

Vol. 69, Issue 21

Thursday, May 22, 2025

ICYMI: WHA Capitol Briefing on 2025 Health Care Workforce Report

WisconsinEye recording available

On May 21, 2025, the chairs and ranking members of the Wisconsin Legislature's Senate Committee on Health and the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care hosted a Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) health care workforce legislative briefing for state policymakers and staff. The event spotlighted the urgent challenges and innovative solutions shaping the future of Wisconsin's health care workforce.

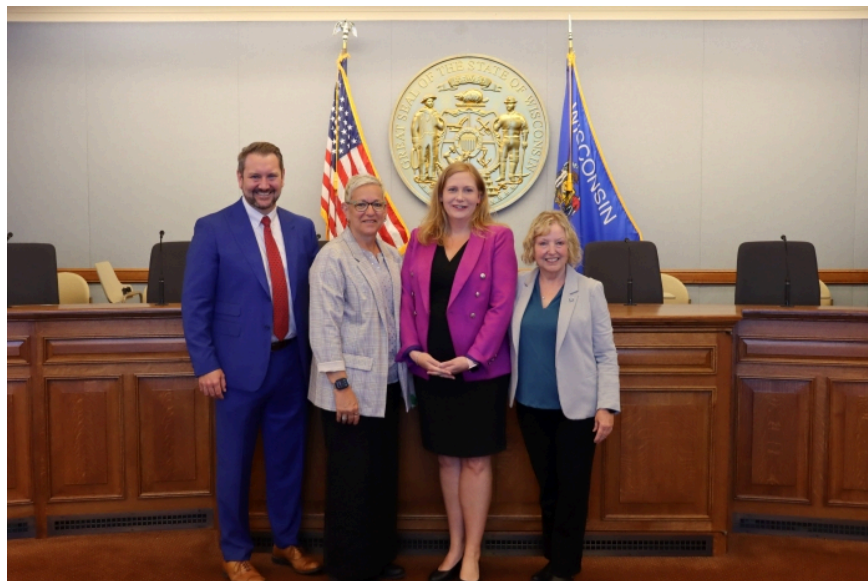
Top Takeaways:

- **Workforce Shortages:** Wisconsin hospitals face a 9% vacancy rate amid rising demand driven by an aging population. As Ann Zenk noted, "The silver tsunami is here."
- **Financial Strain:** In FY2023, 53 hospitals operated at a loss, with labor and supply costs rising sharply. Hospitals lose 26% on Medicare and 37% on Medicaid reimbursements.
- **Policy Progress:** Bipartisan support has enabled over \$100 million in public-private investment in workforce development, including expanded residency programs and apprenticeship models.
- **Rural Innovation:** Sharon Cox, Chief Nursing Officer at Beloit Health System and Eilidh Pederson, CEO at Western Wisconsin Health, shared how their hospitals are expanding services and training pipelines despite financial and staffing constraints. Western Wisconsin Health, for example, has grown its OB services by 400% over the past decade.
- **Regulatory Reform:** WHA called for easing administrative burdens, expanding clinical faculty eligibility and reducing delays from insurance prior authorizations.

WHA Senior Vice President of Government Relations Kyle O'Brien emphasized, "Good health care policy makes good politics." The event underscored the importance of continued collaboration between policymakers and providers to ensure access to high-quality care across Wisconsin.

Watch the full briefing recording on WisconsinEye here.

Access WHA's 2025 Health Care Workforce Report here.



Left to right: Kyle O'Brien, Senior VP of Government Relations at WHA, Sharon Cox, Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer at Beloit Health System, Eilidh Pederson, CEO at Western Wisconsin Health, Ann Zenk, Senior VP of Workforce and Clinical Practice at WHA

IN THIS ISSUE

- U.S. House Passes Budget Reconciliation Legislation that would Severely Disadvantage WI
- President's Column: House Budget Proposal Unfairly Penalizes Wisconsin
- WHA-Backed Prior Authorization Reform Legislation Reintroduced
- ICYMI: WHA Capitol Briefing on 2025 Health Care Workforce Report
- Wisconsin Hospitals State PAC & Conduit Campaign Launches Strong
- WHA Workforce Forum Focuses on Partnering to Grow Faster
- Registration Now Open for the 2026 WHA Health Care Leadership Academy
- Time is Running Out to Register for This Year's Wisconsin Rural Health Conference
- More Spots Added for the WHA Rural Conference Golf Outing
- WHAIC Welcomes New Software Engineer Jeff Schulz
- In Memoriam: Barb Peickert
- WHA and UW PROTEA Host Successful 11th Rural Health SUD Boot Camp in Hayward

EDUCATION EVENTS

May. 27, 2025

Critical Access Hospital (CAH) Conditions of Participation Series

Jun. 4, 2025

2025 Wisconsin Rural Health Conference

Aug. 8, 2025

WHA Financial Workshop