

IN THIS ISSUE

DUE SEPT. 6: Community Benefit Stories..... 1

Homeland Security Finalizes Proposed Public Charge Rule..... 1

Register Now for WHA's Second Annual Post-Acute Care Conference..... 2

Register Now: Health Equity Training Workshop, September 11-12 2

Is Universal Flu Vaccine on the Way? FluGen Founder to Speak at Sept. 24 Wisconsin Healthcare Business Forum Luncheon in Madison 2

August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month..... 3

Deadline for WHA Board and Award Nominations Extended to August 30 3

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

September 6, 2019
WHA 2019 Post-Acute Care Conference
Wisconsin Dells, WI

September 11-12, 2019
Health Equity and Literacy Workshop
Madison, WI

Visit www.wha.org for more educational opportunities

DUE SEPT. 6: Community Benefit Stories

Time to submit stories highlighting what your hospital/health system does for its community!

Later this fall, WHA will publish its annual Community Benefits Report, which highlights how Wisconsin hospitals help support their communities, families and patients.

Each WHA member hospital may have a story in each of the three categories below included in the Community Benefits Report:

- **Charity care:** free care for those who cannot afford it. These make for especially powerful stories.
- **Free clinics:** tell us about the free clinic(s) your hospital/health system runs or contributes to.
- **Hospital-supported initiatives:** identify a priority from your community health needs assessment and explain how the hospital/health system led an effort to address it. If you engaged community partners, include those partners in the story, too.

Stories are due by September 6, and we would ideally like to include a story from each member hospital. We've created an online form to make it easy to submit your article. Go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WHAcBStories2019> to submit your story and an image to accompany the article. Please submit a photo with your story whenever possible, as that helps tell a compelling story to legislators, the public, and media outlets in both the report and on social media.

If you have questions, contact [Stephanie Marquis](#), Vice President of Communications, or [Shannon Nelson](#), Communications Manager at 608-274-1820.

Homeland Security Finalizes Proposed Public Charge Rule

Concerns remain over impact to uncompensated care

The federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS) finalized a rule proposed in 2018 that would expand the definition of what constitutes a "public charge" as it relates to immigration. Unfortunately, the final rule does little to address concerns from WHA and other groups that the expanded definition could lead to more uncompensated care for hospitals and health systems and could negatively impact Wisconsin's projected health care workforce shortage.



The final rule adds Medicaid to the list of public benefits that would be considered in determining whether an immigrant is eligible to enter the U.S. or make changes to his or her immigration status. Historically, U.S. immigration policy has used the "public charge" criteria to determine the likelihood of a prospective immigrant becoming dependent on government benefits. The final rule expands the list of benefits considered in determining whether an immigrant may be determined a public charge

(continued on page 3)

Educational Opportunities

Register Now for WHA's Second Annual Post-Acute Care Conference

There are less than three weeks left until WHA's second annual Post-Acute Care Conference, "[Challenges in Post-Acute Care: Discharging Complex Hospital Patients](#)." This one-day conference will be held Friday, September 6, 2019, at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells. The program will address the challenges hospitals face in finding appropriate, accessible post-acute care for complex patients waiting to be discharged.

Keynote speakers will be Dr. Josh Luke, founder of the National Readmission Prevention Collaborative and health policy professor at the University of Southern California; and Judy Baskins, retired Chief of Clinical Integration and Ambulatory Services for Palmetto Health in Columbia, South Carolina and adjunct professor with the University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

The conference will also include state experts who will address issues including complex patient review committees, tracking excess patient days, expediting guardianship, how nursing homes care for complex patients, and other important topics.

[Register here](#). For conference-related questions, contact WHA Vice President of Policy Development [Laura Rose](#).

Register Now: Health Equity Training Workshop, September 11-12

Based on a state summary report of the Health Equity Organizational Assessments (HEOA) hospitals completed in January 2019, many hospitals responded they do not have a standardized process to evaluate and validate patient self-reported demographic data. The survey also indicated a need for improved communication of identified gaps in disparities to improve organization and community-wide awareness, promote understanding of patient population needs, and inform hospital leadership of potential differences in patient outcomes.

To assist with the statewide need, WHA teamed up with Wisconsin Health Literacy to provide training and resources to help improve focus on diversity and inclusion.

- Day One will focus on inclusion and health justice awareness-building through short presentations, experiential activities, reflection and dialogue.
- Day Two will include an interactive session on how to create health literate materials that incorporate plain language techniques, as well as providing ideas for scripted language that front-line staff can model when asking patients for demographic data.

[Click here for more information or to register](#). If you have questions, contact WHA Clinical Quality Improvement Advisor [Jill Lindwall](#).

Is Universal Flu Vaccine on the Way? FluGen Founder to Speak at Sept. 24 Wisconsin Healthcare Business Forum Luncheon in Madison



Ever wondered why the flu shot you got in the fall didn't work during the height of winter's influenza season? WHA members are encouraged to attend a Wisconsin Healthcare Business Forum luncheon in Madison September 24 where internationally renowned virologist Dr. Yoshihiro Kawaoka, a UW-Madison scientist and co-founder of FluGen, will discuss progress toward a "universal" flu vaccine that could help solve that problem for millions of people.

Additional information and registration are available [here](#).

August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

Every year, thousands of children sustain an eye injury—most of which can be prevented if suitable protective eyewear is used. An eye injury can happen at any time.

Wisconsin emergency rooms treated 1,764 eye-related injuries from April 2018 – March 2019, and there were 418 urgent care visits for eye-related injuries.

Because children are still growing, being vigilant about eye health is important. The earlier problems are identified, the sooner they can be addressed. Below are four tips for healthy eyes and vision:

1. Get regular childhood vision screenings;
2. Know and share your family eye health history;
3. Watch for signals of eye problems; and,
4. Wear protective eyewear when playing sports.



Deadline for WHA Board and Award Nominations Extended to August 30

Nominations are now being accepted for WHA's annual Distinguished Service Award and Trustee Award. These important awards recognize those who display leadership, dedication and professionalism to their community or the Association. You may know someone in your region, hospital, or on your Board of Directors who deserves such an honor. You now have an opportunity to nominate them for one of these annual awards:

- **Distinguished Service Award** is presented to a senior health care executive who has made an exemplary commitment to WHA, his/her hospital, and the communities he/she serves.
- **Trustee Award** honors a trustee of a WHA member organization who has made an exemplary commitment to his/her community and to the organization on whose board he/she serves.

Administrators, trustees, senior managers, nurse leaders, volunteers and others are encouraged to review the criteria for the awards and consider nominating someone to receive one of these honors. Information on these two awards can be found on the [WHA website](#).

The Nominating committee will also make recommendations on new WHA Board members. WHA members interested in being considered for, or wish to submit a candidate for, an At-Large WHA Board seat or the Chair-Elect position should contact either WHA President [Eric Borgerding](#) or WHA Nominating Committee Chair [Robert Van Meeteren](#).

Please submit nominations for both the awards and WHA Board of Directors no later than. Friday, August 30.

(Homeland Security Finalizes Proposed Public Charge Rule . . . Continued from page 1)

to include Medicaid, housing assistance, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (called FoodShare in Wisconsin). It also changes the definition of what is considered a public charge from someone who is "primarily dependent" on government assistance to someone who "receives one or more" government benefits for 12 months or more in a 36-month period. In other words, if an individual received both FoodShare and BadgerCare for a cumulative total of more than six months each in a three-year period, they could be considered a public charge under the new rule. However, the full public charge test is based on several different factors that look at the "totality of circumstances," such as a person's age, health, family status, financial status, education, and skills.

In its [comment letter](#) last December, WHA cautioned DHS that since this policy would be applied to immigrants already residing lawfully in the U.S., it could lead people who are legally entitled to Medicaid benefits or subsidized health insurance to drop their coverage over fears of it negatively impacting their own or a family member's legal immigration status. Indeed, DHS itself acknowledged in the proposed rule that this policy could lead to more cases of uncompensated care, worse health outcomes, and increased emergency room visits. While it's impossible to forecast how widespread such negative impacts could be, Wisconsin is currently home to an estimated 285,000 individuals who are either immigrants themselves or have family members who are immigrants. WHA also noted concerns about the rule's potential impact on Wisconsin's health care workforce shortage, particularly considering the number of immigrants that could fill open entry-level jobs that support direct patient care. Wisconsin currently has more open jobs than workers, and the demand for health care jobs is projected to increase by 30% over the next 12 years.

The final public charge rule will take effect on October 15, 2019. Since its announcement, several groups have called for its withdrawal and several states are suing to block its implementation. Contact WHA Director of Federal and State Relations [Jon Hoelter](#) for more information.