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## AHA Requests Federal Support Following Change Healthcare Cyberattack

Yesterday, the American Hospital Association (AHA) asked the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS) to continue assisting hospitals and health systems in efforts to minimize the fallout from the recent cyberattack on Change Healthcare.

In a letter to HHS Secretary Becerra, AHA asked the department to, among other things:

- Facilitate continued communication and transparency from Change Healthcare to the provider community.
- Offer guidance to providers about how to request Medicare advanced and accelerated payments, including by directing the Medicare Administrative Contractors to prioritize processing applications by hospitals for advanced payments.
- Alert surveyors to the likelihood that some hospitals' systems may not be functional, which may cause longer than normal waits for care which, while upsetting patients and their families, should not result in additional citations since these issues are beyond hospitals' control.
- Provide flexibility with respect to e-prescribing regulations.

AHA also issued a Cybersecurity Advisory yesterday, which provides updates on network connectivity issues and indicators of compromise related to the Change Healthcare cyberattack. The Advisory contains information from a bulletin issued by the Health Information Sharing and Analysis Center (Health-ISAC), an organization that AHA works with closely.

## Paid Leave for All Workers Act Proposed Rules Second Notice

On Feb. 1, the Illinois Dept. of Labor (IDOL) issued its second notice draft of proposed rules regarding the implementation of the Paid Leave for All Workers Act (PLAWA). The Joint Committee of Administrative Rules is tasked with considering the proposed rulemaking and has postponed any action on it until March 12.

IDOL continues to host free webinars about PLAWA. The webinars will be held on the following dates:

- March 7 at 10 a.m. CT. [Click here](#) to register.
- March 21 at 2 p.m. CT. [Click here](#) to register.

As of Jan. 1, 2024, employers are required to post a physical notice on the premises where other notices are posted that summarizes the Act and includes information about filing a complaint.

## Convergence Health New Hospital Quality Director Mentorship Program

Convergence Health will be kicking off a free New Hospital Quality Director Mentorship Program on March 6 at 11 a.m. CT. This program will consist of approximately 10 weekly, 30-minute virtual huddles geared towards hospital-based quality directors, quality managers, vice presidents of quality and chief quality officers with less than two years of experience in their current role.

Sessions will take place each Wednesday at 11 a.m. CT, featuring a brief presentation from an experienced hospital quality director around a specific topic relevant to the role. There will be 10-15 minutes of open discussion allocated for each session, and participants will be given a brief assignment to help them understand how to practically apply that week's learnings within their own organization. At the conclusion of the program, participants will have assembled a robust portfolio of resources and skills designed to help them be successful in their role.

[Click here](#) to view the course flyer for additional information. This program is being offered free of charge to all qualifying hospital quality directors with less than two years' experience in the role. To ensure that participants meet the guidelines for the target audience, interested parties are asked to complete a brief enrollment survey [here](#). Questions can be directed to [kwerkmeister@convergencehealth.org](mailto:kwerkmeister@convergencehealth.org).

#### Embedding Equity in Crisis Preparedness and Response in Health Systems

The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately impacted historically marginalized and minoritized communities, shedding light on the urgent need for collective action towards embedding equity into our crisis preparedness and response systems. Designed to support healthcare professionals championing equity in healthcare organizations and their executive leadership, the [Embedding Equity in Crisis Preparedness and Response in Health Systems guide](#) is grounded in candid accounts of organizations across the country as they embed equity and racial justice during crises and share key findings they learned along the way.

Created in partnership with over 30 organizations, the guide was created as a resource for anyone who has a role within a health system that can influence the actions and processes in that system. However, this guide is especially critical for senior leaders who have the power to make health equity a strategic organizational priority and to ensure sustainable resource allocation to support those leading the work. [Click here](#) for more information.

#### COVID-19 Information

The Illinois Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) has launched a weekly [Infectious Respiratory Disease Surveillance Dashboard](#) that will be updated weekly on Friday. This report provides the public with the latest data on hospital visits, seasonal trends, lab test positivity and demographic data.

[Click here](#) to visit the IDPH COVID-19 resources webpage. IDPH will continue to report the weekly number of people with COVID-19 admitted to hospitals from emergency departments, deaths and vaccinations, with COVID-19, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus information also reported through the dashboard of the [Illinois Wastewater Surveillance System](#).

#### Briefly Noted

The Endocrine Society, the major global medical association for endocrinologists, plans to review its clinical guidelines for gender-affirming care as part of a routine update, CNN reported [yesterday](#). The society's [current guidelines](#), last updated in 2017, outline the appropriate treatment for transgender or gender-diverse children and adults. CNN reported that the guidelines assist the organization's 18,000 members focused on hormone-related health to "determine the best practices to provide appropriate care for people who are transgender and gender-diverse."

A [recent study](#) published in *Global Advances in Integrative Medicine and Health*, found that women in healthcare endure a significantly higher level of stress and burnout compared to their male counterparts. The study asserts women "are more prone to experiencing mental health issues brought on by immense pressure and stress to succeed both at home and at work simultaneously. This issue can affect their physical and mental health to the point of causing psychological distress, occupational burnout, depression, anxiety, rapid turnover, or suicidal thoughts." Study authors say the findings "indicate a need for evidence-based integrative interventions across healthcare enterprises to combat stress and burnout and strengthen the resiliency and well-being of women in healthcare."



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