



***KHA's Current Report***  
**May 10, 2024**

**President's Perspective – 2024 Session Ends with Possible Reunion on the Horizon**

The 2024 Kansas legislative session concluded in the early hours of May 1, with a significant focus on a tax reform package. While the tax discussion does not directly impact the Kansas health care delivery system, the Kansas Hospital Association has been monitoring it. The most recent tax package, a key priority for both the House and the Senate, was particularly notable because of the State General Fund's historically high-ending balances.

The House and Senate passed a tax package, similar to previously passed versions throughout the 2024 session, that included:

- Two-tiered tax structure and cut the top bracket to 5.57 percent from 5.7 percent, and the lower bracket to 5.2 percent from 5.25 percent;
- Elimination of the income tax on Social Security;
- Increases in personal exemptions;
- State Property Tax reductions; and
- Acceleration of the elimination of the state sales tax on food.

This version of the tax package reduced the overall price tag from the previously passed \$1.558 billion to \$1.463 billion. Governor Laura Kelly's Office indicated she may veto the bill and call a special session. A special session would bring legislators back to Topeka, but it does not limit the possible topics that could come up to simplify taxes. Any issue could come up for further discussion, however, bills alive during the regular session of 2024 would die and would require procedural re-introductions in the special session.

As we reflect on the conclusion of the 2024 regular session, it's important to recognize the significant strides made by the legislature. We saw substantial progress on many of the health care policies our hospitals identified as priorities. Some of the notable achievements include:

- Investments in Medicaid Reimbursement Rates: The legislature added \$50 million to increase Medicaid outpatient hospital reimbursement rates by 31 percent, \$30 million to increase Medicaid physician provider codes by nine percent and \$18 million to continue the add-on for Medicaid payments for nursing facilities.

- Hospital Investments: The legislature added language to the budget bill allowing KDHE to begin the process of increasing the provider assessment from no lower than five percent, up to six percent. The legislature also invested \$5.6 million in the Cost Adjustment Factor for Critical Access Hospitals.
- Investments to Support Workforce Challenges: Many investments occurred including adding language requiring supplemental nurse staffing agencies to register annually and report quarterly to KDADS on what their staff is being paid; \$1 million for the Kansas Nursing Initiative grant program; \$1 million for the Nursing Student Scholarship Program; \$10 million for rural family physician residency program expansion; \$2.4 million for the Kansas Osteopathic Scholarship; \$75,000 for the Family Residency Programs including Smoky Hill Family Residency, Ascension Via Christi and Wesley Family Medicine Programs.
- Behavioral Health Investments: The legislature added \$10 million for hospitals that have behavioral health beds and funding to begin construction on a regional psychiatric hospital in Sedgwick County.
- Rural Emergency Hospital Funds: The REH saw pre-emptive language passed by the legislature to allow more hospitals to qualify for REH, and they also added funds for hospitals that have been operating as an REH but didn't previously qualify for the designation.
- Prior Authorization: KHA successfully added language to SB 356 that would require utilization review entities to implement a prior authorization application programming interface as will be required by 2028, per federal law.
- 340B Program: The legislature added language to their budget bill saying that drug manufacturers would be required to honor the 340B program and not limit contract pharmacies through the Kansas Consumer Protection Act.
- Fire Marshall Body Camera Usage: The legislature passed language in HB 2784 that would restrict inspectors from using body cameras in health care facilities for the purposes of inspection.
- KanCare Expansion: For the first time in several years, Medicaid Expansion received hearings in both the House and the Senate.
- Fiscal Sustainability: We were able to defeat the state legislative proposal that would have duplicated federal requirements and added compounding penalties that would have been harmful to the financial sustainability of our hospitals in Kansas.

At KHA, we couldn't do any of our advocacy work without our members, and we thank you for continuing to educate policymakers on how policies impact hospitals and your ability to serve patients in your communities. We look forward to continuing to connect with policymakers whether in Topeka or back home in their districts. As you likely remember, both the House of Representatives and State Senators will be on the campaign trail. Thank you again for your efforts and support on our advocacy agenda!

*--Chad Austin*

## Hospital Week Resources for KHA Members

The Kansas Hospital Association looks forward to celebrating [National Hospital Week](#) next week, May 12-18. The theme, #WeAreHealthCare, ties perfectly with our current public perception campaign.

KHA has a toolkit of resources to assist our members in their hospital week celebrations. The assets are online in the [Hospital Week Toolkit folder](#). They include videos, social media posts, frames, a media release and more. The American Hospital Association has also provided [resources](#) hospitals can use to celebrate National Hospital Week.

Seeing and learning about Kansas hospitals' activities with their teams during Hospital Week is always refreshing. Use the hashtag #wearehealthcare in your social posts. KHA staff look forward to seeing your photos and will highlight what hospitals and health systems are doing to celebrate health care workers and the innovative ways you are supporting and connecting with the communities you serve. Have a great Hospital Week!

--Cindy Samuelson

## Register Now! Getting Paid for Doing Good Work – May 22

Join the Kansas Hospital Association for a panel discussion at noon on Wednesday, May 22. Panelists will share their insights and perspectives to help explain current Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement and the requirements for addressing social determinants of health.



--Hayley Finch-Genschorck

## Healthworks *Grants at a Glance* Newsletter Now Available

The first edition of [Grants at a Glance](#), a monthly newsletter highlighting potential grant opportunities, is now available. Healthworks is partnering with Affiliated Enterprise Solutions to offer newsletters and webinars to enhance grant writing skills and individual consulting options.

If you have questions, please contact [Susan Pattie](#), Healthworks, at (785) 233-7436.

--Jennifer Findley

## KHA-PAC Spotlight

### PAC Highlights

Thank you to the following donors for making contributions in 2024:

- Brooke Bollman, chief executive officer, Caldwell Regional Medical Center, Caldwell
- Claudio Ferraro, hospital president, Ascension Via Christi Hospitals Wichita, Inc., Wichita
- Val Gleason, president and chief executive officer, NMC Health, Newton
- Judy Hodgson, chief nursing officer, Hospital District #1 of Rice County, Lyons

- Pat Myers, board chair, Kiowa District Hospital, Kiowa
- Kansas Healthcare Human Resources' Association

There are still more exciting ways you can get involved in the KHA-PAC coming up throughout 2024!

- **KHA-PAC Auction and Raffle at the KHA Convention** – Donate or sponsor an item for the KHA-PAC Auction during the KHA Convention on Sept. 5-6 in Overland Park. Ideas for auction items include:
  - Weekend getaway (we all need it) with access to lodging and tickets
  - Corporate suite or tickets for concerts or sporting events
  - Round of golf at Kansas or out-of-state courses
  - Kid-friendly or family-friendly items
  - Unique jewelry or home décor from your community
  - Food or wine baskets
  - Products your company makes or services you offer
- **KHA-PAC Wine and Bourbon Pull:** Donate a bottle of wine or bourbon, and then take a chance by purchasing one at the PAC booth at the convention.
- **KHA-PAC Golf Outing** – Join us for our KHA-PAC Golf Scramble. Details will be coming soon. By sponsoring our golf scramble, you can network with KHA members and get recognized in our newsletter, online and at the event. Hole sponsorships will be available.
- **Additional Fun KHA-PAC Events** – Join us for fun regional KHA-PAC events throughout the year. Details on events for 2024 are to come soon.

Thank you for your support of the KHA-PAC. We couldn't do it without you!

To become a contributor, visit: <https://kha-pac.square.site/>. Additional information, including suggested contribution levels, can be found by visiting: <https://www.kha-net.org/AboutKHA/KHAPAC/>.

If you have questions about the KHA-PAC, or how to get involved, please contact [Tara Mays](#) at (785) 969-9270.

--Tara Mays

### **Hospital Compliance with Lay CareGiver Act to Be Audited**

The Kansas Legislative Post Audit Committee has approved an audit of a hospital's compliance with the Kansas Lay Caregivers Act.

During the 2018 state legislative session, Kansas lawmakers passed Senate Bill 68. The Kansas Lay Caregiver Act went into effect on July 1, 2018, to allow hospital patients to designate a lay caregiver. View the [full provisions](#) online.

As part of the audit, your hospital's existing policies will be reviewed for compliance with applicable laws. The Kansas Hospital Association will work with the Kansas Division of Post Audit in the coming weeks to gather information for the Legislative Post Audit Committee. If you have any questions, you can contact [Tara Mays](#).

--Tara Mays

### **AHA Community Health Assessment Toolkit**

The American Hospital Association created supplements to its [Community Health Assessment toolkit](#) to help communities with additional considerations for select populations to ensure equitable engagement throughout the process. [Kansas Health Matters](#) also includes the most current examples of [community health needs assessments and improvement plans](#) completed by Kansas hospitals. Check out [kansashealthmatters.org](#) for examples and Kansas-specific health data.

--Karen Braman

### **KHA HIDI Advantage Optics® Update**

[Advantage Optics](#), the online reporting tool accessed from the [HIDI Advantage User Portal](#), is where your KHA hospital-level data resides. Beginning with January 2024 discharges, the site began updating monthly instead of quarterly. The site was recently updated with the February 2024 discharge data and now contains October 2018-February 2024 inpatient, outpatient and emergency department discharges. This includes Executive Snapshot Dashboards, located under Market Optics.

As a reminder, [monthly discharge data submission](#) to the [HIDI](#) site is due within 45 days following the end of the discharge month. March discharge data is due for submission by May 15.

For assistance with [access](#) to the KHA HIDI Advantage site, and information about [data submission](#), please contact [Dee Lewis](#) at (785) 233-7436. For assistance with training, please contact [Sally Othmer](#) at (785) 233-7436.

--Sally Othmer

### **2024 Kansas Immunization Conference – May 20-23**

The 2024 Kansas Department of Health and Environment is hosting an [immunization conference](#) from May 20 to 23 in Wichita. This conference provides collaboration, knowledge exchange and innovation, uniting experts from diverse fields to address the pressing challenges and opportunities in vaccination and localized health care delivery. The conference provides an opportunity to explore groundbreaking strategies, share best practices and cultivate partnerships to help propel us toward a healthier, more resilient future for all.

[Click to View Agenda](#)

[Click to Register](#)

--Karen Braman

### **Maternal Health Summer 2024 Webinar Series**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Maternal and Infant Health Initiative has announced a summer maternal health webinar series. All webinars will begin at 1:00 p.m. The topics and dates are listed below:

- May 14 – *Promoting Maternal Health Improvement and Equity Through Collaboration*  
[Click to Register](#)
- June 4 – *Maternal Mental Health Screening, Treatment, and Improvement Strategies*  
[Click to Register](#)
- June 25 – *Decreasing Fragmentation in Maternal Substance Use Disorder Screening and Treatment*  
[Click to Register](#)
- July 16 – *Addressing Hypertension Before, During and After Pregnancy*  
[Click to Register](#)
- Aug. 20 – *Medicaid and CHIP Program Collaboration with Hospitals on AIM Bundles*  
[Click to Register](#)

The summer webinar series will be followed by the CMS-sponsored affinity groups to begin in the fall. CMS will convene two affinity groups, including:

- Addressing Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use
- Improving Maternal Hypertension and Cardiovascular Health

State teams, led by Medicaid or CHIP program staff, may join one or both action-oriented affinity groups to address maternal health in their state. Affinity group participants learn more through workshops, receive one-on-one quality improvement coaching and work alongside peers focused on improvement projects in their states. CMS will host an informational Webinar on the affinity groups on Aug. 6, 2024. Please submit questions to the CMS QI technical assistance mailbox at [MedicaidCHIPQI@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:MedicaidCHIPQI@cms.hhs.gov).

--Karen Braman

### **Updated Guidelines Recommend Mammograms Starting at Age 40**

The U.S. Preventive Services Taskforce [released final guidelines](#) urging all women to get screened for breast cancer every other year, starting at age 40. The new recommendation applies to all people assigned female at birth who are at average risk of breast cancer. The recommendation is based on a review of new evidence by an independent panel of experts at the task force. Until now, women in their 40s have been encouraged to have a conversation with their health care provider about when to start mammograms based on their personal risks.

*--Karen Braman*

### **Obstetric Readiness in Rural Facilities Without Birth Units**

The Rural Health Information Hub recently hosted a webinar on [Obstetric Readiness in Rural Facilities without Birth Units](#). If you are interested and weren't able to attend, the [PowerPoint slides and webinar recording](#) are available online. Rural facilities that no longer provide planned maternity care face challenges in providing safe, high-quality services to pregnant, birthing and postpartum people who arrive needing care. Presenters shared innovative work that puts foundational skills, teamwork and equipment in place to be ready and responsive to patients' needs. This was the fourth in a webinar series on improving maternity care in rural health care settings.

*--Karen Braman*

### **Federal and National News**

#### **2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released the [2024 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention](#) in a 10-year, comprehensive approach to suicide prevention. The plan provides recommendations for addressing gaps in the suicide prevention field. HHS's coordinated and comprehensive approach to suicide prevention at the national, state, tribal, local and territorial levels relies upon partnerships across the public and private sectors and people with lived experience. The National Strategy seeks to prevent suicide risk, identify and support people with increased risk through treatment and crisis intervention, prevent reattempts, promote long-term recovery and support survivors of suicide loss.

#### **CMS Spotlight on Opioid Treatment Program G-codes**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services recently published a reminder of the guidelines for using G-codes when billing for opioid treatment program services. Medicare pays enrolled OTPs bundled payments for opioid use disorder treatment based on weekly episodes of care. Professionals who can provide substance use counseling and individual and group therapy included in the bundled payment may include but aren't limited to:

- Licensed clinical social workers
- Licensed professional counselors/mental health counselors
- Licensed marriage and family therapists
- Licensed clinical alcohol and drug counselors
- Certified peer specialists

- Other professionals are permitted to give this type of therapy or counseling by state law and scope of practice

For Medicare patients, there is no copayment for OTP services, but the Part B deductible does apply. Check your patient's [Medicare eligibility](#).

Clinicians cannot use OTP codes to bill for office-based treatment and should visit [Office-Based Substance Use Disorder Treatment Billing](#) and [Opioid Use Disorder Screening & Treatment](#) for more information on office-based SUD treatment billing and OUD screening and treatment.

### **Updated Federal Standards for Collecting and Reporting Data on Race and Ethnicity**

On March 29, 2024, the Office of Management and Budget announced revisions to [Standards for Maintaining, Collecting and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity](#), which apply to federal data collection and reporting. The revisions include using a single combined question for race and ethnicity, adding Middle Eastern or North African as a minimum category, clarifying instructions for individuals to select multiple racial and ethnic categories that represent their identity and requiring collection of more detail beyond the minimum categories. In addition, the Standards require data tabulation procedures produce as much information on race and/or ethnicity as possible, including data for people reporting multiple racial and/or ethnic categories.

The updated standards are effective for all new federal racial and ethnic data collection and reporting as of March 28, 2024, and existing racial and ethnic data must be updated as soon as possible but no later than March 28, 2029. The Kaiser Family Foundation details the revisions in an [issue brief](#).

### **Resource to Locate Dementia Care**

A new [national directory](#) helps organizations and individuals providing dementia care locate and compare programs to find the best fit for patients. Launched by Best Programs for Caregiving, the portal provides dementia care professionals with program features, focus areas, outcome information, implementation costs, training requirements and more. The portal also includes real-world implementation experiences for each program and a side-by-side comparison to select dementia caregiving programs for their communities. The program is supported by [The John A. Hartford Foundation](#).

### **Medicare Trustees Release 2024 Annual Report to Congress**

The Medicare Trustees [released](#) the [2024 Annual Report to Congress](#) about the financial and actuarial [status](#) of the hospital insurance and supplementary medical insurance trust funds. According to the report, Medicare covered 66.7 million people in 2023, with about 48 percent enrolled in a Medicare Advantage product. Total expenditures were \$1,037 billion, with income of \$1,024.6 billion. The total assets held in special issue U.S. Treasury securities decreased by \$12.4 billion. Of the \$1,037 billion in total expenditures, hospitals received \$211.8 billion, while private health plans (MA) received \$466.7 billion.



### **CMS Issues Revised Guidance for Home Health Agencies, Hospices**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [issued](#) revised guidance for home health agencies and hospices regarding the informal dispute resolution process. [QSO-24-11-HHA & Hospice](#) clarifies CMS' ability to issue civil monetary penalties, directed in-service training, directed plans of correction, suspension of payment for new admissions and temporary management of programs found to have conditional-level deficiencies.

### **DNR Proposes Changes to Hazardous Waste Rules**

The Department of Natural Resources is [proposing changes](#) to several hazardous waste rules. The department started the formal rulemaking process for the proposed hazardous waste regulations and is providing text of the proposed changes. A public hearing is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 19, at Bennett Springs Conference Room during the Hazardous Waste Commission Meeting. Of particular interest to hospitals will be changes to hazardous waste pharmaceuticals, which are yet to be defined. Any impact these rules will have on current hospital licensing regulations is unclear. The current regulations can be found in 19 CSR 30-20.070 Registration as a Hospital Infectious Waste Generator, 19 CSR 30-20.100 Pharmacy Services and Medication Management and 19 CSR 30-20.114 Environmental Waste Management and Support Services.

### **MLN Connects Provider eNews Available**

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

- [HHS Releases New Data Showing More than 10 Million People with Medicare Received a Free Vaccine Because of the President's Inflation Reduction Act; Releases Draft Guidance for the Second Cycle of Medicare Drug Price Negotiation Program](#)
- [CMS Roundup](#) (May 3, 2024)
- [Medicare Shared Savings Program: Prepare to Apply and Register for the June 5 Webinar](#)
- [Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule Preliminary Gapfill Rates: Submit Comments by July 1](#)
- [Home Health Quality Reporting Program: Draft OASIS-E1 Instruments and Manual](#)
- [Mental Health: It's Important at Every Stage of Life](#)

### **Before You Go ...**

- On Tuesday, May 14, join Cheryl Connors from Johns Hopkins' Resilience in Stressful Events team and Anna Koerbel from Maryland Patient Safety Center for a webinar. They will discuss the importance of peer support and how the R.I.S.E. peer support program can be used to build resilience and psychological safety of caregivers. [Registration is required.](#)