



IHA WORKFORCE PROGRESS NOTES

Small Doses

IHA Webinar: "Hospitalists and Your Hospital" Recording Available for Purchase

A recording of the September 25th hospitalist webinar is available for purchase. [Please click here for more information.](#)

Two IL Hospitals Named to *Working Mother* 100 Best Companies

Children's Memorial Hospital (Chicago) and Northwestern Memorial Healthcare (Chicago) were recently named to *Working Mother* 100 Best Companies. Both hospitals were scored on their workforce profile, compensation, child care flexibility, time off and leaves, family-friendly programs, and company culture. The magazine praised both for increased flexible scheduling, promoting from within, child care, and other offerings.

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IHA Web Site
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IHA Board of Trustees Approves Workforce Task Force Plan

At its November meeting, the IHA Board approved the IHA Workforce Task Force report and recommendations. The Workforce Task Force, in 2008, divided its effort into two areas: physician supply and retention, and nursing and allied health shortages.

To address the lack of Illinois-specific information on physician supply and demand, the Task Force recommended the development of a statewide data repository to support workforce analysis and planning. As a first step, IHA is convening a Discussion Forum with physician stakeholders to explore interest in an Illinois Workforce Center, examining the connection between physician residency programs and practice retention. The group will use known supply/demand data about Illinois programs and retention, and identify data deficiencies, to outline an initial project on residency retention to demonstrate need and value for future Workforce Center. Invitees for the February 3rd event include administrators and physicians from health care systems and hospitals, academic representatives, the Illinois State Medical Society and other state physician professional organizations.

Another key TF recommendation involves the development of an on-line career portal to provide useful information about health care occupations and educational requirements. The Workforce Task Force will continue its work in 2009. For more information on the Workforce Task Force's recommendations, please contact IHA staff or visit the [IHA Workforce web site](#).

State Health Services Education Grants Funding Cut

In years past, the Health Services Education Program has provided targeted grants to educate and train health care professionals at 59 non-profit, independent Illinois colleges, universities, and hospitals. The General Assembly, in its FY2009 budget, increased the program's budget from \$17 million to \$21 million. However, in 2008, Governor Blagojevich eliminated all FY2009 program funding.

Health education grants were distributed to independent Illinois institutions with accredited programs that educate and train health professionals. The purpose of the program was to assure that Illinois has an adequate supply of health professionals; without this funding, programs that train medical professionals will sustain a direct and immediate impact. IHA is working with the Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities to advocate for restored funding.

Employee Free Choice Act

The Employee Free Choice Act, or "card check" legislation, is expected to be introduced in the new Congress in early January. The legislation would amend

the National Labor Relations Act to require employers to exclusively recognize the majority "card check" process as the means by which unions are organized in various facilities, including hospitals. This would enable unions to avoid private ballot elections in which employees can make decisions free from interference. The bill would also impose mandatory arbitration if the newly installed union and the employer could not reach agreement within 120 days. Bargaining units could include departments within a hospital where the majority of eligible employees signed cards. In addition, under the bill, employer penalties would increase for those found to have committed unfair labor practices during a union organizing drive or negotiation of an initial contract.

The current union election system is built on the foundation of our democracy-free and fair elections by secret ballot. This law would undermine the process, as union authorization cards would be signed in the presence of an interested party - a union organizer or a pro-union co-worker. If passed, this law could allow a workforce to be unionized before an employer is aware that union organizing is going on.

[Click here](#) to contact your members of Congress and ask them to oppose "card check" legislation.

Benedictine Announces Online MSN Program

Benedictine University's College of Education and Health Services has launched a fully [online Master of Science in Nursing \(M.S.N.\) program](#) designed to prepare Registered Nurses at the master's degree level. Classes begin March 9, 2009, and enrollment is currently open. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the year. While Benedictine University does not require an entrance exam, to gain admission, students must at a minimum be BSN RN prepared.

Advocacy Activities

- 31 hospitals participated in an IHA CNE & Direct Care Webinar, "Your Voice Needed!!!" on November 18. During this webinar, Kelli Kaczynski of Rush-Copley Medical Center, Aurora shared with Health System, staff nurses learned the basics about the legislative process relative to nurse staffing. This webinar complemented the October event preparing the nursing community for 2009 legislative session activity.
- The Western Illinois Health Consortium had its first meeting on December 3 at Sarah B. Culbertson Memorial Hospital in Rushville. The goal of this group is to achieve better alignment of regional educational offerings with area hospital workforce needs.
- On December 9, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) adopted the [final report](#) of the [Public Agenda for Higher Education](#). The report will now be submitted to the Governor and members of the General Assembly. The agenda proposes a series of recommended strategies and action steps to achieve the four goals, while noting that the plan will extend over at least a decade and be subjected to a formal top-to-bottom review within 5 years. Member resources remain available on [IHA's Workforce web site](#).
- IHA Webinar: "How to Preserve and Defend Hospital Mission, Vision, and Values in the Midst of Labor Organizing" was held on December 11. K. Bruce Stickler educated attendees about new federal and state laws and regulations and how to proactively provide service and operations excellence. Members learned strategies to expand the leadership's role, develop Board dashboard priorities, and ensure communication and transparency throughout the organization.