



***KHA's Capitol Comments
January 17, 2023***



KHA Hosts Annual Advocacy Day

Today, for the first time in several years, the Kansas Hospital Association returned to an in-person Advocacy Day opportunity. The more than 120 attendees heard from the following:

- Governor Laura Kelly
- State Representative and Tax Chairman Adam Smith (R-Weskan)
- State Medicaid Director Sarah Fertig
- Federal District Directors; Alex Richard (Senator Jerry Moran's office), Becca Swender (Senator Roger Marshall's office), Jake Conard (Representative Jake LaTurner's office), and Reid Petty (Representative Tracey Mann's office)
- Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt

Attendees visited the state capitol to join legislators for lunch and discuss high-priority legislative items. We thank those that took the time to participate in the 2023 Advocacy Day.

Senate Public and Welfare Meets to Hear about 988

Today, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee heard an update on the 988 Suicide Lifeline. Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Commissioner Andy Brown gave an executive summary of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline annual report. The committee also heard about Vibrant Behavioral Health and how they contract in each region of the state. Committee members asked the following questions:

- How calls are transferred between 911 and 988
- If call volumes have gone down for 911 since the inception of 988
- The process for connecting a caller with a live person

The committee also received a bill introduced by Senator Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee) to add funding for Midwest Stem Cell Research in the amount of \$500 million, a bill re-introduced from the 2022 legislative session.

The committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, Jan. 18, to hear a presentation from Amanda Shlumpberger, from Legislative Post Audit, to review foster care services for children.

House Health Hears from Kansas Social Service Agencies

Today, the House Health Committee, chaired by Representative Brenda Landwehr (R-Wichita), received an agency overview from Secretary Laura Howard from the Kansas Department for Children and Families. The committee heard update on the services provided through the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services. Staff highlighted the following behavioral health priorities and accomplishments:

- Developed a comprehensive 988 plan to expand the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline contact center capacity to answer and bolster community-based crisis services, as well as administered \$3 million in grant funds to the call centers
- Completed the State Suicide Prevention Plan and launched the Kansas Suicide Prevention Coalition
- Developed a plan for community integration, as well as funded and staffed Community Integration Section within the Behavioral Health Services Commission
- Launched a three-year effort to enroll Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics in KanCare.
- Launched the State Institutional Alternative in KanCare program to reduce state general fund costs for the care of state patients diverted to private facilities and reduced the demand for admission at state hospitals
- Awarded a contract to KVC Hospitals for the opening and operation of an acute private psychiatric hospital in Hays, serving children as a state institutional alternative.

The committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, Jan. 18, to hear from the community mental health centers.