

UHA, Utah Hospitals & Health  
Systems Association



2009 Annual Report to the Membership

Dear Friends of Utah's hospitals,

This year was a time of great challenge and change for Utah's hospitals. As a historic debate on healthcare reform unfolded in Washington, Utah's hospitals faced significant challenges with Medicaid funding, H1N1 influenza and decreasing patient volumes due to the dismal economic climate.

Despite these concerns, Utah's hospitals rose to the challenge, working cooperatively with public health and other UHA members to meet community needs. UHA members have also worked together to offer their expertise to healthcare reform discussions taking place at the state level.



The Association divided its work for 2009 into the following areas of focus:

- Representation and Advocacy;
- Access and Coverage;
- Workforce Shortages, Recruitment and Retention;
- Data and Health Information Technology
- Financing;
- Patient Safety and Quality of Care;
- Member Communication and Public Affairs; and
- Emergency Preparedness.

The following pages highlight the advancements made in these priority areas in the past year by the Association. The work in many of these areas will continue into 2010 and beyond.

I wish to personally thank those members of UHA that served on our various task forces, committees and councils for 2009. Without your involvement, the Association could not move forward in advancing its priorities. We look forward to continued progress in 2010.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Krella". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Joseph M. Krella, President and CEO

## Representation and Advocacy

***UHA will successfully provide for its members legislative and regulatory leadership and advocacy at federal and state levels.***

- UHA successfully opposed a legislative proposal to impose a hospital tax.
- UHA successfully opposed a legislative proposal to cut hospital inpatient funding by over \$120 million (combined federal and state funds.) Unfortunately, the Legislature still implemented cuts of over \$25 million (combined federal and state funds) in the worst state budget year in decades.
- UHA took an active and leading role in the successful passage of three state health reform bills that reformed the insurance market, improved administrative simplification and improved state contracting with regard to health care insurance coverage.
- UHA also worked successfully to help pass emergency room tort reform for both hospitals and healthcare providers.
- UHA worked to successfully defeat hospital lien legislation as well as legislation that would have created a new private legal right to sue hospitals and health care providers over employment decisions.
- UHA has interacted consistently with Utah's Congressional delegation and their staff on federal health reform efforts and federal reimbursement issues. Utah's delegation regularly reaches out to UHA for our expertise and view on how federal health reform efforts will impact Utah's hospitals and health systems.
- UHA actively worked with the Legislature's Health Reform Task Force and working groups on crafting additional health reform legislation in Utah.
- UHA worked with a variety of organizations to effect positive legal tort reform in Utah.
- UHA staff gave numerous presentations on the state and federal health reform efforts as well as a variety of legislative issues.
- UHA hosted its annual Legislative Reception in January at Little America, allowing members to meet with legislators in an informal setting.
- UHA hosted Hospital Day at the Capitol on February 25<sup>th</sup>.
- UHA hosted its 2009 UTAH HOSPAC Golf Tournament at Thanksgiving Point on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. The tournament raised awareness and funds for UHA's political action committee.
- UHA staff worked with UDOH to resolve conflicts with the proposed reimbursement



- and contracts to obtain rural and University of Utah DSH payments.
- UHA staff met monthly with the Medicaid Program Task Force and reviewed issues and barriers with the Utah Dept. of Health and Dept. of Workforce Services. UHA staff monitored all Utah Medicaid State Plan Amendments pertaining to changes in eligibility and services.
- UHA staff monitored all administrative rule changes, Joint Commission regulations, and federal regulations and provided a monthly report to all hospitals.
- UHA provided public comments to the DOPL regarding Nurse Practice Act changes.
- UHA successfully defeated proposed changes to the birthing center rules to eliminate a transfer agreement.
- UHA monitored the mental health and substance abuse programs and the effect the increase in uninsured patients is having on emergency departments.
- UHA supported federal legislation to maintain savings for healthcare organizations through group purchasing programs.
- UHA met with Governor Herbert and Senate and House Leadership to find a solution with regard to the Medicaid inpatient funding reductions.
- UHA submitted written comments on a number of proposed CMS regulations.
- UHA worked with UDOH on STEMI and Stroke designation to eliminate the need for more regulations.
- UHA worked with UDOH to implement regulations for the Physician Order for Life Sustaining Treatment.
- UHA staff served on the Utah Substance Abuse and Violence sub-committee to advise the criminal justice system on regulations affecting hospitals.

## Access and Coverage

***UHA will review, discuss and provide options for reducing the number of uninsured Utahns.***

- UHA hosted a Self Care Summit in May to discuss the importance of self care and personal responsibility in achieving optimal health. The summit was convened as an activity of the Wellness and Collaboration sub-committee of the Vision 2010 effort.
- UHA staff members attended and provided input to the three community working groups meeting during the summer to discuss health care reform—1) Affordability and Access; 2) Transparency, Quality, Infrastructure, and 3) Oversight and Implementation. Recommendations from the three working groups will be fashioned into legislation for consideration in the 2010 session.



- UHA's Healthcare Coverage Coalition continued to meet on an ad hoc basis, reviewing Utah and national healthcare reform efforts.
- UHA staff served on the Utah Safety Net Steering committee to review resources for uninsured individuals.

## Workforce Shortages, Recruitment and Retention

***UHA will assist its members in addressing workforce-related issues through the UHA Workforce Committee and the Vision 2010 Initiative.***

- UHA presented four \$2,500 scholarships to outstanding students involved in Utah's Health Occupation Student Association (HOSA) chapter. The scholarships were presented at the Utah state HOSA Convention in March.
- UHA supported the Utah Medical Educational Council's Mid-level and Physician Job Fairs for 2009.
- UHA provided financial support for several student outreach/career fair activities throughout the state. In March, UHA provided financial support for a Salt Lake area career day at the Granite Technical Education Center. UHA further supported student outreach through activities of the Rural Health Center at Southern Utah University.
- UHA offered its online salary survey to interested rural hospitals for 2009.
- UHA offered the Northwest Regional Compensation Survey for executive level staff compensation information.
- UHA completed two member financial downturn surveys to determine the effects of the economy on hospital operations throughout the state and to assist in Medicaid messaging. The first survey was launched in February; the second survey was launched in late June.
- UHA, through members of the Workforce Committee and the UONL board, supported and assisted in the development of a "student passport" to streamline prerequisite and screening requirements for students participating in clinical training in the hospital setting.
- UHA hosted an ASHHRA/AHA Webinar entitled "AHA Report on the Economic Crisis: Initial Impact on Hospitals" in January.
- UHA partnered with the Colorado Hospital Association and the Office of Civil Rights to offer a quarterly webinar series related to improving services to the deaf and hard of hearing population.



## Data and Health Information Technology

***UHA will aid its members and the state in efforts to develop health information resources.***

- UHA staff served on various UHIN committees to continue work on common IT standards and an efficient health information exchange between entities and practitioners in the state.
- UHA staff monitored the progress of the national ARRA funding in regards to health information technology.
- UHA staff monitored the progress of the ARCHES project, a high speed redundant network across between facilities in the state. The UTN RFP vendor review process began in November of 2009. UHA staff was included as a technical reviewer.
- UHA produced ad hoc data reports as requested.
- UHA participated in the rural FLEX HIT grant review process.
- UHA staff began the 2009 salary survey process for the non-affiliated rural hospitals.
- UHA staff updated both the utPricePoint.org and utCheckPoint.org site with 2007 data. UHA staff also upgraded the functionality of the utCheckPoint.org site.
- UHA staff supported the DATABANK reporting program.
- UHA staff distributed and monitored reports on Medicaid and DSH expenditures through participation on the Medicaid Medical Advisory Committee.
- UHA staff monitored federal initiatives for pay-for-performance and its impact to hospitals' payment methodology.
- UHA staff revised the annual Fact Book for 2009, changing the design and publication date to accommodate newer and more relevant data.
- UHA completed work with Intellimed and member hospitals to support the collection of more timely data for hospitals in the Salt Lake Valley.

## Financing

***UHA will assist members to coordinate efforts to obtain optimum government funding and seek additional grant funding opportunities to “pass through” to members.***

- UHA staff monitored all Recovery Audit Contractor activities and provided two opportunities for training on their potential impact to hospitals in Utah. The trainings were attended by more than 100 individuals.
- UHA issued a new survey for behavioral health providers to monitor the access to beds and potential loss of funds. UHA updated the listing of inpatient psychiatric beds to indicate the further loss of resources.
- UHA participated in standing committees advising the Utah Dept. of Health on all hospital-related grants. UHA managed the Peer Review grant and the Utah Disaster Advisory Hospital Preparedness funds.

- UHA staff participated with the Behavioral Health Council to monitor the increase in number of individuals seeking mental health services.
- UHA worked with a coalition of other state hospital associations to increase Medicaid funding based on quality indicators.
- UHA worked with UDOH to create a MS-DRG Medicaid payment structure to better align with Medicare MS-DRGs.
- UHA staff presented information on the state of the Utah Medicaid budget shortfalls to the Intermountain Financial Managers group.
- UHA hired a consultant to assist in monitoring the UDOH Medicaid budget and building block requests.
- UHA coordinated with the Utah Dept. of Health to disseminate CDC H1N1 preparedness funds.

## Patient Safety and Quality of Care

***UHA will assist its members to provide the highest standards of quality care and patient safety.***

- UHA provided staffing support for the patient safety user groups.
- UHA provided support to the Utah Dept. of Health's Health-care-Acquired Infection Analytical workgroup, tasked with reporting statewide infection and vaccination rate data.
- UHA staff represented member facilities and systems on the UTAP Task Force as they released the annual UDOH patient safety reports.
- UHA staff monitored the development and implementation of the new all-payer database and its focus on episode of care reporting.
- UHA worked with partners to examine the feasibility of developing a Patient Safety Organization (PSO).
- UHA staff obtained guidance from the Utah Attorney General's Office prohibiting the disclosure of verification of sentinel event reporting by the Utah Dept. of Health.
- UHA actively participated in the Utah Partnership for Value Driven Health Care, HealthInsight and the statewide Patient Safety Steering Committee.
- UHA co-sponsored a conference with the Utah Dept. of Health and the Utah Ambulatory Surgical Center Association to prevent healthcare acquired infections.
- UHA represented hospitals at a national AHRQ meeting to create opportunities for using evidence-based tools for improving quality.



- UHA staff served on the board of the Utah Association of Healthcare Quality to promote best practices for improving quality.
- UHA facilitated the peer review process for rural hospitals to improve the quality of care, completing 19 reviews in 2009.

## Member Communication and Public Affairs

***UHA will be the recognized source of healthcare data and information and will promote enhanced relationships between healthcare and community stakeholders in Utah.***

- UHA supported members of the Rural Hospital Council by hosting quarterly meetings and networking opportunities as well as disseminating American Hospital Association updates and information on grant opportunities.
- UHA staff served on the Office of Rural Health Advisory Committee and actively participated with the group's national meetings.
- UHA staff participated on the Utah Safe Haven Committee as well as provided hospital representation on the Genetics Advisory Committee, Newborn Screening Committee, Newborn Hearing Advisory Committee, Utah Adult Immunization Coalition and Utah Poison Control Center Advisory Board.
- UHA convened its 2009 Annual Meeting in St. George in April. The meeting provided educational and networking opportunities for members related to healthcare reform and the changing political climate.
- UHA staff produced *Newsbyte* monthly, changing to a web-based email format in 2009 which eliminated the need for multiple attachments.
- UHA staff revised its Issue Briefs in preparation for the 2009 Legislative Session and developed new briefs on the effects of the economic downturn on hospitals and the importance of adequate Medicaid funding.
- UHA staff prepared Health News E Clips regularly for members. This service provided an overview of the national and local headlines related to healthcare.
- UHA responded to several local and national media inquiries in 2009. UHA staff also prepared media press kits on the MedCard project as well as writing an editorial rebuttal and attending an editorial board meeting of the Salt Lake Tribune related to medical errors and patient safety. UHA staff also responded to various media inquiries regarding H1N1 during the fall flu season.
- UHA staff supported and participated in a variety of affiliate groups, including the American College of Healthcare Executives, Healthcare Financial Management Association and the Utah Society for Healthcare Communications and Marketing.
- UHA provided staff support for the Western Regional Trustee Symposium planning committee. This year's event took place in Albuquerque in June. Despite economic challenges, the meeting was attended by more than 220 community trustees and hospital administrators.

- UHA hosted its Fall Leadership Conference at The Homestead Resort in October. In conjunction with UHA's program, UHA helped coordinate an ACHE buyout session for the Utah Healthcare Executives.
- UHA recognized several healthcare leaders at its annual Awards Dinner. In addition to the trustee and executive awards presented by UHA, HealthInsight, UONL and Inter-mountain Donor Services presented awards to the hospital community during the program.
- UHA provided information to members to address the H1N1 threat including establishing conference calls, adopting visitor guidelines and monitoring the surge capacity of hospitals.

## Emergency Preparedness

***UHA will partner with the Utah Department of Health and the Division of Homeland Security to prepare hospitals to respond to potential bioterrorism, pandemic flu and mass casualty events.***

- UHA staff, in conjunction with the Utah Dept. of Health, prepared information to distribute to hospitals on the impact of H1N1 as well as hosted conference calls to determine the amount of supplies needed for patients.
- UHA staff participated on the Governor's Council for the Private Sector to coordinate responses with other private sector members.
- UHA organized monthly meetings with members of the Emergency Preparedness Council.
- UHA developed and disseminated a Fatality Management Plan to all hospitals.
- UHA staff presented on Utah's Triage Guidelines to the Institute of Medicine in March 2009. Currently 16 states have adopted the Utah Triage Guidelines and Utah was the first state to adopt specific pediatric guidelines.
- In September, UHA staff hosted a national emergency preparedness meeting in conjunction with the American Hospital Association in Park City.
- UHA hosted an "Evacuation and Shelter in Place" training for hospital preparedness coordinators.
- UHA staff served as a liaison for hospital-based emergencies, providing bed counts and assistance as requested.
- UHA served on the ESF-8 emergency operations center for Salt Lake County.
- UHA staff participated in statewide emergency drills and provided feedback to hospital providers on improvements for care and triage.



## UHA Staff

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## Vision 2010

In 2010, Utah is known as a leading-edge provider of outstanding healthcare.

Through the collaboration of providers, insurers, government, and business, all the people of Utah have access to reliable, affordable healthcare.

With incentives for wellness, transparent information, an engaged workforce and a seamless use of technology, Utah boasts the healthiest communities in the country.

An easy place to practice, safety and quality reign supreme. Utah's integrated approach to care, wellness, equitable allocation of resources, and an efficient payor system provide a solid foundation for the health and well-being of all Utahns.

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