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Saturday, April 9, 2022

### Today's headlines:

- [Grassley introduces bill to provide rural hospital support](#)
- [IHERF makes donation to hospital employees affected by tornadoes](#)
- [Urge federal legislators to support Iowa hospitals](#)
- [Gold medalist Paralympian to share story of triumphing over trauma](#)
- [CMS updates guidance on COVID-19 vaccine mandate for health care workers](#)
- [New COVID.gov website announced](#)
- [Medicare beneficiaries can receive free OTC COVID-19 tests](#)

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### **Grassley introduces bill to provide rural hospital support**

Sens. Chuck Grassley and Bob Casey (D-Pennsylvania) introduced a bipartisan bill to provide rural hospitals with financial stability and security.

The proposal seeks to permanently extend the Medicare-dependent hospital and low-volume hospital designations and establish a new rebasing year for sole

community hospitals and Medicare-dependent hospitals based on 2016 data. The proposal would prevent closures that would disrupt access to care for people in rural communities.

"These extender programs have an enormous financial impact on Iowa hospitals by providing funding for essential services and for hospitals to remain viable. These programs also allow hospitals to contribute to their communities through improvements to access to care, employing members of the community and using services from community businesses, both in and outside the health care sector. IHA is pleased to see Senator Grassley work on this important issue," said IHA CEO Chris Mitchell.

Click [HERE](#) to read more.

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### **IHERF makes donation to hospital employees affected by tornadoes**

The Iowa Hospital Education and Research Foundation has made a \$20,000 donation for two employees of [Madison County Health Care System](#), an affiliate of MercyOne, in Winterset. The donation will help the hospital employees recover after a March 6 tornado destroyed or damaged their homes and property.

"On behalf of our employees affected by the tornado, I would like to thank IHERF for their thoughtfulness and generosity," Marcia Hendricks, CEO of Madison County Health Care System, said. "This will significantly help both families with their rebuilding and recovery processes."

[IHEREF](#), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Iowa Hospital Association, is a charitable nonprofit organization. Its main function is the oversight of the health careers scholarship fund, but also provides disaster relief from floods, tornadoes and the 2020 derecho.

"One of IHERF's goals is to help Iowa hospital employees during difficult times," said Ed Smith, IHERF board chair and CEO of [St. Anthony Regional Hospital](#) in Carroll. "This donation can't bring back items lost or destroyed by the tornado, but it is our hope the funds will help them recover and rebuild."

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### **Urge federal legislators to support Iowa hospitals**

Members of Congress will be in their home districts for a two-week district work period. Members still haven't addressed critical issues dealing with COVID-19. That means Congress will likely resume discussions about a COVID-19 package when they return to Washington, D.C., giving Iowa hospital advocates the opportunity to speak to members of Congress at home.

Hospital and health system leaders are encouraged to speak with their lawmaker to make the case for the urgent need for more congressional support and relief to address a number of challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Issues leaders can discuss include:

- Labor and drug costs.
- Medicare sequester cuts.
- Reimbursement rates that do not match inflation.
- Revenue loss.
- Supply chain disruptions.
- Workforce shortage.

The American Hospital Association created message templates hospital and health system leaders can customize and use to contact lawmakers. Click [HERE](#) to read more.

Email [Erin Cubit](#) at IHA with questions.

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### **Gold medalist Paralympian to share story of triumphing over trauma**

[Andy Yohe](#), Iowa native and three-time Paralympian, will share his inspiring story of triumphing over trauma at the Iowa Trauma Coordinators Spring Conference.

Yohe will discuss his accident from 1993 and his recovery process. He also will share his journey to win back-to-back gold medals in the Paralympics. Participants will learn to:

- Describe personal stories of trauma care in the health care setting.
- Identify three things that helped achieve outcomes.
- Outline trauma recovery.

Other topics to be discussed include:

- Environmental-related deaths.
- Treating agricultural injuries and pediatric burns.
- Updates to Iowa's trauma system.

The conference is scheduled from 9:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Thursday, May 26.

Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Click [HERE](#) to register.

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### **CMS updates guidance on COVID-19 vaccine mandate for health care workers**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services released a memo and provider-specific guidance for complying with its interim final rule requiring COVID-19 vaccinations for workers in most health care settings, including hospitals and health systems, that participate in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. Although the memo specifically applies to Texas, the guidance and rules apply to all states.

Click [HERE](#) to read the memo and guidance.

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## **New COVID.gov website announced**

The Biden Administration is launching [COVID.gov](#), a new one-stop shop website. The website will help everyone in the U.S. better access lifesaving tools like vaccines, tests, treatments and masks and get the latest updates about COVID-19 in their areas.

People can easily find on the website the level of COVID-19 in their communities and access pharmacies and community health centers where people can get tested for COVID-19 and receive appropriate treatments if needed.

Click [HERE](#) to read more.

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## **Medicare beneficiaries can receive free OTC COVID-19 tests**

The Biden Administration announced more than 59 million Americans with Medicare Part B, including those enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan, now have access to FDA-approved, authorized or cleared over-the-counter COVID-19 tests at no cost.

People with Medicare can get up to eight tests per calendar month from participating pharmacies and health care providers for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency. This is the first time Medicare has covered an over-the-counter self-administered test at no cost to beneficiaries.

Pharmacies participating in the new initiative include:

- Albertsons Companies.
- Costco Pharmacy.
- CVS.
- Hy-Vee Pharmacy.
- Kroger Family of Pharmacies.
- Walgreens.

Click [HERE](#) for a full list of participating pharmacies and health care providers. People with Medicare can get additional information by calling 800-MEDICARE or by visiting:

- [COVID-19 Over-the-Counter Tests](#).
  - [COVID-19 Over-the-Counter Tests Fact Sheet](#).
  - [Medicare and Coronavirus](#).
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## **NewsStand**

### **Iowa news**

- [MercyOne's Carreon recognized as a 'Chief Medical Executive to Know'](#)
- [Reynolds launches \\$100M fund for community projects](#)
- [A lack of EMTs in Iowa leads to less](#)

### **National news**

- [Companies that could be negatively affecting Americans' health](#)
- [Advisers to FDA weigh in on updated COVID-19 boosters](#)
- [CDC mask guidelines spur](#)

Click [HERE](#) to read daily NewsStand postings.

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## Upcoming events

- [Understanding Hospital Board and Medical Staff Responsibilities Under Medicare COPs](#): Tuesday, April 12
- [Iowa Association for Healthcare Quality Spring Conference](#): Wednesday, April 13
- [Iowa Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration Spring Conference](#): Thursday, April 14
- [Delegate More to Achieve More](#): Tuesday, April 19
- [Home Health Value-Based Purchasing Plan - The New, the Old and the Success!](#): Tuesday, April 19.
- [IHA Governance Forum](#): Friday, April 22 - Saturday, April 23
- [Exploring Social Determinants of Health Data](#): Thursday, April 28
- [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Health Care](#): Monday, May 2 - Monday, Sept. 12
- [Creating Successes: IHA's Summer Series for Health Care Leaders](#): Tuesday, May 3 - Tuesday, Aug. 16
- [Foundation Professionals for Iowa Hospitals Spring Conference](#): Tuesday, May 3
- [Iowa Society for Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations Conference](#): Wednesday, May 4
- [Iowa Organization for Nursing Leadership Conference](#): Tuesday, May 10
- [Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act \(EMTALA\) Series](#): Wednesday, May 11 - Wednesday, May 25
- [2022 IHA Governance Webinar Series](#): Tuesday, May 17 - Tuesday, Nov. 15
- [Iowa Society of Healthcare Attorneys Conference](#): Thursday, May 19
- [2022 IHA Employment Law Four-Part Virtual Series](#): Tuesday, May 24 - Tuesday, Aug. 16
- [Celebrate Everything](#): Wednesday, May 25
- [Iowa Trauma Coordinators Spring Conference](#): Thursday, May 26
- [Behavioral Health Affiliate of Iowa Conference](#): Thursday, June 16
- [Workplace Violence Program Workshop](#): Thursday, June 30 - Thursday, Aug. 18

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## Hospital jobs site connects hospitals with qualified candidates

Are you looking for qualified health care professionals for your Iowa hospital? [HospitalCareers.com](#) can help. This website connects thousands of nurses, providers and other hospital jobseekers with Iowa hospitals each year and is a main resource for jobseekers looking for work in health care.



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