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**EDUCATIONAL EVENTS**

**July 21, 2020**  
*The Surprisingly Robust Science of Self Compassion with Dr. Carrie Adair*  
 Webinar

**July 22, 2020**  
*Being Present: The Science of Mindfulness*  
 Webinar

**July 29, 2020**  
*CMS Hospital Conditions of Participation Made Easy 2020 – Part 1*  
 Webinar

**IPFCF Board Approves Premium Holiday for 2020-21**

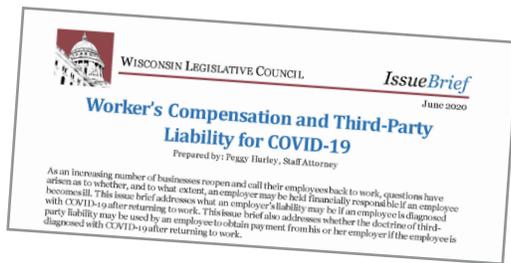
The Injured Patients and Families Compensation Fund (IPFCF) or “Fund” Board of Governors approved a premium holiday for the next fiscal year, from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Hospitals, certain other health care facilities, physicians and certified registered nurse anesthetists are required by state statute to participate in the Fund, which provides excess medical liability coverage above the primary coverage rate of \$1 million per episode and \$3 million per year.

Hospitals and health care systems are major contributors to the Fund, paying premiums not only for facilities but also for their health care employees. The premium holiday was first approved by numerous Fund committees before gaining unanimous approval from the board on June 17. Ralph Topinka, chief legal officer, ProHealth Care, represents hospitals on the 13-member Board of Governors. WHA Senior Vice President of Finance and Chief Operating Officer Brian Potter sits on the Fund’s Actuarial Committee, and WHA General Counsel Matthew Stanford is a member of the Fund’s Legal Committee.

“This premium holiday comes at an opportune time, as hospitals and health systems face unprecedented lost revenue challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding said. “Wisconsin is fortunate to have a well-managed Fund, and we’re pleased the Board unanimously agreed that the premium holiday is an actuarially sound move to make.”

**Legislative Council Issue Brief Discusses COVID-19 Worker’s Compensation Eligibility**

The Wisconsin Legislative Council released an [Issue Brief](#) June 17 addressing questions that have arisen as to whether, and to what extent, an employer may be held financially responsible if an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19. The Issue Brief’s conclusion states, in part, that “an employee who returns to work and who is diagnosed with COVID-19 may be eligible to receive worker’s compensation if the employee can demonstrate that his or her illness is employment-related.”



The Issue Brief notes that [2019 WI Act 185](#), state legislation responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency, created a presumption that a first responder’s injury was caused by his or her employment if the first responder was diagnosed with COVID-19, the injury was found to be caused by COVID-19 during the public health emergency or within 30 days after termination of the emergency, and the first responder had been exposed to persons with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the course of employment. An employer may overcome this presumption by demonstrating that the first responder’s illness was caused by exposure to COVID-19

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**(Legislative Council Issue Brief Discusses COVID-19 Work Comp Eligibility . . . continued from page 1)**

outside of his or her work for the employer. Act 185 defines “first responder” as an employee of or volunteer for an employer that provides firefighting, law enforcement, or medical treatment of COVID-19, and who has regular, direct contact with, or is regularly in close proximity to, patients or other members of the public requiring emergency services, within the scope of the individual’s work for the employer. The period of presumption that the injury to a first responder was caused by employment ended on June 10, 2020. The Issue Brief also discusses third-party liability.

The Issue Brief was prepared by Legislative Council Staff Attorney Peggy Hurley and dated June 2020.

**Member Quality Spotlight: SSM Health St. Mary’s Hospital - Janesville**  
**Multi-faceted approach to sepsis mortality**

*Special Note: Many WHA members proud of their quality improvement efforts had prepared special poster presentations that were to be displayed in the Capitol Rotunda during WHA’s Advocacy Day 2020, which was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. WHA is pleased to highlight these efforts in today’s and future editions of The Valued Voice.*

SSM Health St. Mary’s Hospital - Janesville has developed a variety of approaches to decrease sepsis mortality. One key is the leadership provided by a multi-disciplinary sepsis committee, which includes physicians, nursing, lab staff, pharmacists and quality team members. They have a detailed and in-depth conversation for any opportunity to improve that includes the voice of staff at the bedside. From the committee, monthly “Lessons Learned” are distributed to hospital staff. Topics have included broad spectrum antibiotic use, resuscitation fluid options and enhanced report-off communication. Staff are encouraged to call a “Sepsis 6,” which is a rapid response team that comes to the bedside when a patient meets clinical criteria for severe sepsis. Various scorecards that are distributed monthly help to visualize progress and opportunities.

Click on image to enlarge this poster presentation

Recognition plays a huge part in buy-in, and each month the sepsis subcommittee sends out letters of congratulation to staff who have taken care of patients who met the sepsis care bundles. Biannually, “Sepsis Top Performers” are announced and shared in meetings, on internal communication boards and with executive leadership.

From the committee and staff’s hard work and dedication, SSM Health St. Mary’s Hospital - Janesville has been able to achieve a 12-month total observed-to-expected sepsis mortality ratio of 0.48 and for the study’s most recent six months have a SEP-1 compliance average of 82.2%. They hope that with continued dedication to provide the highest quality and safest care for every patient they encounter, their success will continue.

**Reaction from Local State Legislators:**

*“High-quality health care is one of Wisconsin’s strongest assets. I am proud to congratulate St. Mary’s in Janesville on their dedicated work, showcased by the Wisconsin Hospital Association, to reduce patient mortality from sepsis. Wisconsin’s proactive, collaborative approach to improving health care quality allows us to sustain nation-leading outcomes, ultimately benefiting patients and their families.”*



Sen. Janis Ringhand

– State Senator Janis Ringhand (D-Evansville)

*“We are learning more and more about the challenges, and successful strategies, of caring for our sickest patients. The SSM Health St. Mary’s team has risen to this challenge. I’m proud that successful quality improvement strategies developed right here in Janesville are being shared with hospitals across the state and beyond.”*



Rep. Deb Kolste

– State Rep. Deb Kolste (D-Janesville)

# Call for Nominations: 2020 Global Vision Community Partnership Award

*Nominations due to WHA Foundation by July 24, 2020*

Honor one of your hospital's community health projects by submitting a nomination for a 2020 Global Vision Community Partnership Award, presented by the WHA Foundation.

This competitive grant award is presented to a community health initiative that successfully addresses a documented community health need. The Award, first launched by the WHA Foundation in 1993, seeks to recognize and support ongoing projects that support community health.

All WHA member hospitals are encouraged to nominate a community health project. The project must be a collaborative or partnership project that includes a WHA member hospital and an organization(s) within the community and have been in existence for a minimum of two years. The official call for nominations for the 2020 Award, including a full list of award criteria, can be viewed [here](#).

Nominations are due July 24, 2020. Nomination forms can also be found on the [WHA Foundation website](#). For more information about the Award, contact WHA Foundation Executive Director and WHA Vice President of Education and Marketing [Leigh Ann Larson](#) at 608-274-1820.

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

## 1968 – Research and Education Foundation (The WHA Foundation)



The WHA Research and Education Foundation was established in 1968 to carry out a project with the University of Wisconsin. In 1989, as a result of WHA restructuring, an independent governing

board was created for the Foundation. Fundraising has enabled the Foundation to broaden the scope of health care-related projects it underwrites to include a variety of initiatives – videos, written materials, conferences and internships – largely focused in the areas of health education, ethical issues and development and encouragement of health care personnel in Wisconsin.

Today, as a 501(c)(3) organization, the Foundation focuses its grant making priorities on initiatives that have a statewide impact on health care in Wisconsin. The Foundation's three specific funding priorities include:

- Health care workforce development
- Health care quality and safety initiatives
- Collaborative community health initiatives, through the annual [Global Vision Community Partnership Award](#)

To see the 2010-2019 winners of the Global Vision Community Partnership Award click [here](#).

All WHA member hospitals are encouraged to nominate a community health project for the Global Vision Community Partnership Award. See story in this issue for criteria and information on how to nominate your project.

For more information or to donate to the WHA Foundation, click [here](#).



### WHA Foundation, Inc. 2020 Board of Directors

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