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EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

December 4, 2019
CMS Hospital Improvement FINAL RULES
Webinar

December 10, 2019
Enhancing Resilience: Survival of the Kindest
Free Member Webinar Series

December 12, 2019
Discharge Planning: Compliance with the New CMS Hospital & CAH CoPs
Webinar

Governor Evers Signs WHA-Priority Bills into Law

Richland Hospital’s Roesler, WHA’s Borgerding speak at telehealth ceremony

Governor Tony Evers recently signed into state law two legislative bills that were WHA priorities for the 2019-20 biennial session.



Governor Tony Evers shows the just-signed telehealth improvement act.

Telehealth Improvement (Senate Bill 380)

Gov. Evers approved [Senate Bill 380](#) at a bill-signing ceremony Nov. 25 at The Richland Hospital in Richland Center. Bruce Roesler, the hospital’s CEO, was invited to speak at the ceremony, which also included Wisconsin Department of Human Services Secretary-Designee Andrea Palm and WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding.

“The bill Governor Evers is signing into law today brings more parity between in-person and telehealth-provided care and removes outdated barriers to delivering and receiving care through telehealth,” Borgerding said. “This is especially important for expanding access to critical areas of care like behavioral health, where the need for services is being increasingly understood and growing rapidly.” *(continued on page 4)*

WHA Workforce Council Wrestles with Workplace Violence Prevention

Hospitals and health systems learn from each other and experts to protect the health care workforce

WHA’s Council on Workforce Development devoted their entire Nov. 22 meeting to an assessment of workplace violence in their settings, and the strategies and resources Wisconsin hospitals and health systems are devoting to violence response and prevention.

Council members invited safety and security experts to attend the meeting, and the group welcomed Mike Cummings, a health care security consultant, to set the stage for their discussion. Cummings discussed the four cornerstones of a violence prevention program: policies, procedures and practices, incident reporting, and communication and training. *(continued on page 2)*

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Sixteen participants – from large urban hospitals, remote critical access facilities and everything in between – discussed recent trends in violence in their settings, including an increased intensity in physical and verbal violence and other settings, like obstetrics units and ambulatory clinics catching up to emergency rooms and psychiatric settings in the frequency of violence, or of narrowly averted violence (“near misses”).



Health Care Security Consultant Mike Cummings talks to WHA's Council on Workforce Development.

The participants identified their biggest barriers to eliminating violence in health care:

- Complacency must be overcome; a culture shift is needed to acknowledge that physical and verbal violence is not okay, and that prevention can be effective.
- Training resources are needed; not just dollars, but expertise and methodology, especially for hospitals where employed security personnel are not feasible or recommended.
- Immediate barriers must be addressed while advocacy occurs to resolve underlying causes such as the opioid epidemic and lack of access to mental health resources.

The WHA Council on Workforce Development’s assessment will be utilized to develop the resources that will be the most useful to WHA members as they continue to work on preventing violence in health care settings. Contact WHA Vice President of Workforce and Clinical Practice [Ann Zenk](#) for further information or to provide feedback on the Council’s assessment.

WHA’s Post-Acute Care Work Group Reconvenes



WHA's Post-Acute Care Work Group Meeting, Nov. 22

Locating and maintaining stable post-acute care settings for patients in order to prevent hospital readmissions was the focus of the WHA Post-Acute Work Group’s Nov. 22 meeting. Elaine Makarowski, advanced practice nurse practitioner and clinical supervisor of UW Health’s Advanced Practice Provider Long-Term Care Team, met with the work group and described the team’s work. The team has 14 nurse practitioners (NPs) and 5 RN skilled nursing facility (SNF) case managers who cover about 650 patients at 18

SNFs in Dane County. The team covers all UW/Unity Point Health - Meriter primary care providers with patients in Dane County.

The idea to follow discharged hospital patients at post-acute care settings was first implemented at UW Health 20 years ago. At that time, one nurse practitioner saw SNF patients for just a few doctors. As the acuity of patients increased, UW Ambulatory Operations and Population Health recognized the need to add more NPs to cover patients for all primary care providers. The department was centralized within UW Health in 2016 and patients of all Unity Point-Meriter primary care providers were added to the caseload.

The team works to decrease hospital readmissions and ensure smooth discharge transitions by collaborating with nurse case managers in SNFs. This collaboration helps ensure the patient’s care needs are met. The program has documented a decrease in hospital readmission rates due to the program. The NPs are very familiar with the patients and their families. Because of the rapport with the SNF leadership and staff, facility staff can direct all calls to the NPs, eliminating a large percentage of calls to primary care providers and increasing the primary provider’s productivity in the clinic.

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(WHA's Post-Acute Care Work Group Reconvenes . . . continued from page 2)

The work group discussed how similar models have been implemented in other Wisconsin hospitals and health systems and identified which changes in federal SNF regulations could be beneficial to the smooth operation of these programs. Other topics the work group discussed were Aging and Disability Resource Center delays in completing functional screens for Family Care eligibility, resulting in unnecessary lengths of stay in nursing homes; post-acute needs of complex patients; and WHA advocacy activities that facilitate post-acute care planning.

The work group will meet again in January. For further information, contact WHA Vice President of Policy Development [Laura Rose](#).

Announcing: 2020 Physician Leadership Development Conference

We are heading back to Kohler, WI for the 2020 Physician Leadership Development Conference on March 13 and 14. Per past participant feedback, we have added more speakers and more topics to the event. You will not want to miss it! Conference information, including registration information, can be found [here](#).

Register and secure your hotel room today!!



Stoughton Hospital's Dan Hanson Wins WHA 2019 Trustee Award

Lauded as “exactly the kind of person this award is meant to recognize,” Dan Hanson, chair of the board of directors for the Stoughton Hospital Association, received the WHA 2019 Trustee Award Nov. 25 in Stoughton. WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding presented the award.



Eric Borgerding and Dan Hanson

Awarded for more than 60 years, this annual honor recognizes a trustee of a WHA member organization who has made an exemplary commitment to their hospital and the community they serve.

“He is committed to improvement through accountability and working with the administration and management to continuously raise hospital performance,” Borgerding said of Hanson as he presented the award, pointing out how Stoughton Hospital has been recognized multiple times for high achievement during Hanson’s seven years on the board. “And looking to the future of Stoughton Hospital, Dan has mentored and developed future board members from within the communities the hospital serves.”

Borgerding noted Hanson’s other commitments to the community, including serving on the Shillelagh Foundation Board, working with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Syttende Mai King, Friends of Norwegian Culture Board and other volunteer activities.

Borgerding also cited Hanson’s willingness to advocate for Stoughton Hospital and hospitals across the state through meetings with elected officials and attending events such as WHA’s Advocacy Day.

Hanson’s deep involvement with the hospital over his seven years on the board – the maximum term allowed – was deemed “instrumental” by Stoughton Hospital President and CEO Dan DeGroot, who nominated Hanson for the honor.

“What I appreciate most about Dan is his passion and commitment to the Mission of Stoughton Hospital,” DeGroot wrote in his nomination letter. “He has demonstrated a broad understanding of the healthcare needs within the community and has always helped the Hospital respond effectively and responsibly.

“Dan Hanson is trusted, engaged, demonstrates a keen sense of humor, and is supportive of the hospital administration and management which is appreciated by all of us,” DeGroot wrote.

Hanson operates a family-owned business, Hanson Electronics, with sites in Oregon, Stoughton and Evansville. As part of the recognition, WHA will donate \$250 to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, the charity of Hanson’s choice.

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Numerous studies, including Wisconsin’s own state employee health insurance program, have determined that creating access to care through telehealth is a cost-effective strategy for the state’s Medicaid program. The legislation is the culmination of three years of work by WHA’s Telemedicine Work Group, and includes provisions implementing the work group’s four recommendations for the state’s Medicaid program:

- Cover telehealth the same as in-person care when the quality of the care provided is functionally equivalent.
- Catch up to Medicare in the number of covered telehealth-related services.
- Cover in-home or community telehealth services.
- Increase access to behavioral health via telehealth.



WHA President/CEO Eric Borgerding speaks at the Senate Bill 380 bill-signing ceremony Nov. 25.

The bill enjoyed widespread, bipartisan support – more than 60 state legislators signed on as supporters of the bill, which saw unanimous approval during State Assembly and State Senate floor sessions. Borgerding thanked Gov. Evers, DHS Secretary-designee Palm, State Sens. Dale Kooyenga and Janet Bewley, State Assembly Reps. Amy Loudbeck and Deb Kolste and legislators for coming together to pass and enact this important legislation.

“This is a great example of bipartisanship, working across the aisle to address the needs of Wisconsin,” Borgerding said. “WHA is extremely proud to be a part of this type of legislation, which bridges political divides and for the purpose of improving care – a priority for everyone.”

In his remarks, Borgerding also singled out the work of the WHA lobbying and advocacy team, which he called “second-to-none” in Wisconsin, and also thanked the members of WHA’s telehealth task force for their work in crafting this landmark legislation.

See WHA’s public statement [here](#).

Look for an announcement soon in *The Valued Voice* regarding more detailed education from WHA regarding the new law, officially enacted as [2019 Act 56](#). Contact WHA Vice President of Policy Development [Laura Rose](#) or WHA General Counsel [Matthew Stanford](#) for additional information about 2019 Act 56.



Gov. Tony Evers signs Senate Bill 74 into law.

Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (Senate Bill 74)

Gov. Evers signed a bill Nov. 22 at Prescott High School ensuring that Wisconsin will remain a member of the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC), a 29-state agreement that allows a less-cumbersome path for physicians wishing to hold medical licenses in multiple states.

A sunset clause in state statutes would have automatically removed Wisconsin from the IMLC absent proactive legislative action – a condition that was necessary to ensure passage during the 2015-16 legislative session. This session’s legislation, [Senate Bill 74](#), eliminates the sunset clause from the lawbooks, ensuring Wisconsin health care can continue to benefit from the successful licensing process.

“The compact has proven to be a useful option that can make Wisconsin’s medical licensing process more efficient,” Borgerding said in [this press release](#) praising the bill signing. “So we thank Governor Evers and the entire state Legislature for supporting the new law.

“We’re grateful to see so much bipartisan support in a priority area for WHA: easing the administrative burden for health care professionals,” Borgerding said, highlighting another WHA-promoted bill with enormous bipartisan support.

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