American Hospital Association™

Advancing Health in America

2026

THE VALUE OF **AHA MEMBERSHIP**

We are deeply committed to the work of **hospitals** and **health systems** and the **patients** you serve.

Healthcare is at a critical point in this country. The issue of affordability has never been more real for patients. It is shaping the policy debate, along with questions about care accessibility. The AHA is ensuring that hospitals are leading these conversations, while conveying the very real threats that loom because of policy changes, a sicker population, workforce challenges and other issues.

We are proud to represent your interests. And we depend on the collective strength that comes from your membership. Together, we made significant progress this year, and we look forward to accomplishing more in 2027.



AHA Board Chairs past, present and future. From left: **Tina Freese Decker**, immediate past chair; **Bill Gassen**, chair-elect; **Laura Kaiser**, chair-elect designate; and **Marc Boom**, M.D., AHA chair



Stacey Hughes, AHA executive vice president of government relations and public policy, says healthcare conversations can unite all stakeholders. "There's more opportunity for bipartisan solutions. These members [of Congress] really care about their constituencies, their hospitals, and their ability to access care."

"AHA has always been at its best when it operates just like the hospitals it serves: doors wide open — ready to meet the challenges that come through it."
AHA President and CEO **Steve Walsh**



VOICES FROM THE FIELD

"This is really an opportunity to come together in a way that we've never done before. Every hospital, every health system in America should be a fully engaged member of the AHA, now more than ever."

AHA Board Member **Brian Peters**, CEO, Michigan Health & Hospital Association

PRESSING YOUR CASE AND PRESENTING SOLUTIONS



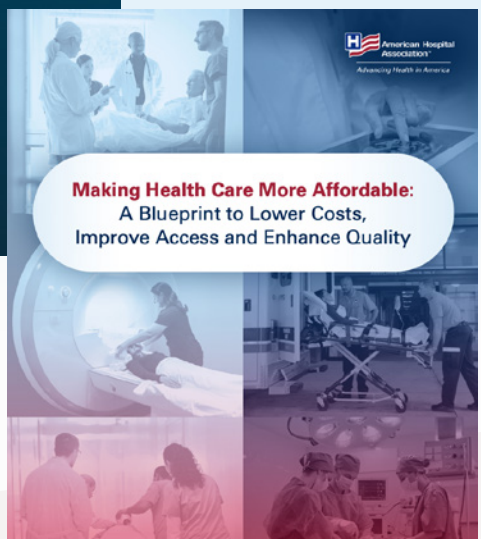
In March testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee's hearing on lowering health costs, then-AHA President and CEO **Rick Pollack** recommended, among other solutions, expanding preventive care access, reforming medical malpractice laws, standardizing administrative processes across insurers and accelerating adoption of AI tools to reduce documentation burdens.

In April, AHA Chair **Marc Boom**, M.D., president and CEO of Houston Methodist, spoke at Politico's Health Care Summit on the issue of affordability and shared how providers and payers can collaborate to remove administrative waste and complexity from the system.



"We believe we can come to the table and work together on these things. I believe there's a multipronged approach and we would like to work very carefully and closely with partners around prevention and wellness."

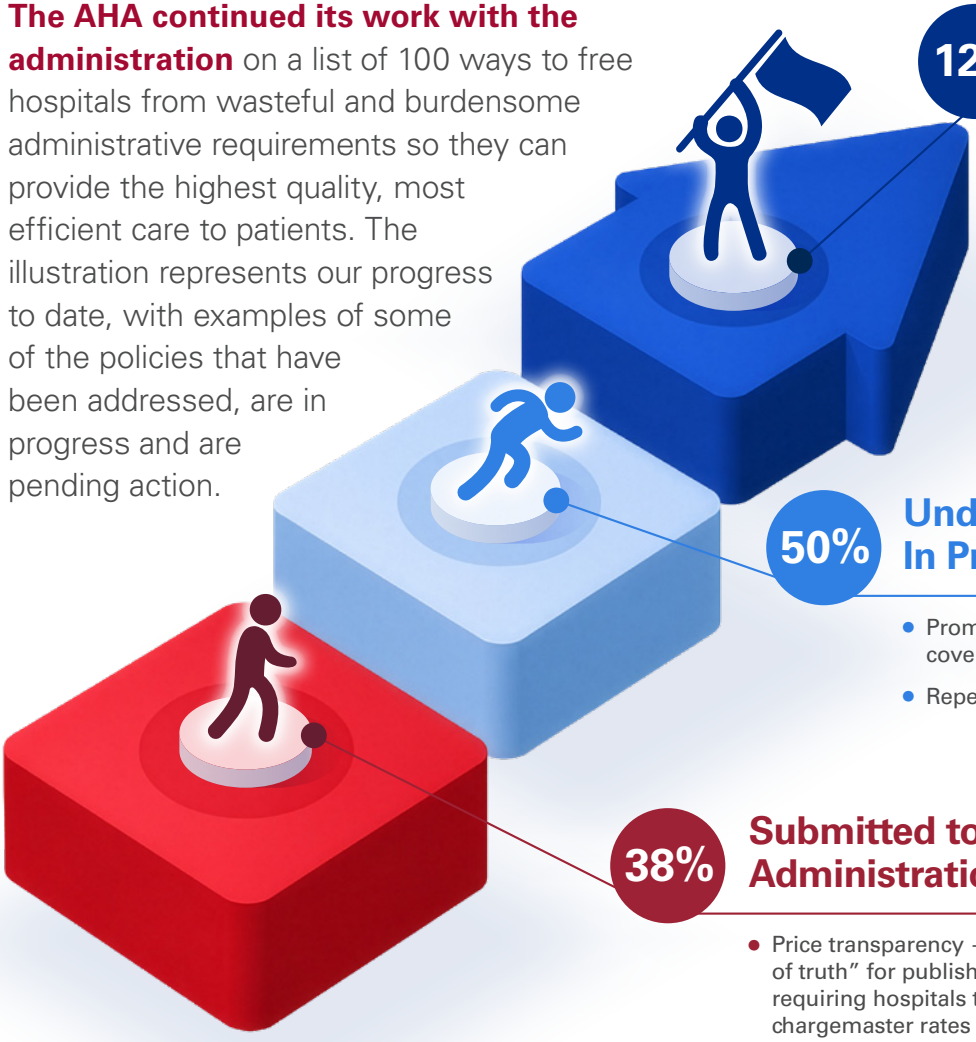




In June, AHA released a new report on healthcare affordability, which offered five key strategies for addressing costs, access and quality. The report was produced with input gathered throughout the year from AHA members across the country.

ADDRESSING ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS THAT LIMIT ACCESS TO CARE

The AHA continued its work with the administration on a list of 100 ways to free hospitals from wasteful and burdensome administrative requirements so they can provide the highest quality, most efficient care to patients. The illustration represents our progress to date, with examples of some of the policies that have been addressed, are in progress and are pending action.



12% Accomplished

- Standardized claims attachment electronic standard
- Repeal of lab-developed test final rule
- Removal of COVID-19 vaccination measures
- Repeal of the nursing home staffing rule
- Streamlined Medicare appeals — upload of medical record when claim filed

50% Under Consideration/ In Progress

- Prompt pay requirements for all forms of coverage
- Repeal of respiratory illness data reporting CoP

38% Submitted to Administration

- Price transparency — making insurers "source of truth" for publishing the negotiated rates and requiring hospitals to post cash price and chargemaster rates
- Eliminate unnecessary 42 CFR Part 2 requirements



Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Administrator **Mehmet Oz**, M.D., and CMS Deputy Administrator and Director of Medicaid and CHIP **Dan Brillman** discuss the agency's priorities with AHA Chair-elect **Bill Gassen** at the AHA Annual Meeting.

CALLING ON COMMERCIAL INSURERS TO PUT PATIENTS FIRST

We continue to highlight the need to address certain health plan practices that threaten patient access to care and drive excessive administrative costs and burden in the healthcare system.

The AHA has been a strong supporter of the **Medicare Advantage Improvement Act**, bipartisan and bicameral legislation that offers reforms to curb harmful MA plan practices. And we are pressing CMS to hold commercial insurers to their **pledge** to reform prior authorization processes.



According to the national survey conducted by Morning Consult from May 22-24:

- Voters primarily say **corporate health insurance companies (47%) are most responsible for rising healthcare costs in the United States**, followed by the federal government (36%) and drug companies (34%).
- 79% of voters are concerned about **corporate health insurers denying or delaying doctor-ordered treatments.**
- 84% believe **corporate health insurers have too much control over medical decisions.**



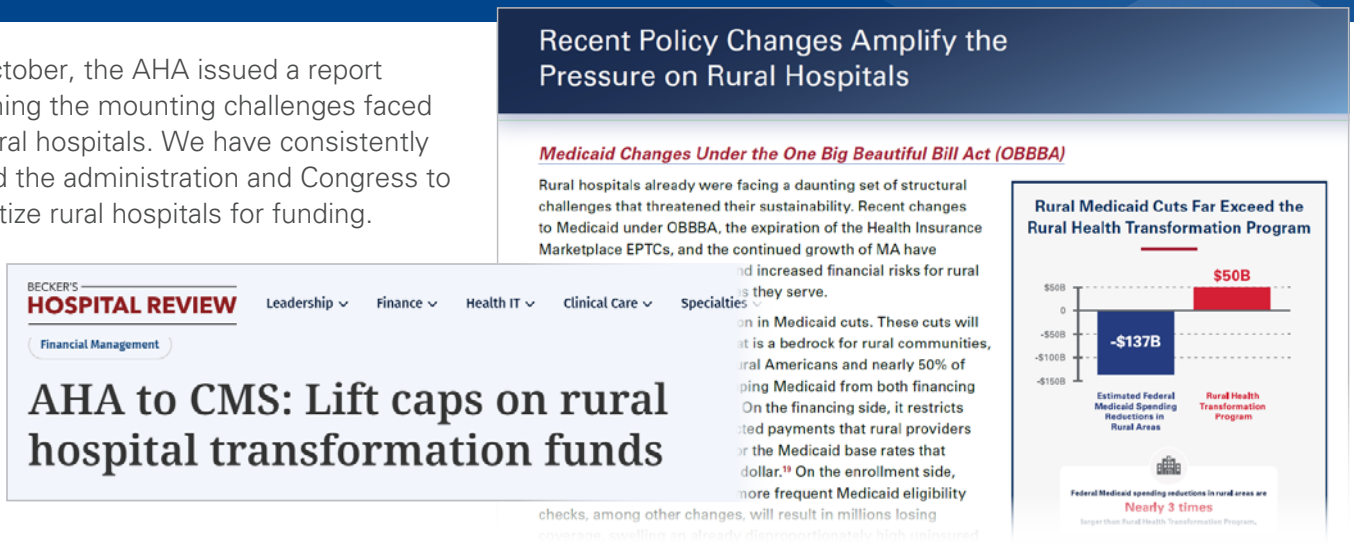
COALITION TO STRENGTHEN AMERICA'S HEALTHCARE
PROTECTING 24/7 CARE

As a founding member of the Coalition to Strengthen America's Healthcare, the AHA has provided vital support to its work to elevate awareness of commercial plan abuses.

TAKING ON CHALLENGES THAT REFLECT THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF OUR FIELD

ADVOCATING FOR RURAL HOSPITALS

In October, the AHA issued a report outlining the mounting challenges faced by rural hospitals. We have consistently urged the administration and Congress to prioritize rural hospitals for funding.



Recent Policy Changes Amplify the Pressure on Rural Hospitals

Medicaid Changes Under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)

Rural hospitals already were facing a daunting set of structural challenges that threatened their sustainability. Recent changes to Medicaid under OBBBA, the expiration of the Health Insurance Marketplace EPTCs, and the continued growth of MA have d increased financial risks for rural s they serve. n in Medicaid cuts. These cuts will t is a bedrock for rural communities, ral Americans and nearly 50% of ping Medicaid from both financing On the financing side, it restricts ted payments that rural providers r the Medicaid base rates that dollar.[19] On the enrollment side, ore frequent Medicaid eligibility checks, among other changes, will result in millions losing

Rural Medicaid Cuts Far Exceed the Rural Health Transformation Program

$50B

-$137B

$50B
0
-$50B
-$100B
-$150B

Estimated Federal Medicaid Spending Reductions in Rural Areas

Rural Health Transformation Program

Federal Medicaid spending reductions in rural areas are

Nearly 3 times

BECKER'S HOSPITAL REVIEW

Leadership Finance Health IT Clinical Care Specialties

Financial Management

AHA to CMS: Lift caps on rural hospital transformation funds

STRENGTHENING LONG-TERM CARE



Jim Prister, president and CEO of RML Specialty Hospital, leads a panel discussion on post-acute issues at the AHA Annual Meeting.

The AHA supports the needs of our 3,300 post-acute care members with focused advocacy and policy development. In 2026, we led a call to strengthen long-term care delivery with specific proposals addressing payment, access and harmful Medicare Advantage practices.

Healthcare PURCHASING NEWS

PATIENT SATISFACTION

AHA and Other Organizations Announce Release of Reform Policy Principles for Long-Term Care Hospitals

The groups are urging Congress to set up vital reforms to keep LTCHs running at peak levels of efficiency and effectiveness.

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

"The American Hospital Association is an ecosystem that exists to support us. And as we work together, we have a powerful voice to shape our future, to empower us, whether we're a critical access hospital, a DSH hospital, a system of care, whether it's rural or urban, to be empowered, to make a difference."

AHA Board Member **Bob Trestman**, M.D., senior vice president and chair of Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine, Carilion Clinic


The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Letter to the Editor

Tax-exempt hospitals pay enormous dividends

All of America's hospitals provide a comprehensive range of benefits, programs and essential services to their communities. For example, we quantify the contributions of **nonprofit** hospitals to the communities they serve and are pushing back on administrative and financial burdens being proposed in legislation that would impact nearly two-thirds of all hospitals.

SHARING INSIGHTS TO ADVANCE HEALTH





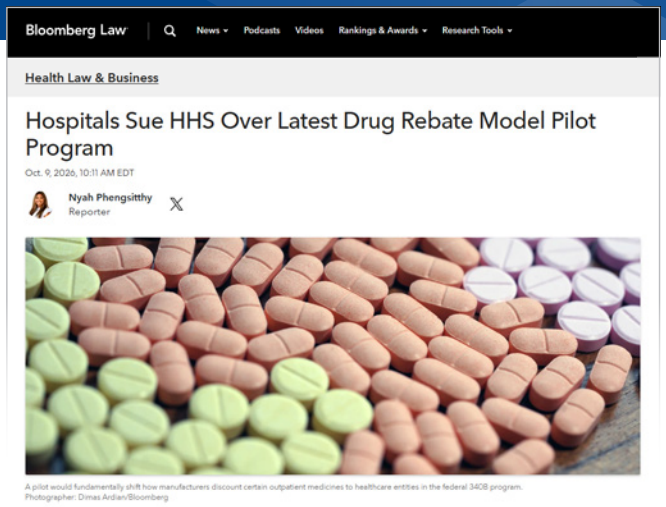
Peer-driven resources and information to advance behavioral health are a priority for the AHA, including a discussion with **John Santopietro**, M.D., senior vice president of Hartford HealthCare, to discuss the work of its behavioral health network and initiatives to recruit behavioral health professionals.



A three-part series spotlights strategies that can improve the physical, mental and social health of patients throughout pregnancy, infancy and beyond.

PROTECTING THE 340B PROGRAM

The AHA, the Maine Hospital Association and four safety-net health systems in October filed a lawsuit challenging changes by HHS to the 340B Drug Pricing Program that would expand the use of a proposed rebate model previously halted by the courts. The AHA said HHS' proposed rebate mechanism would divert resources that 340B hospitals currently use for patient care toward higher upfront drug costs and new administrative burdens.


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Health Law & Business

Hospitals Sue HHS Over Latest Drug Rebate Model Pilot Program

Oct. 9, 2026, 10:11 AM EDT

Nyah Phengsitthy
Reporter

A pilot would fundamentally shift how manufacturers discount certain outpatient medicines to healthcare entities in the federal 340B program.
Photographer: Dimas Ardian/Bloomberg

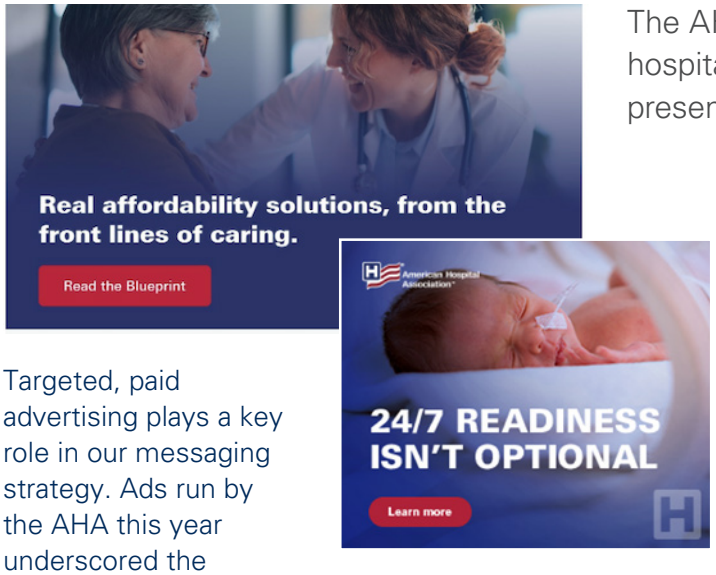
TELLING YOUR STORY



The AHA shares stories across our communications platforms that highlight how hospitals work every day to ensure access to care, build healthier communities, innovate and improve quality, prevent disease and encourage wellness, and support a strong local workforce.

Visit AHA's **Telling the Hospital Story** webpage for hundreds of examples from hospitals across the country, as well as tools and resources to tell your hospital's story in your community.

SERVING AS A NATIONAL VOICE



The AHA is proud to serve as the national voice for hospitals and health systems and uses its position to present the field's view via national media.

Targeted, paid advertising plays a key role in our messaging strategy. Ads run by the AHA this year underscored the crucial role of hospitals in delivering high-quality care for all patients every day of the year, and appeared in influential publications including **The Washington Post** and **Politico**.



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

A MESSAGE FROM AMERICA'S HOSPITALS & HEALTH SYSTEMS

Hospitals are Here for Patients: Making Care More Accessible and Affordable

Hospitals are the heart of communities across America for one fundamental reason: They support patients whenever, wherever and however they need care.

Whether it's a routine checkup, a sudden emergency, or specialized treatment for complex conditions, hospitals and health systems are built around a mission of service to patients and communities. This commitment is not limited to moments of crisis. It extends across a patient's

Rick Pollack
President and CEO American Hospital Association

Innovation plays a major role as well. Hospitals and health systems are adopting technologies such as telehealth, remote monitoring, and digital patient tools to make care more convenient and cost effective for patients. Electronic health records and data-driven care models help clinicians identify risks earlier, reduce duplication of tests, and coordinate treatment more seamlessly. These improvements lead to better

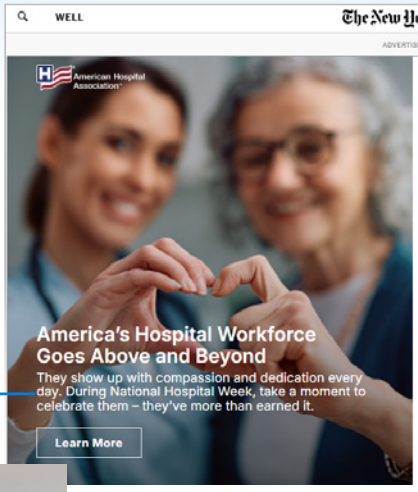


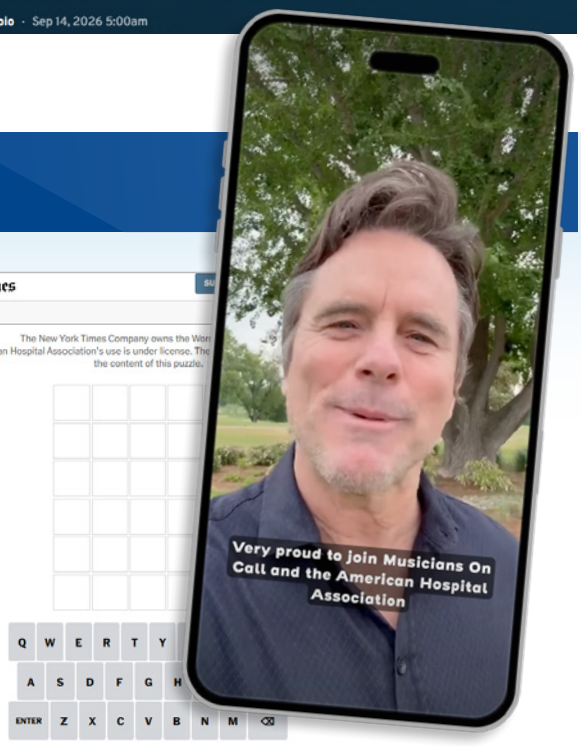
We use data and expert analysis to produce and amplify reports that document the challenges faced by members. The **Costs of Caring** report, released in March, underscored the financial strains experienced by the field. In September, a report by Kaufman Hall provided a strong argument that hospital M&A activities need to be evaluated on impacts beyond pricing, most significantly the impacts on the majority of patients, as well as consequences if an M&A transaction is not allowed to proceed.

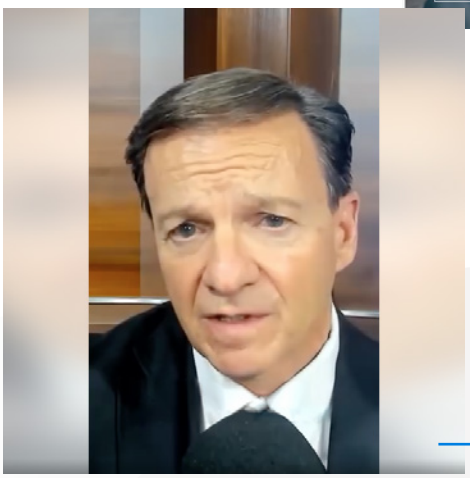


ENGAGING AUDIENCES ACROSS PLATFORMS

National Hospital Week provides an opportunity to celebrate your work. In 2026 a special Wordle in **The New York Times** and social shout-outs from musicians including **Charles Esten** were highlights.







ADVANCINGHEALTH
A podcast by the American Hospital Association

The AHA's award-winning podcast, **Advancing Health**, available on Apple Podcasts and Spotify, shines a light on the most pressing healthcare issues, such as a discussion of cyber threats with **John Riggi**, AHA's national advisor for cybersecurity and risk.

CONVENINGS OFFER TIME FOR INSIGHTS AND CONNECTION

The AHA's national meetings bring together members, thought leaders and other key stakeholders to share ideas, concerns and solutions to the challenges faced by the field.



AHA senior leaders **Stacey Hughes**, **Ashley Thompson** and **Chad Golder** reviewed advocacy priorities and the political landscape at the AHA Leadership Summit in July.



At the AHA Annual Meeting, Rep. **Richard Neal**, D-Mass., commented on the crucial role hospitals play in their communities.

"People see hospitals like the neighborhood library, or a fire station — they think that when they need it, it's there for them," said Neal. "And I think that has to be part of the national conversation as we go forward."



Claire Zengerle, AHA senior vice president and chief nurse officer, welcomed more than 5,300 attendees to the annual conference of AHA's American Organization for Nursing Leaders.

"You are here to connect, to learn, to grow in your nursing leadership practice with people who share the same wins and challenges."

At the Leadership Summit, health system CEOs including **Tina Freese Decker**, Corewell Health; **Michael Slubowski**, Trinity Health; **Amy Perry**, Banner Health; and **Erik Wexler**, Providence, discussed the imperative to innovate at scale and support the workforce. "The needs of the front line need to be at the forefront," said Wexler.





AHA Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer **Michelle Hood** introduces a session on Reimagining Care Delivery at the Leadership Summit.

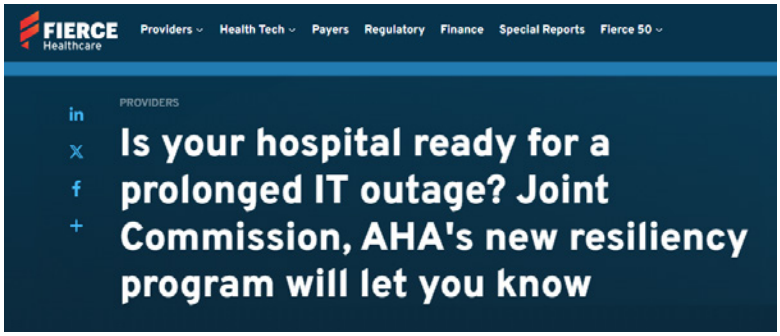
The Leadership Summit provided an opportunity to recognize incoming AHA President and CEO **Steve Walsh**, who took over leadership of the AHA in the fall. Walsh spoke to conference attendees, calling it a "once-in-a-lifetime honor" to be named AHA's president and CEO.



"Our hospitals and health systems don't just save lives; they embody their community, the innovation and the brave sort of hope that have defined the American dream for centuries," Walsh said. "No sector is better equipped to write the next chapter of healthcare in our nation, and I am grateful for the trust that has been placed in me to help push that mission forward."

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES FUEL THE WORK OF THE TEAMS THAT KEEP YOUR ORGANIZATION RUNNING

STRENGTHENING CYBERSECURITY



A new Cybersecurity Resilience Readiness program co-developed by the AHA and Joint Commission helps hospitals assess and strengthen their ability to sustain safe clinical operations during extended technology outages.

ADDRESSING DISPARITIES IN HEALTH OUTCOMES

Disparities in health outcomes cost nearly $320 billion in annual healthcare spending. A new AHA resource guide outlines approaches for using data to identify and address priorities.



RESOURCES FOR TRUSTEES

AHA's Trustee Services provides the resources, education and tools to help trustees oversee strategy, quality, stewardship and more. Topics addressed in 2026 included what boards should know about cyber threats, best practices for board orientation, the importance of capacity management and the value of care redesign.



VOICES FROM THE FIELD

"I had no idea until I leaned in to the American Hospital Association the value that's in our membership. The advocacy, of course, but also the services that we can get as we're working on process improvement efforts. There are so many resources for us to take advantage of."

AHA Board Member **Leah Glasgo**, president, UnityPoint Health-Fort Dodge

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUR TEAMS

The AHA's **Professional Membership Groups** provide role-based resources, research, templates, best practices and peer networks for more than 26,000 members across six specialized healthcare communities supporting critical hospital functions: facilities, supply chain, risk management, environmental services, strategy and marketing, and capacity management.

This year, these professional groups engaged more than 28,000 learners through conferences, education and professional development.



AHE Association for the Health Care Environment

ASHE Optimizing health care facilities

HCMC Hospital Capacity Management Consortium

AHRMM Advancing Health Care through Supply Chain Excellence

ASHRM American Society for Health Care Risk Management

SHSMD Society for Health Care Strategy & Market Development

ADVANCING WORKPLACE SAFETY

10 YEARS Hospitals Against Violence #HAVhope

June 5, 2026, marked the 10th anniversary of #HAVhope Friday, a national day of awareness highlighting how America's hospitals and health systems prevent violence in their workplaces and communities. The #HAVhope website offers information, highlights of key projects from 10 years of #HAVhope and engagement tools to support hospitals' efforts to create a safer environment for workers and patients. The website also tells how to support the Save Healthcare Workers Act (H.R. 3178/S.1600), a bipartisan bill making it a federal crime to assault hospital workers.

LEANING INTO THE PROMISE OF THE FUTURE

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS



The **AHA Next Generation Leaders Fellowship** is a program designed to empower healthcare leaders to bring about lasting change in the hospital and health systems in which they serve.

More than 200 emerging leaders have participated in the program since its launch in 2020.

NATIONAL ACCELERATOR TO ADVANCE PATIENT SAFETY

West Health Accelerator at AHA's Health Research & Educational Trust, supported by a $12 million commitment from West Health, is designed to turn innovation into everyday practice by helping hospitals adopt and scale technology-enabled solutions that improve patient care, safety and operational performance. The national accelerator concentrates on three priority areas where technology can deliver measurable improvement at scale: electronic health record optimization, virtual care, and artificial intelligence utilization and integration.



westhealth Accelerator
at AHA's Health Research & Educational Trust

Nationalaccelerator.org

"We're looking for the intersection of problems that our members across AHA have solved using tech-enabled solutions, and helping connect them to people who have similar problems," **Chris DeRienzo**, M.D., senior vice president and chief physician executive at the AHA.

IMPORTANT 2027 DATES



Rural Healthcare Leadership Conference

Jan. 31-Feb. 3, 2027 • Orlando, Fla.

The premier event for rural leaders who want to exchange ideas and learn best practices for a more sustainable future.

ruralconference.aha.org



AHA Annual Membership Meeting

April 18-20, 2027 • Washington, D.C.

Join CEOs, senior executives and trustees to be a part of the discussions on the advocacy, regulatory and legislative issues that impact our work.

annualmeeting.aha.org



Healthier Together Conference

May 4-6, 2027 • Anaheim, Calif.

Data-driven strategies and innovative approaches to expand care access, strengthen community partnerships and reduce disparities in health outcomes are the focus of this new conference.

healthiertogether.aha.org



AHA Leadership Summit

July 18-20, 2027 • San Diego

Where senior hospital executives and thought leaders share transformational strategies and innovative approaches that will drive healthcare into the future.

leadershipsummit.aha.org

American Hospital Association™

Advancing Health in America

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