

Vol. 69, Issue 23

Thursday, June 5, 2025

Council on Workforce Development Hosts Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara

Senate Health Chair and Council Members Discuss Health Care Policy to Support the Workforce

The WHA Council on Workforce Development welcomed one of the most influential legislators in health care policy, Sen. Rachael Cabral-Guevara. WHA Senior Vice President of Government Relations Kyle O'Brien introduced Cabral-Guevara. During his introduction, he noted that as the chair of the Senate Committee on Health, which has jurisdiction over legislation ranging from hospital price transparency to workforce, Sen. Cabral-Guevara has a great deal of impact and influence on the Wisconsin health care system.

Senator Cabral-Guevara shared her background and her past experiences in the Assembly, and now her service in the Senate. In addition to her work as a legislator, Cabral-Guevara is a nurse practitioner and notes she is one of only a few current legislators who is also a health care provider.

Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara provided brief remarks on her current work in the legislature to support Wisconsin hospitals and the health care workforce, including bills for APRN licensure, a respiratory therapist compact and a proposal to expand the role of experienced registered nurses as clinical faculty for two- and four-year nursing programs. She shared "Early in my career, as a student in a Masters in Nursing program, I was able to serve as a clinical faculty member with my short experience as a registered nurse, while nurses with many more years of experience were unable to do so." She added, "A nurse working there with a lot of clinical experience would be very helpful as a clinical instructor."

Cabral-Guevara welcomed comments, questions and feedback from the workforce council members. They asked for Cabral-Guevara's support to increase Medicaid reimbursement, noting that financial challenges hinder the ability to sustain services. The Senator agreed, noting that in addition, very low volumes can be an issue for hospitals, especially in the rural portions of her district.

Workforce council members also shared their appreciation for added funding for the allied health training grants in the current budget and the need to sustain this funding that is being put to good use by hospitals and health systems across the state. They also mentioned their concerns that a proposal on certification of surgical techs could impact the education and training pathway, exacerbating current serious shortages and access to care.

Senator Cabral-Guevara thanked the council for their good discussion, noting "The ideas for legislation come from the experts like you as we continue to work hard to address the two top things: reimbursement and workforce."

The discussion with the Senate Committee on Health Chair was followed by an update on WHA's state advocacy. Provided by Kyle O'Brien, this update included the continued work on the State biennial budget, with a focus on increasing Medicaid reimbursement. WHA Vice President of Federal and State Relations Jon Hoelter added an update on federal activity, including 340B and efforts threatening Medicaid that are especially disadvantageous to Wisconsin.

WHA Senior Vice President of Workforce and Clinical Practice Ann Zenk closed the meeting with a workforce update. Zenk noted strong participation in the 2025 Wisconsin Health Care Workforce salary survey, the recent WHA workforce briefing for the legislature and the work of the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment, which Zenk is a member of, and the Governor's Council focus on childcare at their May meeting.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Wisconsin Hospitals Ranked Best in the Nation for Price Transparency
- Letter to Sen. Ron Johnson on House Budget Reconciliation Medicaid Cuts
- Council on Workforce Development Hosts Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara
- June Fast Facts: Lyme Disease
- GUEST COLUMN: Leveraging "My Reports" to Distribute Information Throughout your Organization

EDUCATION EVENTS

Aug. 8, 2025

WHA Financial Workshop

Sep. 17, 2025

2025 Annual Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Leaders Conference

Jan. 28, 2026

2026 WHA Health Care Leadership Academy