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Wisconsin RN Renewals Now Open

Members of Wisconsin’s largest health care profession, registered nurses (RNs), must renew their current Wisconsin license by Feb. 28. The Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services sent renewal notices out this week via email to the more than 100,000 registered nurses holding active Wisconsin licenses.

Annual hospital survey results submitted to the WHA Information Center, including the fiscal year 2020 results, show that RNs continue make up more than half of the hospital and health system workforce. At the end of fiscal year 2020, hospitals counted 38,639 registered nurses among their workforce.

Renewal notices are only sent electronically and rely on an active and accurate email address to reach RNs. RNs must also continue to complete a workforce survey in order for their license to be issued by the expiration date.

Contact WHA Senior Vice President of Workforce and Clinical Practice [Ann Zenk](#) with questions about RN renewals or other workforce issues.

Member Benefit: WHA Speakers Bureau

Keeping hospital leadership teams and board members current on industry trends, opportunities and threats is challenging, especially as health care leaders pursue continuous improvement in the face of rapid change. Tapping the perspectives of WHA’s executive staff for a presentation at a management team meeting or board event is an option available to WHA members seeking an outside perspective on issues affecting their operations.

Through WHA’s Speakers Bureau, member hospitals and health systems can request a presentation by a WHA executive. Subjects covered include, but are not limited to:

- Current legal and regulatory updates
- State and federal legislative updates
- Health care workforce
- Emergency preparedness

Learn more about the WHA Speakers Bureau [here](#). Contact Vice President of Education and Marketing [Leigh Ann Larson](#) at 608-274-1820 to schedule a speaker for an upcoming meeting or event.

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

January 26

Mega Healthcare Conference
Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells

January 26

Governance Megatrends: What is the Impact on Your Board?
Webinar

January 27

Beyond the Headlines: What Health Care Executives Need to Know about Cyber Risk
Webinar

March 23

WHA Advocacy Day 2022
Virtual

Hospital Leaders Brief Wisconsin Congressional Delegation on Hospital Capacity Challenges Under Omicron

On Jan. 19, the WHA hosted a congressional staff briefing on the continued strain hospitals are experiencing, particularly with the surge in new COVID-19 cases due to the proliferation of the Omicron variant.

Joining WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding were HSHS Wisconsin President and CEO Andy Bagnall; Advocate Aurora Health Chief Medical Group Officer Dr. Jeff Bahr; SSM Health Wisconsin President of Medical Groups Dr. Mark Thompson; and Marshfield Clinic Health System CEO Dr. Susan Turney. Participating in the briefing were staff from each of Wisconsin's 10 congressional offices and Congressman Ron Kind, a long-time champion of Wisconsin health care.



Top, L to R: Andy Bagnall; Eric Borgerding; Jeff Bahr, MD. Bottom, L to R: Susan Turney, MD; Mark Thompson, MD.

WHA's hospital leaders detailed some of the new challenges they are experiencing with Omicron as well as challenges that have persisted since the start of the pandemic. Nearly everyone is experiencing a dramatically higher testing positivity rate, particularly for symptomatic patients, due to the new variant's increased infectiousness. Additionally, the sheer number of new cases is leading hospitals and health systems to continue to set record numbers for COVID hospitalizations.

Nearly everyone agreed that staffing continues to be their number one challenge. In particular, the growth of contract agency staffing has created myriad new challenges. Not only are hospitals having to pay exorbitant costs for staff, particularly nurses, but the agencies all too often poach staff from one hospital to work at a neighboring hospital. This has also created staffing morale challenges as loyal long-time staff feel frustrated to be making less than a temporary hire that has less experience with their hospital. All these factors are also contributing to burnout in the profession, with 20% of health care workers in one Wisconsin health system projected to leave within the next two years.

Hospital leaders also addressed questions from congressional staff ranging from how they are dealing with the shortage of monoclonal antibodies to why even incidental COVID hospitalizations consume more resources for a hospital stay.

Congress will need to pass a new resolution to fund the federal government by Feb. 18 to avoid a government shutdown, and there have been increasing talks of adding health care relief to the funding package. WHA will continue to be in close contact with Wisconsin's congressional delegation to demonstrate why hospitals need their support now more than ever.

Contact WHA Vice President of Federal and State Relations [Jon Hoelter](#) with questions.

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