



# Health Care Recap

Report provided courtesy of: KSA Group

September 6 - 12, 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

### OFFICIALS AND ADVOCATES DISCUSS PREVENTION OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

By Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | September 9, 2019

Drug and Alcohol Programs Acting Secretary Jennifer Smith, along with legislators and advocates, gathered today in the Main Capitol Rotunda to raise awareness and discuss the prevention of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD).

Sec. Smith stated, “Today, I stand before you to bring awareness to a 100 percent preventable disorder, FASD, and I am thrilled today to be joined by members of the General Assembly, medical professionals and remarkable individuals who focus every day on overcoming obstacles associated with FASD.” She described FASD as “an umbrella term describing the range of effects that occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy.”

Sec. Smith commented, “Unfortunately, even though this disorder is preventable, it is all too prevalent in the United States today.” According to Sec. Smith, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that one out of 100 children are born with FASD annually. She described the impact of children born with FASD as “staggering” and provided the following statistics:

- About 80 percent enter the foster care system or adoptive care system;
- Approximately 50 percent will have a disrupted school experience of suspension, expulsion or drop-out;
- More than 60 percent will encounter problems with law enforcement; and
- More than a third will develop substance use disorders.

Sec. Smith told participants, “Our message today is clear: don’t drink alcohol when you are pregnant. It is the one sure way to make certain our children and future Pennsylvanians can lead healthy lives.”

Rep. Thomas Murt (R-Montgomery), chairman of the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee and prime sponsor of [House Resolution 448](#), which recognizes September as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Month in Pennsylvania, said, “By standing together we speak with a louder voice, and that can lead to enormous change.” He continued, “Today we are reminding our legislature and our fellow Pennsylvanians about a danger many mothers unfortunately overlook.” Rep. Murt also stated, “The truth is fetal alcohol syndrome effects more infants than spina bifida, Down syndrome, and muscular dystrophy combined.” He asserted, “By declaring September 2019 as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Month in Pennsylvania, we are taking an important step forward in educating women who consume alcohol and who can become pregnant.” Concluding his remarks, Rep. Murt said, “Today we are sending an important message that there is no safe amount of alcohol that can be consumed during pregnancy and that abstaining from alcohol during pregnancy is the surest way to prevent this syndrome.”

Dr. Renee Turchi, medical director of special programs at St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children in Philadelphia, observed that statistics make FASD “one of the most common neuro-developmental disorders for children.” She emphasized, “There is no safe time, no safe amount, and no safe type of alcohol to drink while pregnant.” Dr. Turchi commented,



“What I would like to see as a first generation Italian and Philadelphian is that we take a Rocky Balboa approach to eliminating FASD and that we do things like screen women and educate our youth at a very young age that alcohol is never safe while you can possibly become pregnant or try to become pregnant, and then we can help all of our children in Pennsylvania.”

Jean Searle, an individual living with FASD, described her conditions and life experiences while living with the disorder. Searle said her brain has not developed the same as an individual without FASD, and that she is still trying to learn her brain’s system of functioning. She said, “Please remember: if you are pregnant, stop drinking now and please get treated.”

Rep. Karen Boback (R-Luzerne), chairman of the House Children and Youth Committee, also emphasized the importance of educating young people on the dangers of consuming alcohol while pregnant or trying to get pregnant.

###

## **LEGISLATORS JOIN EMERGENCY SERVICE AGENCIES AT ANNUAL EMS MEMORIAL**

By Harrison Cann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | September 9, 2019

Members of emergency services agencies were joined by Rep. Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster), Sen. Mike Regan (R-Cumberland), and Rep. Keith Gillespie (R-York) at the ninth annual EMS Memorial Service this afternoon in the Main Capitol Rotunda.

Honoring past emergency medical service (EMS) providers who lost their lives in the line of duty, the memorial service capped off the fourth annual Pennsylvania EMS Memorial Bike Ride, which began Saturday, September 7 at the St. Luke’s Emergency and Transport Services in Tannersville.

John Bell, retired University of Pittsburgh Medical Center pastor, began the service with a prayer. Doug Garretson, chair, Pennsylvania EMS Provider Foundation, acknowledged the participants of the bike ride and thanked the support staff. “We ride in honor of our brothers and sisters who gave their lives in the line of duty,” Garretson said.

Rep. Cutler thanked EMS workers for protecting their communities and families of those who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty.

“As you all know, you do not serve alone. Your entire family serves with you,” Rep. Cutler said. “They sacrifice the long hours, the weekends, the swing shifts and whatever you are doing not knowing what is on the other side of your next call.”

Sen. Regan began detailing his story as a deputy U.S. marshal following the attacks in New York on September 11, 2001. He recognized the “dedication to duty” of EMS members during that time and admired their continued work after witnessing tragedy.

Sen. Regan added that he will look to address recommendations of the Fire and EMS Commission when the General Assembly returns this month. “I think it is important that we remember that 59 people lost their lives trying to save other people’s lives,” he commented.

Rep. Gillespie described his story as a paramedic from 1981 when two first responders, one of which was his partner and friend, died while rescuing a child from an abandoned septic tank. He said that performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on his partner was one of the hardest things he had to do, but that he still has the memories of him and his family. He thanked the attendees for keeping the memories alive of all 59 people that sacrificed their lives for others.

Dylan Ferguson, director, Bureau of EMS, Department of Health, said that EMS providers in the commonwealth are “some of the most selfless and dedicated individuals that you could ever meet.” He reiterated that EMS families also bear the sacrifice of those protecting the community.

Ferguson added that EMS providers have the skill “to turn people’s fear into hope, and the potential to alter the outcomes of



the worst day of their lives.” He highlighted the closeness of the EMS community and offered prayers to those that protect their communities and their families.

Garretson stated that the memorial’s purpose is to “honor those emergency medical services personnel who died in the line of duty and to recognize the ultimate sacrifice they have made for their fellow man.” He noted that the names of the EMS providers who lost their lives were all providers from the commonwealth.

The names of the fallen providers were then read and a bell was rung to honor each individual.

Garretson concluded by saying that a lot of the individuals named were not just EMS colleagues, but also employees, partners, friends, and family.

###

## **PENNSYLVANIA WORKERS AND UNION CALL FOR ACTION ON HB 1082**

By Harrison Cann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | September 11, 2019

Pennsylvania workers and union representatives, joined by Auditor General Eugene DePasquale and Rep. Thomas Mehaffie (R-Dauphin), asked the General Assembly to take action on [HB 1082](#) and increase health and safety protections for public-sector workers.

“Public employees rush into buildings that are collapsing when everyone else is running out...and too many times they rush in to give their life,” David Gash, president, Harrisburg Region Central Labor Council, stated, following a moment of silence honoring the victims of the September 11 attacks. Gash asserted that he is speaking today because public employees do not share the same protections as private employees.

Gash detailed the story of when he was hit by a car while working for the Department of Transportation (PennDOT), stating that safe working conditions are a right and not a privilege. “We will never be ashamed of fighting for the rights of workers,” Gash added.

DePasquale stated that the issue of workers’ rights should not be a partisan issue. “It has always been stunning to find out that local governments were exempt from a lot of workplace safety regulations,” DePasquale said. “Over time, the ramifications of that distinction become more and more dangerous.” Discussing his previous audits of health care facilities, DePasquale claimed that unsafe working conditions, such as mandatory overtime, are dangerous for both the worker and patient’s safety.

Steve Catanese, president, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 668, stated that following the 9/11 attacks, many people stressed the importance of defining what is “morally right and wrong.” He added that the issue of public worker safety “is morally clear.” Catanese reiterated DePasquale’s claim in that the issue should not be partisan. He stated that many public service workers are going into their field not for the money but for the calling to help society.

“Pennsylvania has not had the courage and fortitude to go to the General Assembly and say ‘we think public workers are worth it.’” Concluding, he reiterated that public workers deserve the same Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations that private-sector workers have, and that he wants to ensure that “children of our members do not have to worry about whether their mom or dad is going to come home.”

George Hartwick, Dauphin County Commissioner, detailed a story of when he was mayor of Steelton and a construction worker lost his life due to a lack of local safety regulations for workers. “The most difficult jobs I found are the ones that SEIU workers are doing,” Hartwick said. He added that public works employees often face dangerous situations similar to the ones police officers face, but do not receive the same protections.



“This issue has been around too long to not take action,” Hartwick stated. “Public employees do not have the same protections [as private employees], and you would assume that they would come first.” He reiterated that public workers often sacrifice a higher salary because they want to serve the public.

Rep. Mehaffie recognized Rep. Patrick Harkins (D-Erie) for introducing HB 1082 and stated that the issue of worker’s rights is a bipartisan issue that “we really need to push.” He stated that employers always take care of their employees as if they were their family, and that should be no different in the public sector.

“When I became a commissioner, I could not believe that we were not following OSHA...it was astonishing,” Rep. Mehaffie added. He asserted that there are cases where PennDOT employees working on one side of a road do not have the same protections as private-sector workers on the other side of the road. He stressed for others to slow down in construction zones and have patience with public workers because accidents can occur when they rush.

Gash stated that 28 states have already passed similar safety and health protections, and that “it is time we do it in Pennsylvania.” He concluded by stating that with help, they can ensure that there will not be an empty seat at the dinner table because of another worker losing their life serving the public.

###

## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH DISCUSSES PROGRAMS HELPING STUDENTS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY**

By Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | September 12, 2019

Department of Health officials along with representatives from Pennsylvania’s BrainSTEPS (Strategies, Teaching Educators, Parents and Students) Program today held a news conference to discuss the impacts of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and resources available to students with a TBI. Sarah Boateng, executive deputy secretary at the Department of Health, told reporters, “A traumatic brain injury or TBI is an important public health issue that can cause death and disability.” She added, “Those who survive a TBI can have effects that can last for days or even the rest of their lives.”

Boateng explained that TBIs can affect memory, movement, sensations and emotions. She noted that a concussion is the most common type of TBI. Boateng reported, “According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), during the last decade emergency room visits for sports and recreation-related traumatic brain injuries including concussions among children and teens nationwide have increase 60 percent.” She reported, “According to the CDC, during the last decade emergency room visits for sports and recreation-related traumatic brain injuries including concussions among children and teens nationwide have increase 60 percent.” Boateng commented, “While this alarming increase is important, we can educate the public on safety tips in prevention.” She outlined some ways to reduce the risk of a concussion including the use of age and size appropriate car seats and booster seats; wearing a helmet that fits correctly; wearing proper sports equipment; and using gates at the top and bottom of stairs to prevent serious falls for infants and toddlers. Boateng explained that the BrainSTEPS program works with teachers and students’ families to improve education for those who have experienced any type of brain injury. She further explained, “BrainSTEP teams are comprised of social workers, school nurses, counselors, psychologists and athletic trainers and these teams provide training and education to teachers so they can effectively help students with a TBI achieve educational success upon graduation.”

According to Brenda Eagan-Johnson, BrainSTEPS program manager, “Pennsylvania is leading the nation for supporting students in the state who sustain any severity of acquired brain injury.” She outlined some brain injury facts including: brain injury is a leading cause of death and disability in children and adolescents according to the CDC; after a brain injury students may experience learning and/or behavioral issues; outward physical recovery of a child does not signify the brain has healed; and the effects of brain injury in children are not always apparent and may not become evident until the child reaches important developmental stages. Eagan-Johnson explained to reporters that the program was created in 2007 by Department of Health and is jointly funded by the department and the Department of Education Bureau of Special Education and is implemented by the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania. She further explained that BrainSTEP teams across the



Commonwealth are based in the educational intermediate units under the Department of Education and are comprised of approximately 300 educational brain injury consultants. Eagan-Johnson said, “BrainSTEP teams collaborate with schools, medical providers, students and families to meet the student’s educational needs after brain injury by providing targeted consultation and training to help the school staff, including the teachers, understand the student’s brain injury and provide recommendations for appropriate academic accommodations.” She also said that once a student is referred to BrainSTEPS, “the team will follow that student annually until the student graduates.”

Eagan-Johnson told reporters, “Acquired brain injuries are brain injuries that occur after birth and include nontraumatic and traumatic injuries.” She explained, “Moderate and traumatic brain injury often results from an external physical force commonly caused by recreational activities, falls, assault, abuse, gunshot wounds, motor vehicle accidents including bicycle and pedestrian accidents and abusive head trauma. Eagan-Johnson further explained, “Nontraumatic brain injuries also receive services after a student has had a nontraumatic brain injury and those result from an internal process caused commonly by strokes, brain tumors, aneurisms, lack of oxygen to the brain, lightning strike, late term chemotherapy and radiation effects to the brain, near drowning, brain infections and viruses, toxic injuries, a cardiac event or a diabetic coma.” She noted that concussions “are the most commonly occurring type of brain injury.” Eagan-Johnson reported that BrainSTEPS created a separate training model in Pennsylvania to help schools manage student concussions and have trained over 2500 school staff since 2013 who serve on their schools’ concussion team.

Dr. Ronald Deguffroy, Lincoln Intermediate Unit 12 team leader, provided an overview of how the teams operate. He explained that the program is designed to deal with functional impairments that come with the injury. Deguffroy encourage parents to go to the program’s website [www.brainsteps.net](http://www.brainsteps.net) if they have a student who is suffering from a concussion or other traumatic brain injury. He noted that degree of support is based on the need of the student and for some of those it may be a combination of regular education and all the way through specialized programming.

### **Committee News**

No Committee News this week.

### **MAAC**

MAAC did not meet this week.

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

#### **DHS: DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE HOSPITAL PAYMENTS TO QUALIFYING HOSPITALS**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is providing final notice of its funding allocation for fiscal year 2018-2019 disproportionate share hospital payments to qualifying acute care general hospitals that provide enhanced access to multiple types of medical care in economically distressed areas. DHS is not changing the qualifying criteria or payment methodology for these payments.

The fiscal year 2018-2019 impact, as a result of the funding allocation for these payments, is \$119,397,000 (\$57,012,000 in state general funds and \$62,385,000 in federal funds). Additional information can be found on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

#### **DHS: DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE HOSPITAL PAYMENTS TO QUALIFYING HOSPITALS**

The Department of Human Services is providing final notice of its funding allocation for fiscal year 2018-2019 disproportionate share hospital payments to qualifying hospitals that provide a high volume of services to the Medical Assistance population to promote continued access to inpatient and ancillary outpatient services in this commonwealth and to support academic medical programs that provide integrated patient-centered medical services. DHS is not changing the qualifying criteria or payment methodology for these payments.

The fiscal year 2018-2019 impact, as a result of the funding allocation for these payments, is \$9,424,000 (\$4,500,000 in state



general funds and \$4,924,000 in federal funds). Additional information can be found on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

#### **DHS: DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE HOSPITAL PAYMENTS TO QUALIFYING HOSPITALS**

The Department of Human Services is providing final notice of its funding allocation for fiscal year 2018-2019 disproportionate share hospital payments to qualifying Medical Assistance (MA) enrolled acute care general hospitals that promote access to comprehensive inpatient services for MA eligible persons by providing an adequate supply of health care professionals who have been trained in high volume MA enrolled hospital settings. DHS is not changing the qualifying criteria or payment methodology for these payments.

The fiscal year 2018-2019 impact, as a result of the funding allocation for these payments, is \$64,566,000 (\$30,830,000 in state general funds and \$33,736,000 in federal funds).

#### **IRRC: NOTICE OF COMMENTS ISSUED**

The Independent Regulatory Review Commission issued comments on the following proposed regulation:

- Reg. No. 8-27: Department of General Services, *State Metrology Laboratory Fee Schedule*.

The comments on the regulation and additional information can be found on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

### **Cosponsor Memos**

HCO1699	Kim, Patty(D)	Requires all correctional institutions to provide an internal, family-centered housing unit for individuals who give birth while incarcerated.
HCO2135	Mehaffie, Thomas(R)	Expands title protection and provides practice protection for licensed dietitian nutritionists. It will more clearly outline the range of functions and responsibilities of dietitian nutritionists.
HCO2509	Miller, Daniel(D)	Amends the truancy law by clarifying that valid medical excuses submitted in a timely manner should not be considered unexcused absences.
HCO2519	Zimmerman, David(R)	Amends the School Code to require eye health examinations at crucial points in children's development.
HCO2523	Brooks, Robert (F)(R)	Allows for the expungement of criminal records for those who turned to the use of marijuana for medical purposes before the enactment of the Medical Marijuana Act.
HCO2540	Sanchez, Ben (F)(D)	Allows an individual on the autism spectrum to receive notation on their driver's license or identification card indicating their condition.
HCO2541	Daley, Mary Jo(D)	Expands restrictions on shackling for incarcerated women who are pregnant, who are in labor, or who have recently given birth.
SCO1140	Williams, Lindsey (F)(D)	Allows individuals diagnosed with health conditions that may impede their ability to communicate to have a special designation placed on their driver's license or identification card.
SCO1142	Mastriano, Doug(R)	Amends the "Solicitation of Funds for Charitable Purposes Act" to ease the regulatory and financial burden this statute imposes on our charitable organizations, such as volunteer fire companies and senior centers.



SCO1149 Tartaglione, Christine(D) Requires school districts, landlords and newly constructed property owners to test their properties for high levels of radon and if toxic levels are found, the owners must take steps to address the radon.

### Bill Actions

HB 1704 Bernstine, Aaron(R) (PN 2296) Amends the Human Services Code, in medical assistance, establishing the Medical Assistance Deemed Eligibility Program for In-Patient Behavioral Health Services. The legislation enables patients in crisis to be deemed eligible for behavioral health services, be automatically enrolled in a local behavioral health managed care organization, and receive these services immediately while their medical assistance application is being reviewed. This legislation also provides that the department shall make a determination on medical assistance eligibility within 60 days of the submission of an application. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 07-01-19 H Filed  
07-08-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Human Services  
09-18-19 H Meeting set for 9:00 a.m., Room 60, East Wing, House Human Services -- House Human Services  
09-11-19 H Bill removed from meeting agenda for 9/18/19, House Human Services -- House Human Services

HB 1798 Kim, Patty(D) (PN 2442) Amends Title 61 (Prisons and Parole), in miscellaneous provisions relating to inmate confinement, requiring all correctional institutions to provide an internal, family-centered housing unit for individuals who give birth while incarcerated. Individuals and their infant may live together for up to 18 months in an environment supportive of parent-child bonding for postnatal care and child care. Effective in one year.

**Bill History:** 09-05-19 H Filed  
09-12-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary

HB 1802 Mehaffie, Thomas(R) (PN 2445) Amends the Professional Nursing Law making changes to numerous definitions of terms, including "treating," "medical nutrition therapy," and "certified nutrition specialist," among others. Amends composition of the State Board of Nursing. Outlines requirements for dietitian nutritionist or nutritionist licensure and registration, scope of practice, and activity prohibited. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-06-19 H Filed  
09-12-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Professional Licensure

HB 1811 Nesbit, Tedd(R) Act providing for medical imaging & radiation therapy licensure; est. the Medical Imaging & Therapy Board of Examiners & providing for its powers & duties; prescribing penalties; making a transfer; and making related repeals.

**Bill History:** 09-11-19 H Filed



[HB 1815](#) [Kinsey, Stephen\(D\)](#) Amends the Crime Victims Act, in preliminary provisions, further providing for definitions; and, in services, further providing for establishment of basic services for victims of crime.

**Bill History:** 09-12-19 H Filed

[HB 1816](#) [Culver, Lynda\(R\)](#) Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in Commonwealth services, further providing for assistance to volunteer fire companies, ambulance service and rescue squads.

**Bill History:** 09-12-19 H Filed

[HR 483](#) [O'Neal, Tim\(R\)](#) Resolution urging the Congress of the United States to direct the National Institutes of Health to conduct a comprehensive study on the causes of Ewing sarcoma.

**Bill History:** 09-11-19 H Filed

## Upcoming Events

### 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, Board Room C, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting immediately followed by a Regulatory 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)

### Press Conference

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

### House Health

*September 18, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Room 205, Ryan Office Building*  
To consider: [HB 533](#) Owlett, Clint Act re insurer credentialing [HR 441](#) Culver, Lynda Resolution re Histiocytosis Awareness Month [HR 463](#) Benninghoff, Ker Resolution re Childhood Cancer Awareness Month [HR 464](#) Brown, Rosemary Resolution re Polycystic Kidney Awareness

### 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 [SB 675](#) Brooks, Michele Act re licensing prescribers of suboxone (Note: HB 1704 removed from agenda)

### House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.

*September 18, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Room B31, Main Capitol*  
To consider: [HB 1347](#) Masser, Kurt Amends Insurance Company Law re EMS [HB 1705](#) Gabler, Matt Amends Title 35 re first responders [HB 1773](#) Struzzi, James ( Amends Title 35 re first responder tuition [HB 1780](#) James, Lee Amends Title 35 re right-to-know law for EMS [HB 1786](#) Sainato, Chris Amends Title 35 re first responder loans



**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

**Patient Safety Authority**

*September 23, 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 23, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., East Wing Rotunda, Capitol*  
Don't Wait: Hospice & Palliative Care Across PA (unconfirmed)

**Press Conference**

*September 23, 2019 - 12:30 p.m., East Wing Rotunda, Capitol*  
Dyslexia Awareness Month (unconfirmed)

**Press Conference**

*September 23, 2019 - 2:00 p.m., East Wing Rotunda, Capitol*  
Nittany Fit (unconfirmed)

**Press Conference**

*September 23, 2019 - 2:00 p.m., East Wing Rotunda, Capitol*  
Nittany Fit (unconfirmed)

**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

**State Bd of Social Wkrs, Marriage & Fam. Therapists & Prof. Coun.**

*September 24, 2019 - 9:30 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1389

**Press Conference**

*September 24, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
PA Dental Hygienists' Association Rally for Access to Oral Health Care (unconfirmed)

**Press Conference**

*September 24, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., East Wing Rotunda, Capitol*  
Newborn Screening Awareness (unconfirmed)



**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

**Press Conference**

*September 24, 2019 - 12:30 p.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*

Parents Know Best (unconfirmed)

**Department of Human Services**

*September 24, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Commonwealth Keystone Building, Forest Room, 400 North Street, Harrisburg*

Income Maintenance Advisory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 772-2549

**Press Conference**

*September 24, 2019 - 2:00 p.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*

Fifth Annual Recovery Advocacy Day

**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 Finance**

*September 25, 2019 - 9:45 a.m., Room 8E-A, East Wing*

Public hearing: [SB 74](#) Martin, Scott Amends Tax Reform Code re cancer research

**Press Conference**

*September 25, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*

Someone You Know; Facing the Opioid Crisis Together (unconfirmed)

**Press Conference**

*September 25, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., East Wing Rotunda, Capitol*

Suicide Awareness Day at the Capitol

**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

**Department of Human Services**

*September 25, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Health & Welfare Building, Room 129, 333 Market St., Harrisburg*

Consumer Subcommittee of the Medical Assistance Advisory Committee. For additional information: (717) 783-9916

**Department of Human Services**

*September 26, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Temple University Harrisburg, 234 Strawberry Square, Harrisburg*

Medical Assistance Advisory Committee (MAAC) Meeting. For additional information: (717) 772-6341

**Department of Health**

*September 26, 2019 - 4:00 p.m., Lackawanna County Children's Library Community Room, 520 Vine Street, Scranton*

Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant Public Meeting. For additional information: (717) 346-3000



### **Press Conference**

*October 1, 2019 - 11:00 a.m., Capitol Fountain, Commonwealth Avenue (behind Capitol)*  
PBCC Pink Fountain Event (unconfirmed)

### **Department of Human Services**

*October 2, 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) 772-254

### **Department of Health**

*October 2, 2019 - 4:00 p.m., Holiday Inn, 100 Pine Street, Williamsport*  
Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant Public Meeting. For additional information: (717) 346-3000

### **Senate Democratic Policy Committee**

*October 3, 2019 - 11:00 a.m., DCCC Academic Bldg., Room 2246, 901 S. Media Line Road, Media*  
Policy hearing on continuing the conversation around the future of firefighting and EMS in the Commonwealth

### **Department of Human Services**

*October 3, 2019 - 12:30 p.m., PaTTAN, 6340 Flank Drive, Harrisburg*  
OCDEL State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) Meeting. For additional information: (717) 772-2376

## **In the News**

- 09-12-2019 **[Purdue Pharma reaches tentative deal in federal, state opioid lawsuits](#)**  
Purdue Pharma, manufacturer of blockbuster painkiller OxyContin, reached a tentative settlement Wednesday with 23 states and more than 2,000 cities and counties that sued the company over its role in the opioid crisis of the past two decades, according to attorneys involved in the deal.... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Allegheny County to receive about \\$15 million to fight opioid crisis](#)**  
A grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will help the Allegheny County Health Department expand staff and resources dedicated to tackling the opioid crisis, officials announced Wednesday. The county will receive about \$15 million over three years through the... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Teachers' union investigating a possible 'cancer cluster' in Philly schools, warn of hazards](#)**  
A longtime city educator has mesothelioma — a type of cancer most often caused by asbestos exposure — and Philadelphia Federation of Teachers officials said Wednesday they are investigating a potential cancer cluster linked to widespread asbestos problems in schools across the district.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Former Pittsburgh man pleads guilty to 2017 federal heroin charge from Lincoln-Lemington](#)**  
A former Pittsburgh man has pleaded guilty to a federal heroin charge stemming from a 2017 arrest at the site of an alleged fentanyl lab in the city's Lincoln-Lemington section. Dezmen Hicks, 33, formerly of Inwood Street, pleaded guilty to one count of possession with intent to distribute heroin Tuesday in front of Chief U.S.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)



- 09-12-2019 **Suicide Prevention Task Force to hold session at Behrend**  
Governor's task force will address suicide prevention on Thursday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Behrend's Reed Union Building. Gov. Tom Wolf's administration's Suicide Prevention Task Force will hold the first session of its statewide public listening tour on Thursday... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Laughlin pledges support for public worker safety bill**  
State Rep. Pat Harkins introduced the bill after the death of EMTA mechanic Jake Schwab in 2014. State Sen. Dan Laughlin on Wednesday announced he would throw his support behind a worker safety bill originally drafted in response to the death of an Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority mechanic who was injured on the job... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 09-12-2019 **OxyContin settlement 'a slap in the face', Pa. Attorney General says**  
Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro is deriding the tentative deal the makers of OxyContin have reached over its role in the nation's opioid epidemic. In a statement Wednesday afternoon, Shapiro called the proposed deal as "a slap in the face" to those who have lost loved ones to drug... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Temple nurses are wary of CEO change in the middle of contract negotiations**  
In 2010, about a year before Larry Kaiser took over as chief executive of Temple University Health System, nurses at its flagship hospital were on strike for nearly a month. Kaiser ushered in an era of labor peace for registered nurses and others — now numbering 2,300 at Temple University Hospital — represented... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Yudichak, Baker ready for public hearing on White Haven Center**  
WHITE HAVEN — A public hearing on plans to close the White Haven State Center will be held this afternoon. The hearing, called by the Department of Human Services, is set for 5 p.m. at St. Patrick's Church, 411 Allegheny St., White Haven. Last month state DHS Secretary Teresa Miller announced the closure of the... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Health care costs push Pennsylvania voters to demand change -- including getting rid of insurance companies**  
Daryl Mulvaney, Linda Gehring and John Gorlowski live in three different parts of Pennsylvania and wear three different political stripes — Democrat, Republican and independent — but all three think insurance companies have too much power in the health care system.... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Muth calls for prescription drug price capping**  
HAVERTOWN—Sen. Katie Muth (D-Berks, Chester, Montgomery) joined Sen. Tim Kearney (D-Delaware/Chester) at the Pennsylvania House Democratic Policy Committee hearing on the rising costs of prescription drugs. The hearing was requested by Rep. Mike Zabel (D-Delaware) and was attended... - [Pottstown Mercury](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Shapiro balks at settlement with Purdue Pharma**  
HARTFORD, Conn. — Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro said Pennsylvania isn't joining a nationwide deal to settle lawsuits against Purdue Pharma over its role in allegedly fueling the opioid crisis. OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma reached a tentative deal Wednesday with about... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)



- 09-12-2019 **What's your sign? Local man coming to aid of the deaf**  
WEST CHESTER—Just try to imagine that you're deaf. And a refugee from another country. Or, blind, too. With a family who doesn't know how to communicate with sign language. Bill Lockard, program director of Deaf Can! (Deaf, Community, Action, Network.) will come to your rescue. Lockard said that the deaf are... - [West Chester Daily Local News](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Trump Administration Plans to Ban Flavored E-Cigarettes**  
The Trump administration said on Wednesday that it would ban the sale of most flavored e-cigarettes, at a time when hundreds of people have been sickened by mysterious lung illnesses and teenage vaping continues to rise. Sitting in the Oval Office with the government's top health officials,... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Purdue Pharma Tentatively Settles Thousands of Opioid Cases**  
Thousands of municipal governments nationwide and nearly two dozen states that sued the pharmaceutical industry for the destructive opioid crisis have tentatively reached a settlement with Purdue Pharma and its owners, members of the Sackler family. The deal is a landmark moment in the long-running effort to compel Purdue,... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Frontline's Flint water crisis report suggests dozens of undercounted deaths**  
The Flint water crisis may be best recognized for reigniting concerns about the levels of lead in municipal drinking water, but it's less often associated with a deadly outbreak of Legionnaires' disease . a severe form of pneumonia caused by waterborne bacteria that can be lethal if left... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Jeremiah Stamler turns 100 next month. He's still doing .incredibly complex. research funded by the National Institutes of Health**  
Jeremiah Stamler's scientific work is so cutting-edge, it recently earned him roughly half a million dollars in funding from a competitive grant program at the National Institutes of Health. Stamler turns 100 next month. For his birthday, the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Denver celebrates former problem property's transformation into Declaration House**  
Community and nonprofit leaders recently gathered in Denver to celebrate the opening of Declaration House. Formerly a well-known hotel, the building at 240 Main St. had degraded into a problem area when the \$3.54 million community effort to transform it started a few years ago.... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Commissioners proclaim National Recovery Month**  
Clearfield County Commissioners on Tuesday proclaimed September as National Recovery Month in Clearfield County. Prior to signing the proclamation, commissioners heard a presentation from members of Bilger's Rocks Association about its upcoming Rockin' Recovery Day and Rural Outreach Coordinator for the Clearfield-Jefferson... - [Clearfield Progress](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: White House may have given up on health plan it says it is writing**  
A former White House staffer and several congressional aides and activists say they've been told the Trump administration has moved away from seeking an Obamacare replacement and is instead focused on damage control should a judge rule next month to topple the entire law.... - [Washington Post](#)



- 09-12-2019 **Americans' struggles with medical bills are a foreign concept in other countries**  
In France, a visit to the doctor typically costs the equivalent of \$1.12. A night in a German hospital costs a patient roughly \$11. And in the Netherlands — one of the few wealthy nations other than the U.S. where patients face a deductible — insurers usually must cover all... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Another young Southern California pastor advocating for mental health dies by suicide**  
On Monday afternoon, Jarrid Wilson, a pastor at a Riverside megachurch and the founder of a mental health advocacy group, took to Twitter. “Loving Jesus doesn’t always cure suicidal thoughts,” Wilson wrote. “Loving Jesus doesn’t always cure depression. Loving Jesus... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 09-12-2019 **PA Attorney General Sues Sackler Family, Alleging Personal Liability For Opioid Crisis**  
Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro has filed a lawsuit alleging that members of the family that owns drug maker Purdue Pharma are personally liable “for the devastation of the opioid crisis,” according to a press release from his office. The announcement came one day after the company reached a tentative deal to... - [WESA 90.5](#)
- 09-12-2019 **AG Josh Shapiro sues family that owns drugmaker behind OxyContin**  
PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro is now going after the family that owns Purdue Pharma, the company that makes OxyContin. Shapiro is suing the Sackler family because he says a potential settlement that was announced Wednesday didn't go far enough to... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Attorney General Dave Yost supports opioid settlement with Purdue Pharma**  
A settlement proposed by drugmaker Purdue Pharma to resolve thousands of federal lawsuits over its role in the deadly opioid crisis would include payments to resolve the lawsuit Ohio filed against the maker of OxyContin, state Attorney General Dave Yost said Wednesday afternoon.... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Medical board won't recommend marijuana for autism and anxiety**  
The State Medical Board of Ohio voted Wednesday against approving medical marijuana to treat autism and anxiety. Due to the lack of clinical trials, the medical board decided that the available evidence is not strong enough to justify recommending the drug to... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Some medical marijuana users in Maryland reporting symptoms amid spate of vaping related illness**  
Seven medical cannabis users in Maryland have come forward to report unexplained respiratory symptoms since the state’s Medical Cannabis Commission asked users and providers to alert regulators of any lung problems in light of the mounting cases of illnesses locally and nationally... - [Baltimore Sun](#)
- 09-12-2019 **Pennsylvania attorney general sues family behind Purdue Pharma over its role in the opioid crisis**  
A day after Purdue Pharma reached a tentative settlement in a federal lawsuit over its sales of opioid painkillers, Pennsylvania’s attorney general filed a separate lawsuit against members of the Sackler family -- the company’s owners -- alleging that they “are personally liable... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 09-12-2019 **[Magee-Womens Research Institute awarded \\$5 million grant to study infant mortality](#)**  
The Richard King Mellon Foundation awarded a \$5.1 million grant to the Magee-Womens Research Institute and its research partners as part of a larger \$13 million project aimed at reducing infant mortality, the research institute announced Thursday. The grant is the second phase of a project that is not only trying to find... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Pa. AG Shapiro files suit against Sackler family, owners of opioid maker Purdue Pharma](#)**  
A day after the announcement of a massive, tentative settlement of perhaps 1,000 lawsuits against opioid maker Purdue Pharma, state Attorney General Josh Shapiro announced Thursday morning that he is suing the company's founders and owners over their role in spurring Pennsylvania's addiction... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Those helicopters overhead actually are flying ICUs](#)**  
Nowadays, STAT MedEvac and LifeFlight focus not on rushing patients to hospitals but bringing ICUs to patients. After a horse kicked her in the head in 2015, the unconscious woman took a 16-minute ride on a LifeFlight helicopter that saved her life. In a race against the clock, Christine Holt, 54, arrived at Allegheny... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Some states say they'll keep fighting Purdue Pharma in court](#)**  
Courtroom showdowns still face OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma and the family that owns it, the Sacklers... - [AP](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Hahnemann's residency program sale challenged in court by federal regulators](#)**  
The federal government, as expected, on Thursday took the first step in appealing the controversial bankruptcy sale of Hahnemann University Hospital's doctor-training programs to Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals Inc. The notice of appeal sets the stage for a showdown in U.S. District Court... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Hahnemann's transplant program is moving to a new home in West Reading](#)**  
Hahnemann University Hospital's kidney and liver transplant group is moving to Tower Health's Reading Hospital, in West Reading, Tower said Thursday. The physicians moving to Tower include David J. Reich, medical director of the Tower Health Transplant Institute and professor of surgery at Drexel... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Why is Imvax putting its new brain-cancer vaccine lab in Philly's old historic district?](#)**  
Imvax, which just raised \$40 million and hired ex-Spark Therapeutics exec John P. Furey as CEO, is building a lab for its new brain cancer vaccine -- not at the University City Science Center in brainy West Philly, nor at one of those county-backed suburban lab centers -- but in Philadelphia's Old... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-12-2019 **[Pennsylvania needs legislation to expand Lyme disease treatment | Opinion](#)**  
Pennsylvania is ground zero for Lyme disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report around 12,000 cases here in 2017 alone, a count they note is conservative and estimate to reflect just one in 10 of the total cases. Now our state legislators have a chance to do something... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 09-12-2019 **[Your child doesn't laugh at a joke? It could be a concussion](#)**  
Decreased mental energy, taking things too literally, or failing to grasp a joke are possible symptoms of concussion, which impact an estimated 20,000 young people per year in Pennsylvania. About half the concussions result from sports and half result from things... - *Penn Live, Patriot-News*
- 09-12-2019 **[Vaping suspected in half a dozen cases at St. Luke's of young Lehigh Valley adults with serious lung injuries](#)**  
The Lehigh Valley is seeing the same mysterious and serious lung injuries among young e-cigarette users that have puzzled doctors across the country and prompted a federal health agency to issue a warning this week . .The injury pattern seems to be the same. The lungs should look black, but... - *Allentown Morning Call*
- 09-12-2019 **[Could power of insurance companies push Pennsylvania voters to seek change? It is definitely on their minds](#)**  
Daryl Mulvaney, Linda Gehring and John Gorlowski live in three different parts of Pennsylvania and wear three different political stripes . Democrat, Republican and independent . but all three think insurance companies have too much power in the health care system.... - *Allentown Morning Call*
- 09-12-2019 **[Health Department: EPA has signed off on Allegheny County wet weather plan](#)**  
The federal Environmental Protection Agency has signed off on a long-awaited plan for managing storm water issues, Allegheny County Health Department officials announced Wednesday during a Board of Health meeting. The details of the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority.s Wet Weather Plan,... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*
- 09-12-2019 **[Pennsylvania Attorney General sues billionaire Sackler family, owners of Oxycontin maker](#)**  
Details of the lawsuit are sealed, but it alleges members of the Sackler family are .personally liable. for the opioid crisis because of their role in promoting Oxycontin, a brand name version of oxycodone. .The Sacklers. mission to avoid accountability and transparency stops... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*
- 09-12-2019 **[State of Obesity report: Pennsylvania's adult rate declined to 30.9% in 2018](#)**  
Down from the previous year, Pennsylvania.s 2018 adult obesity rate tied with Maryland and matched the U.S. rate in the most recent report from the Trust for America.s Health released Thursday. Holding its ranking as 25th in the nation, the state had 30.9% of its adult... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*
- 09-12-2019 **[Pitt Greensburg to gather data for national health research project](#)**  
A big data research project that experts say may change the face of medicine in the next decade is headed to Westmoreland County. The National Institutes of Health project dubbed .All of Us. seeks to collect health data from one million Americans over the next five years. It... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*
- 09-12-2019 **[Pa. investigates dozens of lung injuries possibly caused by vaping, issues warning](#)**  
Pennsylvania has 17 suspected cases of serious lung injury tied to vaping, and is investigating 30 more possible cases, the state health department said Thursday. Most cases involved men in their mid-20s. .Each of these cases have suffered serious lung injuries and have been... - *Penn Live, Patriot-News*



- 09-12-2019 **City could kick in \$10M for asbestos work in Philadelphia schools**  
A day after news broke that a longtime city teacher has a deadly cancer linked to asbestos, City Councilman At-Large Derek Green announced legislation Thursday that would give the Philadelphia School District \$10 million to deal with environmental hazards in schools across the city.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Illegal sales of cigarettes to Philadelphia youth doubled in 2018**  
Illegal sales of cigarettes to young people in Philadelphia have more than doubled in the last year, reversing a two-year decline in the practice, the Philadelphia Public Health Department announced Tuesday. The information came from the 2018 Pennsylvania Synar report, which... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-11-2019 **First-in-a-decade rise in those without health insurance hits children the hardest**  
The number of Americans without insurance increased last year for the first time since 2008, according to a report released Tuesday by the U.S. Census Bureau. In 2018, 27.5 million Americans did not have health insurance. That's up 1.9 million people from the previous year's number, 25.6 million.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-11-2019 **2 mosquito samples test positive for West Nile virus in Reading**  
A total of 19 mosquitoes in eight counties tested positive for the West Nile Virus on Tuesday. Two of the mosquitos were found in Reading, and six in Montgomery County. The remainder were found in Allegheny, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Northampton and York counties, according to the state Department of... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Insect bites, heart issues probed in Pontillo death**  
Medical examiner says director of Erie's Roar on the Shore died Saturday after being stricken at his home in Florida. A medical examiner's office in Florida is evaluating whether heart problems or exposure to insects might have caused the death of Ralph Pontillo, the former head of Erie's Manufacturer & Business Association... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Former Steeler Sam Davis found dead after reported missing from McKeesport nursing home**  
Former Steeler Sam Davis found dead after reported missing from McKeesport nursing home Former Steelers lineman Sam Davis was found dead Tuesday evening after he was reported missing from a personal care home in McKeesport. McKeesport police confirmed late Tuesday that the body of Mr. Davis, 75,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Share of uninsured Americans rises for first time in a decade**  
WASHINGTON — The proportion of Americans without health insurance edged up in 2018 — the first evidence from the government that coverage gains under President Barack Obama's health care law might be eroding under President Donald Trump... - [AP](#)
- 09-11-2019 **As Congress debates PFAS measures, lawmakers press 3M, DuPont, Chemours on chemicals they used**  
As negotiations continue in Congress over a defense spending bill that could provide for some federal cleanup and regulation of PFAS, executives from the companies that manufactured and used the chemicals faced tough questions from a congressional committee Tuesday.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 09-11-2019 **[FTC threatens action against CBD companies making bogus health claims](#)**  
The Federal Trade Commission threatened Tuesday to take legal action against three CBD companies that have illegally advertised that their products can cure a panoply of ailments. CBD, or cannabidiol, is one of hundreds of compounds found in the cannabis plant. Though it doesn't have an intoxicating effect, many people have... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Pa. nurses are fed up with hold times, rude answers, and delays dealing with state licensing board](#)**  
HARRISBURG — Nicole Hatem thought she was in a good spot when she graduated from Philadelphia's Jefferson College of Nursing in May. She had landed a job offer to be a staff nurse at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital and was slated to start in July. All she needed to do was pass her... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Health department says Harrison dust is lime](#)**  
The Allegheny County Health Department on Tuesday identified as lime the dust coating cars in a Harrison neighborhood and said it's coming from a nearby company. The department began investigating after getting complaints in August from residents on Opal Court and nearby High Street in the Natrona Heights area... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[White Haven Center supporters get their say today](#)**  
Since the administration of Gov. Tom Wolf announced plans to close the White Haven Center on Aug. 14, local lawmakers, the White Haven Chamber of Commerce and center employees have said shutting the doors is a bad idea. But the most emotional calls for the governor to reconsider have come from... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Lebanon County judge: People on probation can't use medical marijuana](#)**  
A Lebanon judge issued a policy earlier this month that prohibits people under county supervision from using medical marijuana, even if it goes against doctor's orders. The policy, which is dated Sept. 1, states that "Lebanon County Probation Services shall not permit the active use of medical marijuana, regardless... - [Lebanon Daily News](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Suicide Prevention Awareness Month sheds light on statistics](#)**  
CHAMBERSBURG — On average, one person dies by suicide every five hours across Pennsylvania, with 392 lives lost in Franklin County since 1995, and an estimated 25 attempted suicides for each suicide death. In Franklin County last year, there were 20 suicide deaths — three of... - [Waynesboro Record Herald](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[County leaders meeting to address aging population](#)**  
Bedford County leaders are continuing to work to develop ideas to help the county attract and retain young adults and families. - [Bedford Gazette](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Casey says ACA attacks preventing real reform](#)**  
U.S. Sen. Bob Casey said Monday morning thwarting attacks on the nation's current health care system is preventing meaningful work from being done on lowering costs for Americans. During an hourlong interview at the Times News, Casey said an appeals court could issue a decision "any day" on a lawsuit that, if successful,... - [Lehighon Times News](#)



- 09-11-2019 **Deaths, possible illnesses linked to vaping concern some Valley doctors, not all users**  
SHAMOKIN DAM — Trevorton resident Alyssa Bradigan is well aware of the controversy surrounding vaping but it isn't deterring her from her daily recreational use of electronic cigarettes. On Tuesday, one day after the Pennsylvania Department of Health announced... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Senior donates time, effort to improve playground**  
SUNBURY — The Kiwanis Playground continues to make improvements and, thanks to Shikellamy High School senior Colton Harris, the seating got a bit more comfortable. Harris, 17, a Boy Scout in Troop 605, out of Milton, decided for his Eagle Scout project, to build two picnic tables, clean and mulch the... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Share of Americans With Health Insurance Declined in 2018**  
Fewer Americans are living in poverty, but for the first time in years, more of them lack health insurance. About 27.5 million people, or 8.5 percent of the population, lacked health insurance for all of 2018, up from 7.9 percent the year before, the Census Bureau reported Tuesday. It was the first increase since the Affordable... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Study Shows Income Gap Between Rich and Poor Keeps Growing, With Deadly Effects**  
The expanding gap between rich and poor is not only widening the gulf in incomes and wealth in America. It is helping the rich lead longer lives, while cutting short the lives of those who are struggling, according to a study released this week by the Government Accountability Office.... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Pelosi Energizes Battle to Lower Drug Prices**  
A draft proposal by Speaker Nancy Pelosi would empower the federal government to negotiate lower prices for hundreds of prescription drugs, not only for Medicare but for the private market as well, injecting new urgency into Washington's efforts to control the soaring price of... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Bloomberg Takes on Vaping After Giving \$1 Billion to Fight Tobacco**  
Michael R. Bloomberg, who has committed nearly \$1 billion to aid anti-tobacco efforts, is now stepping into the campaign to combat vaping, announcing a \$160 million push to ban flavored e-cigarettes. Mr. Bloomberg, the former mayor of New York City, said that his Bloomberg... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-11-2019 **California state health director resigns after criticizing anti-vaccine activists on Facebook**  
A top healthcare official in Gov. Gavin Newsom's administration announced her departure Tuesday, with the timing of her resignation sparking questions about whether it was related to a Facebook post she shared criticizing vaccine bill protesters and calling them... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 09-11-2019 **'Gravely Disabled' Homeless Forced Into Mental Health Care in More States**  
Often, when she got high on meth, "Melanie," who suffers from schizophrenia, would strip naked and run screaming straight into San Francisco traffic. Invariably, police would bring her to the hospital, where she'd undergo treatment. There, her psychotic symptoms would... - [Stateline.org](#)



- 09-11-2019 **[Analysis | The Health 202: Millions of Americans aren't getting health insurance, even though they're eligible for free or affordable plans](#)**  
Nearly 28 million Americans lack health insurance despite this fact: About half of them are eligible for either free coverage or government help in buying it. That's both a discouraging and heartening reality behind new census data showing the country's pool of uninsured people grew significantly for the... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Rate of uninsured in WV remains unchanged, but worries shared on lack of progress](#)**  
While West Virginia made progress years ago in decreasing the number of uninsured people in the state, a U.S. Census Bureau report released Tuesday suggests that progress may be slowing after no change in the rate of insurance coverage between 2017 and 2018.... - [Charleston Gazette-Mail](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Portman blames spending on social security, Medicare and Medicaid for deficits](#)**  
The economy apparently is slowing and deficits are soaring, but Sen. Rob Portman said Tuesday he's not disappointed in the performance of the massive 2017 federal tax cut. The Ohio Republican was a big booster of the \$1.5 trillion tax cut, which has been among President Donald Trump's signature accomplishments.... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[N.J. could ban vaping completely, powerful Democrat says](#)**  
New Jersey's most powerful state lawmaker said he's considering proposing a "full ban" on vaping in the Garden State as concern continues to swirl over whether the practice is harmful to your health. "I'm starting to think the more and more we find out about vaping,... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Murphy's changes to bill clearing weed convictions up for vote Thursday. But no deal yet.](#)**  
Relief for those with minor marijuana convictions in New Jersey could be inching closer, as the state Senate is scheduled to vote Thursday on changes Gov. Phil Murphy made a bill that would allow people to have their records expunged. But it's not clear if the Senate is ready to concur with the... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Harm reduction saves lives now and in the future | Opinion](#)**  
I am an emergency physician. I work daily to address emergencies and acute care needs for patients — some life-threatening, all deeply concerning. The fundamental purpose of my job is to do everything I can to save a life in the immediate, while also trying to limit risks and increase access to... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Why childhood trauma matters, and what Lancaster County is doing about it](#)**  
In recent years, childhood trauma has been increasingly recognized as a risk factor for serious physical and emotional problems in adulthood. "Now we know that folks that have four or more traumatic events in childhood are much more significantly likely to have seven of the 10... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 09-11-2019 **[Climate change is hurting Philadelphians. health, and the worst is yet to come](#)**  
The day they found Lee Odgers, it was so hot that the wax candles inside her Northeast Philadelphia apartment had started to melt. The 87-year-old woman had been dead for hours, too long for investigators to get an accurate reading of her body temperature at the time of her... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 09-11-2019 **Harm reduction saves lives now and in the future | Opinion**  
I am an emergency physician. I work daily to address emergencies and acute care needs for patients . some life-threatening, all deeply concerning. The fundamental purpose of my job is to do everything I can to save a life in the immediate, while also trying to limit risks and increase access to... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Preventing suicide should be a mental health priority | PennLive Letters**  
Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, but it can be prevented. I, myself, have attempted suicide three times in the past. My daughter also made an attempt at age 13 yrs. I went through life with undiagnosed mental illness. We must fund for Community Behavior Health Clinics that people can... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Tentative deal reached with Purdue Pharma, maker of OxyContin**  
Purdue Pharma, manufacturer of blockbuster painkiller OxyContin, has reached a tentative settlement with 22 state attorneys general and more than 2,000 cities and counties that sued the company over its role in the opioid crisis of the past two decades, people close to the deal said... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Mars Area officials deny health issues at renovated middle school**  
Tuesday.s Mars Area school board meeting could have been called .a tale of two middle schools.. The middle school has been undergoing extensive renovation since the beginning of summer, and school officials have cautioned residents several times that the renovation would not be complete by the first day of school... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Teachers' union investigating a possible 'cancer cluster' in Philly schools, warn of hazards**  
A longtime city educator has mesothelioma . a type of cancer most often caused by asbestos exposure . and Philadelphia Federation of Teachers officials said Wednesday they are investigating a potential cancer cluster linked to widespread asbestos problems in schools across the district.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-11-2019 **OxyContin maker agrees to tentative settlement, attorneys say**  
Attorneys for some 2,000 local governments say they have agreed to a tentative settlement with OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma over the toll of the nation.s opioid crisis... - [AP](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Allegheny County to receive about \$15 million to fight opioid crisis**  
A grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will help the Allegheny County Health Department expand staff and resources dedicated to tackling the opioid crisis, officials announced Wednesday. The county will receive about \$15 million over three years through the... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-11-2019 **Allegheny County Board of Health continues search for new director**  
A search committee tasked with finding a new director for the Allegheny County Health Department could present a recommendation this fall, committee co-chair Edith Shapira, M.D., told the county Board of Health on Wednesday. .We.ve received a large number of applications, some of which are from... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)



- 09-10-2019 **[E-cigarette maker Juul warned by FDA for claiming products are safer than cigarettes](#)**  
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a warning letter Monday to the popular e-cigarette maker Juul for illegally advertising its product as a safer alternative to cigarettes and threatened to fine the company or seize its products if it does not correct its marketing.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Pitt researchers developing breathalyzer to detect THC levels](#)**  
Deciding if a driver is alcohol-impaired has been a straight-forward proposition for 20 years — if your blood alcohol concentration is 0.08 or higher, you are impaired and you shouldn't be driving. The same can't be said for marijuana, which is being used by more... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Newborn Screenings are vitally important in Pa. | Opinion](#)**  
Our extraordinary son, Johnny, made his entrance into this world on April 14, 2015. He was 7 pounds, 5 ounces of red-headed cuteness. That day our daughter, Faye, became a big sister and showered Johnny with big sister love and asked questions about what it would be like to have a baby... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Penn's head of counseling and psychological services dies by suicide at Center City building](#)**  
The executive director of counseling and psychological services at the University of Pennsylvania jumped to his death Monday morning from the 17th floor of a Center City Philadelphia building, officials said. Gregory Eells, 52, came to Penn six months ago to lead the department that... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Fountain Hill needs money or it may replace its police coverage. Why one official thinks St. Luke's needs to help](#)**  
Something is going to have to change to better fund Fountain Hill police force, Borough Council President Leo Atkinson said, and he does not intend to pass the buck to the next administration. That meeting will be held 7 p.m. Sept. 17 in St. Luke's Hospital's... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Here's what you can do to help prevent suicide | PennLive Editorial](#)**  
The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) has designated September 9-15 as a time to raise public awareness about the devastating toll of suicide and what individuals can do to help people in mental and emotional distress. The number of suicides in our state is alarming – on average one person... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Wolf administration to give away free Naloxone at health centers in Western Pennsylvania](#)**  
The Wolf administration later this month will give away free Naloxone at nearly 100 state and local health centers, including those in Western Pennsylvania, as part of an ongoing effort to reduce opioid overdoses. Naloxone is used to reverse overdoses caused by opioids by blocking the... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Protesters say Children and Youth seizing kids over medical marijuana](#)**  
WILKES-BARRE — Chanting protesters outside the Luzerne County Children and Youth Services office on Monday claimed the agency is “stealing” children from parents who participate in the state medical marijuana program. “They are displacing kids,” said protest organizer Sabrina Smith.... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)



- 09-10-2019 **Knowing warning signs can help stop death from suicide**  
LEWISTOWN — Suicide claims more than 44,000 American lives every year, according to the World Health Organization. As America recognizes Suicide Prevention Week, local Geisinger clinical social worker Kendra McKee described some warning signs, risks and suicide... - [Lewistown Sentinel](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Bensalem hopes first-of-its-kind telemedicine program reduces treatment barriers**  
The new telemedicine program launched on Monday is designed to remove two frequent barriers to obtaining substance abuse treatment quickly: time and transportation. The video assessment pilot program through the Bensalem Police Department could eventually go countywide.... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Course offered for MH families**  
The Blair County chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness is holding a free, 12-session course beginning today for people who are close to someone with mental illness. NAMI Family-to-Family is designed to help family members, partners, significant others, friends and caregivers to better understand and better... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Bedford to host 9/11 cyclists**  
ARLINGTON, Va. — Dozens of runners and bicyclists have departed the Pentagon for a three-day interstate relay to raise money for families of fallen and injured first responders and military. The 9/11 Promise Run has already raised \$70,000 this year and organizers... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Free naloxone distribution events to be held in Berks County**  
Two sites in Berks County will be among 95 across Pennsylvania where Gov. Tom Wolf's administration will distribute free naloxone later this month. As part of the administration's ongoing effort to reduce the number of opioid overdoses, the medication used to reverse an overdose will be handed... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 09-10-2019 **State health centers giving away naloxone twice this month**  
State officials are reminding Pennsylvanians that naloxone, the opioid overdose reversal drug, will be given away for free at 95 sites across the state Sept. 18 and 25, including locations in Beaver and Lawrence counties. "The life-saving medication naloxone is essential for every resident to... - [Beaver County Times](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Uniontown's Maitri Medicinals sees more patients than anticipated in first year**  
A year after it first opened for business, the only medical marijuana dispensary within a 50-minute drive of Uniontown is still serving patients. But now it's serving a lot more of them. Maitri Medicinals sees an average of 140 patients per day at its West Main... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Naloxone distribution scheduled in Schuylkill**  
The Wolf Administration will provide free naloxone on Sept. 18 and 25 at 95 locations across the state, including one in Schuylkill County. The medication, which can reverse an opioid overdose, will be given to any Pennsylvanian who wants it "as part of the administration's ongoing... - [Pottsville Republican and Evening Herald](#)
- 09-10-2019 **State to distribute free naloxone at 95 sites this month**  
Overdose antidote naloxone will be available at 95 locations across Pennsylvania — including four in the Valley — on Sept. 18 and 25. According to a press release from Gov. Tom Wolf's office, the state will provide free naloxone to any Pennsylvanian who wants it "as part of the... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)



- 09-10-2019 **[Health Department investigating 37 cases of possible vaping illness in Pennsylvania](#)**  
HARRISBURG — As many as 37 suspected cases of illness linked to vaping are under investigation by the state Department of Health, a department official said Monday. All of the cases came to light in the last month, said Nate Wardle, a Department of Health spokesman.... - [Meadville Tribune](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Wolf Administration to distribute free naloxone in September](#)**  
HARRISBURG — On Sept. 18 and 25, the state will be distributing free naloxone at 95 locations. Northumberland County residents can obtain the life-saving drug at the Northumberland County State Health Center, 247 Pennsylvania Ave. The distribution is part of the Wolf Administration's ongoing efforts... - [Shamokin News-Item](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Juul Illegally Marketed E-Cigarettes, F.D.A. Says](#)**  
Juul Labs, the dominant e-cigarette company, illegally marketed its vaping products as a less harmful alternative to traditional cigarettes, the Food and Drug Administration said on Monday, casting a deepening shadow over the safety of e-cigarette devices. The agency issued a warning letter to Juul, saying that the company... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Bernie Sanders Went to Canada, and a Dream of .Medicare for All. Flourished](#)**  
In July 1987, Bernie Sanders, then the mayor of Burlington, Vt., arrived in Ottawa convinced he was about to see the future of health care. Years earlier, as his mother.s health declined and his family struggled to pay for medical treatment, he was spending more time attending to her than... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Which Health Policies Actually Work? We Rarely Find Out](#)**  
A few years ago, Oregon found itself in a position that you.d think would be more commonplace: It was able to evaluate the impact of a substantial, expensive health policy change. In a collaboration by the state and researchers, Medicaid coverage was randomly extended to some low-income adults and not to others, and... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[What You Need to Know About Vaping-Related Lung Illness](#)**  
Hundreds of people across the country have been sickened by a severe lung illness linked to vaping, and a handful have died, according to public health officials. Many were otherwise healthy young people, in their teens or early 20s. Investigators from numerous states are working with the... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[Opinion | The G.O.P.'s War on Women's Health Gets Results](#)**  
The Trump administration.s recent efforts to undermine the nation.s Title X family planning program are already having their intended effect, making it harder for women.s health clinics to stay afloat and for patients to afford birth control and other services.... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-10-2019 **[New Johns Hopkins research center tests psychedelics to treat mental health](#)**  
Johns Hopkins Medicine is launching a new psychedelic research center where scientists will test the potential of .magic mushrooms. and other drugs to treat some of the toughest mental health and addiction challenges. The center is believed to be the first center in the United States and the... - [Washington Post](#)



- 09-10-2019 **Bloomberg to spend \$160 million to ban flavored e-cigarettes**  
Michael Bloomberg, the billionaire businessman and philanthropist who has financed efforts to combat tobacco use around the world for years, has a new target: e-cigarettes in the United States. Bloomberg Philanthropies announced Tuesday it would spend \$160 million over... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-10-2019 **FDA blasts Juul for illegally marketing e-cigarettes as less harmful than regular cigarettes**  
The Food and Drug Administration, in a harsh warning letter Monday, criticized Juul Labs for illegally marketing its e-cigarettes as less harmful than regular cigarettes and ordered the company to correct the violations immediately or face tougher enforcement actions.... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Opinion | Everyone should be alarmed by the vaping crisis**  
A PUBLIC-HEALTH crisis underscores the urgency of coming to grips with the dangers and benefits of vaping. There are still more questions than answers about the electronic devices that vaporize fluids in an alternative to the known hazards of burning tobacco, but both the immediate crisis and the... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: States face an opioid funding cliff next year**  
Congress has provided billions of new dollars to fight opioid abuse. But the problem will be far from solved when the one-time appropriations run out next year. President Trump and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar announced \$1.8 billion in grants last week to help states increase access to... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-10-2019 **CVS-Aetna merger approved despite objections from health, consumer advocates**  
With little fanfare, a federal judge in Washington, D.C., removed the final obstacle to CVS' blockbuster merger with Aetna last week. The \$70 billion consolidation, announced in 2017, will combine the nation's third-largest health insurer with a company that owns the... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Delaware investigating 3 possible cases of lung illness related to vaping, e-cigarettes**  
Delaware health officials are investigating three possible cases of severe pulmonary disease related to the use of e-cigarettes. It comes as there has been a national outbreak of hundreds of cases and five deaths related to vaping. Because of this, the health department is urging residents to stop using... - [Wilmington News Journal](#)
- 09-10-2019 **A treatment or a risk?: New IV services need to be regulated for safety**  
A treatment or a risk?: New IV services need to be regulated for safety Facilities must be regulated to ensure adequately trained staff, proper equipment and safe solutions Picture this: A famous singer is lying in bed, an intravenous needle attached to her arm. Not so long ago, such an image would have implied one... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-10-2019 **William McSwain, drop the supervised injection site lawsuit and let Philly save lives | Editorial**  
According to McSwain, a supervised injection site would violate the "crack house statue" — an addition to the Controlled Substances Act from 1986. The law, championed by then-Sen. Joe Biden, made it illegal to own or manage a property to use, produce, or sell illegal drugs.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 09-10-2019 **Women pediatricians earn less than men — and they do the laundry, study finds**  
Female pediatricians not only get paid less than their male counterparts, but they're more likely to have prime responsibility for housework and caring for their own children, according to new research. An additional finding that may strike a familiar chord with working women... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Larry Kaiser stepping down as CEO of Temple University Health System**  
Larry Kaiser is stepping down as chief executive of Temple University Health System after a more than eight-year tenure marked by high-profile moves to bring financial stability to the non-profit by expanding its reach beyond North Philadelphia, where it is the de facto public hospital.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Share of uninsured Americans rises for 1st time in a decade**  
The proportion of Americans without health insurance edged up in 2018 . the first increase in nearly a decade after coverage had significantly increased under President Barack Obama.s health care law... - [AP](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Illegal sales of cigarettes to Philadelphia youth have doubled in last year**  
Illegal sales of cigarettes to young people in Philadelphia have more than doubled in the past year, reversing a two-year decline in the practice, the Philadelphia Health Department announced on Tuesday. The information came from the 2018 Pennsylvania Synar report, which... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-10-2019 **First-in-a-decade rise in those without health insurance hits children the hardest**  
The number of Americans without insurance increased last year for the first time since 2008, according to a report released Tuesday by the U.S. Census Bureau. In 2018, 27.5 million Americans did not have health insurance. That.s up 1.9 million people from the previous year.s number, 25.6 million. The rate... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-10-2019 **Lehigh Valley residents can pick up free overdose-reversing medication at local health centers Sept. 18 and Sept. 25**  
Health centers in Lehigh and Northampton counties will hand out free overdose-reversing medication on Sept. 18 and 25 as part of a statewide effort to reduce overdose deaths amid a countrywide opioid epidemic. The Allentown Health Bureau, Bethlehem Health Bureau, Lehigh County State... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-09-2019 **Psychiatrist shortage causing suffering, risk of jail and suicide in central Pa.**  
Depression is on the rise. So is suicide, particularly among young people and military veterans. And Pennsylvania recently concluded that addressing mental health needs is the best defense against school shootings. Yet, because of a shortage of psychiatrists, people commonly wait six... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 09-09-2019 **Employers rethink coverage choices as employees lament getting shut out of UPMC-Highmark deal**  
Tens of thousands of Western Pennsylvanians shut out of UPMC and Highmark's freshly inked deal don't have much say in the health insurance plans they get — workers under 65 who rely on the coverage options their bosses choose. Kindergarten teachers, state troopers, pharmacists, municipal employees,... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)



- 09-09-2019 **'In typical Scranton fashion,' hundreds pour to support addicts in recovery**  
SCRANTON — Katie Gross almost lost everything to opioids and alcohol. The 37-year-old from Dunmore lost her children. She was living in shelters. She couldn't hold down a job. She bounced in and out of hospitals and rehabilitation centers. "I was basically dead inside, but I almost died physically as... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-09-2019 **Human Services secretary volunteers at Fresh Connect in Bristol Township**  
Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Secretary Teresa Miller volunteered at Fresh Connect at Bucks County Community College in Bristol Township to showcase the much-needed efforts of community networks working to eradicate hunger. In an effort to shine light on the 1.53 million people in Pennsylvania who... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 09-09-2019 **Task force: More women should get BRCA test for breast, ovarian cancer risk**  
More women should be screened for gene mutations that increase their risk of getting breast cancer, ovarian cancer and other cancers, a national group of experts says. All women who have had cancer of the breast, ovary, Fallopian tubes or peritoneum tissue in the walls of the abdomen should be offered a screening... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 09-09-2019 **Some employees at Chesco tech firm losing their jobs**  
EAST WHITELAND — Health information technology firm Cerner Corp., which has a campus in East Whiteland, Chester County, announced it is laying off 255 of its nearly 30,000 U.S. employees. Some of the job losses are at the company's Chester County facility, which employs about 2,000, according to Misti Preston, a spokeswoman for... - [Pottstown Mercury](#)
- 09-09-2019 **More money for opioid crisis**  
Pennsylvania is slated to receive more than \$81 million in federal funding over the next three years to combat the opioid crisis as part of a continued effort to expand access to treatment and stem the loss of life from overdoses. Funding comes in the form of grants from two federal programs as part of... - [Butler Eagle](#)
- 09-09-2019 **Poor and middle-class Americans are much less likely to survive into their 70s than the wealthy, federal report says**  
Poorer Americans are much less likely to survive into their 70s and 80s than rich Americans, a stark life-expectancy divide compounded by the nation's growing disparities in wealth, according to a federal report. Over three-quarters of the richest 50-somethings in 1991 were still alive... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-09-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: Pelosi and Trump want a deal on lowering drug prices. Now is their time.**  
House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) is poised to unveil drug pricing legislation . as soon as this week . as Congress and the White House strive this fall for a bipartisan deal to lower the steep cost of prescription medications in the United States. The proposal will represent a wish list of new powers Democrats want to... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-09-2019 **In Cherokee Country, Opioid Crisis Seen as Existential Threat**  
TAHLEQUAH, Okla. — Here in the foothills of the lush Ozark Mountains, where the Cherokee Nation re-formed its government after U.S. soldiers marched members of the tribe out of the South in the 1830s, people say the removal of children from their Native homes is the most troubling part of... - [Stateline.org](#)



- 09-09-2019 **[Kamala Harris proposes legalizing marijuana, ending bail, eliminating death penalty](#)**  
Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris unveiled a proposal Monday to broadly reform the criminal justice system aimed at ending mass incarceration, helping felons reintegrate into society and increasing oversight of police and prosecutors. The senator and former California attorney general plans to legalize... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[‘Save a Life’ training set for this week in Rostraver](#)**  
Westmoreland, Washington and Fayette residents are invited to a free training Thursday in Rostraver that will teach participants ways to save someone’s life during emergency situations. The Westmoreland Drug and Alcohol Commission and Mon Valley Opioid Coalition are holding “Learn How to Save a Life” from 6-8 p.m. at... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[Stand up for consumers: Drug company probes must go on unimpeded](#)**  
Companies like Mylan and Teva have profited heavily from unchecked power Americans need a champion to stand up for them when corporate power goes unchecked. With prescription drug prices spiraling out of control and price-fixing suspected, much work needs to be done to corral the pharmaceutical industry... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[A West Virginia military town is shaken by veterans' homicide cases at VA](#)**  
CLARKSBURG, W.Va. — It’s clear that veterans and military service are an important part of the fabric of this city. It’s not just Clarksburg’s annual Veterans Day that dates back nearly a century to when it was still known as Armistice Day, or the fact that the city is named after Revolutionary War General George Rogers Clark.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[Green tongue? Eyelid tremors? Legal medical marijuana makes traffic stops more complicated](#)**  
The 37-year-old man was driving on Fourth Avenue in Beaver Falls after work last June when a state trooper pulled him over for an illegal tint on his window and registration plate cover. The officer, after requesting a license and registration, asked the man... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[Pitt researchers developing breathalyzer to detect THC levels](#)**  
Pitt researchers developing breathalyzer to detect THC levels Deciding if a driver is alcohol-impaired has been a straight-forward proposition for 20 years — if your blood alcohol concentration is 0.08 or higher, you are impaired and you shouldn’t be driving.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[Internet addiction should be treated as seriously as substance use disorders | Opinion](#)**  
The devastating effects of addiction — to alcohol, tobacco, cocaine, opioids — are well documented. But video and computer games, cybersex and online porn, Internet gambling and surfing, texting and emailing, social media platforms, online auctions, and shopping can be every bit as addictive as substances.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 09-09-2019 **[The music therapy that helped Gabby Giffords speak again is getting dementia patients moving](#)**  
Many of us know of music therapy as a way to soothe the troubled and stressed or to activate memories of favorite songs embedded deeply in the minds of people with dementia. For her exercise classes in the nursing home at Paul's Run, a retirement community in Northeast Philadelphia, music therapist Molly Bybee... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[CDC: Stop kissing, snuggling your chickens](#)**  
Poultry owners are being advised to avoid infection during moments of affection. The Centers for Disease Control is recommending various methods to limit the spread of salmonella from backyard poultry to humans. The agency says proper hygiene is the key, such as washing hands with soap and water after... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[For many in Western Pa., UPMC-Highmark deal doesn't end questions, frustration](#)**  
Tens of thousands of Western Pennsylvanians shut out of UPMC and Highmark's freshly inked deal don't have much say in the health insurance plans they get. Workers under 65 who rely on the coverage options their bosses choose. Kindergarten teachers, state troopers, pharmacists, municipal employees,... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[Your View: Why we need more mental health professionals in schools](#)**  
In a Pennsylvania where our children have the mental health resources they need, Phillip Spruill Jr. would be entering sixth grade this school year. In that Pennsylvania, Phillip's laughter would mingle in the hallways of Benjamin B. Comegys School in Philadelphia with that of his classmates, as... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[E-cigarette maker Juul warned by FDA for claiming products are safer than cigarettes](#)**  
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a warning letter Monday to the popular e-cigarette maker Juul for illegally advertising its product as a safer alternative to cigarettes and threatened to fine the company or seize its products if it does not correct its marketing.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-09-2019 **[UPMC's board is a silent but powerful force in fate of region's health care](#)**  
As its feud with rival health insurer Highmark threatened to block thousands of patients from accessing its own facilities, UPMC's 24 board members. tasked with steering the nonprofit's vision. remained largely silent and picked up a few powerful detractors along the way.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-08-2019 **[Raise minimum age for tobacco to 21](#)**  
I am writing to urge the Pennsylvania State Legislature to pass Senate Bill 473 that would raise the minimum sales age for all tobacco products to 21. This legislation will reduce youth tobacco use and save thousands of lives. About 95% of smokers try their first cigarette before the age of 21.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-08-2019 **[Outbreak of vaping-associated lung injuries grows; at least 4 U.S. deaths reported](#)**  
The number of cases of lung injuries associated with vaping continues to rise in the Pittsburgh area as well as throughout the country. No cause has been identified. At least four deaths have been confirmed in Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota and Oregon, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)



- 09-08-2019 **Pictures of Health**  
Hahnemann University Hospital, which discharged its last inpatient in late July but is still the subject of an intense legal fight in bankruptcy court, is the 10th Philadelphia hospital to close in the last 20 years. Each closure is an economic blow, typically costing hundreds, if not... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Pennsylvania gets \$75 million more in federal aid for opioid fight**  
Pennsylvania will receive another \$75 million in federal aid to fight the opioid-addiction crisis, money that Gov. Tom Wolf.s administration says will help with treatment, prevention and education... - [AP](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Ball caps become wearable works of art for cancer patients**  
The trials and tribulations that come with a cancer fight are daunting. A few crafters are doing their part to make it just a bit brighter for those doing battle. Manning work stations inside a meeting room at Excelsa Square at Latrobe, volunteers select bright, freshly washed silk flowers, attaching them to... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Pa. seeks growers for medical marijuana research**  
Pennsylvania is looking to bolster homegrown cannabis research by finding more medical marijuana companies to partner with medical schools for cannabis research. The state this week released applications for clinical registrants . entities which grow, process and dispense marijuana for research... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Joseph Sabino Mistick: Time is ripe for action on climate, guns, opioids**  
. There is no fruit that is not bitter before it is ripe,. according to Publilius Syrus, a Latin moralist in the century before Christ. It seems that we have always known that everything has its season. And in the last days of summer, we can relish those things that have finally ripened.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-08-2019 **State should act against vaping**  
Even before contaminated .vaping. devices or fluids seriously sickened about 200 teens and young adults across the country in recent weeks, public health experts had called out the folly of allowing a new generation to become addicted to nicotine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention characterized vaping as a... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Letters to the Editor 9/7/2019**  
Editor: Thanks to Sen. Pat Toomey for opposing a left-wing proposal that would have brought socialized medicine to the United States. Toomey is leading the charge against an international price index under Medicare that could have a chilling effect on pharmaceutical innovation... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Our view: Take some time and enjoy the Luzerne County Fair**  
Diamonds to the Luzerne County Fair, which began Wednesday and runs through tomorrow (Sunday). It may not be of the size and caliber of the fabled Bloomsburg Fair, but it.s no runt either. Nestled in a bucolic setting off Route 118 in Lehman Township, the fair offers a wide range of rides, food... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Changing health care for the aging population**  
After battling breast cancer three times, Barbara .Bobbie. Roberts now describes herself as .perfectly healthy. and she wants to stay that way. The 69-year-old Thornhurst Twp. resident said that.s why it.s important for her to go to a dependable clinic and spend enough time with her doctor.... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)



- 09-08-2019 **Local schools trying to curb growth in teen vaping**  
U.S. health officials are alarmed by a surge in teen vaping, and local schools are stepping up to try to curtail it. Vaping is becoming an epidemic with our young people, said Kevin Booth, superintendent at Pittston Area School District. But it's extremely difficult to catch them, he added.... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Centre County on pace for fewest drug overdose deaths in 7-plus years. Here's why**  
More than a half-million people died from opioids between 2000 and 2015. Today, opioid deaths are considered an epidemic. To understand the struggle of a drug addiction, we take a closer look at what happens to the body. More than a half-million people died from opioids between 2000 and 2015.... - [State College Centre Daily Times](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Philadelphia Eagles open room inside stadium to help kids with autism cope with sensory overload**  
If the chorus of .Fly! Eagles! Fly!. or .E-A-G-L-E-S. chants become too overwhelming for any fan with sensory needs at Lincoln Financial Field, the Philadelphia Eagles took a big step to make sure they don.t have to leave the game or event... - [AP](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Email: Opioid talks fail, Purdue bankruptcy filing expected**  
OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma is expected to file for bankruptcy after settlement talks over the nation's deadly overdose crisis hit an impasse, attorneys general involved in the talks said Saturday... - [AP](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Front-line treatment providers worry about getting pushed aside in Ohio opioid settlement**  
Many advocates on the front lines of the opioid crisis . from firefighters who revive overdose victims, to counselors at community treatment and recovery programs, to grandparents caring for the children of addicts . already are frustrated with two recent developments that could affect... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Your View by Pa. Medical Society: Why nurse practitioners need collaborative agreements with doctors**  
Author and nurse Kim Jordan said she supports current legislation that would remove collaborative agreements, in part, because nurse practitioners have been unable to find or afford to pay for them. To remedy concerns for the nurse practitioners who choose to practice... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-08-2019 **With restrictions on abortions, many women cross state lines to end pregnancies**  
At a routine ultrasound when she was five months pregnant, Hevan Lunsford began to panic when the technician took longer than normal, then told her she would need to see a specialist... - [AP](#)
- 09-08-2019 **Major Drug Maker Is Close to Settling Case to Avert First Federal Trial in Opioid Crisis**  
One of the biggest makers of generic opioids in the United States has reached a tentative settlement of claims to avoid the first federal trial of drug makers, distributors and retail chains for their roles in the opioid epidemic. Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals, a company investigators for the Drug... - [New York Times](#)



- 09-08-2019 **Cases of Vaping-Related Lung Illness Surge, Health Officials Say**  
Medical experts and federal health officials on Friday warned the public about the dangers of vaping and discouraged using the devices as the number of people with a severe lung illness linked to vaping more than doubled to 450 possible cases in 33 states and the number of deaths rose to five.... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-08-2019 **These Newborn Babies Cry for Drugs, Not Milk**  
His body dependent on opioids, he writhes, trembles and cries. He is exhausted but cannot sleep. He vomits, barely eats and has lost weight. He is also a baby. Just 1 month old, he wails in the nursery of the CAMC Women and Children.s Hospital here. A volunteer .cuddler. holds him while... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-08-2019 **What we know about the mysterious vaping-linked illnesses and deaths**  
Health officials, lawmakers and parents have been raising alarms about vaping for a couple of years, warning that products touted as healthier alternatives for smokers are instead drawing in young people with fun flavors and slick marketing. But the caution has taken on new urgency in recent weeks as authorities... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Sale of Hahnemann's medical-residency program approved by bankruptcy judge**  
U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Kevin Gross approved the sale of Hahnemann University Hospital's residency programs to Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals Inc. for \$55 million, but gave the federal government seven calendar days to appeal. Gross called the decision one of those that "cause a judge to lie awake... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Judge probes whether U.S. 'crack-house statute' would make Philly supervised injection site illegal**  
Known colloquially as the "crack-house statute," read literally it could appear to prohibit places where addicted people could use drugs in the presence of medical workers trained to save them from fatal overdoses. Justice Department officials cited it when they sued the nonprofit this... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-06-2019 **New PFAS investigation: Five things you need to know**  
Why isn't the military cleaning up toxic firefighting chemicals at area bases? Firefighting chemicals continue to pour off a trio of current and former military bases in Bucks and Montgomery counties, years after they were first detected. The big question: Why isn't the problem being solved?... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Why isn't the military cleaning up firefighting chemicals?**  
It's been five years since the military first discovered widespread PFAS contamination at bases in Bucks and Montgomery counties, but the chemicals continue to pollute the aquifer and waterways like Park Creek and the Little Neshaminy. We asked more than half a dozen experts a simple... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Judge grills US attorney who opposes injection site plan**  
(Philadelphia) — A federal judge in Philadelphia grilled the city's top federal prosecutor Thursday over his opposition to a plan to open the nation's first supervised injection site to address the opioid crisis... - [AP](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Abuse of elderly intolerable**  
Blair County First Assistant District Attorney Pete Weeks believes Pennsylvania should toughen its penalties for those convicted of abusing an elderly person. Some people who read the Aug. 31 Mirror article "Caregiver gets prison term for abuse" might have a similar opinion, even though Blair County... - [Altoona Mirror](#)



- 09-06-2019 **Berks dentists believe new mindset and new business model will result in more smiles**  
A new mindset and a new business model are putting two local dentists on what they believe is a path toward personal and professional success. Ryan Jones, Cumru Township, and Dr. Jeffrey Grove, a Spring Township resident and founder and owner of Grove Dental Group, combined their... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Ortitay to hold Senior Health Expo**  
State Rep. Jason Ortity, R-Cecil, announced that his fifth annual Senior Health Expo is scheduled for Tuesday. The free event, open to all area seniors and their families, will be held from 9 a.m. to noon at Bethany Presbyterian Church, 740 Washington Ave.,... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Bell Socialization Services to show off new apartments for mental health patients**  
Bell Socialization Services later this month will celebrate its new apartments for mental health patients as a part of its Community Hospitalization Integration Project Program. The agency will hold an open house and ribbon-cutting ceremony from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 17, at the apartments located at 27 Jefferson... - [York Dispatch](#)
- 09-06-2019 **New nonprofit aims to help those battling addiction**  
A newly formed nonprofit is striving to help drug abusers find recovery with the help of those who had battled addiction themselves. - [Bedford Gazette](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Concerned for their future, St. Christopher's Hospital employees hold a rally**  
PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — St. Christopher's Hospital for Children staff members held a rally to let the public know how being sold to an unsatisfactory owner could impact care in an effort to get ahead of bankruptcy proceedings. With the hospital set to be sold in the coming weeks to the best and... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Toxic algae detected in Frances Slocum lake after dog's death**  
KINGSTON TWP. — If you're thinking about letting your dog take a refreshing swim in the lake at Frances Slocum State Park, it could turn out to be a deadly dip. A toxic blue-green algae bloom has been detected in the lake following the reported death of a dog in late August.... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 09-06-2019 **East Hempfield Township accepts big-picture plan for Penn State Health hospital**  
Penn State Health is a step closer to building a hospital in Lancaster County after East Hempfield Township's board of supervisors accepted the conceptual campus overview called the master site plan. As the planning commission did a week earlier, the board on Wednesday heard... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Deadly mystery illness should persuade everyone to cease using e-cigarettes [opinion]**  
THE ISSUE There is disturbing news concerning the use of e-cigarettes, which is most commonly known as vaping. A New York Times article that also appeared in the Sept. 1 Sunday LNP noted that U.S. physicians have treated more than 200 patients “with mysterious and life-threatening vaping-related... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)



- 09-06-2019 **Murphy supports NJEA-backed teachers health care proposal that's split top Democrats**  
Gov. Phil Murphy supports a controversial measure in the state's Democratic-controlled Legislature that seeks to reduce the cost of health benefits for public school teachers in New Jersey. The proposal, which state Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin will introduce as... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 09-06-2019 **MD Anderson cancer doctor emerges as a top candidate for FDA job**  
Stephen Hahn, a top official at MD Anderson Cancer Center, is being considered for the top job at the Food and Drug Administration, according to people familiar with the discussions. Hahn, a radiation oncologist and researcher, met with President Trump on Wednesday to discuss being nominated as commissioner of the..... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Rats Have Ruled New York for 355 Years. Can a Mystery Bucket Stop Them?**  
Traps. Poison. Birth control. Dry ice. And now, what city officials are touting as a high-tech solution: drowning. New York has attempted to eradicate its teeming rat population for 355 years and counting. On Thursday, the latest tactic in the Sisyphean effort... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-06-2019 **Pitt's McGowan Institute aims to study stem cells, 3D printers in space**  
The University of Pittsburgh is teaming up with the International Space Station U.S. National Laboratory (ISSNL) to study how the low-gravity environment of space can improve treatments for kidney disease, traumatic brain injury and juvenile diabetes. Pitt's McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine will collaborate... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)



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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