

July 10, 2018

Volume 62, Issue 28

COMING SOON: WHA-Crafted Rural Wisconsin Initiative Grants

Grant applications for Allied Health Professionals Education and Training to be released this week

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) will release grant applications this week to expand training opportunities to fill specific high-need, high-demand positions in rural areas. Watch the [DHS website](#) for the grant application announcement.

The new Allied Health Professionals Education and Training Grants—proposed by the Rural Wisconsin Initiative and included in the state’s 2017-2019 budget—are designed to help fill behavioral health specialists, certified nursing assistants, physical therapists, respiratory therapists, surgical technologists and other high-demand positions identified in the [WHA Health Care Workforce 2017 Report](#).

- Rural Wisconsin hospitals and clinics who form partnerships or consortia with education providers and health care systems will be eligible to apply for grants.
- Funding can be used to develop and implement new education and training programs, or expand existing programs. This includes curriculum and faculty development, tuition, clinical site development, and simulation expenses.
- Priority will be given to partnerships serving communities with populations of less than 20,000.

DHS will hold a Q&A conference call July 19 for those interested in applying. The anticipated effective date of the grant will be October 1, 2018.

APC Practice Challenges and Opportunities Focus of WHA Conference – Join WHA September 13

On September 13, WHA will bring together those interested in examining the practice challenges and opportunities for integrated care delivery associated with the use of advanced practice clinicians (APCs). *WHA Advanced Practice Clinician Conference: A Comprehensive Look at APC Practice Challenges and Opportunities for Integrated Care Delivery in Wisconsin* is scheduled September 13 at Glacier Canyon Lodge

at The Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Additional information and registration are available [online](#).

Team-based care models that utilize nurse practitioners, physician assistants, certified registered nurse anesthetists and other advanced practice clinicians (APCs) are increasingly important to integrated care delivery models in Wisconsin hospitals and clinics. APCs play a vital role on the teams that provide high-quality, high-value health care in Wisconsin.

“Successfully navigating integration of APC practice within a complex framework of federal and state laws, regulations and accreditation standards is vital in building the workforce and health care teams necessary now and in the future.”

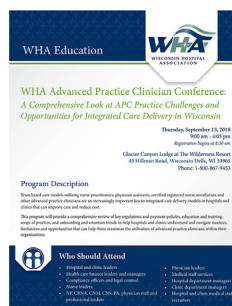
– Ann Zenk, WHA Vice President, Workforce and Clinical Practice

The conference will provide a broad review of key regulations and payment policies, education and training, scope of practice, and onboarding and retention trends. “Successfully navigating integration of APC practice within a complex framework of federal and state laws, regulations and accreditation standards is vital in building the workforce and health care teams necessary now and in the future,” notes WHA Vice President, Workforce and Clinical Practice Ann Zenk. “It is essential for key stakeholders to have a common understanding of this framework.”

This one-day conference is designed for hospital and clinic leaders, clinicians in leadership and practice roles, human resources and recruiting specialists, and others who need to understand and navigate nuances, limitations and opportunities to support and maximize the integration of APCs within their organizations.

[Registration](#) is now open. A full conference brochure can be viewed [here](#). Questions about

conference content can be directed to [Ann Zenk](#) or [Matthew Stanford](#). Registration questions can be directed to [Kayla Chatterton](#) or call 608-274-1820.



CMS Requesting Comment on Impact of Physician Self-Referral “Stark Law”



The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a [Request for Information \(RFI\)](#) in late June

seeking comment on how to address any undue regulatory impact and burden of the physician self-referral law, better known as the Stark Law. WHA recently highlighted this issue during its member visits to Capitol Hill this last May.

The Stark Law has its roots in a 1989 law named after its lead author, former California Congressman Pete Stark. In an era where Medicare paid health care providers based on the volume of services provided, its goal was to ensure physicians refer patients for services and tests only based on whether they are necessary, by making sure physicians do not receive financial incentives for such referrals.

As part of its [Patients over Paperwork](#) initiative, CMS became aware of many concerns hospitals and health systems have expressed over the amount of time and resources needed to comply with the law’s numerous regulations. CMS is particularly interested in how the law impacts providers participating in (or considering participating in) integrated delivery models, alternative payment models, and arrangements designed to reward improvements in quality and reductions in cost. The RFI includes 20 questions, most of which focus on understanding how the law’s current exceptions and definitions are working as well as understanding the current cost of compliance.

WHA staff are evaluating the RFI, which is open for comment through August 24, 2018. Anyone with questions or comments about the RFI may contact [Jon Hoelter](#), WHA director of federal and state relations. Those looking to submit comments may submit them electronically by going to <http://www.regulations.gov> and following the “Submit a comment” instructions.

TCT Pilot Program Reports due to Pharmacy Examining Board by July 31



Several Wisconsin pharmacies are piloting Tech-Check-Tech (TCT) programs, which allows pharmacy technicians to take on expanded roles, while ensuring patient safety and high quality. A TCT practice model utilizes abilities and

resources in a smarter way by giving eligible, properly trained, and validated pharmacy technicians the ability to perform refill verifications, medication reconciliation,

and complete the final check of a prescription filled by another technician. By reducing the time a pharmacist spends on completing final checks, pharmacists are able to reinvest their time in direct patient care.

If your pharmacy is participating in a Pharmacy Examining Board (PEB)-approved pilot program (i.e. Tech-Check-Tech, Technician Ratio, or Automated Technology Final Check), **you must submit a one-page reporting form summarizing your pharmacy’s pilot participation to the PEB by July 31, 2018.**

The reporting form for each pilot can be found [online](#). The completed form should be faxed to 608-261-7083 or emailed to DSPSCredPharmacy@dsps.wi.gov. No attachments are needed when you submit this form, but additional detail may be requested by the Board on a case-by-case basis.

Wisconsin Nurse Aide Registry Transitions to New Vendor

“Blackout” dates for testing announced

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services’ Division of Quality Assurance (DQA) administers state and federal requirements for the Wisconsin Nurse Aide Registry. Starting September 1, Headmaster will manage the competency testing and registry for certified nurse assistants (CNAs). Pearson VUE currently manages these responsibilities, and this transition will require some training blackout dates as noted below.

- August 11: Last date Pearson VUE will provide competency testing (*Note: all applications must be in by August 1 for testing through August 11*)
- August 12-31: No testing available
- August 21: Online registration available with Headmaster for training after September 1

Information and updates can be found at the [DHS Nurse Aide Training and Registry website](#). If you have questions during this transition, email the [DQA Office of Caregiver Quality](#).