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**EDUCATIONAL EVENTS**

**Started January 2019**  
*Health Care Workforce Resilience*  
Free Member Webinar Series

**March 15, 2019**  
*Physician Leadership*  
*Development Conference*  
Kohler, WI

**April 17, 2019**  
*Advocacy Day*  
Madison, WI

**REGISTER TODAY: PHYSICIAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE**

**Early Bird Discount Expires January 31**



As physician leaders continue to move beyond their clinical training, they have the need to focus on employing a new approach to managerial decision making and problem solving. To assist with this transition, WHA will host its 14th annual “Physician Leadership Development Conference” Friday, March 15 and Saturday, March 16,

2019 at The American Club in Kohler. We encourage you to consider which of your physician leaders would benefit from further developing or enhancing their leadership skills, invite them to attend and encourage them to [register today](#).

An early bird discount is available until January 31, and the special room rate at The American Club is only available until the room block fills, which it does quickly each year, so plan to register and make your hotel reservations today. You can view the full 2019 conference agenda and [register online](#).

**EVERS ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES NEW DHS SECRETARY**

Today, Governor-elect Evers announced that Andrea Palm, a former top official at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under President Obama’s administration, has been named Wisconsin’s new DHS Secretary. She will oversee DHS’ \$12 billion annual budget, which includes the state’s Medicaid and other public benefits programs.



Andrea Palm

Palm served as Senior Counselor to the HHS Secretary from 2014-2017, implementing the Affordable Care Act and launching the first open enrollment for the Health Insurance Marketplace. Prior to joining the Obama administration, Palm worked five years as a health policy adviser to then-U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton.

“Wisconsin is known for its consistently nation-leading quality health care, due in large measure to the hospitals, health systems, dedicated caregivers and health care professionals in this state,” said WHA President/CEO Eric Borgerding. “We have accomplished much, have much more to do, and look forward to meeting Secretary-Designate Palm and working with the Evers administration and the Legislature to preserve Wisconsin’s top-quality care, sustain the health insurance coverage gains we have made over the past four years and assure that those who gain coverage also have access to care.”

Palm’s appointment must be confirmed by the Senate.

# WHA BOARD RECOGNIZES MEMBERS, CELEBRATES 2018 OUTCOMES, TALKS MEDICAID EXPANSION

## Another physician leader joins board

The WHA Board of Directors held its final meeting of 2018, and as typical of year-end meetings, it was kicked-off with welcomes, thank yous and good byes.

Welcomed as guests were Daniel DeGroot, President/CEO of Stoughton Hospital, and Steve Kulick, MD, Chief Experience Officer of Marshfield Clinic Health System. Both will be joining the board as at-large members in 2019.



WHA's Board Meeting, December 20, 2018

Outgoing 2018 Board Chair Bob Van Meeteren, President of the Reedsburg Area Medical Center, was thanked by the WHA staff and his board colleagues for his leadership and guidance the past 12 months.

“WHA’s ability to produce relevant, impactful results year after year is truly impressive,” Van Meeteren said in remarks to the board. “They serve urban and rural, system and independent hospitals and health systems with equal commitment while delivering unequalled value for all members. It’s a real privilege to serve on the WHA board and it’s been my honor to serve as chair this past year.”

Van Meeteren will assume the position of immediate past chair, as Regional President of Operations at SSM Healthcare of Wisconsin Damond Boatwright takes over the reigns as chair in 2019.

Leaving the board after completing the maximum two consecutive terms (six years total), Steve Little, Regional COO of SSM Health-Wisconsin, also remarked on his time on the board and thanked the WHA staff and his colleagues.

“My time with WHA has been very rewarding, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve,” Little said. “I look forward to continuing to be a part of the work you do to make health care better in Wisconsin.”

“WHA is successful because of the leadership and participation from all our members, especially those who serve on the board, who go the extra mile in giving their time and sharing their knowledge and insights,” said Eric Borgerding, WHA President/CEO. “This keeps WHA’s advocacy efforts relevant and of value to our members all across Wisconsin.”

## WHA Accomplishes Ambitious 2018 Goals

Each year, WHA puts forward a set of ambitious and forward-looking goals to sustain and strengthen WHA’s advocacy and policy efforts on behalf of its members.

Borgerding noted 2018 was another outstanding performance year for WHA and the WHA Information Center. Staff delivered in all goal areas, which included a comprehensive list of state and federal policy areas such as market stability, sustainable reimbursement for services, health care workforce, post-acute care, telemedicine, quality improvement, and the legal and regulatory environment. WHA also launched its updated brand, “Advocate. Advance. Lead.,” better reflecting its ability to craft and achieve impactful health care public policy and quality improving member services.

Watch for more 2018 highlights in the next issue of *The Valued Voice*.

## Advocacy update

WHA President/CEO Eric Borgerding discussed how the election of Governor-elect Tony Evers might impact health care policy and WHA’s proactive advocacy agenda at the state level. With Evers as Governor, Borgerding said Medicaid expansion is clearly back on the table. Borgerding discussed the positioning of the Governor-elect on this issue during his campaign, along with public commentary by members of leadership in both houses of the state Legislature following November’s election. Borgerding reminded the Board about the extensive work done in 2013 by WHA staff to understand the impact of Medicaid expansion on hospital members, work that has been revisited by staff in advance of this expected debate.

Borgerding said the debate will be different this time compared to 2013 when Medicaid expansion was last debated in Wisconsin, primarily due to seemingly conflicting factors:

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## **WHA Board Recognizes Members, Celebrates 2018 Outcomes, Talks Medicaid Expansion . . . Continued from page 2**

Wisconsin's coverage environment is much improved compared to 2013, with Medicaid now available to all below 100% of the federal poverty level, over 200,000 people receiving coverage on the exchange, and an uninsured rate that has been cut nearly in half. "Because of the significant coverage gains we've achieved, the urgency to accept ACA-style Medicaid expansion to improve coverage is much diminished today compared to five years ago," Borgerding said.

Wisconsin's new Governor, Tony Evers, campaigned on accepting the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) Medicaid expansion and will include it in his 2019-21 state budget bill. Outgoing Governor Scott Walker adamantly refused to accept Medicaid expansion, largely over stated concerns related to Congress eventually repealing the ACA and expansion. But as Borgerding pointed out, that concern is no longer a reality. "Congress could not repeal the ACA when the GOP controlled every aspect of the process, so it certainly won't be repealing it now," Borgerding said. "That 'pull the rug out from us' argument is pretty much moot."

With key impediments now gone, all eyes, and hands, are focusing on the financial windfall to the state of accepting expansion. The state could realize up to \$300 million in fiscal savings over the biennium if it accepts federal dollars that go with Medicaid expansion. "The problem with that is, some in the Legislature will spend the money 20 different ways, none of which will improve health care," Borgerding said. "We have serious health care needs in Wisconsin, not the least of which are workforce shortages and some of the worst Medicaid hospital reimbursement rates in the country. Health care dollars should stay in health care, not be diverted to other pet spending projects."

Borgerding reminded the Board of Candidate Tony Evers' pledge to use Medicaid dollars for health care when he visited the Board in October. Evers went further during an October 19 debate with Scott Walker, when he said, "I'm going to take that Medicaid money and we're going to plow it into the system and make health care more affordable."

At the same time, mixed messages seem to be coming from the Republican majority in the Legislature, Borgerding said. Assembly Speaker Robin Vos has made it clear that he will not support Medicaid expansion, in part due to the poor reimbursement hospitals and other providers receive from the program, which he correctly notes drives up health care costs for all others. In the Senate, Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald has signaled more openness to discussing Medicaid expansion, though still thinks its passage is a long shot. Borgerding said other states have successfully bridged partisan and philosophical disagreements over Medicaid expansion by adopting a hybrid approach that relies more on the private, commercial insurance via the exchanges to deliver the expanded coverage from Medicaid.

Whatever the outcome, Borgerding said, Medicaid payment for hospital service must improve. Now reimbursed at 65% of cost, hospitals in Wisconsin's Medicaid program are reimbursed well below the national average of 89% of cost.

"The idea of accepting federal health care dollars and then diverting additional funds to non-health care spending should be a non-starter for all those who actually care about improving health care coverage and care access," Borgerding said. "And with the second lowest hospital Medicaid reimbursement rates in the country, it's not just hospitals that bear the cost of the state's unpaid Medicaid bills, it's also Wisconsin employers who are picking up over \$1 billion annually in unpaid Medicaid costs that show up in higher prices for hospital care."

Borgerding also walked through a recent federal court decision regarding the constitutionality of the ACA, where a federal judge in Texas struck down the law as unconstitutional. While the decision is subject to appeal and could go before the United States Supreme Court, Borgerding discussed how this decision may impact coverage in Wisconsin and potentially play a role in the debate on further expanding Medicaid.

### **New Input Provided on WHA Physician Agenda**

WHA Chief Medical Officer Mark Kaufman, MD, led a Board discussion of information gathered from chief medical officers and other physician leaders over the course of 2018, focusing on evolving physician leaders' scopes of responsibility and medical leadership structures, emerging needs and challenges facing physician leaders, physician regulatory burden and drivers of physician professional dissatisfaction, and how WHA can further support its member physician leaders.

Dr. Kaufman also discussed potential next steps for WHA in 2019 to further enhance value across a diverse range of member organizations and their physician leaders, including further exploration and validation of 2018 findings and potential initiatives.

## PRESIDENT’S COLUMN: THE PEAK IS NEVER PASSED

As we close the books on another eventful and successful year, I first and foremost want to thank our members for their tremendous support of WHA and our work. We are truly honored to be the voice of some of the consistently best performing hospitals and health systems in the nation. Our partnership remains strong and has never been more important as we navigate, together, the ongoing twists and turns of health care.



Eric Borgerding

Uncertainty, perpetuated largely by inability to coalesce around health care policy, has become the norm today. A sharply divided President and Congress in Washington, D.C., a seemingly as divided Governor and Legislature in Wisconsin and now a third lawsuit threatening to overturn *every single aspect* of the Affordable Care Act, with nothing in its place, assure this environment will persist in 2019 and beyond. Amidst this ongoing turmoil, some things have remained steady and consistent: the quality of Wisconsin health care and the role, relevance and reach of WHA.

Once again, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) ranked Wisconsin health care as some of the very best. According to the AHRQ, in 2018 our state had the 4th best health care in the country, and 1st in the Midwest. Since AHRQ began issuing rankings, Wisconsin has been in the top four 10 of 12 years, ranking first in the nation in 2006, 2008, and 2017 and second in 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2015. We stand on these achievements while reaching even higher, because quality care results in better outcomes for patients and ultimately improved value for Wisconsin employers.

For our part, WHA’s priorities and agenda are more focused than ever on crafting and delivering results that enable our members to do what they do best—continue delivering top quality, high-value health care. Whether it be reforming antiquated telehealth regulations, growing and modernizing the health care workforce, working to stabilize insurance markets, fighting for fair reimbursement from government health care programs, forging new partnerships with business leaders or expanding data and analytics to improve care, 2018 has been another great example of WHA’s relevant work and impactful accomplishments. One of WHA’s Board members paid us the ultimate compliment when she recently wrote, “WHA is a large part of why Wisconsin is number one in health care. WHA’s passion, knowledge, strategy, and support is exceptional. Please pass along my appreciation to the fantastic team for all they do for our hospitals and the people of the state who count on great health care!”

The feeling is mutual! We are privileged to represent Wisconsin’s hospitals and health systems and fortunate to work with tremendous health care leaders.

WHA celebrates its 100th year in 2020, a century of health care advocacy. Over those years our purpose has been shaped by the times and circumstances, our value tested by the ability to anticipate and affect directions and outcomes. So as we wrap up a successful 2018 and, briefly, take stock of what was accomplished, we never lose focus on what can be. WHA will always be a “valued voice,” but today we *advocate, advance, and lead*.

To quote my favorite lyricist, “From first to last, the peak is never passed...one moment’s high, and glory rolls on by, like a streak of lightning that flashes and fades in the summer sky.” Indeed. WHA never settles. We will *always* focus on what’s next.

Speaking of what’s next...from our team to yours, wishing you all a safe and successful 2019!

Eric Borgerding,  
President/CEO

To receive a copy of WHA’s 2018 Annual Report, contact [Sherry Collins](#) at 608-274-1820.

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## HUNDREDS PARTICIPATE IN FIRST WORKFORCE RESILIENCE WEBINAR



On January 8, more than 450 registrants, representing more than 115 individual hospital organizations and all the major health systems in Wisconsin, participated in the first installment of the 12-part series focused on health care workforce resilience. The *Health Care Workforce Resilience* series is offered jointly by WHA and the Wisconsin Medical Society, is available at no cost to members, and is presented by renowned health care workforce resilience expert J. Bryan Sexton, PhD, Director of the Duke Patient Safety Center at Duke University Health System.

The first session, *Prevalence and Severity of Burnout: Workforce Resilience as Care Quality*, focused on the concept that burnout is increasingly common and can compromise clinical and operational outcomes, but it’s treatable. Each monthly session includes

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## Hundreds participate in First Workforce Resilience Webinar . . . Continued from page 4

engaging and evidence-based content, is delivered in bite-sized doses, and shares practical tools and strategies immediately applicable for all members of the health care team, regardless of role.

Even if you missed this first session, you can still participate in the series. You can [access the recorded session](#) and participate in upcoming sessions by [registering today](#).

- Each live session will be recorded and available on-demand, allowing you to view them at your convenience, but pre-registration is required.
- Each session is also approved for 1.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™ and 1.0 Nursing credit hour, for those who participate in the live webinar or view the recording within 30 days.
- [View the full list of series topics and dates and register now.](#)

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## FEBRUARY 11 WEBINAR TO FOCUS ON MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT IN WISCONSIN

On February 11, WHA is offering a complimentary webinar to members, “Buprenorphine 101: Demystifying Medication Assisted Treatment in Wisconsin.” This program will provide an introduction to the evolving role of primary care physicians, emergency physicians, advanced practice providers, and nurses in prescribing and administering buprenorphine medication assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid use disorder. This webinar does not qualify attendees for an X-waiver, but rather, it is an introduction to the X-waiver process and the content one needs to know to either be or support an X-waivered provider. [Registration is now open.](#)

This session will be presented by Robert Redwood, MD, MPH. Dr. Redwood is WHA’s physician improvement advisor and works full time as an emergency and preventive medicine physician at Divine Savior Hospital in Portage. It is designed for primary care or emergency medicine physicians, advanced practice providers and nurses, as well as any clinician or care coordinator who sees patients with substance abuse disorders. WHA members are encouraged to pass registration information for this webinar along to the appropriate personnel in their organizations.



Robert Redwood, MD

The webinar is scheduled for Monday, February 11, from 12:00 -1:00 pm. This WHA Member Forum is complimentary and open only to WHA hospital and corporate members, but [pre-registration is required](#) to participate. Direct registration questions to [Sherry Collins](#) or call 608-274-1820.

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## AHA WEBINAR: SPEND MORE TIME ON THINGS THAT MATTER MOST

The American Hospital Association (AHA) Physician Alliance is hosting a webinar this month titled, Helping Physicians finish faster - making more time for the things that matter most.

WHA is sharing this information as part of our ongoing resources to help reduce physician burnout, as well as focus on organizational strategies to reduce physician time spent on non-clinical work.

**DATE:** Wednesday, January 23, 2019

**TIME:** 12:00 - 01:00 PM CST

**DESCRIPTION:** Scott MacDonald, MD, EHR Medical Director, will discuss the rationale, program details, and outcomes of the ambulatory efficiency training and optimization program at UC Davis Health. Their approach yielded significant improvements in satisfaction with our EMR, efficiency, and time spent outside clinic hours. [Click here for online registration.](#)

*Note: you must be a member of AHA to participate in this webinar.*