



# Health Care Recap

August 23 - 28, 2019

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### SESSION STATUS

At 12:10 p.m. on Friday, June 28, 2019 the Senate stands in recess until Monday, September 23, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

At 10:55 a.m. on Friday, June 28, 2019 the House stands adjourned until Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

### UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

#### House

Sep. 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25  
 Oct. 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30  
 Nov. 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20  
 Dec. 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18

#### Senate

Sep. 23, 24, 25  
 Oct. 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30  
 Nov. 18, 19, 20  
 Dec. 16, 17, 18

## Around the Rotunda

### GOV. WOLF AND U.S. SEN. BOB CASEY RALLY FOR AFFORDABLE CARE ACT ON 'PROTECT OUR CARE' BUS TOUR

By Harrison Cann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | August 28, 2019

Gov. Tom Wolf and U.S. Sen. Bob Casey joined health care advocates on the final stop of the "Protect Our Care" Bus Tour to rally against the lawsuit looking to overturn the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Adam Hoyer, organizing director, Protect Our Care, began by describing the nationwide bus tour that looks to "bring to light what is at stake" in the lawsuit against the ACA. He explained the potential outcomes if ACA were to be repealed and the "chaos" that would ensue in the health care system.

Matthew Jennings, a Lititz native, detailed how he benefits from Medicaid expansion. "In the past, people who had disabilities were isolated and sent to live in institutions," he said. "Thanks to Medicaid, the people I have interviewed are living in homes in their community. They have jobs and many also volunteer."

He asserted that many people with disabilities would not be able to live the lives that they do without Medicaid, and he encouraged people to speak up for those that cannot speak for themselves.

Cindy Jennings, mother of Matt and Medicaid beneficiary, described her struggle to maintain health insurance as a caregiver for her son. She stated that she did not qualify for Medicaid before state expansion, but once Gov. Wolf expanded coverage in Pennsylvania, she was once again able to receive insurance.

"Thanks to the Affordable Care Act and the expansion of Medicaid, I had access to lifesaving preventative health care," Cindy Jennings said. "By maintaining my own health, I could ensure both of my sons' health." She reiterated that repealing the ACA would affect millions of Americans and that "each of us [are] just one life-changing event away from being in a situation similar to mine."

Matt Yarnell, president, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Healthcare Pennsylvania, expressed frustration that the conversation over maintaining the ACA has to happen "again."

"Before the ACA, an emergency room nurse would see dozens of patients checking into the ER with life-threatening conditions because they could not afford basic care and medicine to manage chronic conditions," Yarnell said. "When the governor passed Medicaid expansion, we knew that almost a million Pennsylvanians would gain vital medical services that they very desperately needed."

He added that health insurance should not be a partisan issue but an issue "of the heart." He asserted that if millions of people have their insurance taken away, many will die. Yarnell then repeated an "if we fight, we can win" chant for the crowd to join in.

Sen. Casey commended Gov. Wolf for his "staunch defense" of ACA and his work in



expanding Medicaid. He highlighted Republican efforts in Congress to repeal the ACA and estimated that they have about 70 votes in support of repealing it.

He described the efforts by President Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress as attempts to “rip away, decimate, and sabotage” the health care system. Sen. Casey stressed that there are not enough Democratic candidates in state and presidential elections talking about the issue.

“If [the lawsuit] succeeds, millions of people will lose coverage and tens of millions more will lose all their protections,” Sen. Casey stated. He stressed that 642,700 children in Pennsylvania have a preexisting condition and that “there is nothing American” about taking away protections for so many people.

He highlighted three of the 10 steps included in his report on efforts by President Trump and Republicans in Congress to “take down Medicaid.” Those steps included:

- An executive order issued by President Trump on his first day in office directing all departments to dismantle the ACA.
- A shift of hundreds of billions of dollars in health and long-term care costs to states and low-income Americans and their families in an attempt to cut federal Medicaid funding.
- A complaint filed in the U.S. District Court in the Northern District of Texas arguing that the ACA’s individual mandate is unconstitutional and must be struck down.

Sen. Casey asserted that President Trump originally stated during his campaign that he would not touch Medicaid, but that he has gone back on that promise. “This is a time to fight them and defeat them on this issue,” he concluded.

Auditor General Eugene DePasquale commented that it makes “economic and moral sense” for the ACA to be maintained. He detailed his family’s struggles to pay for medical bills with his brother suffering from muscular dystrophy.

He stated that when his brother suffered cardiac arrest while in college, none of the bills were covered by insurance, but some were forgiven by the hospital and university. “The least we can do is allow people with preexisting conditions to have health insurance,” DePasquale said. “Should we do more? Yes, but that is the least we can do.”

DePasquale reiterated that it is an economic issue and a health care issue, but it is also a moral issue.

Gov. Wolf stressed that “we cannot afford to lose the ACA.” He stated that over a million Pennsylvanians benefitted from the expansion of Medicaid. He then described issues people faced prior to the ACA, saying that employers could cancel insurance for employees, insurance plans could have unforeseen gaps in coverage, and people could be denied coverage for having preexisting conditions.

Gov. Wolf reiterated that work has to be done to ensure the ACA is protected and Pennsylvanians are guaranteed health insurance. “We made big strides this summer in reducing the cost of the individual plans by passing legislation that would bring our health care marketplace in house,” he stated.

“Eliminating the ACA would be a giant leap backwards for Americans who need health care,” Gov. Wolf added. “We need to continue improving our health care system for everyone.” Concluding, Gov. Wolf reiterated that the ACA must be protected and that everyone needs to understand “what is at stake with the current lawsuit.”



### **Committee News**

No Committee News this week.

### **MAAC**

MAAC did not meet this week.

### **Bullet.in.Points**

No Bullet.in.Points this week.

### **Cosponsor Memos**

HCO1508	Boback, Karen(R)	Requires notice to be posted in food preparation areas regarding the requirement to cover hands.
HCO1540	Hickernell, David(R)	Improves the workers' compensation system by providing an option for employers to utilize a healthcare network.
HCO1937	Frankel, Dan(D)	Requires parents seeking a medical exemption from immunization to get an annual medical consultation.
HCO2451	Markosek, Brandon (F) (D)	Creates a "Green Alert" system for missing veterans in Pennsylvania.
HCO2453	Markosek, Brandon (F) (D)	Creates a Green Alert system to alert the public when a veteran with a service-connected health issue is reported missing.
SCO 660	Langerholc, Wayne(R)	Legalizes test strips which can detect fentanyl for first responders.
SCO 871	Farnese, Lawrence(D)	Prohibits the use of solitary confinement on certain individuals and places an absolute cap on the duration of solitary confinement at 15 days.
SCO1061	Regan, Mike(R)	Amends Act 59 to require: information be provided to student athletes regarding electrocardiogram testing and they be notified of the option to request the administration of an electrocardiogram in addition to the physical.
SCO1064	Farnese, Lawrence(D)	Allows medical marijuana users to offset part of their state tax liability if they are a certified patient or caregiver and can show proof of unreimbursed payment for medical marijuana.
SCO1118	Leach, Daylin(D)	Legalizes fentanyl test strips for personal use in the commonwealth.
SCO1119	Scavello, Mario(R)	Requires reimbursement for prosthetic and orthotic devices across the commonwealth.



## Bill Actions

- HB 1784 Hickernell, David(R) Amends the Workers' Compensation Act, in liability and compensation, further providing for schedule of compensation; and, in Uninsured Employers Guaranty Fund, further providing for claims.
- Bill History:** 08-27-19 H Filed
- HB 1785 Keefer, Dawn(R) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in criminal homicide, further providing for the offense of causing or aiding suicide.
- Bill History:** 08-28-19 H Filed
- HB 1786 Sainato, Chris(D) Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies & nonprofit emergency medical services agencies, establishing the First Responder Loan Forgiveness Program; and making editorial changes.
- Bill History:** 08-28-19 H Filed
- HB 1787 Sainato, Chris(D) Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in taxation and finance, further providing for exemptions and special provisions.
- Bill History:** 08-28-19 H Filed
- SB 399 Langerholc, Wayne(R) (PN 947) Amends the Sexual Assault Testing and Evidence Collection Act outlining additional rights of sexual assault victims, including the rights to not be prevented from or charged for receiving a medical forensic exam or to consult with various professionals. A victim who has chosen to make an anonymous report may still elect to receive notifications. Clarifies language regarding the telephone line for victims. Further provides for anonymous submissions. Requires the Pennsylvania State Police to submit an annual report to the Department of Health relating to sexual assault evidence. Lays out requirements for notifications. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 381, 505, 586)
- Bill History:** 06-19-19 H Signed in the House  
06-20-19 G In the hands of the Governor  
06-30-19 G Last day for Governor's action  
06-28-19 G Approved by the Governor (Act: 29)  
08-27-19 G Earliest effective date



**SB 831**     **Farnese, Lawrence(D)** (PN 1140) Amends the Tax Reform Code establishing a medical marijuana tax credit. The legislation permits taxpayers to offset part of their state tax liability if they are a certified patient or caregiver and can show proof of unreimbursed payment for medical marijuana if the expense was not reimbursed by any other person. The annual tax credit is capped at \$1,000 per year, per applicant, and may not exceed \$10,000 in total credits issued. The Department of Revenue shall establish guidelines for implementation and prepare a report to the legislature on the tax credits no later than June 1, 2021. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 08-26-19 S Filed  
08-26-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Finance

**SB 836**     **Regan, Mike(R)** (PN 1145) Amends the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act to include electrocardiogram testing and require information be provided to student athletes regarding electrocardiogram testing. The legislation also provides that the athletes be notified of the option to request the administration of an electrocardiogram in addition to the standard physical examination. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 08-26-19 S Filed  
08-26-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Education

**SB 837**     **Brooks, Michele(R)** (PN 1146) Amends Title 75 (Vehicles), in registration of vehicles, providing for persons with disabilities to obtain temporary disability parking placards from their legislative district offices. The legislation also provides that the placards will only be valid for a period of not more than six months. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 08-26-19 S Filed  
08-26-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Transportation

**SB 840**     **Langerholc, Wayne(R)** (PN 1150) Amends the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, excluding fentanyl test strips when used by a law enforcement officer or emergency services personnel from the definition of drug paraphernalia; and provides for an editorial change. This legislation also includes the definitions of law enforcement officer and emergency services personnel within the act. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 08-28-19 S Filed  
08-28-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Judiciary



## Upcoming Events

### **Press Conference**

*August 31, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Main Capitol Steps, Harrisburg*  
Millions March Against Mandatory Vaccines (unconfirmed)

### **Press Conference**

*September 3, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
DHS Kicks Off Hunger Action Month (unconfirmed)

### **State Board of Occupational Therapy**

*September 5, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1389

### **Department of Human Services**

*September 5, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Department of Education, Honors Suite, 1st Floor, 333 Market St., Harrisburg*  
Managed Long-Term Services & Supports Subcommittee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 772-2549

### **PA Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4)**

*September 5, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Council Conference Room, 225 Market Street, Suite 400, Harrisburg*  
Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 232-6787

### **House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.**

*September 5, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Indiana Area Fire Association White Township Station, 1555 Indian Springs Road, Indiana*  
Public hearing on college tuition credits & loan forgiveness for emergency responders

### **State Board of Examiners in Speech-Language and Hearing**

*September 6, 2019 - 9:30 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1389

### **House Health**

*September 9, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., East Stroudsburg University, 562 Independence Road, East Stroudsburg*  
Public hearing on Lyme Disease and Tick Borne illnesses

### **Press Conference**

*September 9, 2019 - 11:00 a.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
FASD Awareness Month (unconfirmed)

### **Press Conference**

*September 9, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
Annual EMS Memorial Service (unconfirmed)

### **Department of Human Services**

*September 9, 2019 - 5:00 p.m., Atlantic Avenue Church, 160 Atlantic Ave., Franklin*  
Public hearing on the planned closure of Polk State Center. For additional information: (717) 425-7606

### **State Board of Medicine**

*September 10, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1400



**Department of Health**

*September 11, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Best Western Premier, 800 East Park Drive, Harrisburg*  
HIV Community Prevention Planning Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-0572

**Department of Human Services**

*September 11, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey, 4650 Lindle Road, Harrisburg*  
PA Developmental Disabilities Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 787-6058

**House Democratic Policy Committee**

*September 11, 2019 - 2:00 p.m., Haverford Township Building, 1014 Darby Road, Havertown*  
Public Hearing with Rep. Mike Zabel on Rising Costs of Prescriptions Drugs

**State Board of Nursing**

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., One Penn Center, 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Monthly Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7142

**State Board of Physical Therapy**

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7134

**Department of Health**

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Room 129, Health and Welfare Building, 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg*  
Health Research Advisory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 231-2825

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Best Western Premier, 800 East Park Drive, Harrisburg*  
HIV Community Prevention Planning Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-0572

**Department of Human Services**

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey, 4650 Lindle Road, Harrisburg*  
PA Developmental Disabilities Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 787-6058

*September 12, 2019 - 5:00 p.m., St. Patrick's Church, 411 Allegheny St, White Haven*  
Public hearing on the planned closure of White Haven State Center. For additional information: (717) 425-7606

**State Board of Veterinary Medicine**

*September 13, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7134

**Governor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities**

*September 13, 2019 - 9:30 a.m., 333 Market Street, Heritage Rooms A & B, Lobby Level, Harrisburg*  
Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 787-4287

**Department of Human Services**

*September 13, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Commonwealth Tower, 12th Fl., Clothes Tree Rm., 303 Walnut St., Harrisburg*  
Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 346-8164

**State Board of Dentistry**

*September 13, 2019 - 8:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Regulatory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7162



*September 13, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7162

**House Democratic Policy Committee**

*September 13, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., University of Pittsburgh, William Pitt Union Ballroom, 3959 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh*  
Public Hearing with Rep. Dan Frankel on The Public Health Epidemic of Gun Violence

**State Board of Psychology**

*September 16, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Board Room C, Harrisburg*  
Regulation Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7155

**State Board of Massage Therapy**

*September 17, 2019 - 9:30 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7155

**Press Conference**

*September 17, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
Moms Demand Action Suicide Awareness (unconfirmed)

**Patient Safety Authority**

*September 17, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., The Conference Center at Central Penn College, 600 Valley Road, Summerdale*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 346-0469

**Press Conference**

*September 17, 2019 - 11:00 a.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
Don't Punish Pain (unconfirmed)

**House Human Services**

*September 18, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Room 60, East Wing*  
To consider: [HB 730](#) Cruz, Angel Amends Newborn Child Testing Act re screenings [HB 1220](#) Cruz, Angel Act re cytomegalovirus education & screening [HB 1704](#) Bernstine, Aaron Amends Human Services Code re BHMCO [SB 675](#) Brooks, Michele Act re licensing prescribers of suboxone

**Press Conference**

*September 18, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., East Wing Rotunda, Capitol*  
Prostate Cancer Awareness Day (unconfirmed)

**State Board of Chiropractic**

*September 19, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Board Room B, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7155

**Press Conference**

*September 19, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
Rep. Keefer to Unveil Bill to Address Aiding Suicide (unconfirmed)

**Senate Democratic Policy Committee**

*September 20, 2019 - 11:00 a.m., Upper Providence Township Bldg, 1286 Black Rock Road, Phoenixville*  
Policy hearing to address the institutional and societal rape culture epidemic



### **Senate Judiciary**

*September 24, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Hearing Room 1, North Office Building*

Public hearing on behavioral health, second amendment rights, and other gun related issues

### **Senate Health and Human Services**

*September 24, 2019 - 11:00 a.m., Room 8E-B, East Wing*

Public hearing on the closures of the Polk and White Haven State Centers

### **Center for Rural PA**

*September 25, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Keystone Building, PUC Hearing Room 5, Harrisburg*

Public hearing on heroin/opioids and PA's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, followed by a meeting to conduct regular business affairs

### **Senate Judiciary**

*September 25, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Hearing Room 1, North Office Building*

Public hearing on behavioral health, second amendment rights, and other gun related issues

## **In the News**

- 08-28-2019     **[Sen. Bob Casey, seniors look to stem crisis facing many older Americans](#)**  
The opioid crisis has led to a crisis of grandparents, and even great-grandparents, raising young children — something U.S. Sen. Bob Casey, D-Scranton, wants the federal government to take a more active role in addressing. “It’s a challenge, the likes of which I don’t think our country... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-28-2019     **[Philadelphia region now has 20 marijuana dispensaries. Here’s where they are.](#)**  
A new medical marijuana dispensary is opening across the street from the Yards Brewery, taking the total number of cannabis retailers in the region to 20. Beyond/Hello, part of Florida-based Jushi Holdings, launched its second Philadelphia store at 475 N. Fifth St. The chain, which has an informal... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-28-2019     **[VIDEO: Four legislators created legislation that gives every PA worker paid family/medical leave](#)**  
Senators Maria Collett (D-Montgomery), and Dan Laughlin (R-Erie), along with Representatives Wendi Thomas (R-Bucks) and Dan Miller (D-Allegheny), joined together to create the Family Care Act, which would establish a statewide Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program to provide paid leave... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)
- 08-28-2019     **[Before DuPont and 3M hearing in Congress, activists highlight companies’ history with PFAS](#)**  
Decades before the toxic chemicals used in products like Scotchgard and Teflon would be found running through the drinking water and groundwater of dozens of communities nationwide — including in Bucks and Montgomery Counties — the companies producing the substances had evidence the... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-28-2019     **[Kratom is linked with numerous deaths. But it won’t be easy for Pennsylvania to ban it.](#)**  
Centre County State Rep. Scott Conklin was surprised how quickly a lobbyist from the American Kratom Association flew across the country to meet with him after he announced in April that he wanted to ban the unregulated herbal product that has been linked to numerous deaths.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 08-28-2019 **Allentown sues over opioids, joining Lehigh County and thousands of other governments trying to recoup costs**  
Allentown has joined Lehigh County and more than 2,000 municipalities across the U.S. in suing pharmaceutical companies, holding drugmakers responsible for perpetuating the opioid crisis. The city filed an eight-count suit Tuesday in federal court against 20... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Testimony: Former caretaker who left disabled adults in locked car at strip club warned them to keep quiet: 'Antonio told me not to talk, or I'll be in trouble'**  
After leaving three disabled adults in a locked car for hours while he went to a strip club, their caregiver at a Bethlehem Township group home warned them not to tell anyone, according to testimony at a hearing Tuesday. Some of the adults, who have physical and intellectual disabilities, were... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Survivors celebrated on International Overdose Awareness Day in Pittsburgh**  
People struggling with opioid addiction sometimes need more than a second chance, treatment advocates say. "If we give people one more chance. Every day," said Dana Gold, chief operating officer of Jewish Family and Community Services. "Sometimes multiple times a day, then they have the opportunity to make... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-28-2019 **UPMC doctors ready to meet 'pent-up demand' after inking 10-year contract with Highmark**  
UPMC facilities are preparing to meet the "pent-up demand" among Highmark-insured patients who now can choose to go to UPMC doctors and hospitals, particularly when it comes to specialty care, UPMC's chief financial officer said Tuesday. "We're seeing (patient) volume increases," said Robert... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Oklahoma ruling spreads optimism in lawsuit against drugmakers**  
Westmoreland County is one of about 2,000 municipalities across the country with pending lawsuits against various drug manufacturers accused of promoting the opioid addiction epidemic that has devastated communities in recent years. This week's court ruling in Oklahoma, in which the state was awarded a... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Cheswick church rallies behind pastor who needs heart transplant**  
Clinton Blazeovich was told he could live with his heart condition for maybe three to five years before needing a heart transplant. That was nearly 20 years ago. Blazeovich, 42, suffers from myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart, and cardiomyopathy, a condition that makes it harder for the heart to pump... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Oklahoma opioid verdict a sign of more lawsuits to come, Berks officials say**  
The verdict this week in Oklahoma against Johnson & Johnson, ending the first lawsuit by a state government regarding the prescription drug industry's responsibility for the opioid crisis, will almost certainly be a bellwether for other states to bring similar claims, according to Berks... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Meeting set to discuss White Haven Center**  
The White Haven Center board of trustees will hold a meeting today at 4:45 p.m. at the White Haven Center's administration building. The brief closed meeting will be followed by an open forum hearing. Officials from the state Department of Human Services recently announced... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)



- 08-28-2019 **Franklin Addresses Lawsuit at Weekly Press Conference**  
Penn State Coach James Franklin opened his game week press conference on Tuesday by saying "the health and well-being of our student-athletes is of utmost importance to us," and reiterating a university statement rejecting claims by a former team doctor that Franklin tried to interfere with... - [State College News](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Pa. court upholds ending couple's parental rights**  
The Pennsylvania Superior Court, in an opinion issued earlier this month, has upheld a decision by a Cambria County judge to terminate the parental rights of a mother and father who were raising three young children. Professional caseworkers assigned to the case contended the mother had an... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Editorial: Proposed cigarette warning labels a great improvement**  
The Issue: The government wants to use strong words and images to convey the dangers of smoking. Our Opinion: This is a welcome change that cannot come soon enough. Right now considerable attention is being focused on the ills of vaping, a method of ingesting nicotine that's alarmingly popular among teenagers and... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Forum at Marian to focus on vaping**  
The second "Fighting Back" forum will focus on combating the opioid epidemic while addressing concerns about vaping. The one-hour forum begins at 9:30 a.m. Thursday at Marian Catholic High School in Hometown. "I am looking forward to participating in this conference because the... - [Pottsville Republican and Evening Herald](#)
- 08-28-2019 **WellSpan breaks ground for expansion of its York Cancer Center**  
WellSpan Health broke ground Tuesday for a \$45 million expansion of its York Cancer Center, which will help to consolidate oncology services, according to a news release. A 67,100-square-foot addition will be made at the center located in the Apple Hill Health Campus in York Township. When completed in 2021, the... - [York Daily](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Mosquito sample in Mahoning Township tests positive for West Nile Virus**  
MAHONING TWP. — The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Vector Management has reported that one mosquito sample from within Mahoning Township has tested positive for West Nile Virus. Additional mosquito surveillance, sampling and larval control are being... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 08-28-2019 **N.J. woman in agonizing pain wants to get lethal drugs to end her life with court challenge settled**  
Katie Kim has known for years she would die young. On Tuesday, the terminally ill woman from Fort Lee found out when that is likely to happen. Kim's husband Freddy Kalles said he wasted no time contacting his wife's doctor after learning a state appeals court overturned a... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Bill could allow Yost to take over local government opioid lawsuits**  
Legislation has been drafted to authorize Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost to potentially take over lawsuits filed by local governments seeking to recover damages from opioid manufacturers and distributors. The proposed bill, which has not been introduced, would empower the General... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)



- 08-28-2019 **Medical marijuana now two years away, says WV program's top regulator**  
The ranking regulator of the state's nascent medical marijuana program opened up Tuesday about an expedited timeline for patients and new program rules that favor larger industry players. Jason Frame, director of the West Virginia Office of Medical Cannabis,... - [Charleston Gazette-Mail](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Why This Joe Biden Health Care Ad Stands Out**  
Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s presidential campaign on Tuesday made an extraordinarily emotional appeal for his candidacy and his health care proposal through a new ad that highlights his struggles with grief and family loss, a message that reminds voters of the good will and empathy... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Missouri's Eight-Week Abortion Ban Is Blocked by Federal Judge**  
A federal judge in Missouri blocked the state on Tuesday from enforcing a ban on abortions after the eighth week of pregnancy, enacted by Republican legislators this year as part of a national campaign to restrict abortion and perhaps prompt the United States Supreme Court to revisit Roe v. Wade.... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Johnson & Johnson's Brand Falters Over Its Role in the Opioid Crisis**  
In the 1980s, Johnson & Johnson needed a reliable supply of opium for a popular product, Tylenol with codeine. So the health care conglomerate, better known for baby shampoo and Band-Aids, bought a business that grew and processed opium poppies in faraway Tasmania, off the coast of Australia. By 2015, at the height of the... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Sacklers Would Give Up Ownership of Purdue Pharma Under Settlement Proposal**  
The Sackler family would give up ownership of Purdue Pharma, the company blamed for much of the opioid epidemic, and pay \$3 billion of their own money under terms of a settlement proposal to resolve thousands of federal and state lawsuits, according to a person familiar with the negotiations.... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Idaho must pay for an inmate's gender confirmation surgery, a court says. The governor is fighting it.**  
Adree Edmo is one step closer to becoming the first inmate to receive a gender confirmation surgery in Idaho as the result of a court order. After years of struggling with her gender identity, attempting suicide and trying to castrate herself twice in an all-male Idaho prison, a court ruled... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Analysis | Sanders's flawed statistic: 500,000 medical bankruptcies a year**  
.500,000 people go bankrupt every year because they cannot pay their outrageous medical bills.. . Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), in an interview on CNN's State of the Union, Aug. 25, 2019 .500,000 Americans will go bankrupt this year from medical bills.. . Sanders, in a tweet, Aug. 20, 2019... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-28-2019 **OxyContin maker, government attorneys from Pa. and other states in settlement talks**  
(Columbus, Ohio) — Pennsylvania's state attorney general, attorneys generals across the country and lawyers representing local governments said Tuesday they are in active settlement talks with Purdue Pharma, the maker of the prescription painkiller OxyContin that is facing billions of dollars... - [AP](#)



- 08-28-2019 **Editorial: Opioid verdicts have to hurt**  
What is the cost of a crisis? The opioid epidemic has been a greedy monster, demanding more and more resources from all levels of government as well as hospitals and insurance companies over the last 20 years. It has eaten lives and devoured communities. In 2013 alone, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-28-2019 **After eight years, UPMC-Highmark dispute was settled in a matter of weeks**  
The UPMC-Highmark contract dispute lasted eight years, but the agreement signed June 24 — seven days before the scheduled final separation of the two Pittsburgh health giants — came together in a matter of a few weeks last spring, a top UPMC official said Tuesday.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Vaping is vapid: The FDA must get involved, Pa. should change law**  
Vaping is vapid: The FDA must get involved, Pa. should change law Concerns over nicotine addiction among teenagers is worrisome. Boosting concern to alarm is a rash of recent cases involving people hospitalized with vaping-related lung conditions — and many are young.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Region's political leaders step up to fight air pollution**  
Local residents, community and environmental organizations and health professionals have long voiced concerns about the Pittsburgh region's poor air quality and fought to make it better. On Wednesday, in a precedent-setting show of support, 63 state, county,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Before DuPont and 3M hearing in Congress, activists highlight companies. history with PFAS**  
Decades before the toxic chemicals used in products like Scotchgard and Teflon would be found running through the drinking water and groundwater of dozens of communities nationwide . including in Bucks and Montgomery Counties . the companies producing the substances had evidence the... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Brazil fires impact Philadelphia and the world | Opinion**  
With every breath you take, thank a rainforest. A large amount of oxygen that we need is produced by the trees, flowers, algae, and mosses in these rich habitats. But now, like an epidemic of fiery measles, forest fires are popping up across the Amazon rainforest of South America. Smoke chokes the skies over... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-28-2019 **I love dogs, but for the sake of my health, please leave your pup at home | Opinion**  
I have had severe pet allergies since I was a child. This led to exclusion from so much . birthday parties, playdates, sleepovers. There were so many places I couldn.t go because exposure to an animal would send me into a severe allergic and asthmatic reaction. It often hurt my feelings when... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Title X gag rule shows disdain for women - and science | Editorial**  
The Trump administration's recent imposition of a new gag rule prohibiting health-care providers receiving Title X funds to refer for or mention abortion as an option for pregnant women shows disdain for both science and human beings. That's a hallmark of an administration known for denial of... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 08-28-2019 **Medicare for All and the silly season for health reform I Opinion**  
Perhaps you caught the recent two-page spread in the New York Times (August 13) in which health policy experts weighed in on what they thought should be part of the Democrats. Medicare for All. Ignoring the fact that this speculation will only become relevant if the Democrats capture the... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-28-2019 **New parents working at central Pa. hospital will get more time off**  
Geisinger health system said it will give up to two weeks of paid leave to new parents. The new policy begins Sunday and applies to parents of newborns and adopted or foster children, and Geisinger employees who become guardian of a child. It applies to mothers and fathers and, in the case of couples working for... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Pennsylvania Democrats raise the alarm on the future of the Affordable Care Act**  
Cindy Jennings, a mom of two from Lancaster County, says she never realized the struggle that many Americans face in securing health insurance until she had to do it for herself. That realization came when Jennings, a full-time caregiver for her disabled son Matt, was kicked off her husband.s... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Johnson & Johnson opioid ruling spreads optimism around Western Pa.-based lawsuits**  
Westmoreland County is one of about 2,000 municipalities across the country with pending lawsuits against various drug manufacturers accused of promoting the opioid addiction epidemic that has devastated communities in recent years. This week.s court ruling in Oklahoma, in which the state was awarded a \$572... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Report: State had big share of opioid ODs, smaller cut of federal funds**  
Pennsylvania and Ohio were slammed by the opioid epidemic but got relatively modest shares of federal opioid funding, according to a report issued Wednesday by an Indianapolis-based foundation. The Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation, a philanthropy focused on education,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-28-2019 **Overdose Awareness Day celebrates 'survivors and revivers'**  
Kenneth Robert Aquiline overdosed 15 times only to be revived with naloxone, he told a crowd on the City-County Building portico Tuesday afternoon. .If they didn.t have Narcan, I wouldn.t be here today,. he said, using a brand name for the overdose reversal drug.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-27-2019 **U.S. Steel sued in federal court over emissions**  
An environmental group has sued U.S. Steel, saying the company hasn't been reporting the release of pollutants into the air from three plants in the Mon Valley as required by law. In a suit filed Monday in federal court, the Clean Air Council said U.S. Steel has failed to report unpermitted releases of hydrogen sulfide,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-27-2019 **James Franklin, Penn State sued by former football team doctor**  
James Franklin and Penn State are facing scathing allegations in a new lawsuit brought by a former football team physician. Dr. Scott A. Lynch said in court documents that the coach pressured him to clear injured players to return to the field. Further, Lynch contends that his complaints about the interference prompted... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)



- 08-27-2019 **Johnson & Johnson ordered to pay \$572 million after Oklahoma judge finds the drugmaker helped fuel the state's opioid crisis**  
An Oklahoma judge on Monday found Johnson & Johnson and its subsidiaries helped fuel the state's opioid crisis and ordered the consumer products giant to pay \$572 million, more than twice the amount another drug manufacturer agreed to pay in a settlement... - [AP](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Penn State football coach James Franklin pressured team doctor to clear players to return to play, lawsuit alleges**  
Penn State football coach James Franklin pressured a team doctor to clear injured players to return to the field, the doctor alleges in a lawsuit that claims he was fired for reporting the interference as a violation of NCAA and Big Ten Conference rules. Dr. Scott Lynch filed the lawsuit Monday in Dauphin County Court alleging... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-27-2019 **U.S. Steel facing new lawsuit over Mon Valley facilities**  
Environmentalists filed a lawsuit against U.S. Steel on Monday, accusing the Pittsburgh-based multinational of violating federal law by purportedly failing to disclose months of hazardous emissions following a Christmas Eve fire and then another in mid-June that destroyed equipment at its Clairton... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Local lawmakers highlight proposals to merge state agencies**  
State House Republicans highlighted legislation they've introduced that would merge several prominent state agencies at a press conference at the Fayette Chamber of Commerce Building Monday. Rep. Matt Dowling, R-Uniontown, was joined at his district office by fellow... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Court: Huntingdon judge not at fault**  
The 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia has ruled that a Huntingdon County judge did nothing wrong when he ordered an inmate at the State Correctional Institution Huntingdon, who had been involved in a confrontation with corrections officers, to submit his blood for HIV and... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Congressman visits opioid panel in Tamaqua to hear from survivors**  
TAMAQUA — For Lisa Scheller, an alcoholic drink at the age of 10 or 11 made her feel as though she fit in. Marie Beaver was young, too, when she picked up the bottle. Like Scheller, she was shy and also troubled by her father's losing battle to lung cancer. Alcohol numbed that pain.... - [Pottsville Republican and Evening Herald](#)
- 08-27-2019 **White Haven meeting set for Wednesday**  
WILKES-BARRE — While the Wolf Administration has made it clear that no testimony will reverse the decision to close the White Haven Center, proponents to keep it open refuse to go down without a battle. Tom Kashatus of Glen Lyon, parent of a White Haven Center resident, alerted... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Local pediatrician addresses dangers of vaping devices**  
LEWISTOWN — In 2019, there are more teens and young adults choosing to vape rather than smoke cigarettes. In fact, on high school grounds and college campuses, vaping is becoming a popular activity. Vaping is done with a battery-operated device that heats up an inside... - [Lewistown Sentinel](#)



- 08-27-2019 **Coalition shares anti-drug information**  
SELINSGROVE — The monthly meeting of Snyder and Union County United in Recovery brought close to 20 people together, each with a stake in curbing drug use. The coalition met at the Union-Snyder Community Action Agency and attracted officials from the Greater Susquehanna Valley United Way, Geisinger Health... - [Milton Standard](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Ex-PSU team doctor accuses football coach James Franklin of pressuring him to clear injured players**  
According to the complaint filed in Dauphin County on Friday, Dr. Scott A. Lynch accused Franklin of interfering with medical management and return-to-play decisions “on multiple and repeated occasions.” When Lynch reported the behavior to others — among them AD Sandy Barbour,... - [State College Centre Daily Times](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Former Penn State Football Team Doctor Claims Franklin Tried to Interfere with Medical Decisions**  
This story has been updated with a statement from Penn State Health A former Penn State football team physician alleges in a new lawsuit that he was relieved of his duties after reporting that Coach James Franklin attempted to influence and interfere with decisions about medically... - [State College News](#)
- 08-27-2019 **No cases of virus found in county**  
So far this summer, the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has found no cases of West Nile Virus in the county. - [Huntingdon Daily News](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Suit claims Franklin attempted to interfere with players' return to field**  
Former Penn State athletic physician Dr. Scott A. Lynch has sued the university for more than \$50,000 in damages, claiming he was removed from his position as director of athletic medicine after telling athletic officials head football coach James Franklin attempted to persuade him to... - [New Castle News](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Why Doctors Still Offer Treatments That May Not Help**  
When your doctor gives you health advice, and your insurer pays for the recommended treatment, you probably presume it.s based on solid evidence. But a great deal of clinical practice that.s covered by private insurers and public programs isn.t. The British Medical Journal sifted through the evidence for thousands of... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Newark Water Crisis: Racing to Replace Lead Pipes in Under 3 Years**  
Weeks into an escalating public health crisis caused by elevated levels of lead in the water, officials announced on Monday a new \$120 million plan to expedite the replacement of ancient service pipes in New Jersey.s largest city. The new financing will allow the city to replace the 18,000 buried lead... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Johnson & Johnson Ordered to Pay \$572 Million in Landmark Opioid Trial**  
A judge in Oklahoma on Monday ruled that Johnson & Johnson had intentionally played down the dangers and oversold the benefits of opioids, and ordered it to pay the state \$572 million in the first trial of a drug manufacturer for the destruction wrought by prescription painkillers.... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Biden knocks Trump, Democratic rivals in new TV ad touting Affordable Care Act**  
Joe Biden knocks both President Trump and some of his fellow Democratic White House hopefuls in a television ad that debuted Tuesday in Iowa in which the former vice president suggests they are all a threat to the Affordable Care Act. Health care has emerged as a fault line in the Democratic primary debate,... - [Washington Post](#)



- 08-27-2019 **Doctors may again help N.J. patients end their lives after court order. But appeal expected.**  
An appeals court Tuesday overturned the restraining order that halted New Jersey's "Aid in Dying" law, which enables terminally ill people to obtain a prescription and end their lives. The physician and pharmacist who challenged the law are expected to appeal... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 08-27-2019 **How the \$572 million ruling against Johnson & Johnson in Oklahoma could affect Maryland**  
The ruling by Cleveland County District Judge Thad Balkman is the first of its kind in the country and could help shape similar lawsuits filed against the pharmaceutical giant and others. A large collection of cases filed by municipalities throughout the country are being overseen by a federal judge... - [Baltimore Sun](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Reversing a crisis: Naloxone must be readily available**  
Just when families and communities need naloxone the most, federal authorities are warning that not enough of the overdose-reversing drug is being dispensed. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued an alarming report recently that the drug is hard to find, particularly in rural... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-27-2019 **What lies ahead following Oklahoma's \$572M opioid judgment?**  
Oklahoma's \$572 million judgment against Johnson & Johnson will likely be followed by more trials and legal settlements seeking to hold a drug company accountable for a U.S. opioid crisis that has ripped apart lives and communities. Monday's ruling could help shape negotiations over roughly 1,500... - [AP](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Raise the minimum age for all tobacco products | PennLive letters**  
I am writing to urge the Pennsylvania State Legislature to pass legislation that would raise the minimum sales age for all tobacco products to 21 years old. This legislation to increase the minimum sales age to 21 will significantly reduce youth tobacco use and save thousands of lives. About 95 percent of... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Former Pitt dean Jere Gallagher remembered as 'beautiful inside and out'**  
Jere Gallagher devoted her life to caring for others, whether it was her family, her friends or her many students. As an associate dean at University of Pittsburgh's School of Education, she spearheaded multiple initiatives to improve the lives of children and... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Hard-drinking young adults suffer surge in deadly liver disease**  
A little over a year ago, Eric Dunham had the operation that saved his life : a double transplant to give him a new liver and a new kidney. Chronic, heavy drinking had destroyed his own organs. It also led to a condition called hepatic encephalopathy that made him feel like he was losing his... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-27-2019 **800 nurses at this Bucks County hospital just voted to unionize**  
For a year and a half, a group of nurses at St. Mary Medical Center in Langhorne met with management to share their concerns about the cuts they had seen over the last few years . to staffing, on-call pay, sick leave. The quality of care, the nurses believed, had taken a hit.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-27-2019 **Federal judge blocks Missouri's 8-week abortion ban**  
A new Missouri ban on abortions at or after eight weeks of pregnancy won't take effect Wednesday after a federal judge temporarily blocked it from being implemented... - [AP](#)



- 08-27-2019 **[Biden health plan aims far beyond legacy of .Obamacare.](#)**  
Joe Biden is wrapping himself in the legacy of .Obamacare,. but he.s also offering restless Democrats a health care proposal that goes far beyond it... - [AP](#)
- 08-27-2019 **[Geisinger Holy Spirit doubles size of bone and joint clinic near Camp Hill](#)**  
Geisinger Holy Spirit recently opened a new orthopedics clinic near its hospital in East Pennsboro Township in Cumberland County. The \$3.8 million facility replaces one that was located in Lemoyne and, with 21 treatment rooms, doubles the size of the old facility. The facility... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 08-27-2019 **[Raise the minimum age for all tobacco products | PennLive letters](#)**  
I am writing to urge the Pennsylvania State Legislature to pass legislation that would raise the minimum sales age for all tobacco products to 21 years old. This legislation to increase the minimum sales age to 21 will significantly reduce youth tobacco use and save thousands of lives. About 95 percent of... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 08-27-2019 **[New Jersey court ruling lets assisted suicide go ahead](#)**  
New Jersey can move ahead with a new law allowing terminally ill patients to seek life-ending drugs, a state appeals court ruled Tuesday, overturning a lower court's temporary hold on the law... - [AP](#)
- 08-27-2019 **[Sen. Casey, seniors look to stem crisis facing many older Pennsylvanians, Americans](#)**  
The opioid crisis has led to a crisis of grandparents, and even great-grandparents, raising young children . something U.S. Sen. Bob Casey, D-Scranton, wants the federal government to take a more active role in addressing. .It.s a challenge, the likes of which I don.t think our country has ever... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-27-2019 **[Philadelphia region now has 20 marijuana dispensaries. Here's where they are](#)**  
A new medical marijuana dispensary is opening across the street from the Yards Brewery, taking the total number of cannabis retailers in the region to 20. Beyond/Hello, part of Florida-based Jushi Holdings, launched its second Philadelphia store at 475 N. 5th Street. The chain, which has an informal... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[Surgical center poised to grow](#)**  
EAST FREEDOM — The area's newest free-standing ambulatory surgical center is doing well and is poised for additional growth. East Freedom Surgical Associates, which is licensed to perform outpatient urologic surgical procedures, began operations March 6. Dr. Stephen Yanoshak, a urologist, is the lone surgeon at the present time.... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[VA Pittsburgh's new director aims to make health care for vets more convenient, close to home](#)**  
The week after Donald Koenig took the helm of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, a federal law took effect that ushered in unprecedented competition over veterans care nationwide. The Mission Act — bipartisan-backed legislation that took effect June 6, the 75th anniversary of D-Day — makes it easier than ever for... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[Amid E. coli concerns, Harrisburg's City Island Beach keep-out sign is hard to find](#)**  
(Harrisburg) -- After hearing reports on television of dangerous E. coli levels in the Susquehanna River, John Mower decided to head over to City Island. The 59-year-old from Wormleysburg said he's been sick for the last two days after taking his pontoon boat on the river and wading in it with his... - [WITF](#)



- 08-26-2019 **[Smithfield supervisors plan sixth hearing on drug treatment center](#)**  
MARSHALLS CREEK — The Smithfield Township Board of Supervisors on Wednesday will, for the sixth time, reopen a public hearing on the proposed Water Gap Wellness residential drug and treatment center. Supervisors are expected to take action on the matter during a special work session that... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[Federal control of health care means higher taxes and more limitations](#)**  
Medicare for all sounded to a substantial number of Americans like a wonderful it, until they learned and thought more about it. Democratic candidates for president noticed the shift. Now, some who backed the proposal initially are altering their rhetoric. In essence, “Medicare for all” is exactly what the name implies. It... - [Lewistown Sentinel](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[Patients denied benefits, services by health insurers are using appeal process to recover millions](#)**  
It’s been 20 years since Ohio enacted its external review law to allow people to appeal decisions made by health care providers, a right that was eventually established nationally by the Affordable Care Act. Patients are sometimes frustrated or confused by bills from their health... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[Opinion | The Trump Administration Is Creating a Health Nightmare Near the Border](#)**  
The key ingredients for an infectious disease outbreak are no secret: people with immune systems that have been weakened by stress and poor nutrition, crammed into close quarters with one another and denied basic hygiene and health care, for extended periods of time. That.s why diseases... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[The \\$6 Million Drug Claim](#)**  
Dawn Patterson keeps a multimillion-dollar drug in the fridge, next to a bottle of root beer and a jar of salsa. The drug, Strensiq, treats a rare bone disease that afflicted her with excruciating pain and left her struggling to work or care for her family.... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[East Liberty doctor takes a flat-fee approach to family medicine](#)**  
Family physician Timothy Wong’s new iHealth Clinic in the heart of East Liberty won’t accept your health insurance and it doesn’t deal with co-payments or deductibles. He will, however, treat your cold, manage your blood pressure or remove a callus for \$35 per medical problem.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[Don’t count on tax revenues from legal marijuana sales, study says. Locals say balderdash.](#)**  
N.J. Gov. Phil Murphy last year said that if recreational marijuana was legalized in the Garden State, it would generate at least \$60 million in taxes annually. The state’s Office of Legislative Services guessed even more, estimating legal sales would reap between \$80 and \$210 million.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-26-2019 **[Penn State Football Coach James Franklin pressured me to clear injured players to play, ousted team doctor claims](#)**  
A former team doctor for Penn State is suing the university and football Coach James Franklin, claiming Franklin pressured him about clearing injured players to return to the gridiron. Dr. Scott A. Lynch claims in a lawsuit filed in Dauphin County Court that... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)



- 08-26-2019 **Bayada Home Health Care will acquire Visiting Nurse Association Health Group**  
Bayada Home Health Care, which became a nonprofit last December, will acquire the 107-year-old Visiting Nurse Association Health Group, of Holmdel, N.J., the two organizations said Monday. When the merger of the Visiting Nurse Association.s in Bayada is completed,... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Staying vigilant: Uptick in rabies offers opportunity for preparation**  
The wilds of Pennsylvania seem to be getting closer and closer to home. Deer in backyards. Coyotes cutting across playgrounds. Rabid raccoons on the front street. Yes, rabid raccoons. And bats, and a fox, and even a groundhog. In Allegheny County, some 17 rabid animals have been reported this year.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Affordable medicine**  
I am appalled by the full-page advertisement paid for by FreedomWorks on Page A-10 in the Aug 22 issue of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, thanking Sen. Pat Toomey, R-Pa., for opposing price controls on medications. Clearly FreedomWorks is a right-wing entity dedicated to backing its... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Keeping babies safe: Hello Baby program aims to reduce child neglect**  
Allegheny County is saying hello to a new program aimed at reducing child neglect. The method: contacting parents of all babies in the county shortly after the children are born. This will mean making connections with about 13,000 families per year to inform them of available services.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Thanks to 3D-assisted surgery, this dog survived to comfort his grieving family**  
It.s hard to keep a good dog down, and Andy, a dachshund with Yoda ears and boundless energy, was as good as they get. Ever since he joined Lorraine and Robert Young.s Woodstown N.J., home as a pup seven years ago, the little long guy had been a tireless source of... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Bryn Mawr Hospital misplaced body of miscarried baby, lawsuit alleges**  
Only 18 weeks pregnant, Tiffany Griffin was rushed to the hospital and given the news no expecting mother wants to hear. Her baby, her first, was not going to make it. Griffin and her partner, Chad Greaves, knew the baby she was carrying had been diagnosed with several genetic disorders that elevated the risk of... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-25-2019 **With eyes on Philly, it's time for the U.S. to embrace overdose prevention sites | Opinion**  
We are in the throes of an unprecedented public health epidemic. Since 1999, there has been a nearly four-fold increase in drug overdose death rates. And in 2017, a record 70,237 people across the United States died from a drug-related overdose. That.s more lives lost per year than gun... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-25-2019 **3 drownings in past 3 years in public pools in Allegheny County**  
Allegheny County has had three drownings in public pools . one for each of the past three years . according to incident data obtained in a Right-to-Know request. The Tribune-Review requested the information as part of its examination of pool inspection reports in Allegheny and Westmoreland counties. That report... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)



- 08-25-2019 **Disease management focus of new wildlife program**  
More than a century ago, unregulated commercial harvest put much of Pennsylvania's wildlife on the brink of blinking out. These days, disease is the threat. White-nose syndrome has reduced populations of some bat species by 99 percent. West Nile virus continues to hammer ruffed grouse and, perhaps,... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Editorial: Vaccination info should be epidemic**  
Disease is not political. It doesn't have an ideology. It doesn't practice religion. It doesn't espouse an opinion. Disease just wants to grow and spread. And it's usually pretty good at it. So political arguments about vaccinations don't faze diseases. The mumps... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Laurels & lances: Hard work, fast train, sweet music**  
Laurel: To the value of a hard worker. Some people have plans to retire after 20 or 30 years on the job. Not Nora Morant. At 88, the Oakland woman has spent 70 years on the housekeeping staff at Charles Morris Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Squirrel Hill.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Lori Falce: The blindsiding of a friend's suicide**  
We hadn't talked . really talked . in months. Maybe years. It's one of those things where you lose track. Social media had become our conduit, where we left the occasional .oh that's so sweet. on a picture of each other's kids or caught up on job changes and new relationships.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-25-2019 **First Vegas-themed gaming room opens in Western Pennsylvania**  
The first legal Video Gaming Terminals in Western Pennsylvania opened to the public last week at Emlenton Truck Plaza in Emlenton. The Pennsylvania legislature approved truck stop gaming in 2017. Emlenton Truck Plaza will be among the very first in the state to operate the games.... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 08-25-2019 **As school starts, Wolf Administration encourages healthy eating habits**  
Wolf Administration officials last week discussed the importance of proper nutrition, especially among school-aged children, and offered healthy tips to parents and students who are preparing for the new school year. .We want to make sure students have everything they need to succeed in... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Berks County Intermediate Unit gives community award to safe schools advocate**  
The Berks County Intermediate Unit has named Dr. Edward B. Michalik its 2019 Outstanding Community Partner Award winner. Michalik is the mental health/developmental disabilities program administrator and executive director for the Area Agency on Aging for Berks... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 08-25-2019 **On health care, Democrats are moving to the middle**  
Rank-and-file Democrats appear to be shifting to the middle on health care, worried about what's politically achievable on their party's top 2020 issue... - [AP](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Patient's death may be first in US tied to vaping**  
Health officials said Friday that an Illinois patient who contracted a serious lung disease after vaping has died and that they consider it the first death in the United States linked to the smoking alternative that has become popular with teens and young adults... - [AP](#)



- 08-25-2019 **First Christie, now Trump forces cuts to women's reproductive care | Editorial**  
It's like making the rounds to eat corn dogs at the Iowa state fair . next stop, for a nationally ambitious Republican, is slapping a padlock on Uterine Control HQ. This time, it's Donald Trump ducking in to your local Planned Parenthood, as if it's the Miss Teen USA dressing room, and refusing to budge unless... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Medicine and government have failed to help us battle Lyme disease**  
By Mary Beth Pfeiffer In the same week recently, a New York state woman died from a paralyzing virus and an Ontario, Canada, boy suffered meningitis, both from the bite of a tick. Thousands more nationally and hundreds in New Jersey were infected in a medical crisis in our midst.... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Amid measles warning for Disneyland and other L.A. tourist spots, here's what you need to know**  
The symptoms range from ordinary to grim: fever over 101 degrees, cough, runny nose, red watery eyes and, then, the clincher . a rash that starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body. With thousands of people potentially exposed to measles earlier this month... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Tainted Water, Ignored Warnings and a Boss With a Criminal Past**  
In the year after receiving test results showing alarming levels of lead in this city's drinking water, Mayor Ras Baraka of Newark made a number of unexpected decisions. He mailed a brochure to all city residents assuring them that .the quality of water meets all federal and state standards..... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-25-2019 **First Death in a Spate of Vaping Sicknesses Reported by Health Officials**  
A patient in Illinois is the first to die of a mysterious lung illness linked to vaping, public health officials announced on Friday. The death occurred as doctors and hospitals nationwide report an increasing number of vaping-related respiratory illnesses this summer: 193 cases have... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Your Long-Term Care Insurance Rate Spiked. Now What?**  
Karen Herzog, a retired high school teacher, bought a long-term care insurance policy 12 years ago because she didn't want to burden her only daughter if someday she could no longer care for herself. - [New York Times](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Patients face higher fees and longer waits after Planned Parenthood quits federal program**  
In Cleveland, a Planned Parenthood mobile clinic that tests for sexually transmitted diseases has cut its staff to part-time and may shut down. In Minneapolis, women and girls accustomed to free checkups are now billed as much as \$200 per visit on a sliding fee scale. And in Vienna, W.Va.,... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-25-2019 **Opinion | Trump just won a battle with Planned Parenthood. Thousands of women will pay.**  
THE TRUMP administration just won a victory over Planned Parenthood. Thousands of women will pay the price. Planned Parenthood announced this month that it was leaving the federal government's Title X program, which pays for family planning services for low-income Americans. As many as 1.6 million women and girls who currently... - [Washington Post](#)



- 08-23-2019 **[Cannabis ‘drought’ strikes Philadelphia region as the number of marijuana patients spikes](#)**  
A sudden spike in the number of registered patients and the addition of more dispensaries serving them may be causing a “drought” of medical marijuana available in the Philadelphia region. “There’s definitely been a palpable shortage of product in recent weeks, especially in the southeast,” said Mike Badey, owner of Keystone... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-23-2019 **[In Montgomery County, prosecutors are targeting a persistent source of the opioid crisis: ‘rogue’ doctors](#)**  
Ron Januzelli had almost forgotten about the doctor who treated his mother as she battled a heroin addiction. Then, in September, he saw the man’s mugshot next to a story about doctors pushing opioids through shady “pill mills.” And the memories started flooding back.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-23-2019 **[With 149 illnesses in U.S. linked to vaping, Pennsylvania says its medical marijuana vape products are safe](#)**  
Nearly 150 people in 15 states -- including nine in New Jersey and four in Pennsylvania -- have developed “severe lung illnesses” associated with e-cigarette use, federal health officials said Wednesday. In many cases, patients acknowledged recent use of e-cigarette or vape... - [Easton Express-Times](#)
- 08-23-2019 **[White Haven Center hearing: ‘Nothing more than a charade’](#)**  
State Rep. Gerald Mullery, D-119, Newport Twp., invited Gov. Tom Wolf to visit and meet the residents and workers of the White Haven State Center. “I think it is very important for you to see, first hand, those you are affecting with your decision,” Mullery wrote in a letter delivered... - [Hazleton Standard-Speaker](#)
- 08-23-2019 **[Grant Helps CVIM Expand Behavioral Health Services to Uninsured Residents](#)**  
Centre Volunteers in Medicine will be able to integrate behavioral health services with primary care for uninsured residents in Centre County, thanks to a \$125,000 grant from Highmark Foundation. Introduction of the Advancing Integrated Mental Health Solutions (AIMS)... - [State College News](#)
- 08-23-2019 **[Zika Was Soaring Across Cuba. Few Outside the Country Knew.](#)**  
A previously unknown outbreak of the Zika virus swept across Cuba in 2017, a year after the global health emergency was declared over, scientists reported on Thursday. Until now, the Pan American Health Organization had no record of any Zika infection in Cuba in 2017, much less an outbreak. Following inquiries by... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-23-2019 **[This Daily Pill Cut Heart Attacks by Half. Why Isn’t Everyone Getting It?](#)**  
Giving people an inexpensive pill containing generic drugs that prevent heart attacks — an idea first proposed 20 years ago but rarely tested — worked quite well in a new study, slashing the rate of heart attacks by more than half among those who regularly took the pills.... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-23-2019 **[Opinion | Seattle Has Figured Out How to End the War on Drugs](#)**  
SEATTLE — On gritty streets where heroin, fentanyl and meth stride like Death Eaters, where for decades both drugs and the war on drugs have wrecked lives, the city of Seattle is pioneering a bold approach to narcotics that should be a model for America. Anyone caught here with a small amount of drugs — even heroin —... - [New York Times](#)



- 08-23-2019 **Is Delaware on right path in fight against addiction?**  
It has taken years to get Delaware's most influential leaders around the same table, fighting for the same thing: To keep people alive and help them survive the disease of addiction. Thursday afternoon, Sen. Chris Coons organized a 14-person panel in honor of Office of National Drug Control Policy Director James Carroll's visit to... - [Wilmington News Journal](#)
- 08-23-2019 **Feds say a veteran's medical records were leaked; Ojeda says they were his**  
Richard Ojeda, a former Democratic state senator, says his medical records were stolen from a Veterans Affairs office in Huntington and used to derail his congressional campaign in 2018. On Thursday, Ojeda, who served in the U.S. Army for 24 years, filed a lawsuit in federal court seeking to force the U.S. Department of Veterans... - [Charleston Gazette-Mail](#)
- 08-23-2019 **Rally planned to save Polk**  
Organizations, political figures and local residents have joined together to schedule a rally to save Polk Center. The rally, scheduled at 10:30 a.m. Monday, Sept. 2, which is Labor Day, will be held in front of the county courthouse in Franklin. David Henderson, director of AFSCME Council 85 that represents 646 of the... - [Oil City Derrick](#)
- 08-23-2019 **A ban on sales of flavored tobacco for e-cigarettes could be coming to L.A. County**  
Los Angeles County could soon become the nation's largest jurisdiction to ban the sales of flavored tobacco — a move aimed at fighting what public health officials increasingly call an epidemic of e-cigarette use among teenagers. Under a proposed ordinance that the Board of Supervisors is expected to... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 08-23-2019 **911 caller: Toddler left in van at PATCO station 'turning blue and black'**  
A toddler found dead in a minivan in a parking lot at the PATCO High-Speed Line station in Lindenwold had been left in the sweltering vehicle for more than five hours when she was found, according to a 911 call. During the frantic call, a woman urged a Camden County dispatcher to send... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



Health Care Recap is a comprehensive daily report on legislative and executive actions in the Pennsylvania capitol and is compiled and edited by PLS.

For subscription information, questions or more information contact PLS at [mypls@mypls.com](mailto:mypls@mypls.com) or 717-236-6984. Thank you, Lynn, Jeff, Mike, Matt Hess, Matt Hykes, Deborah, Kara, Cheryl, Aaron, Becky, Amyra, Nick, Nicole, Robert, Emily, Andrew, Shaun, Justin, Sheri and Harrison.

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