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Tuesday, July 13, 2021

Today's headlines:

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Rural health care website helps to improve access in Iowa

IHA in partnership with the Iowa Department of Public Health and several other health care-related organizations collaborated on the [Iowa Rural Healthcare Workforce Connection](#). The goal of the website is to:

- Ensure Iowans have access to information, resources and tools for health care in rural Iowa.
- Help people understand the strengths, challenges and demands of the rural Iowa workforce.
- Help strengthen the rural Iowa workforce capacity.
- Increase awareness of job opportunities and health care careers in rural Iowa.

Website visitors will find a variety of resources including:

- Educator toolkits.
- Information about working and living in rural Iowa.
- Job listings.
- Labor statistics.
- Scholarship and loan repayment information.

The website is hosted by the Iowa Department of Public Health with member organizations providing updates, content and job postings. Community leaders, educators, employers, health care professionals and students are encouraged to visit the Iowa Rural Healthcare Workforce Connection.

OSHA extends comment deadline for COVID-19 emergency standard

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has moved back the deadline to submit comments about its COVID-19 health care emergency temporary standard to Friday, Aug. 20.

Last month, OSHA published an emergency temporary standard for occupational exposure to COVID-19 that requires health care employers to take certain steps to protect their workers in settings where suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients are being treated. The standard was

link.ihaonline.org/m/1/42467087/02-b21194-790aae83e5c348d3b72b92384586adca/2/820/4239d3f9-418e-4d91-b6dc-d6e7f728fe97 settings where suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients are being treated. The standard was effective immediately. Employers were to comply with most provisions by July 6, with physical barriers, ventilation and training requirements in place by Wednesday, July 21.

IHA, along with the American Hospital Association, requested OSHA delay the compliance dates for at least an additional six months and extend the comment deadline by an additional 30 days. IHA is pleased to see the comment deadline extension, which will allow hospitals time to voice concerns about the expedited way the standard was implemented. Compliance dates remain the same, and IHA will continue working with OSHA to delay the dates for six months.

Click [HERE](#) for a detailed summary of the emergency temporary standard. Click [HERE](#) for OSHA's field inspection and enforcement procedures for the standard.



**14th Annual IHERF
Swinging for Scholars**

IHA releases latest Iowa hospital data trends

IHA has collected data trends from 103 Iowa hospitals for [January-May 2021](#) as compared with the same time frame in 2020:

- Acute discharges increased 0.2% as acute patient days increased 5.7%.
- Average length of stay increased 5.5%.
- Births decreased 3.6%.
- Charity care increased 3.2%.
- Emergency department visits increased 1.2%.
- Facility employment (excluding physicians) increased 2.1%.
- Hospital-based ambulatory surgery visits increased 38.8%.
- Inpatient admissions from the emergency department increased 3.4%.
- Inpatient surgeries increased 11.3%.
- Medicaid acute discharges increased 2.3% and Medicaid acute patient days increased 9.3%.
- Net patient revenue (collected charges) increased 21.1%.
- Outpatient utilization increased 21.8%.
- Total expenses increased 9.9%.
- Uncompensated care (bad debts) decreased 9.8%.

Email [Allison Martin](#) at IHA with questions.

New executive order promoting economic competition affecting health care

President Joe Biden signed an [executive order](#) establishing a “whole-of-government” effort to promote competition in the American economy. The executive order includes 72 initiatives by more than a dozen federal agencies to tackle competition issues across the economy, including health care, financial services, technology and agriculture.

In the health care industry, the executive order targets drug costs, commercial health insurance plans, hospitals and health systems. Major provisions address:

- A review of and revision to the Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission merger guidelines.
- Consolidation in the health insurance industry leading to limited insurer choices for

consumers.

- Noncompete clauses and other contractual agreements that limit workers' abilities to change jobs without making a specific reference to any industry, such as health care.
- The Department of Health and Human Services' support of existing hospital price transparency rules and the implementation of new price-transparency provisions included in the No Surprises Act.
- The high drug prices and lack of competition among drug manufacturers.

The executive order does not have the force of law or regulation, but rather serves to provide direction to federal agencies.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the executive order and the provisions affecting the health care industry.

Demand for convenience in health care leads to more medical app downloads

More people are turning to the convenience of mobile medical apps as a part of their health care. According to an [App Annie study](#), medical app downloads grew 50% year over year with more than 3.2 billion downloads.

Medical apps were popular during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Patients used apps as a convenient way to stay connected with their physicians, track test results and look up healthy lifestyle advice while lowering their risk COVID-19 exposure.

For a full list of free, paid and top-grossing apps for Apple, Android and other mobile devices, click [HERE](#).

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NewsStand

Iowa news

- [Iowa counties could see changes in property taxes to help EMS](#)
- [Iowa to get \\$25M settlement with OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma](#)
- [Some MercyOne locations require employee COVID-19 vaccines](#)

National news

- [Pritzker signs bill expanding covered Medicaid services](#)
- [What to know about motives, negotiations with hospital IT attacks](#)
- [Biden zeros in on health care competition in executive order](#)

Click [HERE](#) to read daily NewsStand postings.

Upcoming events

- [The Emotional Impact of COVID-19: Leading Your Team to an Emotionally Healthy Workplace:](#) Thursday, July 15.
- [PAMA Lab Test Private Payer Rate Reporting:](#) Thursday, July 22.
- [The Great Resignation Webinar:](#) Tuesday, Aug. 17.
- [A Path Forward: Thriving in Rural Health Care After COVID-19:](#) Thursday, Aug. 19.
- [Swinging for Scholars and All-District Meeting:](#) Thursday, Sept. 2.
- [Iowa Quality Residency Program:](#) Thursday, Oct. 21, 2021-Friday, April 8, 2022.

Hospital jobs site connects hospitals with qualified candidates

Are you looking for qualified health care professionals for your Iowa hospital? [HospitalCareers.com](#) can help. This website connects thousands of nurses, providers and other hospital jobseekers with Iowa hospitals each year and is a main resource for jobseekers looking for work in health care.

Your resource for Iowa hospital and health system jobs.

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