



KHA's Current Report
March 8, 2024

President's Perspective – Healthworks Serves Valuable Role for Kansas Hospitals

Since 1969, the Kansas Hospital Association's foundation, Healthworks, has played an important role in supporting its mission and vision. While Healthworks shares the same vision of KHA, "Optimal Health for Kansans," its specific mission is to "facilitate collaboration and innovation to improve health." Healthworks strives to accomplish this in a variety of ways. For the current year, the main priority focus of Healthworks falls within three areas:

- Health care delivery redesign
- Workforce supply and capacity
- Grant support

The Healthworks brand is likely recognizable to you; however, you may not know the breadth and scope of the resources it provides to support Kansas hospitals. As part of its portfolio, Healthworks has been the lead organization supporting QHi, the multi-state, web-based benchmarking tool designed by small rural hospitals and clinics to give executives insight into clinical quality, finance, operations, workforce and patient satisfaction. At present, QHi is being used by 428 hospitals in 12 states. Other Healthworks efforts include the Kansas Health-e Broadband project and multiple projects with Kansas Rural Hospitals Optimizing Performance, known as KRHOP.

A few Healthworks projects I would like to spotlight include its role in helping Kansas hospitals build a sustainable workforce, as well as its work in the area of new models of care. Developing a sustainable, and knowledgeable, workforce pipeline continues to be a primary focus for Healthworks. It works on this goal through many initiatives including the Healthworks long-standing health care scholarships program, now in its 22nd year, as well as newer initiatives, such as support for the Kansas Health Care Virtual Career Day and funding for HOSA-Future Health Professional student chapters in Kansas. These types of workforce initiatives are exposing high school students, and young professionals, to the rewarding aspects of choosing a career in health care.

Another important project Healthworks has been leading for several years includes the exploration of new health care delivery models. While the work in this area has been ongoing for many years, the results of its efforts are starting to be realized. Early on, hospital leaders around Kansas engaged in discussions on developing new and sustainable models of care for rural communities. Initially referred to as a Primary Health Center model, the ideas and concepts gained traction and are largely incorporated into what is now the Rural Emergency Hospital model. Kansas is now home to two Rural Emergency Hospitals, located in Arkansas City (SCK Health) and Moundridge (Mercy Hospital, Inc). Nationwide, this new delivery model has been replicated in more than 20 locations. Healthworks continues to play an important role in this new delivery model by having Jennifer Findley, Healthworks executive director, serving on the National Technical Center's Advisory Committee.

While it takes a talented and dedicated Healthworks team to carry out the projects and initiatives, it also requires visionary leadership from the Healthworks Board of Directors. I want to specifically express my appreciation for the board's leadership and commitment to the vision and mission of Healthworks. The 2024 Healthworks Board is led by Eddie Hermann, Hays Medical Center, Hays (chair), Todd Willert, Community HealthCare System, Inc., Onaga (vice chair) and current board members include Austin Gillard, Clay County Medical Center, Clay Center; Dee Dee Dewell, Pioneer Health Network, Garden City; Ken Johnson, Wichita; Patrick Custer, Morton County Health System; Elkhart; Brian Lawrence, Coffeyville Regional Medical Center, Coffeyville; Stephanie Bjornstad, Rooks County Health Center, Plainville; Claudio Ferraro, Ascension Via Christi Hospitals, Wichita; Janell Goodno, Kiowa District Hospital, Kiowa; and Robert Durrett, DO, Kansas COM, Wichita. Thank you again for your dedication to serving Healthworks.

Be on the lookout for a new Healthworks project launching very soon. This initiative will provide tools and resources to assist hospitals in finding and writing grants to support projects at the local level.

--Chad Austin

Introduction to the 2024 Joint Commission Standards for Infection Control

Beginning this summer, hospitals accredited by the Joint Commission will be required to adopt a new set of standards for high-consequence diseases. The National Emerging Special Pathogens Training and Education Center is offering a free webinar, [Introduction to the 2024 Joint Commission Standards for Infection Control](#), at noon on Mar. 15. Panelists will review the new HCID standards established by The Joint Commission, identify strategies for implementation, and share resources and tools to prepare organizations to be ready for the new standards by July 1, 2024.

The webinar is free and open to all health care professionals, especially quality improvement teams, emergency managers, infection preventionists, hospital epidemiologists, educational specialists, nurse educators and coordinators for physician education.

--Ron Marshall

KHA Membership Directory Updates Due Mar. 18

The Kansas Hospital Association Membership Directory is an indispensable tool for members. We strive to assist members in communicating with peers, and we need your help to ensure the information is current. This week, KHA members were sent a draft of their current data as it appears in the KHA database and online directory. We asked you to edit this document, providing us with the names, titles and email addresses of your executive staff. If you haven't already done so, please return the requested information, noting any edits, additions or deletions you wish made by Mar. 18, to the attention of Jan Fenwick, (KHA, 215 SE 8th Ave., Topeka, KS, 66603; email jfenwick@kha-net.org; or fax: (785) 233-6955). As a reminder, the online and print directories are only available to KHA members.

In addition, our publishing partner for the directory, E&M Consulting, is wrapping up its advertising campaign for the KHA Membership Directory. They will be contacting members with advertising opportunities. They are very professional and produce a high-quality directory. If you have an interest in advertising or have questions, please contact an E&M sales associate at (800) 572-0011, Ext.8005, or advertising@emconsultinginc.com. As always, your support of the Kansas Hospital Association is greatly appreciated!

--Jan Fenwick

Infection Prevention Conference – Mar. 21-22

This conference will help prepare health care professionals to be facilitators and resources for the surveillance, prevention and control of infections. Attendees will discover proven strategies for implementing infection prevention programs. Time will be allotted during the conference for attendees to network and discuss issues with other infection prevention professionals. All participants will receive infection prevention reference materials. This conference will be at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Wichita Airport, 42098 Airport Road, Wichita, KS 67209.

Who Should Attend

This course is designed for infection prevention professionals in acute care, ambulatory care, long-term care, home health, mental health, correctional facilities and other interested professionals.



--Hayley Finch-Genschorck

Rural Maternal Health Series Webinars Begin Mar. 12

Registration is open for a four-part webinar series presented by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, in collaboration with the Rural Health Information Hub, to support access to safe, high-quality maternity care in rural communities. Focused on the needs of rural hospitals with and without birth units, the series launches on Mar. 12 to help support facilities' understanding of the new Birthing-Friendly Hospital Designation and earn recognition through regional collaboration and implementation of patient safety care bundles. In addition, the final installment will address hospitals without birth units to support their readiness to care for pregnant, birthing and postpartum people who present for care. Webinar dates and topics include:

- [*Achieving Birthing-Friendly Status in Rural Hospitals – Mar. 12, 1:00 p.m.*](#)
- [*Engaging with Perinatal Quality Collaboratives for Rural Hospitals – Mar. 26, 1:00 p.m.*](#)
- [*Implementing Patient Safety Bundles in Rural Hospitals – Apr. 9, 1:00 p.m.*](#)
- [*Obstetric Readiness in Rural Facilities without Birth Units – Apr. 23, 2:00 p.m.*](#)

*Note the 2:00 p.m. start time

Participants will learn about practical toolkits and implementation support, as well as learning about successful safety and access interventions in rural communities.

--Karen Braman

Register Now for the U.S. Drug Supply Chain Security Act Requirements Webinar – Mar. 28

The U.S. Drug Supply Chain Security Act, signed into law in 2013, is designed to track and trace prescription drugs distributed in the U.S. from the manufacturer to the point of dispensing to the patient. In August 2023, the Food and Drug Administration announced a one-year "stabilization period" for DSCSA requirements that became effective Nov. 27, 2023. The FDA stabilization period was intended to accommodate the additional time needed to comply with DSCSA requirements. The FDA will begin enforcing the DSCSA in November 2024.

Join us for a noon briefing to learn more about the DSCSA implications for hospitals and what you need to know to comply.



--Hayley Finch-Genschorck

Agenda Set for 2024 KHA Spring District Meetings

The Kansas Hospital Association's District Meetings provide members with timely information but also are essential in helping KHA learn about your top issues. We encourage CEOs, CFOs, HR executives, trustees and senior staff to join us. We want to have interactive conversations, so invite key staff working or interested in the topic areas below:

- The Kansas Medical Society Professionals' Health Program
- Financial Strategies - Managing Payer Denials, All Payers Scorecard and Financial Benchmarking
- Member Discussion on Workforce Strategies
- Public Perception Campaign
- Member Discussion on KHA 2025-2027 Strategic Planning
- State and Federal Advocacy
- KHSC and APS Spotlight Services
- Member Discussion on Regional and State Resources and Strategies

Join us for networking with your peers and KHA staff at 9:30 a.m. Meeting times will be from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with lunch provided. You are free to attend at any location, so pick the location that best fits your schedule. These meetings are provided at no charge.

District	Date	Location	City
Northeast	April 2	Stormont Vail Health 1500 SW 10th Ave.	Topeka
Northwest	April 3	Rooks County Health Center 1210 N Washington St.	Plainville
Southwest	April 4	St. Catherine Hospital - Garden City 401 E. Spruce St.	Garden City
Southeast	April 9	Allen County Regional Hospital 3066 N. Kentucky St.	Iola
North Central	April 10	Salina Regional Health Center 400 S. Santa Fe Ave.	Salina
South Central	April 12	Ascension Via Christi St. Francis 929 N. St. Francis	Wichita

[Click to View Agenda](#)



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--Cindy Samuelson

Patient Safety Awareness Week Starts Mar. 10

Patient Safety Awareness is every day. It is recognized with [Patient Safety Awareness Week, Mar. 10-16](#), and sponsored by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. This annual recognition encourages everyone to learn more about health care safety and serves as a dedicated time and platform for growing awareness about patient safety. It also recognizes the work hospitals and health systems do every day to prioritize patient safety.

--Karen Braman

Sunflower Chapter HFMA & KAHPAM Spring Conference – Apr. 16-17

The Sunflower (Kansas) Chapter of the Healthcare Financial Management Association and the Kansas Association of Healthcare Patient Access and Account Managers invite you to attend the [Apr. 16-17 spring conference](#) at the [Hilton Garden Inn & Convention Center](#) in Salina. Topics for discussion include KHA Legislative Updates; 2024 Regulatory Changes Impacting Hospital Reimbursement; Thrive with the Five Generations; Operating Margin Improvement Concepts for Hospitals; Benchmarking Intelligence; Patient-Driven Revenue Cycle Workshop; Price Transparency; and Consumer Assistance Division and the Independent Medical Review Process.

This is an in-person-only event. See the [agenda](#) and an [event summary](#) for more details. The registration fee is \$175 for HFMA or KAHPAM members and \$275 for non-members.

[Click to Register](#)

--Dee Lewis

Building a Systemic Well-Being Program: A 5-Step Blueprint

The American Hospital Association Physician Alliance partnered with the Collaborative for Healing and Renewal in Medicine to develop a resource for Building a Well-Being Program. The resource outlines, in five steps, how hospitals and systems can create a well-being program, presents the business case for why hospitals and health systems should address burnout and the impact of burnout on quality and patient safety. For more detail, review the [5-Step Blueprint](#). Additional resources on addressing burnout are on AHA's [Be Well](#) site.

--Karen Braman

Funding Opportunity for Rural Opioid Response – Apply by May 6

Continuing the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program, the Health Resources and Services Administration plans to make approximately 16 awards under [RCORP-Impact](#) to improve access to integrated, coordinated treatment and recovery services for substance use disorder, including opioid use disorder, in rural areas.

The [Notice of Funding Announcement for RCORP-Impact](#) was released on [Grants.gov](#) this week. Applications are due on May 6. Funds may only support activities in [HRSA-designated rural areas](#). Applicants must apply as part of a network that includes at least four entities (three entities plus the applicant organization). At least 50 percent of these entities must be located within the target rural service area. Each grantee will receive up to \$750,000 per year for a four-year project that meets four goals, including service delivery, workforce, supportive services and sustainability.

All RCORP-Impact award recipients are required to provide medication for opioid use disorder, but otherwise the program allows flexibility at the local level to meet the four goals while addressing needs unique to each community. Grantees also may be able to build their local workforce through one of [HRSA's loan repayment programs](#) for the National Health Service Corps. Clinicians who receive these payments must agree to work a minimum number of years at [approved sites in underserved and rural areas](#).

For more information, [join the webinar](#) at noon on Thursday, Mar. 21. [Read the press release](#). For questions, contact ruralopioidresponse@hrsa.gov.

--Karen Braman

Kansas Connecting Communities Free Program and Resources to Support Maternal Mental Health

Kansas Connecting Communities is a federally funded behavioral health workforce development program administered by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. KCC supports health professionals in Kansas in identifying and addressing mental health concerns of individuals during and after pregnancy and was renewed for another five years.

KCC provides a [Perinatal Provider Consultation Line for Behavioral Health](#), a free consultation line available to providers working in or serving patients in Kansas. Through the line, professionals can get practitioner-to-practitioner consultations, resource and referral assistance and access to training, including CE and technical assistance, at no cost. Additionally, through a partnership with Kansas Connecting Communities, the Kansas Chapter of Postpartum Support International is offering training scholarships to Kansas professionals working with perinatal populations or those interested in advancing their expertise in perinatal mental health.

Scholarship funds are available for a predetermined [list of training](#) (both self-paced and live). For more information about KCC, check out [Kansas Connecting Communities](#). Regarding the scholarships for training, see FAQs, list of trainings and scholarship application, all linked below:

- [2024 PSI Kansas Scholarship Application](#)
- [2024 Pre-Approved Training](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Please contact the [PSI Kansas office](#) for additional questions about these scholarship funds.

--Karen Braman

Health Equity Services Covered in Medicare's 2024 Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule

In the calendar year 2024 Physician Fee Schedule rule, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services finalized several new services addressing health equity, including:

- Caregiver training services
- Social determinants of health risk assessment
- Community health integration
- Principal illness navigation services

CMS released guidance on these services available to Medicare beneficiaries and codes for providers in a new [Medicare Learning Network booklet](#).

--Karen Braman

Federal and National News

Older Adults Now Able to Receive Additional Dose of Updated COVID-19 Vaccine

Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention endorsed the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' recommendation for adults ages 65 years and older to receive an additional updated 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine dose. The recommendation acknowledges the increased risk of severe disease from COVID-19 in older adults, along with the currently available data on vaccine effectiveness. For more information, [see the CDC announcement](#).

HHS Issues Statement Regarding the Cyberattack on Change Healthcare

Change Healthcare is involved in a recent cybersecurity attack, causing delays in prior authorization determinations, claims filing and payment administration. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a [statement](#) to inform affected parties about flexibilities in place to assist with timely payments to providers. The statement includes information from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services related to changing clearinghouses, guidance for Medicare Advantage organizations and Medicaid managed care plans to remove or relax prior authorization processes, and assistance for providers who are having trouble filing claims. Optum provided [information](#) about a funding assistance program intended to help Change Healthcare customers who were impacted by the recent payer system outage.

OMB Set to Review LTCF Minimum Staffing Rule

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [submitted](#) the Minimum Staffing Standards for Long-Term Care Facilities and Medicaid Institutional Payment Transparency Reporting [proposed rule](#) to the Office of Management and Budget for review. The final rule could be published at any time.

CDC Shares Additional Respiratory Viral Illness Guidance Information

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shared [additional information](#) about the [updated guidance](#) for respiratory viral illness discussing how people can protect themselves and their communities from respiratory viruses, including COVID-19. The CDC updated its recommendations because the U.S. is seeing fewer hospitalizations and deaths associated with COVID-19, and because there are tools available to combat flu, COVID and RSV.

CMS Issues Final Guidance on Medicare Prescription Payment Plan

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [released](#) a final part one [guidance](#) for the new Medicare Prescription Payment Plan. The guidance addresses topics such as identifying Medicare Part D enrollees who are likely to benefit from the program, the opt-in process, program participant protections and the data collection needed to evaluate the program. The guidance requires pharmacies to provide information about the program for anyone who meets a \$600 out-of-pocket threshold based on a single prescription at the point of sale. Medicare Part D enrollees will be able to opt into the new [program](#) for the [2025 plan year](#).

TJC Reminds Hospitals of CY 2023 Reporting Deadlines

The deadlines for accredited acute care, critical access and freestanding psychiatric hospitals to submit calendar year 2023 ORYX® performance measure data via The Joint Commission's Direct Data Submission Platform are as follows:

- Friday, Mar. 15 – Organizations required or electing to submit electronic clinical quality measures must upload, verify and submit all four quarters of calendar year 2023.
- Sunday, Mar. 31 – Organizations required or electing to submit chart-abstracted measure data must enter and submit fourth-quarter 2023 data.

Additional information is [available](#).

MLN Connects Provider eNews AvailableThe Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services issued the following updates to *MLN Connects Provider eNews*:

- [The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Statement Regarding the Cyberattack on Change Healthcare](#)
- [Final Guidance to Help People with Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage Manage Prescription Drug Costs](#)
- [Current Status of Blood Tests for Organ Transplant Rejection](#)
- [Opioid Use Disorder: Medicare Pays for Certain Treatment Services](#)

- [Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing Program: March Confidential Feedback Reports](#)
- [Marriage and Family Therapists and Mental Health Counselors: Manual Updates](#)
- [Nutrition-Related Health Conditions: Recommend Medicare Preventive Services](#)

Before You Go ...

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is hosting a webinar for hospitals participating in the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Mar. 12. [Registration is required.](#)