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In this Edition:

- Coalition Launches Ad Campaign Urging Congress to Reject Medicare Cuts, Protect Patient Access to Hospital Care
- Smoking and Vaping's Impact on North Dakota Youth
- Webinar: Patients as Payors - Addressing the Patient Affordability Gap
- NDHA Education Calendar
- BCBSND Caring Foundation - SPARK Grants
- Exciting Opportunity to Join the North Dakota Zero Suicide Community of Practice

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Coalition Launches Ad Campaign Urging Congress to Reject Medicare Cuts, Protect Patient Access to Hospital Care

The Coalition to Protect America's Health Care has launched a TV ad urging Congress to reject billions of dollars in cuts to patient care. These cuts would jeopardize access to quality care for patients across the country, especially in rural and underserved communities.

The first ad, which began running yesterday, highlights challenges facing hospitals and health systems and urges Congress not to make cuts to hospital care. The Coalition is also planning to resume a second ad from December to continue messaging on corporate insurer accountability,highlighting the negative impact their practices have on patients.

Corporate insurance companies and other deep-pocketed organizations are pushing Congress to enact harmful Medicare cuts at a time when America's hospitals and health systems have already been pushed to the brink by broken supply chains, workforce shortages and high inflation. More than 100 rural hospitals have already closed over the last decade, and many more hospitals throughout the nation operate in the red. The Coalition's ad highlights how cuts to Medicare could devastate these hospitals and the communities they serve.

Your ongoing advocacy is needed at this critical time. Please share the Coalition's message and contact your lawmakers to advocate on behalf of America's hospitals, health systems and their patients and communities.

To learn more about the Coalition to Protect America's Health Care and how you can get involved, visit the Coalition's website.

Smoking and Vaping's Impact on North Dakota Youth

Permission to reprint received: 1/11/24

Most people know that cigarette smoking poses many health risks that have been backed by decades of research. But what about vaping? Isn't vaping safer than smoking a cigarette? Vapes were created as a healthier alternative to cigarettes, but new studies have found that chemicals in vapors now pose many new health risks that youth may be unaware.

The three forms of smoking all have health risks but vapes and e-cigarettes cause harm differently than traditional cigarettes. It's important to know how vapes work to understand how this causes harm. This electronic device contains nicotine,flavoring, and other chemicals in a liquid "pod" or "cartridge." The device heats the liquid and vapors are inhaled into the lungs. The inhaled microparticles can cause side effects like mouth dryness, throat irritation,cough, and headaches.

When cigarette smoke is inhaled into the lungs, its large particle size can only travel so far. However, the inhaled particles from vaping are smaller than those in cigarettes and are able to travel deeper into all the nooks and crannies of the lungs. There they are deposited extensively, block normal oxygen exchange, and potentially cause breathing problems. Some microparticles are even small enough to actually get into the bloodstream, where there is more risk for damage and disease.

The microparticles of vaping include a number of small molecules, one of which is H2O2,or hydrogen peroxide. Although not harmful when used as an oral rinse, when it enters the bloodstream H2O2 damages cells which increases the risk of infections and disease, especially for people who already have asthma or diabetes.

Recent research has also found that vaping increases a receptor linked to insulin resistance, a term used to describe how diabetes develops from chronic high blood sugar. For younger vapers with hopes of keeping their youthful appearance, researchers have also linked vapor chemicals to faster rates in aging.

Understanding the research that vaping is not as safe as once thought might be important information for North Dakota's youth and their communities. Nearly 10% of the state's high schoolers vape daily and 1 in 3 students have tried a cigarette before age 13, according to recent state health department surveys.

With no data to support any positive health benefits of smoking, for those youth – or adults – who smoke or vape and want to quit, the NDQuits website has information on how to access personal assistance and counselors to quit. Adams County local healthcare providers and tobacco treatment specialists are available for those who are looking to breathe clearly and begin a journey towards a smoke free life.

About the Author: Sarah DiDonna is a third-year medical student at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences. She was selected as the Hettinger participant for the school's ROME program, or Rural Opportunities in Medical Education.The program focuses on teaching student doctors the importance of rural newspapers as a way to share health information. As a future rural healthcare leader, DiDonna has written this column to provide health information for her ROME community. The information is not for diagnosis or treatment and should not be used in place of previous medical advice provided by a licensed provider.

DiDonna, Sarah. "Smoking and Vaping's Impact on North Dakota Youth." *Adams County Record* and *Bismarck Tribune*, December 2023.

Webinar: Patients as Payors - Addressing the Patient Affordability Gap

NDHA is excited to share information for two demo webinars that Strategic Business Partner AblePay is hosting on February 1st and 2nd for NDHA members. Information about the webinars and links to enroll are below.

Overview:

Providers across the country understand that collecting on patient responsibility is a significant challenge and pain point. AblePay is now assisting providers and patients in 22 states and is endorsed by 17 state hospital associations as a tool to address the problem.

During this demonstration webinar, you will learn how the AblePay solution will increase your revenue while providing a better patient experience overall. You will also hear provider case studies about how our program positively changes patient payment behavior.

AblePay highlights:

- Prompt payment in 14 days, with no recourse.
- Patients save up to 13% or can extend payments over time (with savings or 0% interest).
- All patients are accepted into the program with no credit checks or propensity to pay scores (not a medical credit card or bank solution).
- Easy implementation and integration (secondary payor processing); lower costs and better staff utilization.
- Make no changes to current internal processes and keep all current vendors.
- AblePay assumes the financial risk for their members.
- Build continued loyalty and brand identity with employers in the communities you serve!

Links to register:

February 1st (Noon – 1:00 p.m. CT)
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_72hpxvZDS6yxoQFLo14crQ

February 2nd (9:30 – 10:30 a.m. CT)
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_78UnxO_LQg2vgG4y_gfztg

Hospital Services, Inc., d/b/a HSIsolutions, is a subsidiary of the North Dakota Hospital Association (NDHA). Revenue share earned from Strategic Business Partner relationships helps offset the expenses of NDHA and strengthens the value of its programs.

NDHA Education Calendar

All times listed are Central time.

OSHA Hospital-Based First Receiver Training
Date: Various

View description

2024 Nurse Leadership Webinar Series
Dates: January 25, February 22, March 25, May 6

- View description

January, 2024

Rebuilding Your Nursing Team in 2024 - Free for NDHA Members
Date: 1/16/24 | From: 10:00a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

- View description

Strategy or Just Surviving?
Date: January 30, 2024 | From: 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

- View description

February, 2024

How to Appeal Insurance Claim Denials: Navigating the Maze
Date: 2/21/24 | From: 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.

- View description

Scout to See Ahead of the Game: Act Today to Create Tomorrow
Date: 2/29/24 | From: 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

- View description

April, 2024

2024 Credentialing and Privileging Webinar Series with Kathy Matzka
Dates: Various | From: 10:30 a.m. - Noon

- View description

NDHA's 2024 C-Suite Leadership Conference
Mark your calendars and plan to attend the 3rd annual C-Suite Leadership Conference on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at the Baymont Inn & Suites in Mandan, ND. Hotel rooms will be available for the evening prior under the room block C-Suite Leadership. Please call the hotel directly at 701-663-7401 to make your reservations. There will be an evening social at the hotel from 6:00 - 9:00p.m. on April 22, 2024. More details to come soon!

BCBSND Caring Foundation - SPARK Grants

The BCBSND Caring Foundation is now accepting letters of intent for our Spring SPARK Grants. The goal of our SPARK (Strengthening People, Access, Resources and Knowledge) Grants is to enhance collaborative efforts and community involvement that result in long-lasting change. Through our SPARK Grants we provide a limited number of one-year grants of up to $50,000 annually to North Dakota communities and organizations undertaking efforts to support health and community-based wellness and prevention. To be eligible for a grant, the project must support initiatives that encourage health and well-being within North Dakota communities, be sustainable, be a priority in the community,exhibit collaboration with community stakeholders, and align with evidence-based best practices and principles.

Those interested in applying for a grant must first submit a Letter of Intent Form by 5 p.m. on January 31 to be considered for our spring funding cycle. Eligible organizations must be North

Dakota based 501(c)(3) nonprofits, municipal entities (i.e. park boards, public health), or school systems. All letters of intent must be electronically submitted to caringfoundation@bcbsnd.com.

For more detailed information please view the website.

For a sample letter of intent, click HERE.

Exciting Opportunity to Join the North Dakota Zero Suicide Community of Practice

Looking for results? Apply to join the 2024-2025 North Dakota Zero Suicide Community of Practice! Work with an expert team to learn about Zero Suicide, the leading suicide prevention model for health care settings. Don't miss this chance to join healthcare settings across North Dakota to share knowledge and build enthusiasm for bringing Zero Suicide to your organization!

See flyer here.

Click here to apply.

NDHA North Dakota Hospital Association Est. 1934

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A NDHA and HSIsolutions program.

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AblePay

JACKSON Physician Search

JUNIPER ADVISORY

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One Focus. One Standard. One Result.

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Revenue share earned from the Strategic Business Partner program helps offset the expenses of NDHA and strengthens the value of its programs.

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