



KHA's Current Report
July 25, 2025

President's Perspective – Harold Courtois to Receive the Charles S. Billings Award

It is a pleasure to announce that Harold Courtois, retired CEO, Memorial Health System, Abilene, has been selected to receive the Kansas Hospital Association's 2025 Charles S. Billings Award.

The Charles S. Billings Award was created in 1971 to recognize distinguished service and outstanding contributions to the field of health care in Kansas. We reserve this award for those who have truly shown their commitment, leadership and dedication to that noble pursuit. Harold, the 45th recipient of this award, has certainly demonstrated these qualities during his devoted health care career of more than five decades.

Harold often refers to himself as an "old lab junkie," since he began his career as a medical technologist before transitioning into administration. His career has taken him across multiple health care organizations in Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri.

Harold became the chief executive officer at Memorial Health System in July 2017. Before joining MHS, he was the CEO at Russell Regional Hospital in Russell. Prior to being at Russell, Harold was the CEO at Trego County Lemke Memorial Hospital in WaKeeney. He has also been the director of operations at Emeritus Senior Living in Kearney, NE; the director of laboratory and radiology at Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney, NE; and the vice president of ancillary services at Pratt Regional Medical Center in Pratt.

Along the way, Harold has served as president and board member for various organizations, most recently working closely with the Kansas Hospital Association to advocate for patient care at the state and national levels. Harold was a member of the KHA Board from 2019-2024, serving as treasurer in 2024. He served two stints on the KHA Workers' Compensation Fund Board, holding the positions of chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer during his tenure. He also served on the KHA Audit and Finance Committee and the KHA Governance Committee of the Board. Harold is a past chair of the KHA Northwest District and past member of the Northwest Trauma Executive Committee. He has served for numerous years on the KHA Policy and Advocacy Committee, KHA Hospital Leadership and Governance Committee, KHA-PAC Steering Committee and KHA Strategic Planning Committee.

Harold earned a Bachelor of Arts in Biology from Southwestern College in Winfield, and a Master of Science in Management from Friends University. He is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives; past president of the Russell Area Chamber of Commerce; past president of Leadership Kearney; past member of the Leadership Kearney Board of Directors; current member of Rotary International; and past member of the Pratt Area Chamber of Commerce. Harold has been a radio sports broadcaster for KMMM in Pratt, and he taught at the college level for seven years. He enjoys golfing, cycling and reading. He has served on the USD 407 Board of Education, the Miss Kansas Board of Directors (where he was responsible for fundraising) and is a Lay Speaker in the Methodist Church.

While we know the decision to retire was not an easy one, Harold has shared that he is looking forward to spending more time with his wife and family. "I have never met anyone who said, 'I wish I had worked more,' but I have met several who wished they had spent more time with their family. I'm looking forward to that next chapter." Harold and his wife, Sue, have two daughters, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Harold's leadership in health care has been felt on a local, state and national level. He has been a mentor to many health care leaders across the state. His guiding philosophy, "Do what's right for the patient," shaped his leadership approach, fostering innovation and empowerment among all who have worked with him.

Congratulations to Harold! We look forward to officially bestowing this prestigious honor to him during the [KHA Annual Convention and Trade Show](#) in Wichita. I invite you all to attend the KHA Awards Luncheon at noon on Friday, Sept. 5, when Harold will receive the Billings Award and additional health care leaders will be recognized.

--Chad Austin

Provider Assessment Update

The Kansas Hospital Association continues to await the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' approval of the 2025 Preprint, which will enable the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to draw down the federal match for our provider tax revenues. CMS has approved an increase in the provider tax rate to 6 percent for 2025; however, approval of the preprint is required to distribute the funds. In the meantime, our contractor, Health Management Associates, has completed its calculation of the 2025 Q1 payments. KHA and KDHE are currently reviewing the calculations. Once finalized, hospitals will receive their reports.

Please reach out to Audrey Dunkel at adunkel@kha-net.org or (785) 233-7436, if you have questions.

--Audrey Dunkel

Reserve Your Seat at a Complimentary Health Care Preceptor Academy!

Are you ready to sharpen your skills and take your role as a health care preceptor to the next level? This summer and fall, the Kansas Hospital Association is excited to offer a series of complimentary Health Care Preceptor Academies across the state, and seats are going quickly!

Whether you're an experienced preceptor or preparing to take on the role, these hands-on, interactive sessions are packed with practical strategies and tools to strengthen the preceptor-orientee relationship. You'll leave feeling more confident, connected and prepared to support the next generation of health care professionals.

Upcoming Academy Dates and Locations:

- Winfield – Aug. 1
- Plainville – Aug. 8
- Lakin – Sept. 19
- Salina – Sept. 25

Each academy features the same high-impact content, and with only 30 spots available per location, early registration is crucial. These events are completely free to attend, thanks to generous funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration.



--Hayley Finch-Genschorck

Kickoff Webinar at 11 a.m. on Thursday, July 31: Hospital Bed Capacity Project

A webinar will be hosted to introduce Kansas hospitals to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Healthcare Safety Network Connectivity Initiative: Hospital Bed Capacity Project. This webinar will provide an overview of the project and discuss technical specifics of how hospitals can participate in this opportunity.

Presentations will be given by representatives from KDHE's Healthcare Associated Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance and Preparedness Sections, along with the implementation team from the EMResource vendor, Juvare. They plan to have time for a question-and-answer session and look forward to a productive discussion.

Attendants should include persons from Kansas hospitals who can make decisions about connecting Application Programming Interfaces and other similar methods to their Electronic Health Records to automate hospital bed capacity data transfer. They also invite infection preventionists and hospital leadership personnel who are interested in this project. Find more information and register for the [NHSN Connectivity Initiative Webinar](#). If you have questions or need other connection information, email Larry Van Der Wege at lvanderwege@kha-net.org.

Webinar information:

- Thursday, July 31st at 11:00 am CST
- Registration link: [NHSN Connectivity Initiative Webinar](#)

--Larry Van Der Wege

Participate in the 2026 Virtual Health Care Career Day

The Kansas Hospital Association, the Kansas Department of Education and the Kansas Board of Regents are hosting the fourth annual Virtual Health Care Career Day on Feb. 18, 2026. For the past three years, this event has brought together hundreds of schools, and thousands of Kansas students, to learn about 24 different health care careers through videos from Kansas hospitals and live question-and-answer sessions with those health care professionals.

We look forward to building on this success in 2026 and are soliciting applications from Kansas hospitals to profile one of the eight featured health careers for the event, which will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2026. Selected hospitals will profile a specific health care career via a five to seven minute pre-recorded video demonstrating various aspects of health care delivery ([examples of videos from the 2025 event can be viewed here](#)) and featuring the providers/clinicians/team members who work in the specific career to show a "day in the life", what that job entails daily and other "hands on" aspects of the career.

If you are interested in being one of the eight hospitals to profile a health care career, and your providers/clinicians/team members who work in that field can attend on both Feb. 18, 2026, and a rehearsal the morning of Feb. 17, 2026, please take a minute to [complete this form](#) to inform KHA of your interest by Aug. 5.

In addition to submitting this form, [please register here](#) for a required webinar from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Aug. 5. At least one person from your hospital must attend this webinar to obtain further information to be considered for selection. Preferably, the person(s) attending this webinar will be the person(s) coordinating your hospital's career profile video and other logistics of your staff being featured if your hospital is selected as one of the eight hospitals for the 2026 Virtual Health Care Career Day.

After the webinar on Aug. 5, a committee will review and select the eight hospitals for the 2026 Virtual Health Care Career Day. Those hospitals will be notified in early September.

2026 Careers We Are Seeking Hospitals to Profile:

- Laboratory
- Radiology/Imaging
- Dietary
- Advanced Practice Providers
- Social Services (Discharge Planning, Social Workers, etc.)
- EMT/Paramedicine
- Orthopedics and Sports Medicine
- Pediatrics

If you have any questions, please email [Jaron Caffrey](mailto:Jaron.Caffrey). We look forward to helping students learn more about the rewarding careers available in the health care industry!

--*Jaron Caffrey*

De-Escalation Techniques to Address Workplace Violence – AHA Webinar Aug. 13

The American Hospital Association is hosting a webinar on Reducing Risk through Response from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Aug. 13. The session will explore strategies and proven de-escalation techniques tailored to the unique challenges of health care settings. Security and de-escalation training experts will share techniques to provide all levels of health care staff with the confidence needed to prevent violent confrontations among patients, family members and visitors.

Attendees will learn:

- Environmental factors that can influence escalation.
- How to train staff and security teams in situational awareness.
- Key verbal and non-verbal communication techniques to defuse aggression.
- Real examples of successful de-escalation in hospitals.
- Physical defense that is actionable and practical.

[Click to Register](#)

--*Karen Braman*

KONL Logo Contest

The Kansas Organization of Nurse Leaders is launching a logo design contest to create a new, modern, professional and recognizable logo that reflects KONL's mission to support nurse leaders across Kansas. KONL invites designers, students, health care professionals and members of the community to submit their creative ideas. Entries should be submitted to KONL-Logo@outlook.com by Dec. 31.

Contest timeline:

- Submission deadline: Dec 31, 2025
- Judging period: Jan. 1 - Jan. 31, 2026
- Winner announcement: February 2026, with logo unveiling during the 2026 KONL Spring Conference in April 2026

For eligibility details, design requirements, criteria and prize information, see the detailed [KONL Logo Design Contest guidelines](#). For questions or more information, contact Robert Mangold, KONL president, at rmangold@lchoakley.com or (785) 672-8157.

--Karen Braman

Health Observances and Recognition Days for August Month-Long Observances

- Breastfeeding Month (National)
- Children's Eye Health and Safety Month
- Digestive Tract Paralysis Awareness Month
- Eye Exam Month (National)
- Gastroparesis Awareness Month
- Immunization Awareness Month (National)
- Minority Donor Awareness Month (National)
- Neurosurgery Awareness Month
- Psoriasis Action Month
- Spinal Muscular Atrophy Awareness Month
- Summer Sun Safety Month

Week-Long Observances

- Aug. 1-7 – Breastfeeding Week (World)
- Aug. 3-9 – Health Center Week (National)
- Aug. 12-18 – OSHA's Safe and Sound Week

Recognition Days | Events

- Aug. 1 – Lung Cancer Day (World) and Minority Donor Awareness Day (National)
- Aug. 18 – Breast Cancer Research Day (World)
- Aug. 19 – Humanitarian Day (World)
- Aug. 31 – Overdose Awareness Day (International) and Physician Family Day (not to be confused with Family Physician Day celebrated in May)

The Kansas Hospital Association and the Society for Healthcare Strategy and Market Development are pleased to bring you the [2025 Calendar of Health Observances & Recognition Days](#). Yet another example of our commitment to providing health care strategists with practical, timely resources, this calendar is designed to help you plan your community health events, internal and external communications, social media campaigns and more. The calendar is easy to navigate, interactive and features more than 230 health observances and recognition days. Don't miss out on receiving calendar updates from SHSMD sponsor Baldwin Publishing. Not only do they provide you with a Health Observance Guide with ALL the content you need to post every day for the following month, but they also give access to healthy recipes, cooking videos, branded cookbooks, recipe calendars, wellness content and solutions.

--Jan Fenwick

Federal and National News

CMS: 2.8 Million Potentially Enrolled in Multiple Medicaid, Marketplace Plans

Because of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' effort to stop waste, fraud and abuse, a recent analysis of enrollment data identified 2.8 million Americans who either [enrolled](#) in Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program in multiple states or simultaneously enrolled in both Medicaid/CHIP and a subsidized Marketplace plan.

CMS will now take action to ensure these individuals are enrolled in only one program, preventing them from receiving multiple subsidies for health coverage.

MLN Connects Provider eNews Available

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

- [2025 Quality Conference Highlights](#)
- [July 2025 Provider Specific Data for Public Use Files](#)