



# Health Care Recap

Report provided courtesy of: KSA Group

September 13 - 19, 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 2:10 p.m. on Thursday, September 19, 2019 the House stands adjourned until Monday, September 23, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

### UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

#### House

Sep. 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

### SUPPORTERS AND LAWMAKERS URGE PASSAGE OF ERPO LEGISLATION

By Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | September 17, 2019

Members of the Pennsylvania chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America and a group of Pennsylvania House members conducted a rally in the Main Capitol Rotunda today to urge passage of extreme risk protection order (ERPO) legislation.

According to supporters, [HB 1075](#) and [SB 90](#) would empower law enforcement officers and family members to seek a court order to temporarily restrict a person’s access to firearms if they pose a serious threat of harm to themselves or others. Also known as “red flag” laws, similar legislation has been enacted in 17 states.

Erin Buchner, volunteer state legislation leader for the Pennsylvania chapter of Moms Demand Action, pointed out that September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. According to Buchner, “Every day, 20 veterans die by suicide in America and, on average, 14 of those deaths are gun suicides.” She continued, “In 2016, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reported that 263 veterans in Pennsylvania died by suicide and roughly 184 of those were gun suicides.” Buchner commented, “We know guns are the most lethal method of suicide, accounting for less than six percent of all attempts but more than half of all suicide deaths.” She asserted, “It is time to pass ERPO bills out of committee and bring them to the floor for a vote.” Buchner said, “This is our mission at Moms Demand Action, and we won’t stop until the job is done.”

Rep. Todd Stephens (R-Montgomery), prime sponsor of HB 1075, told rally participants, “When I came to the gun violence initiative many, many years ago, I spent a lot of time focusing on gangs, drug dealers and felons who illegally possessed guns, not realizing nearly two-thirds of our gun deaths are suicides.” He noted, “Unfortunately, in Pennsylvania that is about 1,000 people a year. Nearly three people a day will die by suicide with a firearm in Pennsylvania.” Commenting on how people often think gun violence is an urban issue, Rep. Stephens stated, “This is a problem that plagues all of Pennsylvania and hits rural Pennsylvania particularly hard.” He argued, “HB 1075 and SB 90 will save lives in Pennsylvania.” Rep. Stephens thanked Moms Demand Action for their work on legislation last session on domestic gun violence and said they are “going to move the needle this session on suicide gun violence.”

Rep. Melissa Shusterman (D-Chester) related the story of her brother-in-law, who took his own life using a gun. She commented, “My family member’s story, unfortunately, is not unique or special, because every year over 2,000 people in Pennsylvania commit suicide.” Rep. Shusterman asserted, “We must pass ERPO as a suicide prevention tool.” She said, “The time for action is now, so let us make sure all of our laws help people in their time of need. I don’t want more families to miss their loved ones.”

Rep. Joseph Webster (D-Montgomery) rhetorically asked rally participants, “A majority wants to get this done and we have the will, and we’re not ready yet?” He stated, “I think we are ready to do this, so let’s do this.”

Pointing out she has family in Sandy Hook, Connecticut, Rep. Christina Sappey (D-Chester) said, “The issue of gun violence prevention is extremely important to me.” Also noting she



represents a rural part of Chester County, she reported that she has spoken to a lot of people about the issue and have heard their concerns. Rep. Sappey said she agrees with them that something has to be done about mental health. She commented, “We need to destigmatize mental health issues and we need to make it more affordable and more accessible to get treatment.” Rep. Sappey argued, “We need to empower loved ones to file an extreme risk protection order when somebody is in crisis.” She concluded, “I think a lot of us are here today because we value each other, and we value our society. It is time to get this done.”

Lauren Johnson, a policy team member with Action Tank, and Heath Copeland, a veteran and a volunteer with Moms Demand Action, also spoke in support of the legislation.

Other legislators in attendance at the rally included Representatives Danilo Burgos (D-Philadelphia), Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny), Joseph Hohenstein (D-Philadelphia), Mary Isaacson (D-Philadelphia), Ben Sanchez (D-Montgomery), Peter Schweyer (D-Lehigh), Wendi Thomas (R-Bucks), Wendy Ullman (D-Bucks) and Michael Zabel (D-Delaware).

###

## **LEGISLATORS AND ADVOCATES RALLY IN SUPPORT OF PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS**

By Sheri Melnick, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | September 18, 2019

Legislators and advocates attended a rally this morning in support of prostate cancer awareness.

James Williams, chairman of the Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition, explained that September is Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. He noted that men take better care of their cars than their bodies and that preventive maintenance extends the longevity of the car. He opined that the obstacles to health care in the U.S. exist because the health care system is a “reactive system.” He said, “Men don’t appreciate preventive health as women do. We are here today to raise men’s awareness.” He noted that the coalition has partnered with stakeholders to offer free prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood tests today to men, who will receive a blue ribbon if they take the test.

Dr. Adam Reese, associate professor of urology at Temple University Lewis Katz School of Medicine, explained that the Pennsylvania Urology Regional Collaborative (PURC) is a regional voluntary physician-led collaborative established in 2015 to advance the quality of care for the treatment of prostate cancer. He noted that there are now 11 health care institutions involved in the collaborative, which reviews data from 123 urology practices treating 12,300 men for prostate cancer.

Dr. Reese asserted that the PURC has a variety of working groups with various areas of focus devoted to treating prostate cancer, including how to decrease opioid use among prostate cancer patients. He indicated that the PURC has seen an increase in the percentage of men with slow-risk prostate cancer being managed by active surveillance rather than more invasive procedures. He acknowledged that the partnership between PURC and the Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition helps establish a mechanism for statewide quality reporting and optimizes outcomes for patients. He said, “PURC cannot survive without legislative support and funding from the state government.”

Williams remarked that the Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition is in full support of PURC and emphasized the importance of getting support from the legislature to continue their collaborative efforts.

Rep. Kerry Benninghoff (R-Centre), the Cancer Caucus chairman, opined that men “write off” symptoms of prostate cancer and noted that men should get “smart” about health care. He said, “We have a responsibility to be responsible to our families and get regular screening.” Rep. Benninghoff asserted that he would be getting a screening and offered his support of prostate cancer awareness. He said, “On behalf of the General Assembly, we will continue to support [Williams].”

Williams concluded by mentioning that he has received a proclamation from the governor, who is a prostate cancer survivor.

###



## **WOLF ADMINISTRATION DISCUSSES LATEST UPDATED PRESCRIBING GUIDELINES FOR PAIN AND OPIOID USE DISORDER**

By Harrison Cann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | September 18, 2019

Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine announced the latest prescribing guidelines for treating patients with opioid use disorder (OUD) at a press conference this afternoon as part of the statewide Stop Overdoses in PA: Get Help Now Week initiative.

Sec. Levine, joined by Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs Secretary Jennifer Smith and other health care providers, provided insight into the latest guidelines and how they can supplement physician evaluations in treating pain for OUD patients.

Sec. Levine began by stating that today is Naloxone Day and that the overdose reversal medication is available for free during the day at health centers across Pennsylvania. She said that the Safe and Effective Prescribing Task Force developed prescribing guidelines that are a “critical tool as we try to address the opioid crisis and the general substance use disorder crisis.”

Sec. Levine asserted that pain is a common issue for many people, but that when trying to eradicate pain, the overuse of opioid pain medications resulted in many people developing dependency for the drugs. “We need to emphasize other types of medication and treatment for these patients with OUD that have significant or acute chronic pain,” she added.

Sec. Levine stated that non-medication treatment, including physical therapy, acupuncture, osteopathic or chiropractic treatment, and mindfulness-based therapies can be as, if not more, effective than medications in treating chronic pain. She stressed that it is key for a physician to develop a treatment plan that fits the unique needs of a patient.

“These guidelines are part of our overall effort which I call opioid stewardship, which is the careful and judicious prescribing of opioid pain medication,” Sec. Levine added. “The intent is to improve patients’ outcomes and to supplement but not replace the individual provider’s clinical judgement.” She noted that the guidelines are updated every two to three years and are brought to various medical boards for consideration and affirmation.

Sec. Smith stated that the guidelines are “critical in helping individuals to maintain their sobriety” and that “health care professionals play a vital role in combating the opioid crisis.”

“The reality is that even individuals with opioid use disorder experience chronic pain and need treatment plans that meet their unique needs,” Sec. Smith added. “We must give physicians the tools to adequately treat individuals living with opioid use disorder to ensure they can lead happy, healthy lives.”

She noted that this topic is particularly important considering that September is National Recovery Month. She said that this year’s National Recovery Month theme is “Join the voices for recovery, together we are stronger.” Reiterating the theme, Sec. Smith stressed the importance of the partnership between policymakers and health practitioners.

Dr. D. Scott McCracken, WellSpan Community Health Center, commented that physicians are often described as being “on the front lines” in the opioid crisis. He stated that it can be hard to see the scope of an issue when dealing with individual patients, but after seeing patient after patient dealing with various types of chronic pain or addiction, “it is clear that this is one of the great chronic diseases of our time.”

Dr. McCracken stated that it has been an honor to work with the Safe and Effective Prescribing Task Force and that its work has helped answer many of the questions physicians face during this public health crisis.

“Pain and substance use disorder are intensely personal experiences for patients and successful treatment can widely vary,” Dr. McCracken added. “This new guideline provides valuable information on the safest and best options to help



patients achieve pain control while, at the same time, minimize the risk of relapsing or overdosing on opioids.”

Dr. Jon Shapiro, Pennsylvania Medical Society, detailed the updated guidelines. He stated that the guidelines address the “multi-model approach to pain” to include non-opioid use of pharmacology, massage, physical therapy, and an “emphasis on aqua-therapy as well.” He noted that there are barriers to paying for the alternate pain relief services.

Dr. Shapiro described his experience working in Kensington and Philadelphia, which has been considered “ground zero” for the opioid epidemic in Pennsylvania. “The voluntary guidelines we are discussing today are intended to help health care professional provide patient outcomes to supplement, but not replace, the individual provider’s judgement,” he added.

Sec. Levine and Sec. Smith then answered questions from the audience.

#### **How are these guidelines distributed?**

Sec. Levine responded that the guidelines are available at the Department of Health (DOH) and Governor Tom Wolf’s website, and that they are also distributed amongst important stakeholders such as health centers and hospitals.

#### **There have been discussions about a Senate bill that would curtail access to Suboxone. Does DOH have a stance on that bill?**

Sec. Levine responded that DOH does not comment on specific legislation while it is being discussed but that the standard of care for patients with OUD is to have “evidence-based, quality medication-assisted treatment.” She added that she supports the expansion of physicians and health care providers to treat patients with that standard of care.

Sec. Smith commented that the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs cannot support any legislation that would limit access to treatment for individuals with OUD. She stated that intentions behind the bill are mostly good intentions in wanting to limit physicians that are prescribing opioids inappropriately, but that there are a lot of mechanisms within Pennsylvania that are already addressing that issue.

#### **How will Pennsylvania see these guidelines at play in the doctor’s office and how soon will it take effect?**

Sec. Levine responded that the guidelines are published today. She added the guidelines will support and inform physicians treating patients with OUD. She reiterated that the guidelines are implemented to provide guidance and support for all health care providers.

###

### **REP. KEEFER INTRODUCES BILL TO INCREASE PENALTIES FOR AIDING SUICIDE**

By Emily Mistishen, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | September 19, 2019

Rep. Dawn Keefer (R-York) was joined by family members and York County officials Thursday to discuss [HB 1827](#), also known as Shawn’s Law, and protecting vulnerable communities from online predators.

Rep. Keefer explained that 25-year-old Shawn Shatto lost her life to suicide on May 22, 2019. Shatto had been depressed and had turned to an online suicide forum, Rep. Keefer continued, where members encouraged Shatto to commit suicide rather than seek help. The members pointed to suicide as “her best and only option,” Rep. Keefer asserted. “And worse, they provided the step-by-step instructions on how to commit suicide.” She argued that their actions are “unconscionable” and “reprehensible” and she called for harsher penalties for those who “commit murder by proxy.”

Current law establishes aiding suicide as a second-degree felony or misdemeanor, depending on the case, Rep. Keefer explained. These sentences typically carry penalties of five to 10 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$25,000, or one to two years in prison and a maximum fine of \$5,000. “These penalties are nowhere near harsh enough,” she opined. “People encouraging and guiding others to kill themselves are committing murder by proxy.” She claimed vulnerable populations are not receiving justice and called for harsher sentences to combat the issue. Rep. Keefer stated Shawn’s Law will increase



sentences for those who assist in the suicide of someone who is under 18 or has an intellectual disability. She called for sending a message to perpetrators that “our society will not tolerate these...insensible actions” and that they will “face the full extent of the law.”

Jacqueline Bieber, Shatto’s mother, expressed her gratitude for Rep. Keefer and supporters of Shawn’s Law and she called for more legislators to become cosponsors for the bill. Bieber described her horror when she discovered the forum that her daughter had gone to and the instructions she had been provided with to poison herself. She stated that members of the forum had encouraged Shatto to commit suicide and told her “good luck” instead of encouraging her to seek help. “This is appalling, unbelievable, unimaginable, unacceptable. Justice must be served,” she asserted. She claimed members of the forum demean mental health workers and services and shame doctors.

Bieber indicated she and her husband are sharing their story to prevent other families from experiencing the same grief and to save lives. She urged for harsher penalties for those who prey on vulnerable communities and she expressed support for Shawn’s Law. Additionally, Bieber explained that she wants to turn this tragedy into Shatto’s legacy to target criminals, improve access to mental health services, and bring awareness. The internet is changing, she commented, and parents need to be more aware of what their children have access to.

Bieber reiterated the importance of changing laws to prosecute enablers and control sites that take advantage of victims. “Today we need action,” she insisted. She concluded by calling on federal and state lawmakers to support Shawn’s Law and to increase resources for mental health services.

York County Coroner Pam Gay commented that despite her years as county coroner, she has “never seen anything quite like this.” She described the story as “shocking” and lauded the family for turning a tragedy into something positive. She opined that Shatto’s parents are saving lives and that legislators now have the opportunity to do the same thing by supporting Shawn’s Law.

Tim Barker, chief of policy and research, York County District Attorney’s (DA) Office, explained that the DA office was horrified to learn about what had occurred and asserted that the issue needs resources and attention. As such, he continued, District Attorney Dave Sunday immediately devoted resources to bringing justice for Shatto and her family. Barker pointed to current penalties for aiding suicide as an issue that needs to be addressed, arguing that they currently aren’t enough for something that is “equivalent to murder.” He called for providing proper assistance to those who need it and the ability to prosecute offenders to the fullest extent of the law.

Rep. Keefer thanked Rep. Frank Ryan (R-Lebanon) for his work on the issue and encouraged others to help the legislation “cross the finish line.”

Rep. Keefer opened the floor for questions.

**Does similar legislation exist in other states?**

Rep. Keefer responded that different states have different penalties for aiding suicide.

**How will the penalties be enhanced?**

Barker explained that the current penalty for aiding suicide is a second-degree felony or misdemeanor, depending on the case, and that an enhancement will result in more years of incarceration. Currently, the grading of the offense is a lower level and not the highest grade, he continued. He asserted that the consequences of aiding suicide require higher penalties, especially due to the loss of life of vulnerable people. He added that the enhancements will lead to higher levels of state incarceration.

**What are the victims that are included in the bill?**

Rep. Keefer answered that the bill refers to those who are under 18 or have an intellectual disability.



Barker noted that the bill has specific definitions for those who are included.

**What is the status of the investigation? Have there been any charges or arrests?**

Barker commented that the investigation is active and ongoing and that the only thing he can say is that the DA's office has devoted resources to the case. Regarding charges or arrests, he stated, "Not at this time."

**Committee News**

**House Committee on Committees**

*9/17/19, 3:45 p.m., House Floor*

By Becky Mehringer, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee announced the following changes, effective immediately:

Rep. Zachary Mako (R-Northampton) has temporarily resigned as a member of the House Professional Licensure Committee, the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee, the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee, and the House Finance Committee.

Rep. Michael Peifer (R-Pike) has been temporarily elected as a member of the House Professional Licensure Committee.

Rep. Michael Peifer (R-Pike) has resigned as a member of the House Transportation Committee.

Rep. Ryan Warner (R-Fayette) has been elected as a member of the House Transportation Committee.

Rep. Jim Marshall (R-Beaver) has resigned as a member of the House Transportation Committee.

Rep. Lori Mizgorski (R-Allegheny) has been elected as a member of the House Transportation Committee.

Rep. Jim Marshall (R-Beaver) has been elected as a member of the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee.

Rep. David Rowe (R-Snyder) has been temporarily elected as a member of the House Finance Committee and the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee.

Rep. David Rowe (R-Snyder) has been elected as a member of the House Local Government Committee and the House Children and Youth Committee.

Rep. Wendi Thomas (R-Bucks) has resigned as a member of the House Local Government Committee.

Rep. Torren Ecker (R-Adams) has resigned as a member of the House Children and Youth Committee.



## House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee

9/18/19, 9:00 a.m., Room B-31, Main Capitol

By Sheri Melnick, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

Chairman Stephen Barrar (R-Delaware) explained that the legislation being considered is the product of Senate Resolution 6 and indicated that it will “make a huge impact on the recruitment and retention of emergency responders.” He asserted that the bills are a vote to ensure that when someone calls 911, there will be an equipped emergency responder able to respond.

[HB 1347 Masser, Kurt](#) - (PN 2149) Amends the Insurance Company Law, in casualty insurance, further providing for billing. The bill establishes that where an insurer has reimbursed a non-network EMS agency at the same rate it has established for a network EMS agency, the EMS agency may not bill the insured directly or indirectly or otherwise attempt to collect from the insured for the service provided, except for a billing to recover a copayment, coinsurance or deductible as specified in the health insurance policy; and an EMS agency that submits a form under this section may solicit donations or memberships or conduct fundraising, except that an EMS agency may not promise, suggest or infer to donors that a donation will result in the donor not being billed directly for any payment as provided. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was **reported as committed**.

Rep. Greiner expressed his concerns about the balance billing portion of the legislation and indicated that he will vote to get the bill out of committee.

Rep. Ryan Bizzarro (D-Erie) echoed Rep. Greiner’s concerns and noted that he wants to help emergency service providers. He explained that because nine organizations came out in opposition to the bill last night, he moved to have the bill referred to the House Insurance Committee.

Chairman Barrar asked the members to vote against the motion and asserted that the House Insurance Committee will “never move the bill.”

Chairman Sainato asked his members to vote in favor of referring the bill to the House Insurance Committee and noted that the governor is very concerned with the legislation. He noted that the House Insurance Committee is negotiating to end surprise balance billing.

Rep. Frank Ryan (R-Lebanon) asserted that Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement issues are “the real” problems and noted that he will vote to get the bill out of committee. He said that he would vote against the bill on the House floor unless “substantial” changes are made to the bill. He asserted that there are “Band-Aids” on multiple state issues without solutions and commented that unless Pennsylvania takes care of voluntary firefighters and emergency medical services, “we are in deep trouble.”

The motion to refer the bill to the House Insurance Committee **failed**.

Rep. Joseph Webster (D-Montgomery) noted that he has received calls from constituents regarding balanced billing issues. He moved to table the bill.

Chairman Barrar asked the members to vote “no” on the motion. Chairman Sainato acknowledged his agreement with Rep. Webster.

Rep. Ryan asked members to vote “no” on the motion to table. He explained that with the state of ambulance service financials, “we cannot afford to wait any longer.”

Rep. Jennifer O’Mara (D-Delaware) explained that she would be voting “no” on moving the bill out of committee. She noted that she spent the weekend speaking with constituents who volunteer as ambulance drivers and asserted that they were



afraid that the bill would hurt the people it was designed to help. She explained that she has gotten recommendations on how to make changes to the bill to make it better.

The motion to table the bill until September 24, 2019, **failed**.

[HB 1705 Gabler, Matt](#) - (PN 2297) Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies and nonprofit emergency medical services (EMS) agencies, expanding the definition of governing body to include the governing body of a school district, authorizing school districts to enact a tax credit against the property tax liability of active volunteers of a fire or EMS company, and increasing the current property tax credit allowance from 20 percent of an active volunteer's liability to 100 percent of their tax liability. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Greiner asked for clarification on the definition of "volunteer firefighter." Rep. Matt Gabler (R-Clearfield), the legislation's prime sponsor, responded that under the bill, the benefit that is extended to municipalities would be extended to school districts. He noted that the bill references active volunteers. Sean Harris, Republican research analyst, noted that under Act 172, municipalities have the ability to choose to provide a tax credit and that the decision is left up to municipalities to decide how someone would qualify for a tax credit. He noted that the legislation merely extends the ability to make that decision to school districts.

Rep. Farry emphasized that the bill corrects some errors in Act 172 and allows municipalities to provide a 100 percent tax credit if they choose to do so, rather than be limited to the 20 percent cap.

[HB 1786 Sainato, Chris](#) - (PN 2376) Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies and nonprofit emergency medical services agencies, establishing the First Responder Loan Forgiveness Program to provide up to \$16,000 in debt forgiveness for individuals who serve in eligible positions for four years. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A02790](#) by Sainato, makes technical changes to bring the bill in line with definitions already in existence in Title 35. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Chairman Sainato, the prime sponsor of the bill, noted that recruitment and retention are key to keeping first responders and that the bill creates a loan forgiveness program. He explained that there was a lot of support for this bill at a hearing in Indiana County.

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#### **House Human Services Committee**

*9/18/19, 9:00 a.m., Room 60 East Wing*

By Mike Howells, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

Chairman Gene DiGirolamo (R-Bucks) first welcomed the new executive director, Erin Raub.

[HR 399 O'Mara, Jennifer \(F\)](#) - (PN 2111) Resolution urging the commonwealth to adopt and utilize sensitive language related to suicide. - The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 417 Benninghoff, Kerry](#) - (PN 2245) Resolution recognizing the month of September 2019 as "National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month" and September 10, 2019, as "World Suicide Prevention Day" in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.





[HR 487 Isaacson, Mary \(F\)](#) - (PN 2431) Resolution designating the week of September 16 through 22, 2019, as Prescription Opioid/Heroin Epidemic Awareness Week. - The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 494 Toepel, Marcy](#) - (PN 2476) Resolution designating September 25, 2019, as Someone You Know Day. - The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1220 Cruz, Angel](#) - (PN 1426) The CMV Education and Newborn Testing Act provides for cytomegalovirus education and newborn testing. - The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A02673](#) by Cruz, is a technical amendment. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

[HB 730 Cruz, Angel](#) - (PN 1405) Amends the Newborn Child Testing Act further providing for definitions and the Newborn Child Screening and Follow-up Program. Establishes the Newborn Child Screening Program Account as a special restricted account within the State Treasury. Provides the fees deposited in the account, upon approval of the governor, are appropriated to the Department of Health for the use of screening newborn children, tracking screening outcomes, follow-up services and referrals for treatment for up to the first year of life. Requires the department to impose a fee on birthing facilities, certified-nurse midwives, direct-entry midwives and health care practitioners for each newborn child screened. Provides the fee shall be determined by the department and shall not exceed an amount sufficient to cover the administrative, laboratory and follow-up costs associated with the performance of screening tests. Effective in 180 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 675 Brooks, Michele](#) - (PN 820) The Buprenorphine Medically Assisted Treatment Act establishes that the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs shall establish a program for certification of buprenorphine office-based prescribers as qualified by training and experience to prescribe buprenorphine. The legislation establishes fees for certification, requirements for prescribing buprenorphine, and penalties for violations of this act. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was **passed over**.

On the bill, Chairman DiGirolamo acknowledged members have been “bombarded” by various stakeholders with concerns about the legislation. He said there are two opiates authorized to treat opioid addiction: methadone and Suboxone. He said if someone is on methadone to treat an addiction, that person has to report every day to the clinic, which is licensed to provide the treatment and monitor its dosage appropriately. Additionally, he said there is associated counseling and drug testing provided.

By contrast, the chairman said, Suboxone treatment works via a once-a-month doctor visit and a prescription for a 30-day supply. He said Senate Bill 675 “reasonably tries” to allow for counseling and a type of certification to go along with the drug. He said there seems to be a big outcry that it is not necessary, despite the restrictions surrounding the comparable treatment involved with methadone. He also noted Auditor General Eugene DePasquale has recommended as such, and also commented there is an “enormous diversion problem” associated with Suboxone.

Chairman DiGirolamo said that in talking with other members of the committee he drafted two amendments, the latter in particular with provisions aimed at compromise. He advised the bill is being passed over to give members and stakeholders further time to sort out an agreement.

Minority Chairman Angel Cruz (D-Philadelphia) thanked members of the committee for passing the earlier legislation related to newborn screening.

Chairman DiGirolamo also recommended members to go over the federal indictment of Suboxone maker Indivior. “It is absolutely shameful,” he said.

Rep. Stephen Kinsey (D-Philadelphia) thanked Chairman DiGirolamo for his remarks and his willingness to work with Chairman Cruz on their ideas in order to develop the best possible legislation.



Rep. Mike Schlossberg (D-Lehigh) expressed his appreciation for more time to work on a compromise. He said the vast majority of stakeholders believe that medicated-assisted treatment can work, and encouraged members to follow where the science leads.

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### **House Health Committee**

*09/18/19, 9:00 a.m. 205 Ryan Office Building*

By Robert Cochran, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

Chairman Kathy Rapp (R-Warren) stated that the committee would pass over the non-controversial resolutions on today's agenda because the committee has technically not received them. She suggested that they may be considered later this week, but that the committee may possibly vote on non-controversial resolutions as a legislative package.

Minority Chairman Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) agreed with considering non-controversial resolutions as a legislative package.

[HB 533 Owlett, Clint](#) - (PN 525) The Health Care Practitioner Credentialing Act provides for the use of certain credentialing applications and for credentialing requirements for health insurers; imposes penalties; and confers powers and imposing duties on the Insurance Department. All health insurers licensed to do business in this Commonwealth shall be required to accept the CAQH (Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare) credentialing application or other form designated by the Insurance Department so long as the form is nationally recognized as an appropriate credentialing application when submitted by a health care practitioner for participation in the health insurer's provider panel. All health care practitioners shall use the CAQH or other designated form. An application shall be considered complete if the application is submitted through the CAQH electronic process or other process as designated by the Insurance Department and all required information is provided. Effective in 180 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[A02815](#) by Owlett, provides notification requirements between health care practitioners and health insurers regarding credentialing. The amendment was **withdrawn**.

Republican Executive Director Whitney Metzler stated that former Republican Health Committee Chairman Matt Baker circulated a [co-sponsor memo](#) last session for establishing an advisory council to unify the credentialing process for health care practitioners. She said that stakeholder meetings identified the Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQU) as the "gold standard" form required by Medicare and Medicaid credentialing purposes.

Metzler said that [HB 1663](#), which also provided for physician credentialing, passed the committee in 2016. She added [HB 125](#) addressed the same in 2017.

Metzler continued that the committee held [a hearing](#) to discuss barriers to employment in the health care field, identifying credentialing as a major obstacle for health care practitioners.

Rep. Clint Owlett (R-Tioga) said that insurance companies were neutral on the legislation in 2017. The representative said that he has been working to solve issues with the legislation, but that his amendment does not entirely address the concerns with the bill. He added that an amendment would be suggested on the House floor.

Rep. Owlett said the problems with credentialing are impacting physicians, and some with concerns fear retribution regarding the issue. He described the current credentialing system as «slow,» «riddled with obstacles» and «extremely unpredictable.» He added that the legislation provides stability and predictability, that patients are the ultimate «winner» of the bill.

Rep. Mary Jo Daley (D-Montgomery) asked if confidential comments of how credentialing impacts health care practitioners



could be shared with her because the problems of credentialing impact the entirety of the commonwealth. Rep. Owlett said the comments could be provided.

Rep. Daley stated a credentialing process for managed care plans exist and asked about the experience of that process. Metzler said in 2015 managed care organizations could not process credentialing within the timeframe, and that the Department of Human Services processes credentialing now within 25 days. She applauded the department for their effort in improving credentialing. Metzler said the problem was with the next step with providers, and that the process in private insurance is slow. She added that a debate exists whether it's best for the Department of Health (DOH) or the Department of Insurance to oversee network adequacy, which may be addressed by a House floor amendment.

Chairman Frankel said there is needed between the needs of insurers to check the qualifications of practitioners and that the commonwealth should support a more streamlined process. He said concerns exist regarding oversight by DOH to determine what constitutes a complete application. He encouraged members support for the legislation. He clarified that credentialing and insurance networks were separate issues.

Chairman Rapp said credentialing is an issue for rural hospitals because of increased costs.

[HR 441 Culver, Lynda](#) - (PN 2399) Resolution designating the month of September 2019 as « Histiocytosis Awareness Month» in Pennsylvania. - The bill was **passed over**.

[HR 463 Benninghoff, Kerry](#) - (PN 2409) Resolution designating the month of September 2019 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Pennsylvania. - The bill was **passed over**.

[HR 464 Brown, Rosemary](#) - (PN 2410) Resolution recognizing the month of September 2019 as Polycystic Kidney Awareness Month in Pennsylvania. - The bill was **passed over**.

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### **House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee**

*9/19/19, 9:30 a.m., Room 205, Ryan Office Building*

By Sheri Melnick, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held a voting meeting followed by an informational hearing on [House Bill 1061](#).

[HR 456 Farry, Frank](#) - (PN 2391) Resolution recognizing September 23, 2019, as "National Falls Prevention Awareness Day" in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**. Chairman Murt noted that the resolution will establish September 23, 2019, as Falls Awareness Day and asserted that falls are some of the "most common" injuries of older adults.

Chairman Murt explained that as Pennsylvania's older adult population continues to grow, "it is imperative that we continue to explore protections for these residents." He noted that seniors are targeted through telephone scams for financial exploitation.

Rep. Schroeder, the prime sponsor of House Bill 1061, noted that her bill would require the attorney general to establish ongoing communications with the Pennsylvania Department of Aging to ensure that consumers 60 and older have information about certain patterns of financial scams.

[Sarah Frasch](#), chief deputy attorney general, Bureau of Consumer Protection (BCP), Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General (OAG), noted that the senior community is often targeted by scammers and asserted that based upon the data collected by the BCP, the scams are not decreasing. She noted that of the 4,382 complaints BCP received in 2018, nearly half were submitted by seniors. She remarked that the top complaints in 2019 include tech support scams; debt collection scams;



and imposter scams, such as the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) scam, the Social Security scam, or the grandparent scam.

Frasch remarked that the Health Care Section of OAG (HCS) also receives complaints. She noted that HCS's top-reported scams include consumers receiving unsolicited back and knee braces delivered in the mail, consumers entering into negative options associated with the purchase of dietary supplements, and consumers receiving mailings that have the appearance of being related to Medicare.

Frasch outlined the initiatives the BCP has employed to combat the scams. She noted that they are using a dedicated task force to review and track complaints, working with retailers to combat gift card scams at the front end, and working with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to force the telecommunications industry to curb spoofed calls and robocalls. Frascch remarked that the BCP has increased education and outreach efforts to provide real-time information to consumers.

Frasch asserted that the Scam Task Force reviews each scam complaint submitted to the BCP and takes the necessary steps to help recover money for the victims, which includes working with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to attempt to recover money for victims. She noted that the BCP "initiated collaborative discussions" with Best Buy, Walmart, and Target and asserted that the retailers agreed to make changes to their gift card policies, which include reducing the monetary limits on the gift cards.

Frasch acknowledged that through the collaboration with the FCC, the OAG has been working to combat unwanted phone calls. She noted that last year, Pennsylvania led a bipartisan coalition of 38 state attorneys general to file comments with the FCC, urging them to adopt broader call-blocking rules.

Frasch explained that the OAG has created a scam alert system where consumers can alert the OAG to scams through the hotline, or by email to [scams@attorneygeneral.gov](mailto:scams@attorneygeneral.gov). She commented that the OAG releases alerts via email and text messaging, engages in educational and outreach opportunities, and participates in National Consumer Protection Week, which is held every March. Frascch remarked that the BCP recently started to take consumer complaints over the telephone, which she opined was "helpful" for the senior population.

[Joseph Ryan](#), chief, Criminal Investigation Division, Delaware County Office of the District Attorney, explained that Delaware County has a "dedicated" Senior Exploitation Unit as well as Senior Victim Services. He noted that the Senior Exploitation Unit has about 80 fraud investigations per year, with a population of 93,000 seniors. Ryan spoke about the grandparents scam, which is when callers impersonate grandchildren, pretending to be arrested and asking for money. He noted that his office has arrested several people for this type of scam within the past two months. Ryan remarked that some of the money has been recovered for seniors, who had sent thousands of dollars in cash to those perpetrating the schemes.

Ryan also spoke about the IRS scam, where scammers will call seniors and pretend to be an IRS official, indicating that the senior will be under arrest if they do not pay money. Ryan remarked that another area of fraud is power of attorney fraud and commented that this type of fraud is done by family members.

Ryan noted that his office partners with local law enforcement to assist seniors who are victims and that some of those victims have multiple issues that require social services assistance. Ryan asserted that his office engages in outreach and refers seniors to senior centers to assist them with becoming less homebound. He opined that seniors are vulnerable to victimization by scammers because they are lonely and will engage the scammers.

[Robert Burns](#), director, Dauphin County Area Agency on Aging, commented that each of the scams against older adults represent a form of "elder abuse" and referenced the *New York Times*, which has referred to elder abuse as "the most underreported crime in America." Burns noted that in Dauphin County in 2018, there were almost 2,000 cases of reported elder abuse. Burns explained that one-third of elder abuse involves financial exploitation, which impacts the "entire American economy" with an estimated cost of \$2.9 billion annually. He asserted that the scams in Dauphin County each have the same common denominator of "targeting weak, isolated victims whom they perceive as easy targets." Burns noted that Pennsylvania has elder abuse hotlines in every county and that reporters can remain anonymous. He emphasized that in



Dauphin County, elder abuse investigators attend training at the Institute on Protective Services at Temple University and noted that the Dauphin County Elder Abuse Taskforce partners with local police and county, state, and federal officials to investigate elder abuse. Burns thanked the members for their efforts to fight for increased funding for local offices for the aging.

[Tony Wolchasty](#), volunteer, AARP Pennsylvania Consumer Issues Task Force, spoke about his efforts to educate consumers about frauds and scams and noted that AARP is the largest organization for people over 50 in the world. He remarked that his organization's task force has 15 volunteer members who work to educate seniors about scams and promote consumer protection for all Pennsylvanians. He emphasized that if people are educated about the specifics of a scam, they are much less likely to be victimized. He asserted that older consumers may not understand how much information is available to the public and in cyberspace. He said "education and vigilance are imperative" and noted that AARP has a nationwide program called the [fraud watch network](#), where consumers can sign up to receive alerts. He confirmed AARP's support of House Bill 1061.

Rep. Nelson noted that the attorney general's office was helpful in prosecuting a home-health scam in Westmoreland County.

Minority Chairman Samuelson asked about the grandparents scam and remarked that it can involve people wiring money. He asked if people send cash through overnight mail. Ryan noted that cash was involved in the arrests made by his office.

Chairman Samuelson asked if it is possible for law enforcement to intercept where the cash is being delivered. Ryan explained that the arrests were made because surveillance was conducted once the address of the pickup was available.

Chairman Samuelson noted that there is legislation to increase penalties for spoofed phone numbers and asked Ryan if there could be prosecution for spoofed numbers. Ryan responded that he is not familiar with the criminal statutes for spoofing and indicated that perpetrators could be charged with theft by deception.

Chairman Samuelson asked Ryan to share with legislators different ways they can assist with the prevention of scamming seniors.

Rep. Miller asked what can be done to address the power of attorney fraud. Ryan recommended that people pick a power of attorney when they do not need it. He also suggested the use of co-powers of attorney or having a second person who receives the senior's financial statements every month.

Rep. Miller asked if there is any legislative action that could assist with the power of attorney issue. Ryan responded that he could not think of any other than legislation to mandate a second person receiving the records in addition to a power of attorney.

Rep. DeLissio asked how long the OAG alert system has been in place. Frasch responded that it has been in place since 2018.

Rep. DeLissio asked if there is a way to send out alerts with information that seniors already receive and asked how long the dedicated unit has been running in Delaware County. Ryan stated that it has been 15 years and noted that Senior Victim Services was integrated into the unit about six years ago.

Rep. DeLissio asked if any other counties use the same approach. Ryan noted that he did not know of any other counties that use the approach. He also opined that the underreporting of elder abuse could be related to embarrassment and fear by seniors that their families think they cannot handle their affairs any longer.

Rep. DeLissio commented on a "fishing" scam where people were stealing checks from mailboxes. Wolchasty noted he advises people that if they are mailing checks to take them directly to the post office.



Frasch commented that the U.S. postal inspectors contacted the OAG office to let them know of the “fishing” scams but noted that the OAG did not receive any tips from consumers.

Wolchasty suggested that if people write checks, they should use gel pens because it is more difficult for thieves to “wash” the payee name on a stolen check with gel ink.

Rep. Hennessey asked about washing. Wolchasty responded that scammers will remove the payee name from checks that they steal.

Rep. Hennessey noted that he received calls about lowering the interest rates on his credit cards and started asking questions of the caller. Wolchasty responded that Rep. Hennessey is a little more “savvy” than other consumers who do not always ask questions and asserted that he educates people not to answer a call if they do not know who it has come from.

Rep. Hennessey commented that his brother receives petitions to save Social Security and indicated that if someone is asking for money in a mail solicitation, it is generally a scam. Wolchasty explained that 70 percent of schemes are by telephone and computer because the victims are not able to identify the scammers.

Rep. Hennessey stated that he has heard that if a caller asks you to confirm your name and you respond “yes”, the caller can now use your name. Wolchasty advised that people should ask who is calling.

Rep. Schroeder asked what the current protocol is for collaboration between the area agencies on aging and the OAG. Burns responded that in most instances with the Dauphin County Elder Abuse Taskforce, the district attorney and criminal investigation division receive the referral.

Rep. Schroeder asked if that is how it has always been or if that procedure has changed under Attorney General Josh Shapiro. Burns responded that the jurisdiction lies with the local district attorney’s office.

Rep. Schroeder asked if the OAG will call area agencies on agency with alerts about community events. Burns responded that the OAG’s office has been “helpful.” Frascch noted that the OAG’s criminal section does not have jurisdiction to prosecute without the referral from a local district attorney and noted that AARP is part of the outreach engaged in by the OAG’s office.

Rep. McCarter commented that the coordination of all the advocacy programs is important and is a “critical element” to make sure that the counties can disseminate the information in the best way possible. He referenced Ryan’s suggestion that seniors do not report elder abuse because they fear losing independence and opined that seniors with dementia may be the most susceptible. He asked if there is anything legislators can do about helping seniors by making them a protected group. Ryan asserted that seniors do not want to lose their independence and may not want to be considered as a protected group. He opined that it is a “balancing act.”

Rep. Wentling commented that there is another layer to the issue, which is the partnership with the federal government. He remarked that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has a [website](#) and commented that people can “freeze c noted that seniors can set up automatic debits to avoid writing checks and opined that if people use credit cards, there are “extra” levels of protection.

Chairman Murt asked the panelists to advise legislators if they have any legislative ideas that could help in the prevention of elder abuse.

## MAAC

MAAC did not meet this week.





## Bullet.in.Points

### [DCED: AMENDMENTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN](#)

The Department of Community and Economic Development is amending the 2019 Annual Action Plan to revise the 2019 Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) allocation and to revise the method of distribution for the commonwealth's administration and competitive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. This action requires no public meeting or citizen comment as both actions are beneath the \$1 million threshold for a substantial amendment and do not change the scope of either program. Additional information can be found on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

### [DHS: DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE AND SUPPLEMENTAL HOSPITAL PAYMENTS](#)

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is announcing its intent to allocate funds for fiscal year (FY) 2019-2020 inpatient disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments to qualifying inpatient acute care general, psychiatric, and rehabilitation hospitals and qualifying psychiatric and rehabilitation units of acute care general hospitals; outpatient supplemental payments to qualifying inpatient acute care general hospitals; direct medical education payments to qualifying inpatient acute care general hospitals; and certain DSH and supplemental payments to new hospitals.

DHS also intends to clarify in the state plan the payment methodology for new hospitals eligible for Medical Assistance (MA) dependency supplemental payments to make the language consistent with the provisions for hospitals for which DHS has a FY 2014-2015 MA-336 Hospital Cost Report as of July 2017.

DHS is not otherwise changing the state plan provisions addressing the qualifying criteria or payment methodology for these payments. All payment limitations are applicable, including those limitations that the commonwealth may not exceed its aggregate annual DSH allotment, and that no hospital may receive DSH payments in excess of its hospital-specific limit.

The fiscal year 2018-2019 impact, as a result of the funding allocation for these payments, is \$258,953,000 (\$112,150,000 in state general funds and \$146,803,000 in federal funds) upon approval by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Interested persons are invited to submit written comments regarding this notice to the Department of Human Services, Office of Medical Assistance Programs, c/o regulations coordinator, Room 515, Health and Welfare Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. DHS will review and consider comments received within 30 days in determining the final payment methodology for these payments. Additional information can be found on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

## Cosponsor Memos

<a href="#">HCO1388</a>	<a href="#">Nesbit, Tedd(R)</a>	Provides for regulations and licensure of medical imaging professionals.
<a href="#">HCO1936</a>	<a href="#">Nelson, Eric(R)</a>	Two-bill package addressing firearms' restoration of rights and transportation.
<a href="#">HCO2296</a>	<a href="#">Culver, Lynda(R)</a>	Raises Volunteer Loan Assistance Program loan limits by 10 percent.
<a href="#">HCO2313</a>	<a href="#">Wheatley, Jake(D)</a>	Provides limited access to criminal records when a medical professional certifies a veteran has an undiagnosed, service-connected mental health disorder.
<a href="#">HCO2402</a>	<a href="#">Causer, Martin(R)</a>	Increases the funding available through the Emergency Medical Services Operating Fund.
<a href="#">HCO2453</a>	<a href="#">Markosek, Brandon (F) (D)</a>	Creates a Green Alert system to alert the public when a veteran with a service-connected health issue is reported missing.
<a href="#">HCO2481</a>	<a href="#">Quinn, Chris(R)</a>	Requires our school nurses and professional employees be educated on seizure recognition and first aid.



HCO2549	Murt, Thomas(R)	Grants licensed physical therapists the ability to authorize and certify disabilities for vehicle disability placards.
HCO2552	Keefer, Dawn(R)	Amends the provision in the Crimes Code entitled Causing or Aiding Suicide.
HCO2565	Rabb, Christopher(D)	Allows individuals who legally use medicinal cannabis to operate a motor vehicle.
HCO2573	Ryan, Frank(R)	Establishes requirements for the final disposition of the remains of unborn children after their demise.
HCO2574	Innamorato, Sara (F)(D)	Closes the loophole and mandating that all treatment plants be required to pre-treat leachate from landfills that accept untreated industrial waste.
HCO2581	Kaufer, Aaron(R)	Seeks to modernize the process by which graduates of international medical schools become licensed.
HCO2582	Rowe, David(R)	Amends the Mental Health Procedures Act to protect the rights of Pennsylvanians receiving mental health care.
HCO2584	Pashinski, Eddie Day(D)	Bans flavored e-cigarettes that have become popular among young users in Pennsylvania.
SCO 616	Vogel, Jr., Elder(R)	Defines telemedicine, offers guidelines outlining who can provide telemedicine services, and provides clarity around insurance company reimbursement for telemedicine services.
SCO 617	Argall, David(R)	Amends Medical Practice Act of 1985 to define ophthalmic surgery.
SCO 627	Muth, Katie (F)(D)	Expands Pennsylvania's definition of institutional sexual assault to include law enforcement officers and any person in the officer's custody.
SCO1160	Farnese, Lawrence(D)	Streamlines guardianship for medically disabled adult children.
SCO1163	Iovino, Pam(D)	Expands the amount of adult changing stations in the most commonly-used, large facilities.
SCO1176	Iovino, Pam(D)	Requiring health care providers to notify local health departments when a child has high lead levels in their blood.





## Bill Actions

**HB 83**      **Kauffman, Rob(R)**      (PN 85) Amends the Workers' Compensation Act, requiring a claimant receiving benefits from the Uninsured Employers Guaranty Fund to demonstrate proof of wages in order to receive a wage loss benefit. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 06-04-19 H First consideration  
06-04-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

**HB 122**      **Kortz, Bill(D)**      (PN 1012) Amends Title 68 (Real and Personal Property), in home inspections, further providing for home inspection reports. The bill establishes that a home inspection report must include a disclosure of the visible evidence of the presence of interior mold present at the time of inspection and the location of the visible evidence along with advice to obtain a professional evaluation. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 06-25-19 H Removed from the table  
06-25-19 H Laid on the table  
09-19-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar  
09-19-19 H Removed from the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the House Calendar

**HB 386**      **DiGirolamo, Gene(R)**      (PN 370) Amends the Administrative Code, in powers and duties of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs, further providing for powers and duties. The bill establishes that the Department of Drug and Alcohol programs has the power and duty to utilize criteria developed or adapted by the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs to meet the needs, service requirements and regulatory structure of the commonwealth to guide decisions governing the type, level and length of care, including hospital detoxification, for all patients receiving drug and alcohol addiction treatment through federal or state funding. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 06-25-19 H First consideration  
06-25-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar



HB 533 Owlett, Clint(R)

(PN 525) The Health Care Practitioner Credentialing Act provides for the use of certain credentialing applications and for credentialing requirements for health insurers; imposes penalties; and confers powers and imposing duties on the Insurance Department. All health insurers licensed to do business in this Commonwealth shall be required to accept the CAQH (Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare) credentialing application or other form designated by the Insurance Department so long as the form is nationally recognized as an appropriate credentialing application when submitted by a health care practitioner for participation in the health insurer's provider panel. All health care practitioners shall use the CAQH or other designated form. An application shall be considered complete if the application is submitted through the CAQH electronic process or other process as designated by the Insurance Department and all required information is provided. Effective in 180 days.

**Bill History:** 09-18-19 H Voted favorably from committee on House Health  
09-18-19 H Reported as committed from House Health  
09-19-19 H First consideration  
09-18-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

HB 564 Saylor, Stanley(R)

(PN 2284) Amends the Insurance Company Law, in quality health care accountability and protection, requiring a clean claim to be paid directly to a participating or non-participating healthcare provider by an insurer. Provides that an insurance claim shall be deemed to be paid when a licensed insurer or managed care plan mails a check to the participating health care provider or non participating health care provider; or makes an electronic transfer of funds to the participating health care provider or nonparticipating health care provider. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 579)

**Bill History:** 06-27-19 H First consideration  
06-27-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar



**HB 730**      **Cruz, Angel(D)**      (PN 1405) Amends the Newborn Child Testing Act further providing for definitions and the Newborn Child Screening and Follow-up Program. Establishes the Newborn Child Screening Program Account as a special restricted account within the State Treasury. Provides the fees deposited in the account, upon approval of the governor, are appropriated to the Department of Health for the use of screening newborn children, tracking screening outcomes, follow-up services and referrals for treatment for up to the first year of life. Requires the department to impose a fee on birthing facilities, certified-nurse midwives, direct-entry midwives and health care practitioners for each newborn child screened. Provides the fee shall be determined by the department and shall not exceed an amount sufficient to cover the administrative, laboratory and follow-up costs associated with the performance of screening tests. Effective in 180 days.

**Bill History:** 09-18-19 H Voted favorably from committee on House Human Services  
09-18-19 H Reported as committed from House Human Services  
09-18-19 H First consideration  
09-18-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

**HB 941**      **Heffley, Doyle(R)**      (PN 1748) Amends the Human Services Code, in public assistance, providing for financial disclosures for pharmacy services. The legislation provides for transparency in pharmacy benefit manager pricing in Medicaid and addresses inadequate reimbursement rates for pharmacies. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 06-11-19 H First consideration  
06-11-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

**HB 942**      **Grove, Seth(R)**      (PN 2088) Amends the Human Services Code, in public assistance, establishing the Pharmaceutical and Therapeutics Committee. Provides for membership of the committee. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 1841)

**Bill History:** 06-11-19 H First consideration  
06-11-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar



**HB 943**     **Gaydos, Valerie (F)(R)** (PN 2089) The Consumer Prescription Drug Pricing and Freedom Disclosure Act provides for consumer prescription drug pricing disclosure and pharmacy freedom to communicate. The bill states a pharmacy or pharmacist shall have the right to provide a covered individual with information concerning the cost of a prescription drug, including the individual's cost share. A pharmacy, pharmacist or contracting agent of a pharmacy or pharmacist may not be prohibited from or penalized by a pharmacy benefits manager or pharmacy services administration organization for discussing said information, disclosing the availability of therapeutically-equivalent alternative medications or selling to the covered individual a more affordable alternative if an affordable alternative is available. A pharmacy benefits manager or pharmacy services administration organization shall not prohibit, restrict or limit written or oral disclosure of contract information by a pharmacist or pharmacy to any state, county or municipal official or before any state, county or municipal committee, body or proceeding. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 1587)

**Bill History:** 06-11-19 H First consideration  
06-11-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

**HB 944**     **Fritz, Jonathan(R)** (PN 2090) Amends the Human Services Code, in public assistance, authorizing the Department of the Auditor General to conduct an audit and review of a pharmacy benefits manager that provides pharmacy benefits management to a medical assistance managed care organization under contract with the department. The Department of the Auditor General may review all previous audits completed by the department and shall have access to all documents necessary to complete the review and audit. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 1588)

**Bill History:** 06-11-19 H First consideration  
06-11-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

**HB 994**     **Fee, Mindy(R)** (PN 1125) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for dental examinations and dental hygiene services. The bill establishes that a school district or joint school board may use a public health dental hygiene practitioner to satisfy the requirements under the dental screenings and dental hygiene services section. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 06-10-19 H First consideration  
06-10-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar



HB 1075 Stephens, Todd(R) (PN 1235) Amends Titles 18 (Crimes and Offenses) and 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure), in firearms and other dangerous articles, further providing for persons not to possess, use, manufacture, control, sell or transfer firearms and for abandonment of firearms, weapons or ammunition; in community and municipal courts, further providing for masters; and adding provisions relating to extreme risk protection orders. The bill provides for extreme risk orders regarding access to firearms. Effective in 90 days.

**Bill History:** 04-04-19 H Filed  
04-05-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary  
04-08-19 H Press conference held  
06-03-19 H Discussed during joint public hearing, House Judiciary -- House Judiciary  
09-17-19 H Press conference held

HB 1189 Knowles, Jerry(R) (PN 1386) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in volunteer firefighters, repealing employment sanctions and providing for the Volunteer Emergency Responders Employer Tax Credit. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 04-10-19 H Filed  
04-11-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Finance  
09-24-19 H Meeting set for 9:30 a.m., Room 205, Ryan Office Building, House Finance -- House Finance  
09-19-19 H Meeting cancelled for 09/24/19, House Finance -- House Finance

HB 1220 Cruz, Angel(D) (PN 1426) The CMV Education and Newborn Testing Act provides for cytomegalovirus education and newborn testing.

**Bill History:** 09-18-19 H Voted favorably from committee as amended House Human Services  
09-18-19 H Reported as amended House Human Services  
09-18-19 H First consideration  
09-18-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar



- HB 1347 Masser, Kurt(R) (PN 2149) Amends the Insurance Company Law, in casualty insurance, further providing for billing. The bill establishes that where an insurer has reimbursed a non-network EMS agency at the same rate it has established for a network EMS agency, the EMS agency may not bill the insured directly or indirectly or otherwise attempt to collect from the insured for the service provided, except for a billing to recover a copayment, coinsurance or deductible as specified in the health insurance policy; and an EMS agency that submits a form under this section may solicit donations or memberships or conduct fundraising, except that an EMS agency may not promise, suggest or infer to donors that a donation will result in the donor not being billed directly for any payment as provided. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 09-18-19 H Voted favorably from committee on House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.  
09-18-19 H Reported as committed from House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.  
09-18-19 H First consideration  
09-18-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar
- HB 1423 Ortitay, Jason(R) (PN 2103) Amends the Public School Code requiring public schools to create at least one threat assessment team. Lays out definitions and other guidance, including pertaining to eligibility. Effective immediately. (Prior Printer Number: 1752)
- Bill History:** 06-11-19 H First consideration  
06-11-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar
- HB 1457 Schroeder, Meghan (F)(R) (PN 1825) Amends the Insurance Company Law, in casualty insurance, further providing for coverage of mastectomy and breast cancer reconstruction. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 06-17-19 H First consideration  
06-17-19 H Rereferred to House Rules  
09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar
- HB 1662 DiGirolamo, Gene(R) (PN 2207) Amends the Methadone Death and Incident Review Act, incorporating Buprenorphine-related deaths into the act, including in the title, short title, definitions, the Methadone Death and Incident Reveiw Team, team duties, review procedures and confidentiality. The legislation also removes the term narcotic treatment and replaces it with opioids-assisted treatment throughout the act. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 09-19-19 Laid out for discussion 1:09pm  
09-19-19 H 1 Floor amendment(s) adopted  
09-19-19 Second consideration 1:12pm  
09-19-19 H Over in House  
09-19-19 H Rereferred to House Appropriations



**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 1705**     **Gabler, Matt(R)**     (PN 2297) Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies and nonprofit emergency medical services (EMS) agencies, expanding the definition of governing body to include the governing body of a school district, authorizing school districts to enact a tax credit against the property tax liability of active volunteers of a fire or EMS company, and increasing the current property tax credit allowance from 20 percent of an active volunteer's liability to 100 percent of their tax liability. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-18-19 H Voted favorably from committee on House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.  
09-18-19 H Reported as committed from House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.  
09-18-19 H First consideration  
09-18-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

**HB 1786**     **Sainato, Chris(D)**     (PN 2376) Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies and nonprofit emergency medical services agencies, establishing the First Responder Loan Forgiveness Program to provide up to \$16,000 in debt forgiveness for individuals who serve in eligible positions for four years. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-18-19 H Voted favorably from committee as amended House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.  
09-18-19 H Reported as amended House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.  
09-18-19 H First consideration  
09-18-19 H Laid on the table  
09-23-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar



- HB 1811 Nesbit, Tedd(R) (PN 2469) The Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Licensure Act establishes the Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Board of Examiners for regulations and licensure of medical imaging professionals. The board shall establish a scope of practice, set requirements for licensure and develop standards for improving medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures. The legislation establishes requirements for medical imaging licenses, including fluoroscopy, diagnostic sonography, radiation therapy, and radiologist assistant, along with provisions regarding violations, disciplinary authority, civil penalties, injunctive relief and related repeals. Effective immediately.
- Bill History:** 09-11-19 H Filed  
09-16-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Professional Licensure
- HB 1815 Kinsey, Stephen(D) (PN 2472) Amends the Crime Victims Act, in services, further defining safe waiting areas. A secure waiting area shall be a locked room within a judicial center which is exclusively used by victims, witnesses, attorneys and family members of victims and witnesses. The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency shall provide standards for construction. The legislation also establishes that hospitals shall construct secure waiting areas. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 09-12-19 H Filed  
09-16-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary
- HB 1816 Culver, Lynda(R) (PN 2473) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety) increasing loan limits of the Volunteer Loan Assistance Program (VLAP) and establishing annual inflation adjustments of loan limits based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers in the Northeast Region. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 09-12-19 H Filed  
09-16-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.  
09-24-19 H Meeting set for 10:00 a.m., Room 205, Ryan Office Building, House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared. -- House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.
- HB 1817 Miller, Daniel(D) (PN 2480) Amends Title 75 (Vehicles), in licensing of drivers, establishing that an individual diagnosed with a disability may request to have a disability identifier symbol place on their driver's license or identification card. The individual shall not be required to provide further documentation that the individual has a disability for the purpose of renewal or reissuance of the driver's license or identification card. The symbol must be discreet and represent all types of disabilities. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 09-13-19 H Filed  
09-17-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Transportation





**HB 1819**     **Davis, Austin(D)**     (PN 2481) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in 911 emergency communication services, providing membership of the state fire chief to the 911 board; in commonwealth services related to emergency management, establishing the State Fire Commission and providing for membership; amending provisions relating to the state fire commissioner by abolishing the state fire commissioner and establishing the State Fire Commission, the state fire chief and the director of the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services; in miscellaneous provisions, further providing for the commission's responsibility for use of the Firefighters' Memorial Flag; in grants to volunteer fire companies and emergency medical services companies, establishing the commission's responsibility in the Fire Company Grant Program; and in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies and nonprofit emergency medical services agencies, replacing the state fire commissioner's responsibility with the commission. The legislation establishes a State Fire Commission by consolidating and expanding the duties of the Office of State Fire Commissioner. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-13-19 H Filed  
09-17-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.

**HB 1820**     **Quinn, Chris(R)**     (PN 2482) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, providing training for school staff regarding seizure recognition and related first aid training. Effective immediately.

**Bill History:** 09-13-19 H Filed  
09-17-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

**HB 1823**     **Rothman, Greg(R)**     (PN 2485) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in minors, raising the minimum age for purchasing tobacco, electronic cigarette and like products from 18 to 21 years old unless the individual is a member of active or reserved branch of the United States armed forces; and repeals related provisions found in the Fire and Panic Act. Violation of use of tobacco products is established as a summary offense. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-16-19 H Filed  
09-17-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary



HB 1824 Markosek, Brandon (F)(D) (PN 2486) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety) establishing Chapter 56, Recovery Assistance Systems for Abducted and Missing Persons, which provides for the Pennsylvania Amber Alert System, the Missing Endangered Person Advisory System, the Green Alert System and imposing duties on the Pennsylvania State Police; imposing a \$25 cost on those convicted of certain crimes for the Pennsylvania Amber Alert System; establishing media and good Samaritan immunity; and repeals provisions of the Pennsylvania Amber Alert System Law. Effective immediately.

**Bill History:** 09-16-19 H Filed  
09-17-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.

HB 1827 Keefer, Dawn(R) (PN 2498) Amends Title 18 (Crimes & Offenses), in criminal homicide, establishing a sentence enhancement for the offense of causing or aiding suicide when the person who has committed suicide is under 18 years of age or has an intellectual disability. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-17-19 H Filed  
09-18-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary  
09-19-19 H Press conference held

HB 1828 Wheatley, Jake(D) (PN 2499) Amends Title 18 (Crimes & Offenses), in criminal history record information, establishing limited access to criminal records when a medical professional certifies a veteran to have an undiagnosed, service-connected mental health disorder or traumatic brain injury. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-17-19 H Filed  
09-18-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary

HB 1829 Wheatley, Jake(D) (PN 2500) Amends the Pennsylvania Election Code, in nomination of candidates, establishing drug screening for candidates for certain elected public offices; and in penalties, providing that drug screening certification or compliance abides by the same penalties regarding false signatures and statements in nomination petitions and papers. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-17-19 H Filed  
09-18-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House State Government

HB 1843 Howard, Kristine (F)(D) Amends The Insurance Company Law, in casualty insurance, providing for coverage for epinephrine auto-injectors.

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

HB 1848 Lewis, Andrew (F)(R) Amends the Tax Reform Code, providing for a long-term care insurance tax credit.

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



HR 74	Cruz, Angel(D)	(PN 392) Concurrent Resolution declaring that the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is committed to equal rights for individuals with cognitive disabilities to technology and information access and calling for implementation of these rights with deliberate speed. <b>Bill History:</b> 06-05-19 H Removed from the table 09-19-19 H Set on the House Calendar 09-19-19 H Laid on the table 09-19-19 H Removed from the table 09-23-19 H Set on the House Calendar
HR 483	O'Neal, Tim(R)	(PN 2459) 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. <b>Bill History:</b> 09-11-19 H Filed 09-16-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health
HR 514	Murt, Thomas(R)	Resolution directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the financial and administrative effectiveness of the statutory provisions requiring autism spectrum disorders insurance coverage. <b>Bill History:</b> 09-19-19 H Filed
HR 515	Murt, Thomas(R)	Resolution directing the LBFC to conduct a comprehensive study of changes in access to county-managed community health services between fiscal years 2010 through 2018; and establishing an advisory committee. <b>Bill History:</b> 09-19-19 H Filed
SB 675	Brooks, Michele(R)	(PN 820) The Buprenorphine Medically Assisted Treatment Act establishes that the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs shall establish a program for certification of buprenorphine office-based prescribers as qualified by training and experience to prescribe buprenorphine. The legislation establishes fees for certification, requirements for prescribing buprenorphine, and penalties for violations of this act. Effective in 60 days. <b>Bill History:</b> 06-17-19 S Final Passage (Vote: Y: 41/N: 9) 06-18-19 H Received in the House and referred to House Human Services 06-25-19 H Meeting set for 9:00 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building, House Human Services -- House Human Services 09-18-19 H Meeting set for 9:00 a.m., Room 60, East Wing, House Human Services -- House Human Services 09-18-19 H Passed over in committee House Human Services
SB 853	Argall, David(R)	Amends the Medical Practice Act, further providing for definitions and for applicability of act. <b>Bill History:</b> 09-19-19 S Filed 09-19-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Consumer Protection & Prof. Licensure



SB 857 Vogel, Jr., Elder(R) (PN 1170) The Telemedicine Act authorizes the practice of telemedicine by health care providers. Requires each licensure board to promulgate regulations within 24 months of the effective date and provides for the publishing of temporary regulations within 60 days. Further provides for evaluation and treatment, insurance coverage, and Medicaid program reimbursement. The provisions regarding insurance coverage and Medicaid program reimbursement shall take effect in 90 days and the remainder shall take effect immediately.

**Bill History:** 09-19-19 S Filed  
09-19-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Banking and Insurance

SB 859 Leach, Daylin(D) (PN 1171) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in 911 emergency communication services, providing membership of the state fire chief to the 911 board; in commonwealth services related to emergency management, establishing the State Fire Commission and providing for membership; amending provisions relating to the state fire commissioner by abolishing the state fire commissioner and establishing the State Fire Commission, the state fire chief and the director of the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services; in miscellaneous provisions, further providing for the commission's responsibility for use of the Firefighters' Memorial Flag; in grants to volunteer fire companies and emergency medical services companies, establishing the commission's responsibility in the Fire Company Grant Program; and in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies and nonprofit emergency medical services agencies, replacing the state fire commissioner's responsibility with the commission. The legislation establishes a State Fire Commission by consolidating and expanding the duties of the Office of State Fire Commissioner. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-19-19 S Filed  
09-19-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.

SB 860 Leach, Daylin(D) (PN 1172) The Paid Family Leave Act establishes that an employer with at least four employees shall provide not less than 12 weeks of paid leave to an eligible employee to care for a child during the beginning of a pregnancy to one year after the birth, adoption or placement of the child. An eligible employee who takes leave is entitled to the same protections and rights that an eligible employee is entitled to under the Family Medical Leave Act, including protection from discrimination and interference, the right to reinstatement, and the right to continuation of health care benefits. The legislation provides for the amount of leave and benefits, and that the Department of Labor and Industry may promulgate regulations. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 09-19-19 S Filed  
09-19-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Labor and Industry



SR 196 Costa, Jay(D)

(PN 1173) Resolution directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study and issue a report on the impact of housing on health in Pennsylvania.

**Bill History:** 09-19-19 S Filed  
09-19-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Urban Affairs and Housing

## Upcoming Events

### 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

### Press Conference

September 23, 2019 - 11:00 a.m., Room 39, East Wing  
Parents, Kids Joining Homecare Providers to Unveil New Resource for Pediatric Homecare

### Press Conference

September 23, 2019 - 12:00 p.m., Capitol Media Center  
Rep. Dan Miller to Discuss H.B. 117

### Press Conference

September 23, 2019 - 12:30 p.m., East Wing Rotunda, Capitol  
Dyslexia Awareness Month Rally

### Senate Aging and Youth

September 23, 2019 - 12:30 p.m., Room 8E-A, East Wing  
To consider: [SB 819](#) Mensch, Bob Amends Older Adults Protective Services Act [HB 775](#) Diamond, Russ Amends State Lottery Law re income [HB 956](#) Murt, Thomas Amends State Lottery Law re rate of return

### Press Conference

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

### House Health

September 23, 2019 - Off the Floor, Room G-50, Irvis Office Building  
To consider: [HB 419](#) Donatucci, Maria Amends Breast & Cervical Cancer Screening Act [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 [HR 465](#) Youngblood, Rosi Resolution re Diaper Need Awareness Week [HR 475](#) Cruz, Angel Resolution re Newborn Screening Awareness [HR 484](#) Rapp, Kathy Resolution re Medicare Education Week [SB 314](#) Baker, Lisa Act re PA Rural Health Redesign Center Auth.

### House Judiciary

September 24, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Room 60, East Wing  
To consider: [HB 165](#) Donatucci, Maria Amends Title 18 re no firearm purchase list

**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)

**House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.**

*September 24, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Room 205, Ryan Office Building*

To consider: [HB 432](#) Barrar, Stephen Amends Workers' Compensation Act re PTSI [HB 1448](#) Sturla, Mike Amends title 35 re loan program [HB 1459](#) Schlossberg, Mik Amends Titles 35 & 75 re emergency responders [HB 1816](#) Culver, Lynda Amends Title 35 re volunteer loan assistance

**Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs**

*September 24, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Room 8E-A, East Wing*

Public hearing on: [SB 798](#) Killion, Thomas Amends Dog Law re dangerous dogs

**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 - 1:30 p.m., Main Capitol Steps, Harrisburg*

Pennsylvanians United Against the Closures of the State Centers (unconfirmed)

**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



### **House Aging and Older Adult Services**

*September 25, 2019 - 9:30 a.m., Room 60, East Wing*

To consider: [HB 1061](#) Schroeder, Megha Amends Telemarketer Registration Act re calls

### **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)

### **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

### **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 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*

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) 772-2549

### **Press Conference**

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

Healthcare Workers Press Conference (unconfirmed)

### **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

### **State Board of Psychology**

October 7, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg

Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7155

### **Department of Human Services**

October 8, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Rachel Carson State Office Building, Room 105, 400 Market St., Harrisburg

Long-Term Services & Supports Subcommittee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 772-2549

### **Department of Health**

October 8, 2019 - 4:00 p.m., Montgomery-County Norristown Public Library, Community Room, 1001 Powell Street, Norristown

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

## **In the News**

- 09-19-2019 **[Study: Affordable Care Act dropped uninsured rates in Pa. to 6.5%](#)**  
A new report shows the number of uninsured people in Pennsylvania declined by more than 5 percentage points under the health care reform of the Affordable Care Act. Conducted by the Urban Institute, the research examined national uninsured rates from 2013 through 2017, using U.S. Census Bureau data.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[Medical marijuana 'POS' software crashes, preventing sales to sick patients in Pennsylvania](#)**  
Medical marijuana patients across the state couldn't buy medicines yesterday due to an update in a tracking software system that's supposed to track sales, not prevent them. The Pennsylvania Department of Health requires all marijuana transactions to be processed through a software system called MJ Freeway. The... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[Hospital stays for opioid overdoses are decreasing around Pa., but still high in Philadelphia](#)**  
Researchers said that it may be a sign that efforts to curb the tide of fatal overdoses — including distributing thousands of doses of the overdose-reversal drug naloxone — are working. Data on hospital admissions don't show the full picture of overdoses. PHC4's analysis did not include overdoses that were reversed in the... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[Montenegrin crewmate indicted in connection with that 20-ton, \\$1.1B cocaine bust at Philly port](#)**  
A nautical engineering trainee on Wednesday became the first crew member indicted in connection with the 20-ton, \$1.1 billion cocaine seizure this summer at the Port of Philadelphia. A federal grand jury has charged Nenad Ilic, 39, of Montenegro, with conspiring to violate maritime drug-smuggling laws — a count that... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[South Fayette man, four children run in honor of wife, mom who died from cancer](#)**  
Manson and Kristin Seto talked about running together as a family. They never got to take that first step. Kristin Seto died in 2014 from colon cancer. She wasn't well enough to jog with her husband and their four children. But the surviving South Fayette family won't let that dream fade.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)





- 09-19-2019 **[Westmoreland commissioners honor Red Sand project for human trafficking awareness](#)**  
Westmoreland County Commissioners this month honored supporters of the 2019 Red Sand project that brings attention to human trafficking issues. The Blackburn Center along with multiple organizations in Westmoreland throughout September have poured red sand into pavement cracks to symbolize... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[Central Pa. hospital cited for discussing private medical info in public area](#)**  
The Pennsylvania Department of Health has faulted UPMC Pinnacle West Shore Hospital in Cumberland County for discussing confidential medical information in a public waiting area. The health department said an inspector saw a patient being interviewed by hospital staff in the waiting room. "The patient's name, date of... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[St. Luke's racketeering claims over alleged tobacco settlement fund fraud dismissed](#)**  
A federal racketeering lawsuit filed by St. Luke's University Health Network alleging another Pennsylvania hospital gamed the state tobacco settlement fund for millions of dollars has been dismissed. The suit alleged Lancaster General Hospital, which is part of the... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[IronPigs raise more than \\$26K on "Strike Out Cancer Night" and other company news](#)**  
The Lehigh Valley IronPigs in conjunction with Air Products, the Lehigh Valley Health Network Cancer Institute and the Lehigh Valley Cancer Community raised \$26,100 while donating 450 IronPigs game tickets to those fighting cancer, or aiding the fight versus cancer, and their families for... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[Narcan giveaway draws many in the Lehigh Valley who want the overdose antidote on hand](#)**  
Emily Grohman has been startled by the sound of police officers knocking at her door. But before answering, she's tried to prepare herself for the worst news imaginable: that her daughter has died. Grohman, who lives in Macungie, said her daughter suffers from a heroin... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[Our view: Progress reported on Kanzius' work](#)**  
The late John Kanzius' idea for fighting cancer with radio waves fanned hope and generosity in this region. Imagine an Erie inventor coming up with a way to battle the disease that would be effective and spare patients the debilitating effects of other treatments.... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[DEP investigating Erie Coke air-quality results](#)**  
Benzene levels do not present "an immediate risk to the community," DEP says. Although the fight over environmental violations at the Erie Coke plant has been raging for years, little hard data has been available to support either side's arguments in the dispute.... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 09-19-2019 **[White Haven Center residents can stay until they find homes](#)**  
White Haven Center residents who can't find a home of their choosing and the support services they need will be able to stay in the center until they do, Department of Human Services Secretary Teresa Miller said Wednesday. The state has announced plans to close White Haven State Center, as well as... - [Hazleton Standard-Speaker](#)



- 09-19-2019 **Former Mineral Spring Hotel in Reading could become a veterans service center**  
The Mineral Spring Hotel, which has sat vacant since the city evicted the East End Athletic Club in 2017, may soon have new life. It may soon be home to a veterans service center that will also cater to homeless veterans, city officials announced Monday night.... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Q&A: DHS secretary talks White Haven Center plans**  
White Haven Center residents who can't find a home of their choosing and the support services they need will be able to stay in the center until they do, Department of Human Services Secretary Teresa Miller said Wednesday. The state has announced plans to close White Haven State Center, as well as... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 09-19-2019 **More mosquitoes with West Nile virus found in Springetts, York City**  
Mosquitoes in York City and Springettsbury Township have tested positive for West Nile virus for the third time this year, the York County Mosquito Surveillance Program announced Wednesday. The samples were collected Thursday, Sept. 12. This is the sixth round of samples in York County to test positive for the... - [York Dispatch](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Doctor: Get flu vaccine before season starts**  
DANVILLE — A family medicine physician with Geisinger Medical Center, in Danville, is recommending people get vaccinated for the flu now because it takes a few weeks for the body to build up antibodies and for the vaccine to start working. "And we've already seen some cases of flu," said Dr. Josh Hottenstein,... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 09-19-2019 **State hospital resident stabs another patient**  
MAHONING TWP. — A Danville State Hospital resident stabbed another patient with a pencil, police said. This was the second time he has been charged with assaulting another patient. State police charged Padro Hernandez, 33, with simple assault and harassment of Keith Cole Sept. 7.... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Recovery support specialist pleased with anti-opioid progress**  
For the past two-plus years, Shawn Johnson has been one of the main faces of recovery in Lawrence County. However, come Sept. 30, the recovery support specialist with Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol will be transitioning into a new role with Cray Youth & Family Services, where he will work with family reintegration.... - [New Castle News](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Three workers at Devereux arrested in connection with assault of special needs student**  
WEST WHITELAND — Three employees at the Devereux facility in West Whiteland Township were arrested in connection with the physical assault of a 16-year-old special needs student there. Andrene Bennett-Wint, 35, of Newark, Delaware, Tyrena Adams, 51, of Philadelphia, and Cecelia Gbor, 22, of Darby Borough, were charged with... - [Primos Delaware County Daily and Sunday Times](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Upper Darby officials distribute free Naloxone**  
UPPER DARBY — A steady flow of people came to the Upper Darby Township Building Wednesday to pick up a medicine they hope never to use but want to be prepared 'just in case'. Wednesday was the first of two days the PA State Department of Health is offering free doses of the overdose-reversal drug naloxone, or Narcan nasal... - [Primos Delaware County Daily and Sunday Times](#)



- 09-19-2019 **What Should Young Children Drink? Mostly Milk and Water, Scientists Say**  
A panel of scientists issued new nutritional guidelines for children on Wednesday, describing in detail what they should be allowed to drink in the first years of life. The recommendations, among the most comprehensive and restrictive to date, may startle some parents.... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Teenage Vaping Rises Sharply Again This Year**  
The rate of vaping among teenagers continued to rise sharply this year, federal health officials said, suggesting that campaigns to curb e-cigarette use among minors are not working. .It.s not good news at all,. said Dr. Nora Volkow, director of the National... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Sanders's apples-and-oranges comparison on Medicare-for-all costs**  
.Joe said that Medicare-for-all would cost over \$30 trillion. That.s right, Joe. Status quo over 10 years will be \$50 trillion.. . Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), remarks during the third Democratic presidential debate, Sept. 12, 2019 Sanders made this comment after former vice president Joe Biden criticized... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: Pete Buttigieg's health-care plan sounds like Sanders but looks like Biden**  
Pete Buttigieg is billing his new health-care proposal as a riff off Sen. Bernie Sanders.s Medicare-for-all plan. It.s called .Medicare-for-all-who-want-it.. But if you read the proposal out this morning, it.s actually a lot more about building on the Affordable Care Act . the approach preferred by the... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-19-2019 **WPSU Penn State launches resources to help combat opioid epidemic**  
In recognition of Pennsylvania's Opioid Disaster Declaration, WPSU Penn State has responded with a cross-platform media and outreach project called "Overcoming an Epidemic: Opioids in Pennsylvania." According to the Penn State website, the project was created to raise... - [Bradford Era](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Yoga, Zumba, Narcan: Check Out Your Local Library**  
SOMERSET, Ky. — It's a sweltering Wednesday morning in Somerset, Kentucky, but at 9 a.m., the Pulaski County Public Library is already bustling. From the community room, the hum of sewing machines echoes into the entryway, as the "pedal pushers" club stitch up their latest... - [Stateline.org](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Abortion pill 'reversals' debated in Ohio as Toledo clinic halts surgeries to end pregnancies**  
Despite critics' claims of junk science, the Republican-led Ohio Senate held its first hearing Wednesday on a bill that would require doctors who provide medication for an abortion to tell their patients that the procedure could be reversed. The proposal, under consideration by the Health, Human Services and... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Young female athletes with concussions take longer to recover, CHOP study finds**  
New research from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia suggests that young female athletes who suffer concussions have longer recovery times than their male peers, but not because of differences in strength or hormones as some experts have speculated. Rather, it's because girls tend to take longer to seek or get specialty... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 09-19-2019 **LVHN to acquire Coordinated Health**  
Lehigh Valley Health Network, the region's largest health care provider, will acquire Coordinated Health, a smaller system known for its orthopedic services. "Coordinated Health and LVHN share a strong passion for delivering high value healthcare and combining these two organizations is an opportunity to... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Pilot demolition projects measure lead in soil before and after**  
Lead found in soil throughout Allegheny County is a health concern, particularly in the development of young children, along with the hazards of lead in water and lead in peeling paint and dust. With new recommendations from the Lead-Safe Demolition Working Group, the... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Lead-safe group recommends demolition rules that would reduce health hazards**  
A model lead-safe demolition ordinance — with clear instructions to wet down a structure before and during demolition to control the spread of dust — was unveiled Thursday as part of the ongoing effort to dramatically reduce children's exposure to lead in the region.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-19-2019 **A good death for geese: Dangerous bacteria a cause for concern**  
Pennsylvania should consider expanding the length of hunting season for Canada geese. Their distinctive honk can make us smile. Their precision aerial "V" is a thing of wonder. But the ubiquitous droppings of our resident Canada geese can make us wish they'd just go back. So to speak.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Remembering loved ones lost during Suicide Awareness Month | Christine Flowers**  
I never met my great grandfather, although I've seen pictures of him. The one I treasure most is a family photo, similar to those images on an Ancestry.com commercial where he is sitting with his wife and older daughters. (The sons would arrive later.) He's wearing a hat and a solemn... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Vaping illness count tops 500, but cause still unknown**  
U.S. health officials say 530 people have now been diagnosed with vaping-related breathing illnesses, but the cause remains unknown... - [AP](#)
- 09-19-2019 **Pittsburgh hospitals are saying hello to professional greeters**  
When 28-year-old Ja-Ray Gamble began working at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital three years ago, he never expected to make such a positive impact on the lives of patients every day. He's not a doctor or a nurse. You won't find him checking your heartbeat or even taking your height and weight. But as a team lead in customer service,... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Advocates call for ERPOs as a tool to combat suicides**  
Lost during gun control conversations, advocates say, is consideration for the role of firearms in suicides. While the gun violence debate frequently centers around mass shootings and illegal gun crimes, roughly 200 activists who filled the Capitol rotunda steps on Tuesday said that more attention should be paid to the hundreds... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)
- 09-18-2019 **West Nile Virus case suspected in Pa.: officials**  
A probable case of West Nile Virus has been detected in a Philadelphia resident, according to Pennsylvania's Department of Health. Samples were taken from the resident and are being tested at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to confirm, according to a joint release... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)



- 09-18-2019 **Kanzius device owner discussing human trials with UPMC**  
NeoTherma Oncology might collaborate with UPMC on “first in human” trials for a new version of the late John Kanzius’ cancer-fighting machine. The Kansas-based company that owns the patent rights to the late John Kanzius’ cancer-fighting device might soon collaborate with UPMC on... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Prison medical contractor pays Erie County \$125,000**  
Pittsburgh-based Wexford Health Sources, Inc. agreed to pay the settlement to end questions about staffing at the prison. The Erie County Prison’s medical provider has agreed to pay \$125,000 to settle questions about staffing at the jail. The settlement comes after Erie County Controller Mary Schaaf threatened to... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Heroin hospitalizations down in Pa. but amphetamine cases rise**  
People being hospitalized because of heroin or opioid painkiller overdoses dropped by 24 percent between 2016 and 2018, according to new numbers from the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council. The figures include people admitted to the hospital — not the much... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 09-18-2019 **‘Blood money’? Purdue settlement would rely on opioid sales and critics are fuming**  
The tentative multibillion-dollar settlement with OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma would raise money to help clean up the opioid mess by ... selling more OxyContin... - [AP](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Opioid overdose hospitalizations decline in Lackawanna County, new study finds**  
Opioid overdose hospitalizations in Lackawanna County dropped 50% from 2016 to 2018, a report released today shows. The decline was less in Luzerne County, but still a notable 8%, according to a research brief by the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-18-2019 **DEP: First statewide PFAS testing results due within weeks**  
Officials say they have found one water supply with chemical levels above an EPA advisory limit, but are waiting for confirmation testing before the public is notified. Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection officials said at a meeting in Harrisburg on Tuesday morning that they expect to release the... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Moms group renews push for red flag gun bills**  
HARRISBURG — Enacting a red-flag law to make it easier to get firearms out of the hands of dangerous individuals would save lives, including the lives of some of the hundreds of Pennsylvanians who commit suicide with a firearm each year, advocates said Tuesday.... - [Meadville Tribune](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Coalition pushes forward against epidemic**  
The Wyoming County Hope Coalition had a full house at its September meeting as members moved forward with plans to address the opioid epidemic. On Thursday, (Sept. 12) coalition leader Michael Donahue brought up a series of thousands of lawsuits against Purdue Pharma, the maker of... - [Tunkhannock The New Age Examiner](#)



- 09-18-2019 **East Stroudsburg's Hospice House receives regulatory approvals necessary to reopen**  
EAST STROUDSBURG — The Monroe County Hospice House announced that it is officially open and accepting end of life patients in need of intensive care on Tuesday. The East Stroudsburg facility, located on University Ridge Drive, celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony in June, though... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Agreement will lower county cost of insurance**  
MIFFLINTOWN — Juniata County has entered into an intergovernmental program to reduce insurance costs associated with providing behavioral health services to local residents. During Tuesday's regular business meeting, the Juniata County Commissioners adopted an ordinance authorizing a single primary contractor... - [Lewistown Sentinel](#)
- 09-18-2019 **State to distribute free naloxone at 95 locations on Wednesday**  
Overdose antidote naloxone will be available at 87 locations across Pennsylvania — including four in the Valley — on Wednesday and again Sept. 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](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Opioid overdose admissions decline more slowly in Luzerne County than statewide**  
If Luzerne County is gaining ground in the opioid epidemic, it's at a slow pace. A new report on hospital admissions for opioid overdoses shows the county rate has dipped slightly, but decrease is much smaller than a nearly 24% statewide decline. The Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council released a report... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Pennsylvanians can pick up free naloxone**  
HARRISBURG — As part of the commonwealth's second Stop Overdoses in PA: Get Help Now Week, Gov. Tom Wolf on Monday reminded all Pennsylvanians that the life-saving, overdose-reversal medication naloxone will be available free at more than 95 locations across the state today and Sept.... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Former Mineral Spring Hotel in Reading could become a veterans service center**  
The Mineral Spring Hotel, which has sat vacant since the city evicted the East End Athletic Club in 2017, may soon have new life. It may soon be home to a veterans service center that will also cater to homeless veterans, city officials announced Monday night.... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 09-18-2019 **\$25,000 grant focuses on public health, food**  
BEAVER — A program designed to get Beaver County residents more focused on public health received some resources recently. Penn State Extension in Beaver County received a \$25,000 grant from the Penn State University College of Agriculture to help fund its Well-Connected Communities program. One of just 35 programs in the nation,... - [Beaver County Times](#)
- 09-18-2019 **State kicks off 'Get Help Now Week' to stop overdoses in PA**  
WILKES-BARRE — Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine on Monday said, "it is impossible to get someone into treatment who is dead." Levine joined the effort "Opioids: The Fight Continues" as part of Stop Overdoses in PA: Get Help Now Week — a statewide initiative to get... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)





- 09-18-2019 **[Lancaster County's high air pollution could make it into moms' placentas, study says](#)**  
WASHINGTON (AP) — A new study suggests when a pregnant woman breathes in air pollution, it can travel beyond her lungs to the placenta that guards her fetus... - [AP](#)
- 09-18-2019 **[Can you use medical marijuana while on probation and parole in Lancaster County? Yes, so far](#)**  
Lancaster County isn't looking to follow its neighbor's lead in banning medical marijuana for people on probation and parole. Lebanon County adopted a ban on Sept. 1. Jefferson, Lycoming and Potter counties also have such bans. They're based on federal law prohibiting... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 09-18-2019 **[New Pennsylvania attempt at Medicaid work requirement follows 2 vetoes](#)**  
A Lancaster County state senator is taking a leading role in a third consecutive attempt to establish work requirements for some Medicaid enrollees, despite Gov. Wolf having vetoed previous bills in 2017 and 2018. Sen. Scott Martin, R-Martic Township, is one of two senators introducing... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 09-18-2019 **[Almost Everywhere, Fewer Children Are Dying](#)**  
The map shows estimates of the under-5 mortality rate . the probability that a child born in a given year dies before reaching age 5 given current age-specific mortality rates. Two decades ago, nearly 10 million children did not live to see a 5th birthday. By 2017, that number . about 1 in every 16 children . was nearly cut in... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-18-2019 **[America's Abortion Rate Has Dropped to Its Lowest Ever](#)**  
Abortion in the United States has decreased to record low levels, a decline that may be driven more by increased access to contraception and fewer women becoming pregnant than by the proliferation of laws restricting abortion in some states, according to new research.... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-18-2019 **[Tennessee becomes first state with a plan to turn Medicaid into a block grant](#)**  
Tennessee unveiled a plan on Tuesday to convert Medicaid into a block grant . an idea long supported by conservatives that would rupture the federal government.s half-century-old compact with states for safety-net insurance for the poor. Tennessee is setting up the nation.s first test case of how far the Trump... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-18-2019 **[The U.S. abortion rate has fallen to lowest levels since Roe v. Wade -- but state restrictions are not main driver](#)**  
A new Guttmacher Institute report released on Wednesday outlines dramatic changes in the abortion landscape between 2011 and 2017. The U.S. abortion rate hit an all-time low . again. An unprecedented wave of 400 bills imposing restrictions on the procedure were passed by states. And medical... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-18-2019 **[Can justice be found in the rubble of Purdue Pharma?](#)**  
What is the main purpose of the multiple lawsuits seeking to hold the pharmaceutical industry liable for the epidemic of opioid addiction and death that has swept the country over the past two decades? By filing for bankruptcy and offering to distribute billions of dollars among... - [Washington Post](#)



- 09-18-2019 **Biden and Sanders take fight over health care to union workers**  
Former vice president Joe Biden and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) clashed sharply over health care in separate appearances before union members on Tuesday, intensifying one of the central policy disputes in the Democratic presidential race. Speaking at a forum hosted by the Philadelphia Council of the AFL-CIO,... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Maternal Mortality Rates For Black Women In Pittsburgh Higher Than In Most Other U.S. Cities**  
Black women in Pittsburgh are more likely to die during pregnancy than their peers in 97 percent of U.S. cities, according to a sweeping new report from the city's Gender Equity Commission. There's also significant inequity when it comes to employment, poverty and college readiness for... - [WESA 90.5](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Ohio went around drugmaker restrictions on executions despite warnings**  
State officials went ahead with executions in recent years even after manufacturers threatened to cut off the supply of their drugs to millions of Ohioans who rely on the state for needed medications, records obtained by The Dispatch show. Going back to at least 2015, drugmakers warned Ohio officials not to use... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Opioid overdose deaths in Maryland drop for first half of the year**  
Maryland's opioid-related deaths dropped during the first half of the year, including those linked to fentanyl, according to new state figures that show a bit of relief from the overdose crisis that is still claiming close to 200 lives a month in the state. There were 1,182 total drug and alcohol-related deaths from January through... - [Baltimore Sun](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Americans continue to be ignorant or indifferent about the cancer-preventing HPV vaccine**  
Thirteen years after the HPV vaccine was hailed as a revolution in cancer prevention, most Americans still don't know the virus causes oral and genital cancers, and most doctors still aren't recommending the vaccine to patients, according to a new study in JAMA Pediatrics.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Appellate court revives whistleblower lawsuit against UPMC, neurosurgeons**  
A whistleblower lawsuit that was filed against UPMC over bonuses for its neurosurgeons has been revived after a federal appeals court on Tuesday reversed a lower court ruling that dismissed the claims. The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a ruling last year by U.S.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Pa. hospitals seeing shift in opioid ODs**  
Fewer Pennsylvanians were hospitalized for opioid overdoses last year than in 2017, according to data released Wednesday, which supports other indications that the public manifestations of the epidemic are on the wane. Officials this week have been quick to add that even as the state's drug... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-18-2019 **New urgent care center opens just off central Pa. interstate**  
A WellSpan Health urgent care center opened this week just off Interstate 83 in York County. The center, open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day including weekends, is at 2149 Queen Street in York at the site of a former diner. In conjunction with the opening, WellSpan closed its nearby WellSpan Care Express.... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)





- 09-18-2019 **Medical marijuana 'POS' software crashes, preventing sales to sick patients in Pennsylvania**  
Medical marijuana patients across the state couldn't buy medicines yesterday due to an update in a tracking software system that's supposed to track sales, not prevent them. The Pennsylvania Department of Health requires all marijuana transactions to be processed through a software system called MJ Freeway. The... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Hospital stays for opioid overdoses are decreasing around Pa., but still high in Philadelphia**  
Researchers said that it may be a sign that efforts to curb the tide of fatal overdoses . including distributing thousands of doses of the overdose-reversal drug naloxone . are working. Data on hospital admissions don't show the full picture of overdoses. PHC4.s analysis did not include overdoses that were reversed in the field... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-18-2019 **PWSA replaces 855 lead lines ahead of schedule in 2019**  
The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority hit its state-enforced requirement for lead line replace 10 months ahead of schedule this year, the agency said Wednesday. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection required that 7% - or 855 . lead service lines in Pittsburgh be replaced between this past... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Rural Pennsylvania's 'exercise deserts' contribute to obesity**  
In one vision of rural America, residents are hiking rocky trails all day or horsing barrels of hay around sun-drenched fields, sweating and staying in shape via nature, the world's biggest gym. But Donna Iannone, who lives in Sullivan County 150 miles north of... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Jefferson group bows out of bidding for St. Christopher's Hospital for Children**  
The Jefferson Health consortium of nonprofits decided not to submit a bid for St. Christopher's Hospital for Children by the deadline for Thursday's bankruptcy auction for the North Philadelphia facility. Two other bids were submitted, though it was not yet clear if the scheduled... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Hospital admissions for opioid overdoses decline in Pennsylvania**  
A significant decrease in hospital admissions for opioid overdoses across Pennsylvania may have more to do with evolving treatment and the widespread availability of a lifesaving antidote than any major drop in drug abuse, experts said following the release of a report on overdose... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-18-2019 **Study: Affordable Care Act dropped uninsured rates in Pa. to 6.5%**  
A new report shows the number of uninsured people in Pennsylvania declined by more than 5 percentage points under the health care reform of the Affordable Care Act. Conducted by the Urban Institute, the research examined national uninsured rates from 2013 through 2017, using U.S. Census Bureau data.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Rep. Dan Frankel holds hearing on gun violence as a public health issue**  
In the year that has followed the Tree of Life massacre, which left 11 people dead and several others injured, Democratic lawmakers inside and outside of city limits have sought gun control with varying degrees of success. Hoping to understand the causes and the impact it has on the... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)



- 09-17-2019 **5 bills to watch for the week of September 16**  
We get it, session weeks are busy. That's why we put together a list of the bills being discussed in committee and on the floor of the General Assembly that are worth devoting your precious time to tracking. From manufacturing tax credits to volunteer fire departments, here are five... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Measles infects York County doctor who encourages vaccination**  
Despite being previously vaccinated against the contagious illness, a WellSpan Health doctor has become infected with measles, making her the second person to contract the virus in York County in the past few weeks. Jennifer McCabe, a family medicine physician with WellSpan, announced that... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Pa. to help dependent prescription opioid patients avoid black market**  
A week after Gov. Tom Wolf renewed his opioid disaster declaration for the seventh time since 2018, Secretary of Health Rachel Levine spoke about the successes against the ongoing crisis and a program that will assist dependent patients cut off by their doctors.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Editorial: Companies play games with bankruptcy**  
Bankruptcy isn't supposed to be child's play, but too often companies big and small use it as a way to cheat at tag. Remember when you were a kid and someone wouldn't play the game so much as game the rules? They would taunt "come and get me!" as they hugged close to base, ready to reach out and claim freedom whenever anyone... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Stony Brook doctor comes forward as the second measles case in York County**  
A WellSpan Stony Brook Health Center physician has come forward as the second measles case in York County. In a three-minute recording released by WellSpan Health on Monday, Dr. Jennifer McCabe confirmed she has the measles, despite the fact that she was vaccinated twice and was presumed immune as recently as last week.... - [York Dispatch](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Insurers face hurdles serving medical marijuana clients**  
California was burning in December 2017. The Thomas fire turned 280,000 acres of the Golden State brown near Santa Barbara and caused some \$2 billion in damages. Tons of ash spirited upwards by the flames eventually floated back down to earth blanketing everything from cars to crops and even finding its way... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 09-17-2019 **State to distribute naloxone for free at two local sites**  
As part of the state's response to the opioid crisis the overdose reversal drug naloxone will be distributed for free at two area locations this month, the first being this week. The Wilkes-Barre City Health Department at 71 N. Franklin St. and the State Health Center at 142 Mundy St. in Wilkes-Barre Township will have... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Select Specialty Hospital of York moving to UPMC Memorial**  
Select Specialty Hospital in York will soon be moving to its new, permanent location within UPMC Memorial Hospital. Select Specialty Hospital will transfer all patients from its current space in WellSpan York Hospital on Tuesday, Sept. 24. The transfer to UPMC Memorial, at 1701 Innovation Drive, will begin at 9... - [York Dispatch](#)



- 09-17-2019 **Health authority warns about silent killer sepsis**  
EAST NORRITON — You may have heard of sepsis, but do you really know what it is? A lot of people don't have any idea that sepsis is a silent killer that is often overlooked simply because of a lack of awareness, according to the Pennsylvania Patient Safety Authority, which has designated September as... - [Pottstown Mercury](#)
- 09-17-2019 **New Life Flight blood transfusions saving lives**  
SELINSGROVE — Geisinger Life Flight crews have completed more than 30 blood transfusions since they began carrying a cooler containing life-saving plasma on each emergency call this year. The addition of blood being onboard all air ambulances from Life Flight's... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Geisinger president visits woman on 100th birthday**  
MAHONING TWP. — Josephine "Josie" Baylor celebrated her 100th birthday Monday afternoon surrounded by 60-plus people and some surprise guests at Emmanuel Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation. Geisinger CEO and President Dr. Jaewon Ryu stopped by along with Geisinger... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Pocono health centers to provide free naloxone Wednesday**  
STROUDSBURG — When it comes to opioid overdoses, every second is crucial. As part of the state's second annual Stop Overdoses in PA: Get Help Now Week, Governor Tom Wolf announced that the medication naloxone would be available free of charge at more than 95 locations across the state on... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Local group looks to make a difference in the lives of those in recovery**  
SHAMOKIN — The Oasis Community Recovery Club, a local organization that supports individuals in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction, is holding a Recovery Awareness Walk and Fun Run this Sunday. - [Shamokin News-Item](#)
- 09-17-2019 **After serving country, Help for Raymond supporting veteran in time of need**  
WINDHAM TOWNSHIP — The community is stepping up for a local Korean War veteran whose home had fallen into such disrepair that when Pennsylvania State Constable Jim Canning recently arrived to serve a tax notice, he thought the home had been abandoned — until he saw a light on inside.... - [Towanda Daily Review](#)
- 09-17-2019 **California to Target Counterfeit Vaping Products**  
Gov. Gavin Newsom of California announced on Monday that the state will ramp up its efforts to regulate electronic cigarettes . known as e-cigarettes or vapes . with new health-warning standards, a \$20 million campaign to raise awareness about the products. harmful health effects, and... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-17-2019 **'Fly-by-night' companies invite disaster by spiking vapes with illegal drugs**  
Jay Jenkins says he hesitated when a buddy suggested they vape CBD... - [AP](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Ohio's pharmacy benefit managers back in spotlight of Medicaid-oversight panel**  
The legislative committee that oversees Ohio's \$28 billion Medicaid program will meet Thursday for the first time this year, and legislators want to know whether the state has made progress in addressing long-standing concerns about pharmacy middlemen profiting off prescription... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)



- 09-17-2019 **Ohio medical marijuana too pricey, inconvenient, say users in survey**  
Ohio's medical marijuana cardholders find medicinal cannabis pricey and inconvenient to obtain, according to a survey conducted by Ohio State University's Drug Enforcement Policy Center and the nonprofit advocacy group Harm Reduction Ohio. Patients said cost is the largest barrier to buying medical marijuana,... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: Congress is probing secretive groups opposing medical billing reforms**  
Dark-money groups have been going after Congress for trying to free Americans from burdensome surprise medical bills. Now Congress is going after them. In an investigation launched yesterday, leaders of the House Energy and Commerce Committee are demanding answers from three private equity firms... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-17-2019 **UPMC to receive state grant to study Ewing sarcoma**  
Two state legislators representing Washington County communities have landed a \$100,000 state grant for UPMC to do genetic research on patients with Ewing sarcoma and their family members throughout Western Pennsylvania. But the study won't focus on whether pollution can cause the rare... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-17-2019 **UPMC to appeal zoning permit revocation in Jefferson Hills**  
UPMC will appeal a Jefferson Hills Borough Zoning Hearing Board vote Monday to revoke a zoning permit necessary to build a 63-bed hospital on Elliott Road at Route 51. In a statement Tuesday, UPMC spokeswoman Gloria Kreps said the hospital system giant looked "forward to a positive outcome as we continue to... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Philadelphia, Camden groups win grants to fight maternal mortality**  
Mary-Ann Etiebet is originally from Nigeria, a poor African country where a woman dies every 13 minutes — 109 each day — from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. But it was in Brooklyn, not Nigeria, that Etiebet got first-hand experience when her husband's sister-in-law died giving birth about 30 years ago.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Federal judge stays Hahnemann residency sale; St. Chris auction pushed to Thursday**  
A U.S. District Court judge in Wilmington on Monday temporarily blocked the bankruptcy sale of Hahnemann University Hospital's residency programs pending an appeal by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). There was no indication how long that might take.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Advocates call for ERPOs as a tool to combat suicides**  
Lost during gun control conversations, advocates say, is consideration for the role of firearms in suicides. While the gun violence debate frequently centers around mass shootings and illegal gun crimes, roughly 200 activists who filled the Capitol rotunda steps on Tuesday said that more attention should be paid to the hundreds... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)
- 09-17-2019 **Calls for a red flag gun law in Pa.: 'This isn't a gun issue. This is a public health issue.'**  
Advocates calling for a red flag gun law that aims to prevent a person experiencing a crisis from having access to firearms used statistics and personal stories to make their case at a Capitol Rotunda rally on Tuesday. About a thousand suicides by gun happen in Pennsylvania every year, said... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)



- 09-17-2019 **West Nile Virus case suspected in Pa.: officials**  
A probable case of West Nile Virus has been detected in a Philadelphia resident, according to Pennsylvania's Department of Health. Samples were taken from the resident and are being tested at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to confirm, according to a joint release... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 09-17-2019 **The Home Depot to stop selling carpet containing toxic PFAS chemicals**  
Consumers looking to reduce their exposure to toxic chemicals will be getting some help from The Home Depot, which announced today that it would stop selling carpets and rugs containing PFAS. The per- and poly-fluorinated chemicals are have widely been used in... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Prevention is key: Mandated testing for lead poisoning is not enough**  
Proposal and initiatives must aim to cut down lead exposure One year in on a countywide initiative to test children for lead exposure, we've learned that more kids than we may have imagined presented elevated levels of the poison, which has irreversible and lifelong impacts.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Purdue Pharma Files for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy**  
Purdue Pharma, maker of OxyContin, the drug widely seen as igniting the opioid crisis, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on Sunday night, a move at the center of the company's efforts to shield itself and its owners from more than 2,600 federal and state lawsuits.... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-16-2019 **'Keep venturing into the light': Recovery rally in Uniontown offers hope and connections**  
The Rev. Terry Sanders was surrounded by both dark and light, but he urged those assembled before him to embrace only the latter. Night had fallen on the nearly four-hour recovery rally that he and his wife and fellow Reverend Rhonda Sanders emceed at Storey Square Saturday,... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 09-16-2019 **About 1,000 people walk to raise awareness for suicide prevention**  
WILKES-BARRE — Love of life filled the air on a sunny Sunday for the Greater Northeast PA Out of the Darkness Community Walk to raise awareness for suicide prevention. About 1,000 people participated in the walk from Kirby Park to downtown Wilkes-Barre and back, according to Samantha Benz, area director for the... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Pharmacists urge support for bills to increase pricing transparency**  
Independent pharmacists are urging residents to press state legislators to support several bills that would result in more oversight of companies that administer prescription drug plans for the state Medicaid program. The firms, known as pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, operate in virtual... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Berks County school officials, families split on later start to school days**  
The buzzing of her alarm is not a welcome sound most mornings for Amaya Shah. Shah, a 16-year-old Wilson High School junior, dreads dragging herself out of bed in the early morning, still exhausted from a too-short night of rest. She'll sometimes catch a quick nap on the bus ride to school,... - [Reading Eagle](#)



- 09-16-2019 **Need hand surgery? Allentown doctors offering free operations to veterans and uninsured**  
Sometimes you settle with the pain. Without insurance, that's how Tina Alotta copes with her arthritis and hand pain. On bad days, she has to use a small towel to dry off after a shower because it hurts too much to grip a large one. And on those days, she can't... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Pa. officials offer steps for emergency or disaster**  
As National Preparedness Month continues, Pennsylvania Department of Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine encourages Pennsylvanians to take the proper steps needed to protect their health in case large-scale emergency or disaster occurs. "In the event of a natural disaster, an extended power outage or a flu... - [Latrobe Bulletin](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Learning session will focus on veterans facing drug addiction**  
Veterans, like all other segments of society, face issues with drug addiction, but also possess their own special challenges when addressing the problem. So, on Sept. 24, Veteran Community Initiatives, Cambria County Drug Coalition and Pennsylvania Department of Education plan to hold the... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Editorial: Vaping comes with serious risk for teens**  
No one has to remind Geri Sullivan of the dangers of vaping and e-cigarettes. She sees it every time she looks at her 17-year-old son, Eddie. The strapping former offensive lineman for Monsignor Bonner spent two weeks in the hospital this summer suffering from lung ailments linked to the... - [Pottstown Mercury](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Plans for Norristown Wellness Center hit a rough patch**  
NORRISTOWN — With a GoFundMe platform growing every day and the energy and wholehearted commitment of Gangster Vegan Organics founder Vince DePaul behind it, the future seemed bright for Norristown Wellness Center. Norristown native DePaul had followed his dreams back to Norristown from... - [Norristown Times Herald](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Experts talk mental health, addiction**  
Juniata College hosted the James E. Van Zandt Mental Health Summit Friday, which focused its discussions around the topics of the suicide and the opioid crisis. A panel of experts comprised of officials from the James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center in Altoona, as well as local officials, spoke on the topic... - [Huntingdon Daily News](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Uniontown fire department receives FEMA grant to reduce cancer risks**  
Uniontown City Fire Department secured a \$100,000 federal grant for a diesel exhaust system to reduce firefighters' risk of cancer, said Chief Dane "Buck" Griffith. "This will just assist us tremendously in our efforts to combat cancer," he said. The grant was provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 09-16-2019 **New York moves to enact statewide flavored e-cig ban**  
NEW YORK — New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo is pushing to enact a statewide ban on the sale of flavored e-cigarettes amid growing health concerns connected to vaping, especially among young people... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Editorial: Health crisis linked to vaping demands public's attention**  
The Issue: There's an alarming number of serious lung illnesses being attributed to use of e-cigarettes. Our Opinion: The Trump administration is right to discourage use of these products, especially by children. No one has to remind Geri Sullivan of the dangers of vaping and... - [Reading Eagle](#)





- 09-16-2019 **[New York Moves to Ban Flavored E-Cigarettes by Emergency Order](#)**  
Amid a surge of vaping-related illnesses and deaths, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York announced on Sunday that he would pursue emergency regulations this week to quickly ban the sale of flavored e-cigarettes. The governor's action comes days after President Trump announced an effort... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-16-2019 **[Cannabis conference looks to level the field for medical marijuana in Philadelphia](#)**  
PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — A conference to promote equity in the emerging cannabis industry is getting support of from both city and state officials. State Sen. Sharif Street says medical marijuana is creating once-in-a-generation opportunities and he wants to make sure everyone in... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 09-16-2019 **[Fed up with rampant overdoses, Kensington residents try Narcan bike patrols](#)**  
PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — Many efforts are underway to address the opioid epidemic in Kensington but perhaps the most unusual is a resident-led mission called "Operation Save a Life." Moe Morrisette glides by a hand-painted wooden sign that seems ironic:... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 09-16-2019 **['Gravely Disabled' Homeless Forced Into Mental Health Care in More States](#)**  
This article originally appeared on Stateline, an initiative of the Pew Charitable Trusts. 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,... - [Route Fifty](#)
- 09-16-2019 **[Dreaming Big for a Risky Hemp Crop](#)**  
ORLINDA, Tenn. — Standing between two rows of thigh-high hemp crops close to the Tennessee-Kentucky border, the retired owner of a New Hampshire convenience store cheerfully recalled why he chose to grow his first hemp crop this year. Barry Paterno, 67, is a gardener, not a farmer — he likes to grow... - [Stateline.org](#)
- 09-16-2019 **[What's in fracking chemicals? Energy nonprofit demands answers](#)**  
Ohioans could be exposed to dangerous chemicals that state laws don't require drilling and fracking companies using them to disclose, according to a report issued by a nonprofit organization. "Ohio and 28 other states have enacted rules that require some public... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-16-2019 **[A physician-writer on stories and conversation as essential medicine for patients at the end of life](#)**  
In her memoir *That Good Night: Life and Medicine in the Eleventh Hour*, Sunita Puri takes us along on her journey as a first-generation American to becoming a physician, and then choosing to specialize in palliative care. She writes about the rewards she finds in caring for seriously ill... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-16-2019 **[Why do people die young here? Project aims to send 'citizen scientists' out to investigate](#)**  
The cost of being poor can include decades of life. A just-launched partnership between a Homewood-based community group and a University of Pittsburgh research team intends to explore that grim price tag, and to create a corps of "citizen scientists" who could lead the charge to... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)





- 09-16-2019 **State committee expected to find many more maternal mortality cases**  
In the state's first-ever attempt at documenting exactly how many women in Pennsylvania have died from pregnancy-related causes, it already has identified significantly more potential cases than the less rigorous process the state has used for decades, said a member of the state's... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Measles infects York County doctor who encourages vaccination**  
Despite being previously vaccinated against the contagious illness, a WellSpan Health doctor has become infected with measles, making her the second person to contract the virus in York County in the past few weeks. Jennifer McCabe, a family medicine physician with WellSpan, announced that... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Vaping debate should look at how, not just what, people vape | Opinion**  
On Sept. 12, 2019, the CDC lowered the number of confirmed and probable cases from more than 400 to 380. The number was lower, the agency said, because it is no longer reporting possible cases. The mystery and concern remain. And, many smokers who use these devices to... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Auction for St. Chris children's hospital morphs into a battle for Philly health-care market**  
St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, a vital health-care outpost for North Philadelphia's poor, is turning into a battleground as the region's health-care titans prepare to fight each other for the ownership of one of Philadelphia's two children's hospitals.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-16-2019 **On a Chester County farm, these horses help people heal. Soon, they'll need a permanent home.**  
Before she walked into the paddock, J. Gail LoCicero felt lost. She had just been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress and dissociative identity disorder. She struggled, she said, to let people get close to her, to get to know her. Looking back, she said, she didn't feel that she knew... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Regulating e-cigarettes requires a scalpel, not a hammer | Editorial**  
The U.S. is in the middle of a vaping epidemic - an epidemic of panic. Over the past few weeks, there have been reports of a mysterious vaping-related lung disease that impaired - and at least six times killed - otherwise young healthy people. In response, on Wednesday, President Donald Trump... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Lemieux history with Afib leads to \$1 million donation to AHN**  
When hockey fans remember the health problems that plagued Mario Lemieux's Hall of Fame Pittsburgh Penguins career, they usually recall his severe back problems and his battle and ultimate triumph over Hodgkin's lymphoma. But people forget that he retired because of Afib. Tom Grealish,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-16-2019 **Free naloxone kits will be handed out in Pittsburgh on Sept. 18 and 25**  
Free naloxone kits will be distributed Sept. 18 and 25 at 95 locations throughout Pennsylvania as part of Stop Overdoses in PA: Get Help Now Week. Naloxone is considered a safe and effective antidote to opioid overdoses. In Pennsylvania, a standing order signed by Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-16-2019 **No new measles cases reported in fading U.S. outbreak**  
The nation's worst measles epidemic in 27 years could be in its final stages as a week went by with no new reported cases... - [AP](#)



- 09-16-2019 **Pa. to help dependent prescription opioid patients avoid black market**  
A week after Gov. Tom Wolf renewed his opioid disaster declaration for the seventh time since 2018, Secretary of Health Rachel Levine spoke about the successes against the ongoing crisis and a program that will assist dependent patients cut off by their doctors.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-16-2019 **\$2M in grants from Lemieux Foundation, Highmark for AFib research**  
The Mario Lemieux Foundation delivered a \$1 million grant Monday to the Allegheny Health Network that will be used along with \$1 million in matching funds from Highmark Health for research and therapies into heart rhythm disorders. Dr. Amit Thosani, director of AHN.s Cardiac Electrophysiology Department,... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-15-2019 **NY finds \$1B in hidden transfers by family behind OxyContin**  
The family that owns OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma used Swiss and other hidden accounts to transfer \$1 billion to themselves, New York.s attorney general contends in court papers filed Friday... - [AP](#)
- 09-15-2019 **People must accept responsibility for the medications they choose to take**  
When did we become so weak as a society that we have to blame anyone but ourselves for our actions? Pharmacies and pharmaceutical companies exist to provide needed medications. Physicians prescribe medications based on their diagnoses. Patients are expected to follow recommendations and to be honest about... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Prevention is key: Mandated testing for lead poisoning is not enough**  
One year in on a countywide initiative to test children for lead exposure, we.ve learned that more kids than we may have imagined presented elevated levels of the poison, which has irreversible and lifelong impacts. The incidence rate of lead exposure among children in Allegheny County took... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Snooze for heart health**  
If you were looking for scientifically backed justification for dozing off on the couch some Swiss researchers have got you covered. It turns out that daytime napping is linked to improved heart health. Researchers from the University Hospital of Lausanne, Switzerland, have... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Social justice is the foundation of healthcare - and medical education | Opinion**  
Dr. Stanley Goldfarb, our medical school colleague at the University of Pennsylvania, published an essay in the Wall Street Journal entitled, .Take two aspirin and call me by my pronouns.. Dr. Goldfarb argued for a return to .the traditional American model of medical training. . one that he... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-15-2019 **'UVA has ruined us': Health system sues thousands of patients, seizing paychecks and claiming homes**  
Heather Waldron and John Hawley are losing their four-bedroom house in the hills above Blacksburg, Va. A teenage daughter, one of their five children, sold her clothes for spending money. They worried about paying the electric bill. Financial disaster, they say, contributed to their divorce, finalized... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 09-15-2019 **Drug company attorneys seek to disqualify federal judge**  
Attorneys representing eight drug distributors, pharmacies and retailers facing trial next month for their roles in the national opioid crisis filed a motion late Friday seeking to disqualify the federal judge overseeing their cases saying he has shown clear bias in his effort to obtain a... - [AP](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Treat gun violence as a 'public health epidemic,' state lawmakers are told**  
Hundreds of times Dr. Raquel Forsythe has had to tell families their loved one has died from a bullet-wound trauma that surgeons just couldn't repair. The UPMC director of trauma takes a moment to steel herself first, even though she's done it before and she'll do it again. She checks to see if... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Prescribe transparency**  
It is established law in Pennsylvania that companies conducting public business are subject to the same transparency standards as the government for which they work. Pennsylvania's Supreme Court found in 2012 that governments cannot escape their disclosure obligation by contracting work to private companies. The... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Shapiro right in opioid case**  
Just a day after the announcement of a massive tentative settlement between opioid manufacturer Purdue Pharma and as many as 2,000 governments that had filed suit against it, Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro filed a new lawsuit against the company's founders and owners.... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Some local nursing homes low on federal agency's ratings**  
Michael Miller cared for his mother at his Taylor home for three years before a doctor determined she required help he could not regularly provide. That led to Sarah Miller's admission to Riverside Rehabilitation & Nursing Center in May 2012. In about a two-week span in 2013, the 91-year-old fell twice at Riverside.... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Nursing home citations detail injuries and other incidents**  
The snap was undeniable. "Ouch, my arm," 85-year-old Joanna Perry exclaimed to the two Lackawanna Health and Rehab Center workers changing her clothing. The employees stared silently at each other, then left Perry, who suffered from dementia, overnight in her room with an untreated broken arm.... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Strengthening Families program builds life skills, tightens bonds**  
The pressures that accompany early adolescence can be difficult for children and parents to navigate. While the transition of growing from a child to a teenager is an exciting time, it can also be stressful for youths and their families as they face peer pressure while learning to become independent.... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 09-15-2019 **States split by party on accepting settlement with OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma**  
The opioid crisis has hit virtually every pocket of the U.S., from rural towns in deeply conservative states to big cities in liberal-leaning ones... - [AP](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Hold the fries: 1 in 3 Americans is obese, study says**  
About one in three Americans, or more than 100 million people, are obese, according to a report released this week. The report from Trust for America's Health, a nonprofit public health policy, says 30.9 percent of people fit into the National Institutes of Health's definition of obesity.... - [Easton Express-Times](#)



- 09-15-2019 **Research, questions key in choosing a nursing home**  
If the time comes to place a loved one in a nursing home, conducting research and asking questions are key to making the best choice, experts agree. While the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services provides a rating system in a searchable database on its Nursing Home Compare website, the... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Bartoli makes case for community system**  
Frank Bartoli, executive director at NEPA Inclusive, has worked for years to create and support inclusive and sustainable lives for people with disabilities. Bartoli said the White Haven State Center is an institution and no matter how you craft the language around it, it is a large congregate setting... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 09-15-2019 **State health official warns of possible measles exposure, second case confirmed in central Pa.**  
A second person with a suspected case of the measles has been confirmed in York County, according to the Pennsylvania Secretary of Health. The state health department Saturday released a list of new locations, dates and times when individuals may have been exposed to the highly... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Your View: Pennsylvania leads nation in Lyme disease. Now it can help victims who need long-term antibiotics.**  
Pennsylvania HB629 was introduced by Rep. Kathy Rapp in January and overwhelmingly passed the House in April. This legislation would ensure health insurance covers diagnostics and treatment for Lyme and related tick-borne diseases as prescribed by a health care provider, regardless of... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Ex-Baltimore health commissioner Leana Wen, Planned Parenthood spar over benefits, confidentiality clause**  
Former Baltimore health commissioner Dr. Leana Wen on Saturday said Planned Parenthood is withholding severance pay and health benefits owed to her under her contract in an effort to get her to sign a burdensome confidentiality agreement on her way out the door, after less than a year... - [Baltimore Sun](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Across the nation, hundreds of thousands of kids are going to school unvaccinated**  
As measles cases rise, more vaccine exemptions are being demanded by parents concerned about government control or worried about the now-debunked link between immunization and autism. This year's back-to-school season coincides with the worst measles resurgence that the nation has seen since the disease was declared... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Outlawing vape sales will just lead to more risks with black-market products | Mulshine**  
When I take my dog for walks in the park I sometimes find beer cans on the ground. But the other day I came upon a piece of litter of a type I'd never encountered before. It was a device about the size of a thumb drive for a computer. But it didn't have a USB connection. What was it?... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 09-15-2019 **New York UnCOVERS \$1 Billion in Sackler Family Wire Transfers**  
The New York attorney general's office said on Friday that it had tracked about \$1 billion in wire transfers by the Sackler family, including through Swiss bank accounts, suggesting that the family tried to shield wealth as it faced a raft of litigation over its role in the opioid crisis.... - [New York Times](#)



- 09-15-2019 **Opioid Defendants Seek to Disqualify Judge Overseeing 2,300 Cases**  
Scarcely five weeks before a landmark federal civil trial in the opioid epidemic, the giant retail pharmacy chains and drug distributors that are defendants in the bellwether Ohio case are seeking to disqualify the judge from overseeing it and nearly 2,300 other opioid-related lawsuits before... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Planned Parenthood and Fired Former Chief Mired in Escalating Dispute**  
Leana Wen, the recently fired former president of Planned Parenthood, appears headed toward an increasingly contentious exit, after accusing the organization's leadership of trying to buy my silence. in a dispute that threatens to prolong and magnify an acrimonious transition at the top of... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Fetal remains found in home of dead abortion doctor Ulrich George Klopfer of South Bend's Women's Pavilion**  
More than 2,000 medically preserved fetal remains were found at a deceased abortion provider's Illinois home Thursday by his family as they sorted through his belongings, authorities said. A lawyer for Ulrich George Klopfer's family called the Will County Coroner's Office that afternoon to report that the family had found what... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-15-2019 **'I'm going to kill myself:' A veteran tells Sanders he's drowning in medical debt**  
John Weigel, a 58-year-old Navy veteran, was desperate to tell Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) his story. So on Friday afternoon, he folded his \$139,000 hospital bill into his pants pocket and took the city bus to the Democratic presidential candidate's town hall at the Carson City community center.... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Sacklers: New York Attorney General uncovers \$1 billion in wire transfers by Purdue Pharma owners**  
The New York attorney general's office disclosed Friday that it uncovered about \$1 billion in wire transfers between the Sackler family, which owns OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma, and international financial institutions, suggesting the family sought to shield its wealth in overseas bank... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-15-2019 **Perhaps the FDA could have waited on vaping, but it was right to act**  
EVER SINCE e-cigarettes began surging in popularity, they have posed a vexing problem: These nicotine-delivery devices may help some adults quit smoking, which is more dangerous than vaping, but also may addict nonsmokers to nicotine, especially curious teenagers. The Trump... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-15-2019 **House Republicans, seeking path back to majority, vow to try again on scrapping health-care law, curbing deficits**  
Meeting for their annual legislative retreat here nearly nine months into the minority, top GOP officials couldn't help but raise matters such as health care and skyrocketing budget deficits that bedeviled the party before last year's House Democratic midterm sweep.... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Pennsylvania Attorney General sues billionaire Sackler family, owners of Oxycontin maker**  
Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro is suing the family that owns Purdue Pharma, the manufacturer of Oxycontin — a powerful prescription opioid pain medication that proved to be a multi-billion cash cow. Details of the lawsuit are sealed, but it alleges members of the Sackler... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)



- 09-13-2019 **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,... - *Allentown Morning Call*
- 09-13-2019 **Pa. investigating dozens of possible vaping sicknesses, puts out 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*
- 09-13-2019 **Federal government helps Bucks County go after drug traffickers and suppliers with new designation**  
Thanks to the White House, Bucks County District Attorney Matthew Weintraub has new tools at his disposal for targeting drug dealers. In an announcement this week, the federal government revealed that Bucks County and Gloucester County in New Jersey are the latest to join the... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*
- 09-13-2019 **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*
- 09-13-2019 **Some states say they'll keep fighting Purdue Pharma in court**  
HARTFORD, Conn. — Courtroom showdowns still face OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma and the family that owns it, the Sacklers... - *AP*
- 09-13-2019 **Erie day care fire prods state to expand inspections**  
Human services secretary announces changes during visit to fire station. Smoke detectors, fire extinguishers to be checked. The deaths of five children in an Erie day care fire have prompted state officials to broaden the reach of their inspections at similar facilities... - *Erie Times-News*
- 09-13-2019 **Cedar Crest launches Tuition Program to transform access and other company news**  
Cedar Crest launches Tuition Program Building on a commitment to expanding access to higher education and making college more affordable, Cedar Crest College announced a new program that offers academically qualified students the same tuition rate of the flagship public institution in their home state. The State Tuition Access... - *Allentown Morning Call*
- 09-13-2019 **New Jersey creates e-cigarette task force amid vaping health concerns**  
New Jersey lawmakers on Thursday joined state and federal officials calling for a closer look at e-cigarette regulations amid a rash of severe lung illnesses linked to vaping among teens and young adults. Gov. Phil Murphy ordered a new electronic-cigarette task force to come up... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*





- 09-13-2019 **Department of Health warns against vaping illegally obtained products as life-threatening illnesses rise**  
As cases of e-cigarette-related lung injury have rapidly increased in Pennsylvania and nationwide, Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine is warning all Pennsylvanians of the dangers of vaping, especially illicit drugs like recreational marijuana, especially using unregulated products... - [Meadville Tribune](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Support strong for White Haven Center**  
WHITE HAVEN — When testifying about plans to close the White Haven Center, Candy Miller told about her two brothers who lived there. Joe remains at the center, his home the past 50 years. John moved out decades ago but to a more restrictive setting, a house near... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Families, staff denounce White Haven Center closure; Yudichak announces Harrisburg hearing**  
WHITE HAVEN — Is the closure of White Haven State Center a done deal? One state official told a parish hall packed with staff and relatives of center residents Thursday evening that it is. Another took the floor with news that state lawmakers aren't ready to... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Hahnemann University Hospital transplant team transfers to Tower Health**  
Tower Health announced that a Tower Health Transplant Institute has been organized and will become the new home for a nationally recognized kidney and liver transplant program formerly located at Hahnemann University Hospital. The program's team of surgeons, hepatologists and nephrologists have joined... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Berks doctor ran opioid 'pill mill,' investigators say**  
A doctor who practices in Berks County has been charged with recklessly prescribing pain pills, enabling his employees to illegally obtain them for street sales that helped fuel the opioid epidemic. The charges against Dr. Robert W. Schorschinsky, 61, culminated a two-year... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Vaping into mist**  
The Trump administration is squarely on the mark with its vow to ban most flavored e-cigarettes. More than a year ago, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention characterized “vaping” as an epidemic among teenagers. In recent weeks, 450 young people across the nation have been seriously... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Bill would examine PFAS exposures in military children**  
A new bill introduced on Thursday by U.S. Reps. Madeleine Dean, Andy Kim and Xochitl Torres Small, would examine exposures to toxic firefighting chemicals in children who currently live on military bases, or have within the last 10 years. Servicemembers and civilian employees who lived and worked on area military... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Lebanon judge on medical marijuana probation rule: 'I don't think we want to be heartless'**  
A Lebanon judge who signed a policy prohibiting people under court supervision from using medical marijuana said that they couldn't wait any longer to make a decision on the matter. "We felt as if we may get some guidance from the state, but time passes time passes time passes, and you're not getting that guidance, and we... - [Lebanon Daily News](#)





- 09-13-2019 **Trump vape ban: Vaping proposal renews calls for gun control**  
As news of the Trump administration's plan to ban most flavored e-cigarettes rippled across social media, another topic quickly hijacked the conversation: gun control. Pointing out that the thousands of gun deaths in the United States vastly outnumber the six fatalities attributed... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Democrats clash over health care and more in debate that started with calls for unity**  
HOUSTON — There were brief calls for unity, and then a free-for-all. In heated exchanges at a presidential debate here Thursday night, 10 Democratic contenders laid bare the party's deep divisions on major issues including health care, immigration and foreign policy during a... - [Washington Post](#)
- 09-13-2019 **A Ban on Flavored E-Cigarettes Would Sharply Cut Sales**  
Companies and trade groups are weighing the risks of fighting a proposed ban on most flavored vaping products, to protect mint and menthol varieties. - [New York Times](#)
- 09-13-2019 **A French Worker Died After Sex on a Business Trip. His Company Is Liable.**  
LONDON — A court in France has ruled that a man who died from a heart attack after having sex during a business trip had suffered a work-related accident and that his employer was liable. The man, who was identified in court documents only as Xavier, traveled in... - [New York Times](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Lancaster County vape shop owners, customers mystified by proposed ban on flavored vaping**  
Several Lancaster County vape shops closed three years ago after Pennsylvania enacted a 40% wholesale tax on vaping equipment and supplies. Among them was King's Vapor, which shuttered its downtown Lancaster shop but stayed open at its second location at the Manor Shopping Center... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 09-13-2019 **CVS agrees to pay \$4.4 million for possibly 'outing' Ohioans with HIV**  
CVS has agreed to pay a multimillion-dollar settlement in connection with 2017 mailing on behalf of the state could have exposed the HIV-positive status of 4,500 Ohioans. The proposed \$4.4 million settlement comes in a class-action suit filed in federal court in June 2018 because a contractor for CVS sent letters to... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 09-13-2019 **States Flubbed the Rollout of Their Health Insurance Exchanges. Now They're Ready to Try Again.**  
The launch of President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act was marred by the performance of the newly created state health insurance marketplaces. With generous federal financial support, many states created these markets, also called exchanges, based on soaring promises: Individuals and small... - [Stateline.org](#)
- 09-13-2019 **Concerned Citizens Attend Meeting About Health And Environmental Concerns Related To Fracking**  
CANONSBURG (KDKA) — Many attending a hearing at the Canonsburg Middle School are fearing an increase in the cancer rate in the Canon-MacMillan School District and that it may be a side effect of fracking. So far, there's no evidence that fracking is linked to cancer, but many... - [KDKA](#)



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, Harrison, and Sarah.

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