

Emergency Preparedness

The LHA Research and Education Foundation works with all hospitals in Louisiana to promote emergency preparedness and response planning. This year, the LHA focused on pandemic flu and hurricane planning, along with:

- Reported to the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) in **response to Hurricanes Gustav and Ike**, and staffed the state EOC 24/7 for several weeks.
- Assisted with the **evacuation of over 1,000 hospital patients** across the entire southern coastline of Louisiana, another first for the nation, and conducted a hospital assessment to collect hospital generator and other vital operational information.
- **Distributed over \$4.57 million of Health and Human Services (HHS) grant funds to hospitals (\$3.4 million)** and EMS providers (\$1.1 million) to address the needs of the hospitals and providers in the areas of surge, isolation, decontamination, personal protection equipment (PPE) and communications.
- **Distributed \$1.16 million to hospitals** for the development of a ventilator cache to prepare for a pandemic influenza event.
- Conducted eighteen **"Regional Hospital Rounds"** meetings for hospital representatives to discuss pandemic flu planning, Emergency System for the Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP), National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance and the planning priorities for the 2007-2008 HHS grant.
- Conducted the **2008 HHS Hospital Needs Assessment** survey.
- Conducted two courses entitled "Community Preparedness and Response: Pandemic Flu, Strategic National Stockpile, NIMS and CHEMPACK" in partnership with the Office of Public Health.
- Assisted Region 1 hospitals with **Mardi Gras response activities**, helped set up Mardi Gras temporary triage site, and collected bed availability reports.
- **Responded to flood threats** during the months of April and May.
- Conducted a **statewide hurricane drill** and **Medical Institution Evacuation Plan (MIEP) drills** to test hospitals' evacuation and shelter-in-place plans.
- Worked with state and federal partners to revise the 19-step communication process and the evacuation forms for the MIEP plans.
- Assisted in the development of nine regional **Hospital Pandemic Influenza plans** and continued participation in the pandemic flu clinical forum to help develop a triage tool and to enhance hospital pandemic influenza plans.
- Assisted the **Louisiana Emergency Response Network (LERN)** with obtaining access to EMSsystem, which improved their ability to develop a statewide trauma network.
- Participated in the **Pandemic Flu Planning Summit** to identify the potential needs of hospitals during a pandemic flu event.

LHA Center for Healthcare Workforce Development

Workforce was front and center during this year's Legislative Session, as it was Governor Jindal's top priority. The LHA's Center for Healthcare Workforce Development collaborated with administration officials, the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI), and other business representatives to redesign and streamline Louisiana's workforce development system. This year, the workforce center staff:

- Served on the **Governor's Workforce Investment Transition Team** to lay the foundation for workforce development change.
- Lobbied the legislature to **pass Act 743** to redesign the workforce system in Louisiana.
- Continued to serve on and **Chair the Louisiana Health Works Commission**, which is developing a strategic plan to address the healthcare workforce shortage.
- Collaborated with the Health Works Commission and the Board of Regents to **secure \$15.1 million in healthcare workforce education and training funds**, resulting in 650 new nursing students, 250 new allied health students, 60 new loans for nursing and allied health faculty, tuition reimbursement for LPN faculty, and the purchase of simulation equipment for LPN programs.
- Served as the state advisors to **Health Occupations Students of America** and sent students to the national competition for the first time in over ten years.
- Served on the Board of HearTS Collaborative overseeing the expenditure of **Community Development Block Grant Funds (\$6 million)** to train nurses and allied health professionals in 37 Katrina and Rita-impacted areas.
- Collaborated with the Department of Health and Hospitals to promote the New Orleans Health Corps to **recruit and retain healthcare professionals and faculty** in four Katrina-impacted parishes.
- Worked with education and hospital partners in the Lafayette area to address the nursing shortage by **establishing new and creative programs and partnerships**.
- Supported and lobbied for changes to the higher education funding formula to more adequately **address the costs of healthcare education and training programs** in the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.
- Promoted efforts to increase participation on **local and state workforce investment boards and councils**.
- Served on the **LABI Employee Relations Council and Education Council** to present a united business front on education and workforce issues.



Education

The LHA monitors issues facing hospitals and the healthcare field and offers educational opportunities to address these issues. This year's educational accomplishments include:

- The completion of the new **LHA Conference Center**.
- **Seventy-eight quality education programs** with over 3,500 healthcare CEOs, senior management, trustees and volunteers in attendance. This represents a 20 percent increase in the number of offerings and in member participation.
- The 27th successful year of the **LHA School for Supervisory Training**.
- The **Direct Source Media launch of LAHospitalCareers.com** in October for the LHA Employee Recruitment program with over 41 hospitals participating.
- Hosting the **American Nurses Credentialing Center Nursing Administration Certification Review Seminar** for 47 participants from across the nation (27 Louisiana Nurse Executives).
- Hosting the **NAHQ Certification Review Course** for 15 healthcare quality professionals from Louisiana hospitals.
- The maintenance of **careLearning.com** (e-learning project) for 18 Louisiana hospitals. The LHA ranks in the top five associations based on the number of hospitals enrolled.

Communications

Local, state and national media outlets consider the LHA an industry leader and expert. This year, the LHA participated in over 100 media interviews, on issues ranging from hurricane recovery to Medicaid cuts to workforce shortages. We also work with our members to promote the hospital field and assist members one-on-one with media issues.

The LHA uses various communications tools to keep members informed, including:

- The **LHA Membership Directory**.
- **IMPACT Weekly**, which was redesigned this year as an electronic newsletter.
- Other Member Newsletters - **IMPACT Lawbrief**, **IMPACT Session**, and **LHA Louisiana Trustee**.
- **LHA Daily News**, **LHA CEO Storm E-Alerts**, **Rural Hospital E-Alerts**, and **Hospital Public Information Officer Emergency List**.
- Legislative Action Alerts using the **LHActNow System** and grassroots outreach e-mails to the hospitals' PR Point People.
- The **LHA Legislative Review**.
- LHA's website at **www.LHAonline.org**.



LOUISIANA HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION



2008 Annual Report

The Louisiana Hospital Association has had an eventful year with numerous successes and some unexpected events. With a new Administration and a large turnover in the Louisiana House and Senate, it was essential that we invest time and resources this year to **educate the Louisiana Legislature** on issues and challenges facing hospitals in our state. Our advocacy and grassroots efforts helped to secure over \$486 million in funding for healthcare-related needs during the 2008 Legislative Session, including funding for uncompensated care costs (UCC), rural hospitals, workforce and mental health.

Because of an \$81 million "projected" budget deficit, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) proposed a \$67 million reduction to hospitals that the LHA and its members fervently fought. The LHA and hospital leaders testified and, along with a huge grassroots push, **stopped these cuts from being implemented**. Because of the attention the proposed budget deficit received, many legislators have become well-informed on overall healthcare reimbursement issues, and they will be going into the 2009 Legislative Session with a better understanding of the challenges facing Louisiana hospitals.

Since the 2005 hurricanes, the LHA, DHH and Louisiana hospitals have been working together to make improvements to hospital emergency preparedness plans. These plans were tested during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, and our preparation paid off with **over 1,000 patients being successfully transferred to safety**. The LHA staffed the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness 24/7 before, during and after the storms, and the Association provided assistance and resources to all hospitals in need. We will take the lessons learned from these storms and make further improvements for the future.

This year, all hospitals in Louisiana united in a common cause. The LHA and the Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency (LOPA) partnered in the **first-ever, statewide hospital donor registration initiative in the nation**. This campaign has caught the attention of the Health Resources and Services Administration Division of Transplantation, who will use this campaign as a model for other states to follow. We are proud of the hospital Champions, who have agreed to lead this campaign in their hospitals over the next year.

As you can see, our Association is strongly committed to our mission of supporting our members through advocacy, education and services. We would like to thank the Board of Trustees, whose guidance has been invaluable. We are also grateful for the work of dedicated members serving on task forces, constituency groups and committees, bringing with them innovative ideas and a shared vision of an improved healthcare delivery system for our state. Finally, we are proud of the performance of the LHA staff, who have exceeded every expectation.

Thank you for your continued support and assistance as we move forward to make Louisiana a better and healthier state for the citizens we serve.

Sincerely,



William R. Holman, FACHE
LHA Board Chair



John A. Matessino
President & CEO



Member Groups

The LHA represents over 180 hospitals in Louisiana. In order to meet the needs of all our members, the LHA has created several types of member groups that provide our hospitals the opportunity to network, to give input on policy issues, to collaborate on healthcare solutions and to work on continued professional development.

Groups that work on policy and regulatory issues include the **Legislative, Regulatory and Policy Council; LHA Medical Liability Task Force; CFO Expert Panel; Workers' Compensation Advisory Group; and Managed Care Advisory Group.**

In order to provide a mechanism for hospitals with unique services to collaborate on common issues, the LHA has three Constituency Groups: **Behavioral Health; Long Term Acute Care; and Rehabilitation.** The LHA has also created the **Rural Hospital Leadership Forum** to provide specialized assistance and services for our rural hospital members.

The LHA has four active Affiliate Societies: the **Louisiana Society of Hospital Attorneys; the Louisiana Society of Hospital Auxiliaries; the Louisiana Organization of Nurse Executives; and the Louisiana Society for Hospital Public Relations & Marketing.**

Quality

- Created the **Vice President of Quality & Regulatory Activities** staff position.
- Partnered with Louisiana Health Care Review, Louisiana's Medicare QIO, in an **initiative to eliminate MRSA** and other healthcare-acquired infections.
- Established the **Quality and Patient Safety Advisory Panel**, comprised of subject matter experts from member hospitals.
- Participated in a **CMS task force to eliminate pressure ulcers** across all healthcare disciplines: hospitals, nursing homes and home health.

Data

- Launched **LHA DataGen**, a new data and reporting program geared toward providing our member hospitals with healthcare financial and clinical information to support education, operations and advocacy efforts.
- Added additional all-payer data and quality measures to the **Louisiana Hospital Inform** website, along with a side-by-side hospital comparison tool.
- Offered participating hospitals utilization data from the **LHIN Database** for strategic planning and marketing.
- Developed the **LHA Annual Survey.**
- Offered members other diverse data services and reports, including the **LHA Financial DATABANK Program** and **Monthly Utilization Reports.**

Federal Initiatives

Legislative

- Successfully **opposed \$1.6 billion in Medicare cuts** to Louisiana hospitals.
- Supported HR 2638, the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act of 2009, which has a provision that provides **\$600 million in Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funds** for "necessary expenses resulting from hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters that occurred during 2008" and "from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita."
- Supported H.R. 1424, the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, which requires group health plans to provide comparable **coverage for mental health and substance-abuse**, as they do for medical and surgical benefits.
- Lobbied in **opposition to the 1.7% proposed cut** across the board in the President's Fiscal Year 2008 budget proposal.
- Lobbied in support of **grants for Health Information Technology; reauthorization of funding for the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program; removal of the DSH Cap for rural hospitals over 100 beds; and hurricane recovery funds for hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike.**
- Supported **SCHIP Expansion.**
- Supported reauthorization and funding of the **Workforce Investment Act.**
- Supported efforts to **increase the number of visas for foreign nurses.**

Regulatory

- Held the CMS proposed rule that excluded hospital-owned Rural Health Clinics from DSH/UCC funds eligibility at bay for over one year.
- Opposed portions of proposed changes to the Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment System and Fiscal Year 2009 Rates.
- Opposed portions of proposed changes in Conditions of Participation Requirements and Payment for RHCs and FQHCs.
- Successfully opposed the HRSA Proposed Rule on Designation of Medically Underserved Populations and Health Professional Shortage Areas.

HOSPPAC



HOSPPAC, LHA's political action committee, has helped to make the LHA a strong political player and allows us to accomplish the legislative priorities set forth by the Association. Through the support and contributions of our members, HOSPPAC has become one of the most influential PACs in the state and a dynamic force at the State Capitol.



State Initiatives

The LHA and its members have become powerful players in the political arena. LHA's lobbyists and staff educate lawmakers on issues that affect hospitals and healthcare both locally and nationally, resulting in improved healthcare policy that better supports hospitals and patients. The LHA also has a strong grassroots advocacy network of hospital leadership, employees, trustees and volunteers that is vital to protecting our hospitals and the patients they serve.

Funding Issues

Budget Related Successes for Fiscal Year 2008-2009

- Mid-year \$67 million Medicaid budget cuts** were stopped.
- The **Community Hospitals UCC Pool** was fully funded.
- \$10 million** was allocated for services provided at general acute care hospitals and inpatient psychiatric facilities located in hurricane-impacted areas.
- \$10 million** was included for increased health coverage to uninsured children.
- \$13.5 million** was included for expanding electronic medical records to rural hospitals.
- \$13.8 million** was approved for mental health services in New Orleans.
- \$5 million** was allocated for a provider service network.
- Funding was added to help offset increased uncompensated costs for services provided to the uninsured in qualified burn units and hemophilia centers.
- \$3 million** was approved to provide pay for performance incentives.
- \$76 million** was included for the extra week checkwrite.
- The Rural Hospital Preservation Act** was fully funded.

Other Important Legislation

- \$22 million of hurricane-related **Unemployment Trust Fund hospital debt was forgiven.**
- Health insurance carriers' ability to retroactively deny and recoup claims based on eligibility determination was limited to 90 days.
- Costly renovations to hospitals' existing facilities to meet new wind and flood tolerance limits are no longer required.
- Some procedures at the **Patient's Compensation Fund (PCF)** were modernized, and efforts to eliminate the medical malpractice cap were stopped.
- Legislation was defeated that would have required physicians to accept health plan rates for services rendered in a contracted facility, even if the physicians were not participants in a contract with the health plan.
- A **mental health package** to expand the mental health services in Louisiana was passed. This included legislation about crisis receiving centers; expansion of Human Services Districts; assistive outpatient treatment; mental health exams using telemedicine; and malpractice insurance for telemedicine.

Thank you to everyone who contacted their legislators on important issues this legislative session. It truly makes a difference when they hear about how legislation will positively or negatively affect their local hospitals and the patients they serve.