



## ***KHA's Current Report*** **January 12, 2024**

### **President's Perspective – Governor Kelly's State of the State**

Earlier this week, the 2024 Kansas Legislative Session officially commenced. While much of the week consisted of legislators settling into their offices and getting reacquainted with their colleagues, we did have the opportunity to hear Governor Laura Kelly present her annual State of the State Address. The highly anticipated occasion is attended by members of the Kansas Legislature and allows the governor to share her legislative priorities for the year. Governor Kelly opened the address with reflections on last year's speech, highlighting the momentum of four years of balanced budgets, four years of funding schools and a year that saw the announcement of significant manufacturing investment. She also stressed that while achieving is hard, sustaining is harder. Governor Kelly focused on the link between the needs of rural Kansas and its counterparts in urban areas, saying, "When rural Kansas is strong, all Kansas is strong." With her remaining few years as governor, she expressed her commitment to focusing on issues of importance to rural Kansas.

On the health care front, Governor Kelly renewed her call for Medicaid expansion. She encouraged the Kansas Legislature to listen to the majority of Kansans who support Medicaid expansion and hold a hearing on the topic by Kansas Day. Governor Kelly recognized the challenging financial health of many Kansas hospitals and pointed to the recent closures of the Herrington Hospital and the Fort Scott emergency room. While acknowledging Medicaid expansion is not a silver bullet to resolve the financial woes of Kansas hospitals, she said that the problem cannot be solved without it.

The governor also highlighted several non-health care related initiatives she would like to pursue in 2024. These ranged from keeping public schools fully funded, investing in early childcare and daycare for working parents, financing a state water plan and adopting a responsible tax plan. On first blush, it seems as though several of these policies should reasonably make their way through the legislative process. Unfortunately, it is never that simple ... especially in an election year. The 2024 Kansas legislative session will require elected leaders, in the legislature and the governor's office, to put aside partisan politics and commit to doing the right thing. Governor Kelly fittingly ended her address with a quote from Kansas' own Ted Lasso: "You know the happiest animal on earth? A goldfish. It has a 10-second memory. So be a goldfish." Time will only tell whether our elected leaders are willing to forget the divisions of the past and focus on the opportunities of the future to make Kansas the best state in the nation.

And one final reminder, Tuesday, Jan. 16, is KHA's 2024 Advocacy Day. If you have not yet registered, there is still an opportunity to [register online](#). We have a great agenda and will have an opportunity to hear from several elected leaders. We hope to see you next week!

--Chad Austin

### **CMS Price Transparency Regulations Starts Jan. 1, 2024**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services recently revised the Price Transparency regulations. It is crucial for all health care providers to ensure compliance with these changes. The updated regulations aim to enhance transparency and empower patients by providing them with access to accurate and up-to-date pricing information for health care services. Compliance ensures your organization meets legal requirements and builds trust with your patients. Facilities are expected to be in compliance with the new regulations by July 1, 2024.

Key Takeaways from the CMS Revisions:

- **Required Formats:** Newly released templates are required so all price transparency files have the same layout and structure.
- **Expanded Data Requirements:** The revised regulations introduce additional data elements or modifications to existing ones, requiring a thorough review of your current pricing information.
- **Automated Auditing:** The use of standardized templates allows CMS to automate the process of auditing the price transparency files for compliance. This will result in more hospitals being audited each month.
- **Tougher Penalties:** CMS is expected to enforce compliance more rigorously, and penalties for non-compliance may be more severe.

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More Information](#)

KHA plans to hold an educational webinar on the new rules in the coming months. KHA has also developed the *What's Next for Hospital Price Transparency in 2024* [PDF](#) and [PowerPoint slide presentation](#) to assist you with these regulations. Please contact [Shannan Flach](#) at (785) 233-7436 if you have questions.

--Shannan Flach

### **KDHE Health Facilities and Licensing Quarterly Webinar**

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment health facilities quarterly webinar, originally scheduled for Dec. 21, 2023, is rescheduled from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 18. Since this is a rescheduled webinar, participants are required to re-register.

[Click to Register](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Topics to be discussed include:

- Rural Emergency Hospitals Update
- Provider/Supplier Closure Requirements
- MPD and State Agency Survey Priorities
- Cyber Security Attacks in Acute & Continuing Care Health Care Facilities

*--Ron Marshall*

### **Food Security in Kansas: Cross-Sector Innovations – Jan. 30 Webinar**

Join KPMC and the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, for *Food Security in Kansas: Cross-sector Innovations* at 10:30 a.m. on Jan. 30. This webinar will bring together experts, thought leaders and stakeholders from various sectors to delve into the critical issue of food security in Kansas. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of a meaningful conversation and contribute to the advancement of food security initiatives in Kansas. This webinar is the first in a series of quarterly health equity focused webinars, each to be co-hosted with a different health equity partner.

[Click to Register](#)

*--Karen Braman*

### **Join a KHA Allied Organization in 2024**

Now more than ever, health care organizations are looking for economic ways to provide growth, education and support for their employees. The Kansas Hospital Association reminds members of the benefits of having your employees participate in one of KHA's allied organizations. KHA's allied organizations offer at least one affordable education program per year, networking opportunities and up-to-date information on important health care issues and trends that affect their job and your facility. Many of these organizations offer continuing education credits, mentoring programs, newsletters, websites, their own listserv and much more. KHA encourages your staff to participate in an allied organization. More information, including membership applications for each allied organization, is available on the [KHA website](#). If you have questions, contact the KHA office at (785) 233-7436.

*--Jan Fenwick*

### **Training Opportunity in Quality Improvement and Implementation Science**

The Healthcare Institute for Innovations in Quality at UMKC is offering [Training in Implementation: Actionable Research Approaches](#), a short-course on integrating traditional quality improvement with tested and proven implementation science methods. TIARA has seven modules being offered in moderated Zoom sessions from Jan. 29 – May 1, 2024, which also can be accessed at the learner's convenience. This course is offered for clinicians involved in quality improvement, including physicians, nurses and pharmacists, as well as quality improvement staff and individuals interested in applying implementation science in pragmatic quality improvement. The cost is \$750.

*--Brett Moorehouse*

### **APS Welcomes Bio-Electronics to Its Roster of Services Provided to Hospitals**

APS is hosting an introductory [webinar](#) for a new vendor, [Bio-Electronics](#), at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024. Bio-Electronics, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Nebraska Hospital Association, provides maintenance and repair for a wide range of medical devices, including general biomed, respiratory, radiology and laboratory equipment. Bio-Electronics currently serves nearly 300 hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities in Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas, Colorado, South Dakota and Iowa.

[Click to Register](#)

If you have questions or need additional information, contact [Dennis George](#) at (913) 327-8730.

--Dennis George

### **Equipping Clinicians to Address Lead Exposure in Kansas Communities**

Beginning Jan. 16, Project ECHO is offering [Lead Poisoning 2024 ECHO Series](#) on Tuesdays through Feb. 13, 2024. All courses will be held via Zoom from noon – 1:00 p.m. The series is designed to provide primary care providers, pediatricians, community health care workers and public health professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively engage families and educate them about the critical risks associated with lead poisoning. By participating in this series, health care professionals will graduate with a thorough understanding of how to:

- Recognize potential sources of lead exposure and comprehend its impact on the human body
- Identify individuals at risk of lead poisoning
- Determine when and how to perform lead screening and testing
- Implement best practices for the medical management of lead poisoning case
- Effectively communicate the importance of pediatric blood lead testing to families
- Collaborate with clinicians, public health professionals, and other stakeholders to prevent lead exposure and testing issues

Continuing education credit will be offered to physicians, nurses and social workers. This series is also no-cost, open to all.

[Click to Register](#)

--Karen Braman

### **KONZA National Network Earns Qualified Health Information Network Designation**

[KONZA National Network](#) was recently designated as one of five Qualified Health Information Networks to facilitate the exchange of health data on a nationwide scale. QHINs will be instrumental in expanding provider and consumer access to health information to improve care coordination, decrease costs and enhance health outcomes overall. Harnessing its 14 years of experience in interoperability, KONZA earned its QHIN designation by demonstrating how health information exchange can be scaled nationwide with the highest level of privacy and security and by delivering high-quality health data. With a footprint across nine states, 92 percent of KONZA's members have already joined the [Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement](#) through the KONZA QHIN.

--Karen Braman

### **MIPS 2023 Data Submission Is Now Open and Submission Resources Available**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services opened data submission for Merit-based Incentive Payment System eligible clinicians who participated in the 2023 performance year of the Quality Payment Program. Data can be submitted and updated until 7:00 p.m. on April 1, 2024.

Follow the steps outlined below to submit data:

1. Go to the Quality Payment Program [sign in page](#).
2. Sign in using your QPP access credentials.
3. Submit MIPS data for the 2023 performance year or review the data reported on your behalf by a third party. (You can't correct errors with your data after the submission period, so it's important to make sure the data submitted on your behalf is accurate.)

Submission resources are available now on the [QPP Resource Library](#).

2024 MIPS Quality Measure Specification Resources are available [here](#).

--Sally Othmer

### **Medicare Pays for Opioid Use Disorder Screenings and Treatment**

Medicare pays for opioid use disorder screenings performed by physicians and non-physician practitioners. For more information, see the links below:

- Required element of the [initial preventative physical exam](#) and [annual wellness visit](#)
- In physician office and outpatient hospital settings, Medicare pays for [screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment services \(PDF\)](#):
  - Evidence-based, early intervention approach
  - For non-dependent substance use before patients need more specialized treatment

If providers diagnose their patients with OUD, Medicare pays for certain treatment services. Visit [Opioid Use Disorder Screenings & Treatment](#) for Medicare coverage and coding information.

--Karen Braman

## **Federal and National News**

### **CMS Invites Input on Hospital Quality Reporting System**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is seeking [participation](#) in a research pool designed to guide enhancements in the Hospital Quality Reporting system via feedback and testing sessions. Members may be asked to test new HQR designs and ideas, participate in focus groups or be interviewed about experiences with HQR.

### **CMS Releases IQR Specifications Manual Version 5.16**

Version 5.16 of the Specifications Manual for National Hospital Inpatient Quality Measures for the IQR Program now is available on [QualityNet](#). Version 5.16 is effective for acute inpatient discharges from July 1 through Dec. 31, 2024. Changes are outlined in the associated release notes.

### **FMT Publishes Policy Brief on Partnerships to Address Rural Community Needs**

The Flex Monitoring Team released a [policy brief](#) on partnerships between Critical Access Hospitals and local health departments based on data from the American Hospital Association and qualitative interviews with four pairs of CAH/LDH partners. It compares the collaborative and community-focused activities of CAHs with rural and urban prospective payment system hospitals and identifies challenges and opportunities to improve collaboration to address community needs. Three specific opportunities are highlighted to improve CAH/LDH collaboration: concentrating on local community health needs assessments and implementation strategies, developing local emergency preparedness strategies and addressing emergent public health crises.

### **CMS Updates HQR For Reporting CY 2023 OQR Web-based Measures**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services updated the data form for submission of calendar year 2023 Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting Program web-based measure data into the [Hospital Quality Reporting system](#). The submission period is open through Wednesday, May 15.

### **CMS Releases OQR Specifications Manual Addendum 17.0a**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting Program specifications manual version 17.0a now is available on [QualityNet](#). The manual is effective for encounters dated Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2024, unless otherwise specified. Changes are outlined in the associated release notes.

### **MLN Connects Provider eNews Available**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [issued](#) the following updates to *MLN Connects Provider eNews*:

- [Marriage and Family Therapist & Mental Health Counselor Services: Overpayments to Critical Access Hospitals Billing under Method II](#)
- [Medicare Part A Cost Report Exhibits: New Electronic Templates](#)
- [Additional Residency Positions: Apply by March 31](#)
- [Therapy Services: Per-Beneficiary CY 2024 Threshold Amounts](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine CY 2024 Geographically-Adjusted Payment Rates](#)
- [Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program: CY 2024 Payment Rates](#)
- [Ambulance Fee Schedule: CY 2024 Inflation Factor](#)
- [Medicare Wellness Visits: Healthy Start to 2024](#)

#### **Before You Go ...**

- Suicide remains a leading cause of death among U.S. children and adolescents. A recent [study](#) estimates that approximately 80 percent of youth who die by suicide had contact with a health care professional in the year prior to death. Increased training and education, utilization of standardized suicide screenings and community engagement are key strategies to battling the rise in youth suicide.