



KHA's Current Report
January 24, 2025

President's Perspective – KHA Members Gather in Topeka to Advocate on Health Care Policies

More than 130 hospital leaders and advocates from across the state convened in Topeka this week to participate in the annual Kansas Hospital Association Advocacy Day. The event is an opportunity to bring together hospital advocates and their elected officials to discuss the health care priorities of the KHA membership.

To kick off the day, Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt welcomed attendees and highlighted the importance of Kansas hospitals as the health care anchor for Kansas communities and an economic anchor. Attendees had the opportunity to hear from several other elected officials including House Health and Human Services Chair Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado) and Senate Ways and Means Chairman Rick Billinger (R-Goodland). A panel of elected state legislators whose professional careers are in the health care industry enlightened attendees on ways to engage elected officials and how they are using their background in health care to be advocates for Kansans in the House and Senate. Kansas Department of Health and Environment Secretary Janet Stanek commented on the agency's priorities and the importance of state agencies and health care providers working together.

The presenters shared their support for Kansas hospitals and willingness to explore health care policies during the 2025 legislative session. The highlight of the KHA Advocacy Day is the luncheon opportunity for Kansas hospital leaders to meet with their state elected officials. Several advocacy topics emphasized by the KHA membership revolved around ensuring financial viability, promoting health care workforce opportunities, protecting access to care, defending the integrity of the 340B program and reducing the administrative burdens imposed by health insurance organizations. While KHA Advocacy Day is a key opportunity to meet our elected officials, it is vitally essential that Kansas hospital leaders continue to engage in advocacy efforts throughout the legislative session.

Besides the KHA Advocacy Day, this week also marked the first opportunity for the KHA Board to meet in 2025. As part of the meeting, the KHA Board discussed advocacy efforts on the state and federal levels. The KHA Board also reviewed the latest study on the Economic Impact of Health Care in Kansas, produced by the Institute of Policy and Social Research at the University of Kansas.

Other highlights from the KHA Board meeting included:

- Welcomed new KHA Board members Joel Phelps, CEO, Salina Regional Health Center, Salina; Connie Chavez, trustee, Hodgeman County Health Center, Jetmore; Dee Bohnenblust, trustee, Labette Health, Parsons; and Mark Brady, MD, Overland Park.
- Appointed Carrie Lutz, CEO, Holton Community Hospital, Holton, to fulfill the remaining one-year open term on the American Hospital Association's Regional Policy Board and the KHA Board;
- Approved several KHA members to the following boards and committees:
 - HealthWorks: John Fitzthum, Vice President Operations | Chief Operating Officer | Administrator, St. Catherine Hospital-Dodge City; Sandy Dickerson, administrator and CEO, Greenwood County Hospital, Eureka; and Sarah Ragsdale, CEO, Smith County Memorial Hospital, Smith Center.
 - Kansas Healthcare Collaborative: Jenny Niblock, chief clinical officer, Citizens Health, Colby; Tina Pendergraft, CEO, Satanta District Hospital, Clinics & LTCU, Satanta; and Aimee Zimmerman, CEO, Logan County Health Services, Oakley.
 - KHA Audit Committee Chairperson: Debbie Bruner, administrator and CEO, Minneola Healthcare, Minneola.
- Adopted the KHA finance and investment report;
- Completed the annual corporate compliance training;
- Discussed the latest status of the Health Care Access Improvement Program;
- Reviewed the results of the 2024 KHA Member Satisfaction Survey;
- Learned about the KHA workforce initiatives, including the Virtual Health Care Career Fair that will be on Jan. 30, 2025, in partnership with the Kansas Board of Regents and the Kansas Department of Education;
- Received the latest information on KHA activities in health care finance, communication, education, KHA-PAC and advancing health.

KHA thanks the hospital leaders who traveled to Topeka to advocate for our priorities. The key to effective grassroots advocacy is the personal interaction between elected officials and their constituents. Even if you could not attend this year's KHA Advocacy Day, you can still join our grassroots advocacy team by meeting with your elected officials when they are in their home districts. Let us know how we can assist you in this endeavor!

--Chad Austin

Register Now: 2025 Infection Prevention Conference – March 13-14

Register now for the Infection Prevention Conference on March 13-14 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Wichita Airport, 2098 Airport Road, Wichita. This two-day event will provide health care professionals with infection prevention and control strategies and opportunities to network and discuss best practices. A discounted room rate of \$123 per night (plus tax) is available for March 12-13, with reservations accepted until Feb. 23. Call (316) 945-5272 to book and mention "Kansas Hospital Association."

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 fields of interest.



--Hayley Finch-Genschorck

Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Today's Workforce Educational Webinar – Feb. 4

In today's competitive job market, attracting and retaining top talent requires a dynamic and multifaceted approach. This webinar will equip health care leaders and human resources professionals with the tools and strategies to create a more engaging, supportive and growth-focused work environment, leading to more muscular retention and improved recruitment outcomes.

With staffing shortages and time constraints, organizations often struggle to meet the needs of today's evolving workforce. This session explores actionable tactics, from the Magnet Culture guide, to build more substantial staffing stability. Learn how to audit your current organizational culture, identify gaps and implement strategies that create a workplace where employees want to stay, reducing turnover and enhancing long-term retention.



--Hayley Finch-Genschorck

Quality Corner Call – Feb. 11

Join the Kansas Hospital Association staff at noon on Tuesday, Feb. 11, for a Quality Corner Call when we explore the future of electronic clinical quality measures. Topics of discussion include preparing to meet the increasing demands of eCQM reporting requirements and upcoming, and anticipated, measure changes.



--Jennifer Findley

2024 KHA Public Funding Survey – Due Feb. 7

The Kansas Hospital Association opened the KHA Public Funding Survey last week. Emails were sent to all KHA member hospital CEOs and CFOs to encourage participation. Hospital-level results are shared with all participants, and responses support KHA advocacy efforts as we head into the 2025 legislative session. [Click here](#) to participate.

The survey is due Feb. 7. If you have questions, please call [Sally Othmer](#) at (785) 233-7436.

--Sally Othmer

Opioid Webinar – Feb. 14

Over-the-counter medications are generally safe when used as recommended. However, as with prescription and illicit drugs, OTCs can be misused, resulting in adverse events and even overdose.

Join Kansas Hospital Association staff for a webinar at noon on Feb.14, where Ashley Haynes, MD, provides an overview for providers and clinicians of the most commonly misused OTC medications, their risks and adverse effects and how to address OTC misuse.

This webinar is part of an ongoing series of opioid-related provider education webinars offered in 2025 for providers, clinicians, quality professionals and hospital leaders. The series is sponsored by DCCCA and hosted in partnership with KHA and Healthworks.



--Jennifer Findley

Subtyping of Influenza A in Hospitalized Patients

As H5N1 Avian Influenza continues to be a threat, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment sent out a [KS HAN on Friday, Jan. 17](#). The guidance aims to identify whether any hospitalized patients with Influenza A have the H5N1 (Avian Influenza) subtype. For guidance, see the KS HAN on H5 Subtyping, the [Clinician H5 Flow Chart](#) and the [Lab H5 Flow Chart](#). Please share this with infection prevention, the lab, medical staff and others as needed.

--Larry Van Der Wege

2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Rule and RHC Strategic Impacts – Feb. 4

Registration is open for the 2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Rule and RHC Strategic Impacts at noon on Feb. 4. The 2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule included many updates impacting rural health clinic operations and may provide strategic opportunities. This presentation will discuss these changes, how they may affect existing or new RHCs and what RHC and hospital leadership must consider when implementing them.

Steve Smith, FACHE, FACMPE, CHFP, is a member of the Healthcare Performance Improvement practice unit at Forvis Mazars and is the practice unit's lead for rural health care performance improvement. He provides consulting services to hospitals, physician practices, RHCs, federally qualified health centers and other provider groups related to revenue cycle performance, RHC establishment, operations and compliance. He has presented on Medicare reimbursement and revenue cycle topics and numerous operational and payment reform topics for state and local chapters of the Medical Group Management Association and Healthcare Financial Management Association, as well as multiple state primary care associations and health care associations. Smith is a fellow of the American College of Medical Practice Executives through MGMA and the American College of Healthcare Executives through ACHE. He has earned the certified health care financial professional designation through HFMA.

[Click to Register](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Brought to you by GoTo Webinar®.

--Shannan Flach

Kansas State Fire Marshal Prevention Information Release

The Office of the State Fire Marshal sent information on Hood Suppression System Maintenance for facilities with a Kitchen Hood System. The Information Release contains maintenance and inspection expectations. [Click here](#) for the KSFM Prevention Information Release and share it with Facilities, Survey Preparedness and any other staff as needed.

--Larry Van Der Wege

Kansas State Board of Healing Arts Offers Presentation Opportunities

The Kansas State Board of Healing Arts is offering presentation opportunities to their stakeholders as part of their outreach efforts. Each presentation lasts about 45 to 60 minutes, including time for questions and offers licensees, students and professional organizations the chance to learn about the KSBHA's services, application requirements and mission.

If you are interested in scheduling a presentation, [please contact KSBHA](#) or make a request online using the [KSBHA Speaker Request Form](#).

KSBHA is offering presentations on the following topics:

- **Licensing:** A general overview of the agency, KSBHA's licensing department, application process and requirements, information on renewals, continuing education and audits. KSBHA's licensing presentations are tailored to a specific profession.
- **Professionalism:** An overview of KSBHA's complaint, investigation and litigation process, as well as grounds for disciplinary action and types of board action. It also addresses prevention/remedial measures and highlights the importance of early detection.

- **KSBHA: Who We Are; What We Do and How We Do It:** Provides a high-level overview of the agency, its mission, the roles of KSBHA's five departments, recent and pending changes, agency resources, and more.
- **KSBHA: Complaints and Investigations:** Provides a more in-depth look at KSBHA's complaint, investigation and litigation process of disciplinary cases. It provides insight into common complaints and investigations and explains how Kansas law impacts the investigation process.
- **Healthcare Professional Wellness:** This presentation provides a general overview of health care professional wellness, KSBHA's approach and advances in the agency to promote health care professional wellness, as well as frequently asked questions and resources.
- **Social Media Use by Healthcare Professionals:** For health care professionals, social media can support personal expression, enable online professional presence and foster networking. However, it can also create challenges for the licensee/patient relationship, boundaries and advertising. In this presentation, KSBHA will discuss social media's growing relevance in health care, the most common pitfalls for professionals online, tips for prevention and a case review of state board actions involving the improper use of social media.

KSBHA also offers virtual presentation opportunities throughout the year. KSBHA anticipates sending a calendar of these presentations out in mid-February. Please contact KSBHA_EducationOutreach@ks.gov for more information.

--Karen Braman

Join the Kansas Healthcare Engineers Association for 2025!

Today's regulations affect all health care facilities with oversight from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, National Fire Protection Association, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Motor Vehicles, Joint Commission, the Association for Retarded Citizens of the United States, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas State Fire Marshal and others impacting patient care and the bottom line.

The Kansas Healthcare Engineers Association provides educational and networking opportunities to help hospital facilities departments meet these challenges. KHEA would encourage you to support your facilities department staff by asking them to become members of KHEA. Membership opens access to dozens of health care engineers experiencing similar challenges and creating innovative solutions in our state. Memberships are \$75 annually and conferences registration fees are affordable.

For more information or to join, visit [KHEA's website](#). Questions can be directed to [Gregg Freelove](#), 2025 KHEA president or [Larry Van Der Wege](#), KHA liaison.

--Melissa Willey

Position Available

[Director of Finance](#)

[NMC Health](#)

600 Medical Ctr. Dr. P.O. Box 308

Newton, KS 67114-0308

Contact: [Jaime Lopez](#), HR Director

Phone: (316) 804-6107, ext. 1103

Fax: (316) 804-6277

Email: Jaime.Lopez@mynmchealth.org

Website: www.mynmchealth.org

Apply Online Today!
CLICK HERE

The finance director plans, organizes and oversees activities related to the financial management of NMC Health. This includes planning and analysis, accounting, budgeting, reimbursement and managing the financial and accounting systems. In this role, you will compile required annual data requests from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and federal and state agencies and complete various financial analysis projects. Additional responsible for the policies and procedures related to the organization's accounting and financial operations. This position also plans and directs the operations of a department or area(s), and is responsible for staffing, processes, budgets and cost adherence. Education and experience: bachelor's degree in accounting with a minimum of five years in management, health care finance and accounting, CPA or MBA preferred, an understanding of annual reporting and compliance requirements, skilled in hospital and physician clinic review cycles, yearly budget preparation and analysis, highly experienced in monthly GL closing, accounts payable with fixed asset control and tracking, expense analysis and assisting department leaders with data requests, development and maintenance of internal control systems, management of insurance contracting, fee schedule development and analysis, supervision of W-2 balancing, form preparation and electronic SSA submission.

Email [Jan Fenwick](#) if you have a management position available in your organization and would like it posted in *the Current Report*. Also, check out www.kshealthjobs.net for other health care openings in Kansas.

--Jan Fenwick

Federal and National News

HRSA Releases Nurse Faculty Loan Program Funding Opportunity

The Health Resources and Services Administration released a Notice of Funding Opportunity to increase the number of qualified nursing faculty nationwide. The [Nurse Faculty Loan Program](#) funds accredited nursing schools to establish and operate a student loan fund and provide loans to students enrolled in advanced nursing degree programs committed to becoming nurse faculty. In exchange for completion of up to four years of post-graduation full-time nurse faculty employment in an accredited school of nursing, the program authorizes cancellation of as much as 85 percent of the original student loan amount. Applications will be accepted through Monday, Feb. 24.

DEA Publishes Proposed Telemedicine Rules

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency [announced](#) three new rules to permanently extend some of the telemedicine flexibilities established during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Buprenorphine treatment: Patients can now receive a six-month supply of buprenorphine, a medication for opioid use disorder, through a telephone consultation.
- Special registrations: Medical providers can obtain special registrations to prescribe controlled substances via telemedicine. The requirements vary based on the medication schedule and provider specialty. This rule will also require establishing a national prescription drug monitoring program.
- Veterans Affairs exemption: VA practitioners are exempt from some special registration requirements.

These rules do not apply to patients who have already had an in-person visit with a medical provider or telemedicine visits that do not involve prescribing controlled substances.

CMS Announces 15 Additional Drugs Selected for Medicare Drug Price Negotiations

In accordance with the Inflation Reduction Act, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [announced](#) 15 additional drugs covered under Medicare Part D that will be subject to a negotiated price. According to CMS, between November 2023 and October 2024, 5.3 million Medicare Part D beneficiaries used these drugs, amounting to \$41 billion in total gross covered drug costs.

HRSA Announces Rural Residency Planning and Development Program

The Health Resources and Services Administration is now accepting [applications](#) through Thursday, April 10, for funding to develop new sustainable rural residency programs to improve and expand access to health care in rural areas. The Rural Residency Planning and Development Program will fund eligible applicants up to \$750,000 for three years, from Aug. 1, 2025, to July 31, 2028.

CMS Releases Final Rule of Benefit and Payment Parameters for Marketplace Products

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services released a [final rule](#) on benefit and payment parameters for 2026. The rule includes requirements related to modifications to the calculation of Basic Health Program payments, changes to the Initial Validation Audit sampling approach and a Second Validation Audit pairwise means test for HHS-RADV. The rule applies to issuers offering qualified health plans through Federally Facilitated Exchanges and State-based Exchanges on the federal platform.

Before You Go ...

- A new *JAMA Insights* article, [Communication About Harm Reduction With Patients Who Have Opioid Use Disorder](#), explores the vital role physicians play in preventing fatal and non-fatal overdoses before they occur. A short conversation about harm reduction can help patients make more informed decisions regarding substance use.
- Results of a clinical research [study](#) published in *The American Journal of Medicine* reveal that alcohol-related deaths in the U.S. have surged dramatically in the last two decades, with the mortality rate nearly doubling from 1999 to 2020.