



**ANNUAL REPORT
2020**

Letter to Members

Dear Colleagues,

2020 has been one of the most challenging and unbelievable years in our careers in health care. The COVID-19 pandemic has upended our society and economy, challenged our health care systems to respond like never before, and changed the lives of far too many people here in New Hampshire, throughout the country, and around the globe.

Yet, despite all of those challenges, we have seen such great compassion, dedication and frankly, heroism, by the doctors, nurses, caregivers and support staff who have come to work every day during this pandemic to ensure that they are there for the patients and communities who need them now more than ever. While none of these health care heroes could have imagined serving during a pandemic, it is why they chose to enter this profession—to serve others.

And the Association has been a key advocate and component of the important work that we have done together this year and will continue to do in the months and years ahead. The Association has served as a touchpoint for all of us to organize ourselves around priority issues and shared concerns, compiling and sharing data and information that helps us and state leaders respond to the pandemic, and to help policymakers and the public understand the challenges facing hospitals and what is needed to support our efforts in the days and months ahead.

Working together, we have been able to accomplish a great deal. The current surge of COVID-19 patients that we are seeing across the state, however, will challenge us once again. But as we saw earlier this year, hospitals were able to come together, collaborate and help one another respond to the challenges of COVID-19, and we are confident that hospitals will continue to partner with one another to serve their patients and communities. Our success will be defined not by what each of us is able to do individually, but rather by what we are able to accomplish together.

We wish all of you the very best and thank you for your continued involvement in the work of the Association.

Sincerely,



Don Caruso, MD, MPH
Chair, NHHA Board of Trustees



Stephen M. Ahnen
President, NHHA

Early this calendar year, COVID-19 arrived in New Hampshire and immediately impacted our member hospitals and health systems, as well as the Association. It also reminded the public just how essential hospitals and health systems are to their communities, demonstrated by the continued support and appreciation for the healthcare heroes on the front lines. The Association has worked hard to support our hospitals and health systems as we respond to the challenges presented by the pandemic. We are stronger together, and we are proud to stand alongside you. Below is a brief summary highlighting our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING RELIEF

Working with state and federal partners, the Association successfully advocated for more than **\$329 MILLION** in federal COVID-19 funding relief for our members, which includes funding from the Coronavirus Aid and Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the Paycheck Protection Program and Healthcare Enhancement Act, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and **\$52.1 MILLION** in state funding through the Emergency Healthcare Relief Fund.

The Financial Cost of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant financial impact on hospitals due to costs associated with preparing for a surge of patients, delaying elective and non-urgent procedures for months, securing testing supplies, personal protective equipment, ventilators and other supplies to strengthen their response. Hospitals statewide are estimated to suffer more than **\$557 MILLION** in COVID-19 related financial losses by year end and a financial deficit of **\$228 MILLION**, which continues to grow as hospitals respond to the pandemic. The NHHA will continue working with our state partners and federal delegation to secure future funding relief to help member hospitals navigate this public health crisis.

TOTAL PROJECTED LOSSES THROUGH DECEMBER 2020: \$557.2 MILLION

RELIEF RECEIVED TO DATE: \$329.2 MILLION

NET REVENUE LOSSES: \$228.0 MILLION



STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATORY RELIEF

In addition to **working with state and public health officials on executive orders and regulatory issues** that ensured enhanced access to care through telehealth, additional flexibility for hospitals to expand capacity, increased staffing in the event of a surge, removal of prior authorizations and a halt to on-site accreditation visits, the Association advocated for the relief members needed to serve their patients during the pandemic.

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INCIDENT COMMAND & COMMUNICATIONS

Since March, the NHHA has convened members, state and federal partners **to address the public health threats and impact of COVID-19 on our communities** and made member communications a top priority to ensure that hospital and health system administrative and clinical leadership were abreast of COVID-19 trends, including reports of state, federal and congressional actions impacting hospitals. In addition to supporting hospitals as they set up surge capacity in their facilities, Alternative Care Sites and community testing sites, the NHHA continues to serve as a liaison between public health, state officials and members to address ongoing challenges, including the resumption of health care services, PPE and testing equipment needs, health profession licensure regulations, COVID-19 vaccination planning, immunization registry development and electronic laboratory reporting.



DATA ANALYTICS

The NHHA has made real time data a priority throughout the pandemic, managing daily reporting of **Hospital Risk Assessment levels ranging from Normal to Crisis to gauge impact on hospitals** in the areas of bed capacity, ventilator utilization, PPE availability, staffing challenges and medication supplies that proved to be an invaluable situational awareness tool for hospitals as well as state and federal public health officials.



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE


The NHHA played a critical role in collaborating with the Granite State Health Care Coalition, the regional health care emergency response coalition in the state, in conducting situational awareness assessments to evaluate current and future resource needs and served as a member of the State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee (SDMAC) in developing state **Crisis Standards of Care guidelines** for hospitals, supporting long term care facilities and recommending prioritization levels for COVID-19 vaccination distribution.



PUBLIC AWARENESS & PREVENTION

In partnership with more than 40 organizations and trade associations statewide, the NHHA engaged in a statewide public awareness campaign, **Mask Up New Hampshire**, to help educate the general public on the importance of adhering to the public health guidance known to reduce the community transmission of COVID-19, and to encourage New Hampshire residents to wear masks when outside their homes. In addition, the NHHA also launched a **Resuming Health Care Services Safely** campaign, a **Healthcare Heroes** campaign in celebration of the heroes on the front lines of the pandemic and continues to focus its public awareness efforts on encouraging the public's continued vigilance in following the public health measures to help protect themselves, their loved ones and the healthcare heroes on the front lines of COVID-19.

CELEBRATING OUR HEALTHCARE HEROES



To our member hospitals and health systems on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, working tirelessly to provide the best care for your patients, families and communities, we extend our deepest appreciation and gratitude for your service.

We remain inspired by your unwavering resolve, heroic sacrifice and absolute commitment to delivering the critical care your patients need and deserve.

As hospitals and health systems have been on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, NHHA has continued to advocate for the financial and regulatory relief needed for member hospitals to have the resources they need to care for their communities today and into the future. We remain deeply committed to collaborating with the American Hospital Association and our Congressional Delegation on our legislative agenda and the unprecedented challenges presented by the public health crisis.

Below is a summary of legislative priorities NHHA continues to advocate for in support of member hospitals and health systems:

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- the extension of the public health emergency, currently set to expire on Jan. 20, 2021, to safeguard needed flexibilities, including critical 1135 waivers, through the duration of the public health crisis;
 - appropriate additional funding for the provider relief fund, as well as ensure a timely distribution to support hospitals on the front lines of the pandemic;
 - significant reforms to, if not forgiveness of, Medicare's Accelerated Payment Program to support providers' recovery efforts and their ability to care for their patients and communities;
 - prioritizing maintaining health benefits for individuals and families and increased coverage options for those who are already uninsured through a variety of means;
 - retention of the Provider Relief Fund dollars by allowing use of any reasonable method for calculating COVID-19-related lost revenue, movement of targeted distributions within a system, and use of funds for increased staffing costs;
 - protection of vital federal funding for public programs, including stopping unlawful payment cuts that do not recognize legitimate differences among provider settings or site-neutral payment policies; and
 - protection of the 340B drug savings program to ensure vulnerable communities have access to more affordable drug therapies by reversing harmful policies and holding drug manufacturers accountable to the program rules.

The New Hampshire Hospital Association is committed to being the leading resource on healthcare issues, representing the best interests of member hospitals and health systems and the communities they serve, and advocating at the state and federal levels for policies that ensure viability, increased access and improved quality.

2020 Legislative Session

This year has been like no other, as COVID-19 has impacted the state, hospitals and health systems, patients and families, businesses and communities, and the State Legislative Session was no different. After suspending the session in March, House and Senate leadership were able to consider pending legislation and omnibus bills, some of which were COVID-19 related. Of significant importance was the passage of HB 1639 which addressed a number of legislative priorities, including the **strengthening of protections for Critical Access Hospitals** (CAH) when other healthcare facilities, such as urgent care or ambulatory surgical centers, seek a license to open new operations within 15 miles of a CAH.

In addition, another legislative highlight was the passage of HB1623 relative to telemedicine which **ensures reimbursement parity, expands site of service, and enables all providers to provide services through telehealth** for Medicaid and commercial health coverage. In addition, HB 1623 expanded the definition of telemedicine, enables the use of telehealth services to deliver Medicaid reimbursed services to schools and allows access to medication assisted treatment in specific settings via telehealth services. This significant legislation has had a tremendous impact on enhancing access to health care services for all, most notably our most vulnerable populations, especially in light of the challenges presented by COVID-19.

Behavioral Health Crisis

The NHHA remains committed to resolving the behavioral health crisis facing patients throughout New Hampshire. The litigation that NHHA and members intervened in nearly two years ago continues with important rulings to date. We support the state's implementation of its 10 Year Mental Health Plan designed to address the behavioral health crisis by eliminating the barriers to care and better meeting the needs of patients who suffer from mental health issues and substance use disorders. We continued our efforts to address this statewide crisis alongside member hospitals, community mental health centers and other key stakeholders through the Behavioral Health Clinical Learning Collaborative, which released a **Suicide Screening and Prevention Toolkit** that helps hospitals implement a uniform approach to screening by adopting the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS). In addition, we continue to support hospitals and health systems in implementing **Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)** therapies within their emergency departments and primary care practices to address the opioid crisis devastating communities throughout the state.

Patient Safety & Quality of Care Improvement

The Foundation for Healthy Communities continued its efforts to lead the way to a healthier New Hampshire by supporting hospitals in their efforts to improve patient safety and quality of care through the **Partnership for Patients Initiative**. Along with other healthcare partners, the Foundation joined The Healthcare Association of New York State as a member of the **Eastern US Quality Improvement Collaborative (EQIC)**, a new program under CMS' Network of Quality Improvement and Innovation Contractors supporting healthcare delivery systems in implementing and designing initiatives that are person-centered and integrated across the healthcare continuum for Medicare beneficiaries, with a focus on rural and critical access hospitals. In addition, the **NH Health Care Quality & Safety Commission** continues to be a critical resource for hospitals statewide that promotes accountability, culture of safety and the sharing of best practices and prevention strategies.

Opioid Stewardship Efforts

In its continued efforts to decrease the risk and inappropriate use of prescription medication, the NHHA collaborated with the Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative (RALI NH), the New Hampshire National Guard, the Public Health Networks, state partners and others to distribute **more than 75,000 Deterra Drug Deactivation Pouches** and educational materials on the safe disposal of opioid medication this past year.

Age-Friendly Health Systems

The NHHA joined the American Hospital Association in support of its Age-Friendly Health Systems Initiative which addresses the needs of the elderly population by identifying and sharing lessons learned across the care continuum to improve key outcome measures for this vulnerable population, such as readmissions, falls and patient experience. The Age-Friendly Health System framework is structured around the 4Ms which help hospitals and health systems create age-friendly environments: what **MATTERS** to the patient and family; using age-friendly **MEDICATIONS** that don't interfere with mobility, mentation or what matters; focusing on **MENTATION** by preventing, identifying and treating conditions like dementia, depression and delirium appropriately; and ensuring safe **MOBILITY** among older adults so that they can maintain and improve function.

Physician Leadership Development Program

In its second year, the **New Hampshire Physician Leadership Development Program (NHPLDP)** welcomed an additional **21 physician leaders** into its 2021 - 2023 cohort. The program cultivates effective physician leadership from bedside to boardroom by teaching management, communication and leadership skills, fostering effective communication, and empowering physicians to foster change among their colleagues, and has **supported more than 50 aspiring physicians** since its inception.

Value through Business Solutions

Through its **Endorsed Business Partner (EBP)** program, the NHA delivers greater value to its membership by connecting hospitals and health systems with carefully selected business partners who provide value-added services at reduced costs. The Association has endorsed 9 business partners that aim to address members' needs through innovative business solutions, while providing critical support to the Association in the form of non-dues revenue.

CommerceHealthcare®

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offers cost efficiency and tax credit solutions that help hospitals to reduce operating cost.



provides a vendor neutral solution for managing locum tenen agencies.



offers a designated website that helps thousands of healthcare professionals find jobs and career paths.



offers recruitment of permanent physician placements.



obtains money for healthcare organizations through their class action Settlement Recovery Service.



provides vendor management software and relationships with a network of hundreds of Affiliate Providers to provide clinical healthcare professionals.



provides pharmacy benefit solutions that gives hospitals a significant discount on their pharmacy drug benefits for employees, as well as software and services that help 340B hospitals manage and optimize their 340B program.



recruits, credentials and places physicians in temporary assignments.

Our Mission

To provide leadership through advocacy, education and information in support of its member hospitals and health care delivery systems in delivering high quality health care to the patients and communities they serve.

Our Vision

To be the leading and respected voice for hospitals and health care delivery systems in New Hampshire, working together to deliver compassionate accessible, high quality, financially sustainable health care to the patients and communities they serve.

Member Snapshot



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Hospitals & Health Systems

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Endorsed Business Partners

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Corporate Members
representing law, finance, insurance providers, staffing solutions, medical research & technology, business development and more.

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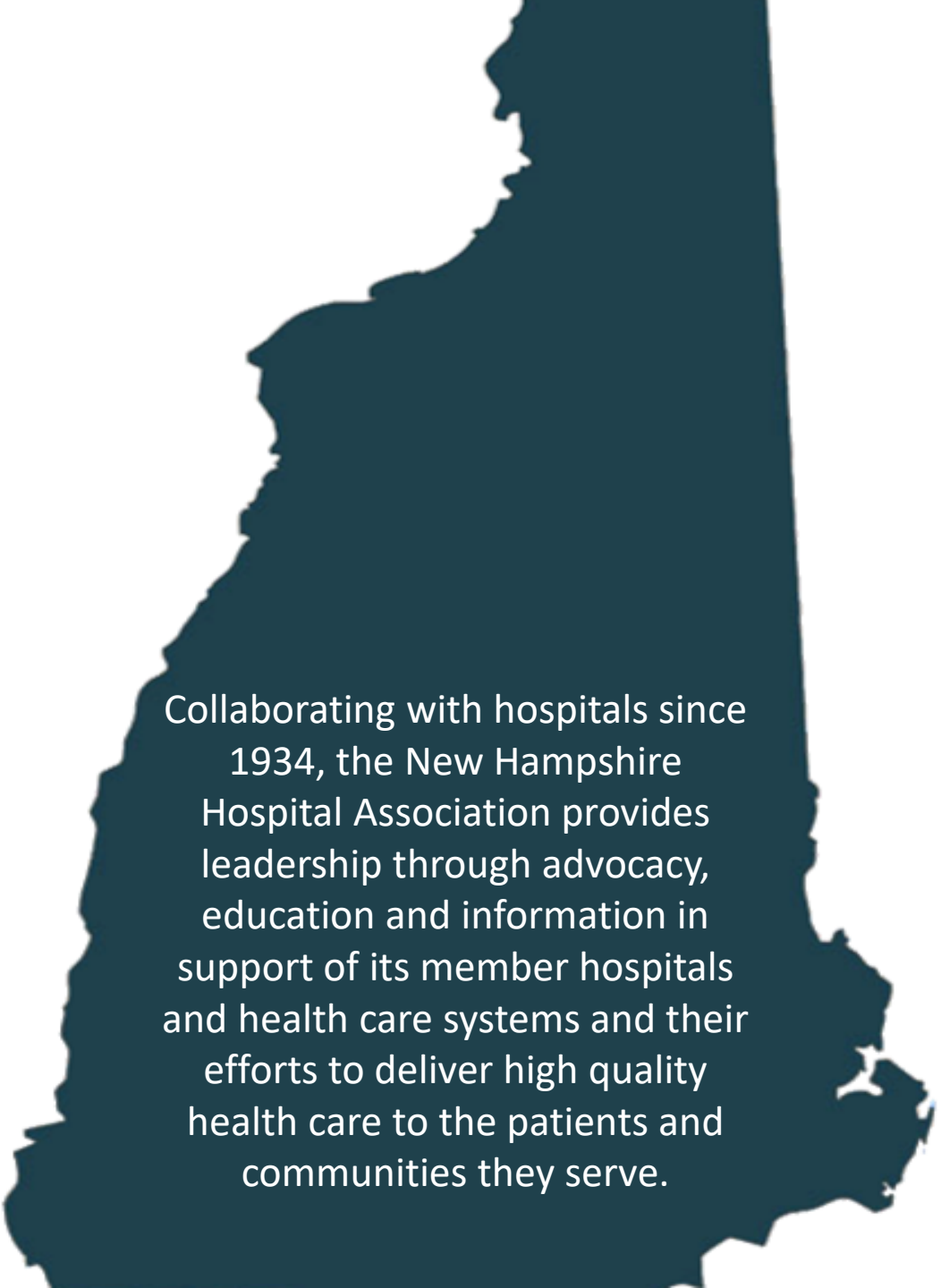


@NHHospitals



New Hampshire Hospital Association

www.nhha.org

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Collaborating with hospitals since 1934, the New Hampshire Hospital Association provides leadership through advocacy, education and information in support of its member hospitals and health care systems and their efforts to deliver high quality health care to the patients and communities they serve.