



KHA's Current Report
April 19, 2024

President's Perspective – KHA Workforce Report Focuses on Challenges and Opportunities

The Kansas Hospital Association has published its annual [Kansas Health Care Workforce Report](#). The report, shared with members during the recent district meetings, utilizes data gathered from various sources to illustrate the current pulse on health care workforce challenges in Kansas. KHA has developed [talking points and template language](#) for members to use when discussing workforce data, challenges and solutions.

The 2024 KHA Workforce Survey is the primary source of data, providing vacancy and turnover rates for 29 hospital-based and four clinic-based positions and highlighting those most in-demand positions statewide and regionally. With this information, we can gain a better understanding of the current workforce environment as well as what to expect in the future and, in turn, explain that to policymakers and the communities we serve. The data is designed to inform strategies for recruitment and retention to ensure Kansas hospitals have the capacity to support the health of their local communities.

This year, 110 Kansas hospitals participated in the survey, the highest participation in the last ten years. Thank you for your participation. It is important to note that statewide, turnover remains at record high levels while vacancies have declined but are still higher than pre-pandemic levels.

Turnover for approximately half of the jobs surveyed improved from last year's numbers, but there are increases in turnover in pharmacy, surgery, housekeeping, dietary, occupational and physical therapies and APRNs. Vacancy rates statewide for nursing, respiratory therapy, laboratory and clinics have improved, but unfortunately, vacancies in the diagnostic imaging professions have worsened.

The report shows vacancy and turnover rates in 2023 for licensed practical nurses and registered nurses have declined from their peak in 2022, but nursing assistants' vacancy and turnover rates are unchanged from 2022. Nineteen percent of hospital LPN positions and fifteen percent of hospital RN positions are vacant. Twenty percent of LPN and sixteen percent of RN positions were turned over throughout 2023. Other positions with the highest full-time vacancy rates are sonographer/ultrasound technologists (20 percent), nursing assistants (19 percent) and radiology technologists-certified (18 percent).

The overall employee turnover rate for surveyed health care positions in Kansas averaged 19 percent, with the occupations that turned over the most being housekeepers (34 percent), dietary aides (34 percent) and nursing assistants (30 percent).

New Kansas Department of Labor data indicates respiratory therapists are now the fastest-growing occupation. The number of RTs needed by 2030 will be up by nearly 23 percent, while registered nurses have the highest number of jobs, with 3,192 new RN jobs created by 2030.

The report also includes breakdowns of vacancies and turnover geographically by seven regions. For the second year in a row, Southwest Kansas has the highest vacancies (17 percent of jobs are open). The largest openings in that region include mammography technologists (67 percent), sonographer/ultrasound technologists (41 percent), and magnetic resonance imaging technologists (40 percent).

The report also notes enrollment in Kansas K-12 and post-secondary schools has continued to decline. Fewer students are seeking health care credentials, licenses and degrees, and in turn, working in health care in Kansas.

KHA continues to work with multiple stakeholders to combat these issues on a variety of fronts including resiliency and retention education efforts, new preceptor/mentor statewide trainings, events to promote health care careers, advancements of health care apprenticeship opportunities to allow hospitals to grow their own workforce and workforce executive roundtables that bring together colleges and hospitals to address these issues collaboratively.

KHA also continues to work with policymakers, encouraging their support of these efforts by enhancing existing incentive programs to encourage students to pursue health care careers and commit to working in Kansas following graduation, increasing support to collegiate health care programs to be able to enroll and graduate more students and providing assistance for hospitals lacking resources. We encourage members to use [this data](#), along with the [talking points](#), to have conversations in your local communities or initiate local media coverage on workforce challenges and solutions you are implementing.

--Chad Austin

Pneumococcal Vaccine Update for Physicians and Clinicians – April 30

Please join us for a pneumococcal vaccine update webinar from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 30. Subject experts Lynn Fisher, MD, family physician and Gretchen Homan, MD, pediatrician, will provide updates impacting adult pneumococcal vaccine recommendations for adult and pediatric patients, respectively. Monica Pando, RN, vaccines for children coordinator, will discuss navigating these updates from a clinical perspective.



--Hayley Finch-Genschorck

CMS Releases CY 2025 Medicare Advantage Final Rule

On April 4, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services released its final Policy and Technical Changes to the Medicare Advantage and Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Program, Medicare Cost Plan Program, Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly and Health Information Technology Standards for contract year calendar year 2025 (CMS-4205-F). The [final rule](#) includes a series of changes intended to strengthen beneficiary protections, promote access to behavioral health care providers, advance equity in coverage and improve supplemental benefits in the MA program.

Specifically, the rule finalizes requirements that:

- Strengthen network adequacy standards for certain behavioral health provider types.
- Streamline the appeals process for enrollees if the MA plan terminates coverage for certain post-acute care services.
- Lay the groundwork for increasing data collection and reporting from Part C and D plans.
- Annually review MA utilization management policies for health equity considerations.
- Provide new guardrails for plan compensation to agents and brokers to prevent undue influence on beneficiary enrollment decisions.
- Ensure that MA plans offer appropriate supplemental benefits.
- Simplify enrollment for individuals dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid.
- Standardize the appeals process for MA Risk Adjustment Data Validation audit findings.
- Limit out-of-network patient cost sharing for certain plans serving dually eligible enrollees.
- Give Part D plans more flexibility to substitute biosimilars for reference drug products.

For any questions, please contact [Shannan Flach](#) at (785) 233-7436.

--Shannan Flach

Start Building Your Nominations Today

Help the Kansas Hospital Association identify individuals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. We encourage health care organizations to enter a nomination for the following [awards](#):

[The Charles S. Billings Award](#) is KHA's highest honor. It recognizes a hospital leader for his or her lifetime of service and continuing contribution to Kansas's health care. This award was established in 1971 to honor Billings' dedication and years of service to Kansans.



[The Distinguished Health Care Advocate Award](#) honors individuals, organizations or groups that have made an exemplary contribution to the health and well-being of the people of Kansas through their leadership in the political or policy arena. This awards members of KHA the opportunity to recognize those who work on our behalf from outside our ranks.



[The Donald A. Wilson Visionary Award](#) recognizes hospital-related individuals who have made an outstanding, innovative contribution to health care delivery, health care financing or initiatives that improve the health and clinical outcomes of their community. This award was established in 2007 to honor Wilson's dedication and years of service to Kansans.



[The Trustee of the Year Award](#) honors a hospital board member who is a leader, gives back to the community and routinely goes beyond the call of duty. KHA members are encouraged to recognize a trustee who has served with distinction and made significant contributions to the betterment of their hospital and community.



[The Heart of Health Care Award](#), previously called the Health Care Worker of the Year Award, recognizes and honors the excellence of health care workers statewide. KHA will recognize all nominated employees (one employee from every hospital) for making a significant contribution to the betterment of their hospital. New this year, we included a "Rising Star" category, which provides additional recognition to individuals who have been employed for less than five years.



[The Workforce Strategies Award](#) recognizes a team of employees, providers or volunteers who worked collaboratively to make a significant contribution to the well-being, retention or recruitment of health care workers at their facility(s) or in Kansas.



Thank you in advance for your assistance in helping us recognize and highlight those individuals deserving of our recognition. Make your nominations online by June 1. We have a new online nomination tool with Reviewr, and we hope this new tool makes the nomination process even easier.

--Cindy Samuelson

Register Now for the Health Care Preceptor Academy – May 23

Register now and plan to attend the Health Care Preceptor Academy on May 23 in Hays. The academy is designed to engage and grow current and future preceptors with key education tools and strategies to foster a strong preceptor/orientee relationship. This interactive program provides information and practical tools to improve preceptor abilities.



--Hayley Finch-Genschorck

AHA Resources to Help Tell the Hospital Story

For this year's National Hospital Week, May 12-18, the American Hospital Association is providing hospitals with new, ready-to-use [tools](#) that give hospitals quick access to creative content and makes it easy to engage in the important work of telling the hospital story. Additionally, the [Coalition to Strengthen America's Healthcare](#) will boost these messages through its broader media campaign reflecting the positive role hospitals and health systems play in ensuring patient access to 24/7 care.

- **Communications Resources:** AHA created a [one-stop web resource](#) for hospitals and health systems to find communication materials related to National Hospital Week and beyond. This resource hub has been updated for easier use and integrates content on priority issues along with social assets that can be adapted with your hospital logo. Find the latest toolkit [here](#).
- **Radio Public Service Announcements:** AHA has created a 15-second and 30-second radio public service announcement celebrating National Hospital Week and thanking our communities for trusting us with their care. Additionally, hospitals can download a [60-second PSA audio template](#) and add a customized quote, creating a PSA for local distribution.
- **Spotlight on Hospitals:** The AHA regularly features the people and programs from hospitals across the country that save lives, help families and connect communities. Find spotlights in your state or [sign up](#) to have your organization featured.
- **#WeAreHealthCare:** AHA's ongoing social media campaign continues to amplify health care workers' voices sharing their personal reasons for being in health care. This series spotlights hospital workers from different areas within hospitals and health systems, such as food services, human resources and environmental services, as well as more broad examples of community outreach and impact.

Visit AHA's National Hospital Week [webpage](#) to access logo, graphics, digital toolkits, videos and other resources. Visit the Coalition to Strengthen America's Healthcare [webpage](#) to learn how its expanded mission is supporting hospitals and health systems through local advocacy, paid media and grassroots engagement.

--Cindy Samuelson

CMS Releases FY 2025 Proposed IPPS Rule

On Wednesday, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services issued its fiscal year 2025 Inpatient Prospective Payment System [proposed rule](#). The comment period is open until June 10, 2024. View the [CMS' fact sheet](#). Major proposals include:

- A 2.6 percent increase in IPPS payments over FY 2024. This reflects a market basket update of 3.0 percent minus a 0.4 percent productivity adjustment.
- A separate IPPS payment for small hospitals to help establish and maintain a buffer stock of essential medicines.
- Continuing the low wage index hospital policy for at least three more years beginning in FY 2025.
- Implementing revised statistical area delineations based on the 2020 Census. As a result, 54 counties and 24 hospitals previously considered rural would now be located in urban areas. Conversely, 53 urban counties and 33 hospitals will become rural.
- Implementing the application and award process for 200 new Graduate Medical Education residency slots, providing at least half go to psychiatry or psychiatry sub-specialties.
- Requesting information on implementing solutions to improve access to quality care during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum.
- A new mandatory model, the Transforming Episode Accountability Model, will be implemented for selected acute care hospitals to ensure beneficiaries receive coordinated, high-quality care after certain surgical procedures.

Please reach out to [Shannan Flach](#) at (785) 233-7436 with questions.

--Shannan Flach

CMS Releases FY 2025 Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility PPS Proposed Rule

On March 27, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services issued its fiscal year 2025 [proposed rule](#) for the inpatient rehabilitation facility prospective payment system. This rule proposes to update IRF payments and modify the IRF Quality Reporting Program measures and reporting requirements.

The proposed rule:

- Updates payment rates by a net 2.6 percent. This includes a proposed market basket update of 3.2 percent, less a productivity cut of 0.4 percent, as well as a 0.2 percent decrease related to outlier payments.
- Updates the wage index using the most recent Office of Management and Budget statistical area delineations based on the 2020 Decennial Census.
- Adopt and modify patient assessment items addressing social determinants of health.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [Shannan Flach](#) at (785) 233-7436.

--Shannan Flach

R7 Special Pathogen Outbreak Report: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza – April 29

The Region 7 Disaster Health Response Ecosystem is hosting a [complimentary webinar](#) at 11 a.m. Monday, April 29, with Angela Hewlett, MD, MS, the director of the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit, on the current situation of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1.

Topics include:

- Characteristics and origins of HPAI outbreaks
- Modes of transmission of HPAI
- High-risk populations
- Where to find resources and information for responding to and managing HPAI outbreaks

[Click to Register](#)

--Ron Marshall

Federal and National News

CMS Releases Proposed Mandatory TEAM Model

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [announced](#) a proposed mandatory [Transforming Episode Accountability Model](#) that advances the Innovation Center's prior work on episode-based alternative payment models. The proposed rule would begin on Jan. 1, 2026, and end on Dec. 31, 2030. The [TEAM model](#) would be mandatory for selected acute care hospitals and apply to Traditional Medicare beneficiaries who undergo one of the surgical procedures included in the model. The hospital would be responsible for the cost and quality of care from the surgical service through 30 days after the Medicare beneficiary leaves the hospital. Details about the TEAM model proposal is located within the proposed FY 2025 Inpatient and LTCH PPS proposed rule. CMS is proposing to mandate participation for 25 percent of the hospitals within the geographic areas beginning on page 1,119 of the pre-published [proposed rule](#).

MLN Connects Provider eNews Available

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services issued the following [updates](#) to *MLN Connects Provider eNews*:

- [PrEP for HIV: Prepare for Potential Medicare Part B Coverage](#)