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Durbin, Hospital Leaders Release Report on HEAL Initiative

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin was joined today by hospital leaders and Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA) President and CEO A.J. Wilhelmi to unveil the [five-year report](#) of the Chicago HEAL Initiative. Launched in 2018 by Senator Durbin and 10 of the largest hospitals serving Chicago, the HEAL Initiative is a collaboration to address the root causes of gun violence through economic, health, and community projects in 18 of Chicago's neighborhoods with the highest rates of violence, poverty, and health disparities.

"The HEAL initiative is a shining example of what can be accomplished when hospitals and community leaders come together, and work in earnest to facilitate positive change," said Wilhelmi. "IHA is honored to be a part of this collaboration and we applaud Senator Durbin and our 10 health systems for creating the blueprint for this vital work to address violence and reduce disparities in communities across the city of Chicago."

"This year's HEAL report showcases the resilience of our communities and the progress we have made together. Through these strategic partnerships, we can change lives, heal wounds, and build a nation where every individual lives free from the fear of gun violence. I salute the IHA and the ten hospital systems for their commitment, and will continue to pursue additional federal resources to advance their lifesaving work," said Durbin.

The HEAL report highlights efforts to collaborate around four main topics: local hiring; school/community programs; trauma/violence recovery programs; and data sharing. As part of today's report, Durbin also announced \$4.35 million in new federal funding to support these hospital-led efforts to break the cycle of violence through community programs.

"From providing vital funding for the collaboration between UChicago Medicine's Violence Recovery Program and Metropolitan Peace Initiatives, to sparking the launch of Southland RISE (Resilience Initiative to Strengthen and Empower), Senator Durbin's Chicago HEAL Initiative has inspired the creative and strategic approaches required to address the causes and devastating effects of gun violence," said Tom Jackiewicz, President of the University of Chicago Health System. "We are grateful for Senator Durbin's sustained leadership and support on this critical issue and look forward to continued partnership in bringing meaningful change to the South Side communities that we serve."

Among other highlights, in calendar year 2023, the hospitals:

- Hired 4,402 new employees from the 18 focus neighborhoods (a 50% increase compared to the launch of HEAL in 2018).
- Provided 4,403 local students with summer employment, pipeline, or apprenticeship programs (a 31% increase from last year).
- Partnered with 253 Chicago Public Schools (a 20% increase from last year), including operating 16 school-based health clinics/mobile health units that served 7,599 students.

- Provided 2,614 victims of violence with ongoing trauma-informed case management and recovery programs (a 43% increase since 2018).

The 10 hospitals initially involved in Chicago HEAL include Advocate Health; Ascension Saints Mary and Elizabeth Medical Centers; Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago; Cook County Health and Hospital System; Loyola University Medical Center; Northwestern Memorial Hospital; Rush University Medical Center; Sinai Health System; University of Chicago Medical Center; and University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences Systems.

National Nurses Week Is May 6-12

National Nurses Week provides a special opportunity to offer our gratitude to each nurse who tirelessly and selflessly cares for Illinois patients each and every day. Today, May 6, is National Nurses Day. We salute the dedication of Illinois nurses, recognize their compassionate service and thank them for their extraordinary contributions, which improve the lives and health of those across Illinois.

This year's theme, "Nurses Make the Difference," honors the incredible nurses who embody the spirit of compassion and care in every healthcare setting.

In honor of National Nurses Week, the American Nurses Association is illuminating the spirit of nursing excellence by lighting up landmarks across the country, including the Wrigley Building in Chicago. The "#NursesLightUpTheSky" campaign is designed to rally citizens across the country in support of nurses.

You can find related information and resources about the annual celebration by [clicking here](#).

HNI to Host Panel on the State of Nursing on May 13

On May 13, from noon-1 p.m. CT, Health News Illinois (HNI) will host a virtual panel discussion titled, "State of Nursing in Illinois."

According to HNI, the state of nursing care remains one of the most discussed issues facing Illinois' healthcare sector, whether it is a nursing shortage cited by providers or the challenges nurses say they face trying to provide care to patients. State and national policymakers have taken steps to address the workforce, from increasing openings at nursing schools to providing more funding to support the industry.

HNI panelists will discuss the nursing landscape in Illinois and what steps are needed to strengthen the sector. Panelists include:

- Sen. Lakesia Collins, D-Chicago
- Ron Nunziato, Senior Director of Policy and Regulatory Affairs, Health Care Council of Illinois
- Monique Reed, Independence Foundation Professor of Nursing Education, Rush University College of Nursing
- Michael Mutterer, Interim President and CEO, Silver Cross Hospital

For more information or to register, [click here](#).

IDPH Urges Public to Protect Against Ticks, Lyme Disease

May is [National Lyme Disease Awareness Month](#). With weather warming up, the Illinois Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) is urging the public to get educated about how to protect themselves from ticks and Lyme disease—an infection that sickens an estimated 500,000 people each year in the U.S.

IDPH has teamed up with the with the Illinois Natural History Survey to create an interactive [Tick Surveillance Map](#) that documents the counties in Illinois where the different tick species have been confirmed as well as the diseases they may carry. For more information about tick removal and symptom awareness, [click here](#).

In addition to Lyme disease, other serious tickborne diseases include Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Tularemia, Ehrlichiosis

and Babesiosis. Some tickborne illnesses can be life threatening. [Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever](#) is particularly dangerous and may cause death as quickly as five days after symptom onset.

If you are a clinician, [click here](#) for more information about Lyme Disease and [click here](#) for more information about Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

Central Illinois ACHE Chapter Education Day on May 8

The Central Illinois Chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) will hold its spring education day this Wednesday, May 8, at the Jump Trading Simulation & Education Center in Peoria.

The agenda will feature three panel presentations on patient throughput, healthcare consumerism, and data and advanced analytics.

Participants will receive 1.5 ACHE Face-to-Face Education Credits for each panel presentation (4.5 hours for the full day). The \$45 registration fee includes continental breakfast, lunch and the opportunity to interface with other healthcare leaders.

Participants do not have to be an ACHE member to attend. [Click here](#) for more information or contact Phillip.I.Baer@osfhealthcare.org.

COVID-19 Information

The Illinois Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) has launched a weekly [Infectious Respiratory Disease Surveillance Dashboard](#) that will be updated weekly on Friday. This report provides the public with the latest data on hospital visits, seasonal trends, lab test positivity and demographic data.

[Click here](#) to visit the IDPH COVID-19 resources webpage. IDPH will continue to report the weekly number of people with COVID-19 admitted to hospitals from emergency departments, deaths and vaccinations, with COVID-19, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus information also reported through the dashboard of the [Illinois Wastewater Surveillance System](#).

Briefly Noted

The Illinois House of Representative and Illinois Senate return to Springfield this week, with the House gaveling in today and Senate lawmakers resuming business tomorrow. Last Friday, May 3, was the House and Senate committee deadline for bills originating in the opposite chamber; however, many bills received deadline extensions. May 17 is the third reading deadline for bills originating in the opposite chamber, and the scheduled adjournment deadline is May 24.

Leading the News

Democrats flex muscle to kick off final month of session as revenues remain on track

Capitol News Illinois [reported](#) (5/3) that, "With about three weeks to go before the Illinois General Assembly is scheduled to adjourn its spring legislative session, supermajority Democrats showed their strength this week as fiscal forecasters noted state revenues remain on track."

27 hospitals, health systems cutting jobs

Becker's Hospital Review [reported](#) (5/3) that, "A number of hospitals and health systems are reducing their workforces or jobs due to financial and operational challenges."

A common liver disease with an unfortunate name gets a rebrand

AXIOS [reported](#) (5/6) that, "A common liver condition — non-alcoholic fatty liver disease — is in the midst of a rebrand. The name of the condition, which affects 1 in 4 U.S. adults, was officially changed by several medical societies in the last year, and is part of a broader effort to eliminate stigmatizing language from medicine."



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