsyshost.com/vsys/app/HQGL45AS0GY1I17N>

For questions regarding the program, please contact the Volunteer Department at 860-972-2182 or email: Kelley.boothby@hhchealth.org

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