




Health Care Recap

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Co-Sponsor Memos

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|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| N HCO1059 | Donatucci, Maria | Requires insurance coverage for immunizations administered at a pharmacy by a pharmacist. |
| N HCO1084 | Farry, Frank | Increases the maximum income limits in the PACENET program from \$23,500 to \$31,000 for a single person and from \$31,500 to \$41,000 for a married couple. |
| N HCO1125 | Donatucci, Maria | Seeks to provide paid sick leave to Pennsylvania workers. |
| N HCO1126 | Rozzi, Mark | Eliminates the criminal and civil statutes of limitations for childhood sexual assault claims and allows for a 2-year revival civil window, so that past victims of childhood sexual abuse can have the opportunity to bring suit. |
| N HCO1127 | Baker, Matt | Closes many of the exemptions which were found in the Clean Indoor Act (CIAA) of 2008. |
| N HCO1135 | Bizzarro, Ryan | Directs the Department of Health to promulgate regulations for the certification and practice of community paramedicine providers and requires insurance coverage and medical reimbursement for services. |
| N HCO1136 | DeLuca, Anthony | Requires insurance companies to provide coverage for direct treatment patient costs received during a cancer clinical trial. |
| N HCO1140 | Cutler, Bryan | Codifies a PA Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) form may be used by individuals wishing to designate end of life wishes and discontinue the use of OOH-DNR orders. |
| N HCO1150 | DeLuca, Anthony | Urges Congress to consider keeping the most important provisions of the Affordable Care and Patient Protection Act when executing their impending repeal of the law. |
| N HCO1152 | Davis, Tina | Increases the maximum available loan amounts provided for under the Volunteer Loan Assistance Program (VLAP) for the upgrading of facilities & purchase of new & used apparatus. |
| N HCO1160 | Hahn, Marcia | Creates a research grant program aimed at discovering new and innovative treatments and rehabilitative efforts for spinal cord disabilities. |
| N HCO1172 | DiGirolamo, Gene | Provides for a equitable process to continue to provide services during a budget impasse. |
| N HCO1179 | Davidson, Margo | Strengthens community mental health crisis response systems and treatment programs to ensure individuals with debilitating mental illness receive the treatment they need. |
| N SCO 560 | Killion, Thomas | Updates Act 136 of 1998, the Social Workers, Marriage & Family Therapists & Professional Counselors Act. |
| N SCO 562 | Brooks, Michele | Allows constituents to obtain handicap parking placards in their respective legislative district offices rather than waiting to receive them in the mail. |

- [N SCO 566](#) [Rafferty, John](#) Establishes an official state prescription form for distribution by the Secretary of Health for use by medial professional authorized to prescribe drugs.
- [N SCO 570](#) [Vogel, Jr., Elder](#) Defines telemedicine and offers guidelines outlining who can provide telemedicine services, and provides clarity around insurance company reimbursements for these services.
- [N SCO 572](#) [White, Donald](#) Establishes the Pharmaceutical Transparence Commission to better educate consumers and payors about the components of prescription drug costs to ensure they are reasonably priced in relation to cost.
- [N SCO 573](#) [Browne, Patrick](#) Permits pharmacists to dispense emergency prescription refills for up to 30 days pursuant to certain restrictions.
- [N SCO 578](#) [Schwank, Judy](#) Creates an Emergency Addiction Treatment Program to expand treatment space at existing long-term residential addiction treatment facilities & licensed halfway homes, & brand-new facilities.
- [N SCO 579](#) [Brooks, Michele](#) Deducts Medicare Part B premiums from the countable income of an individual applying for the Aging Waiver.
- [N SCO 580](#) [Dinniman, Andrew](#) Requires school entities to incorporate child opioid awareness education into their curriculum for students in 6th through 12th grades.

Bill Actions

- [N HB 115](#) [Kaufer, Aaron](#) (PN 241) Amends Title 40 (Insurance), in regulation of insurers and related persons generally, requiring insurers to file a written certification with the Insurance Department attesting that they have completed a comprehensive review of all health insurance policies and plans they administer and that they are in compliance with the federal law. This bill is part of a legislative package intended to address the ongoing opioid epidemic. Effective immediately.

Bill History:

01-31-17 H Filed
 02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Insurance

- [N HB 116](#) [Kaufer, Aaron](#) (PN 242) Amends Title 40 (Insurance), in regulation of insurers and related persons generally, requiring insurers to provide consumers with an emergency insurance addendum explaining the coverage for addiction treatment services provided under their purchased plan. The addendum must be no more than two pages, be written in nontechnical language, explain how to access coverage, and how to file an appeal. This bill is part of a legislative package intended to address the ongoing opioid epidemic. Effective immediately.

Bill History:

01-31-17 H Filed
 02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Insurance

- [N HB 117](#) [Kaufer, Aaron](#) (PN 243) Amends Title 40 (Insurance), in regulation of insurers and related persons generally, requiring insurers to disclose to the Insurance Department the number of insureds, the number of insureds receiving addiction treatment and a breakdown of the treatment, including denials based on types of treatment in order for the Department to prepare a public report further reviewed by the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs for compliance with the federal parity law and other laws of the

Commonwealth. This bill is part of a legislative package intended to address the ongoing opioid epidemic. Effective immediately.

Bill History:

01-31-17 H Filed
02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Insurance

 [HB 118](#) [Kaufer, Aaron](#)

(PN 244) Amends the Health Care Facilities Act, in licensing of health care facilities, providing for Emergency Drug and Alcohol Detoxification Program by encouraging existing health care facilities to convert beds to provide medically supervised detoxification and create a staging area for people who are in need of developing a high quality treatment program who may still be in search of an available bed. This bill is part of a legislative package intended to address the ongoing opioid epidemic. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-31-17 H Filed
02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health

 [HB 190](#) [Gainey, Ed](#)

(PN 248) The Prescription Drug Program Act establishes the Prescription Drug Program within the Department of Human Services to bulk purchase prescription drugs or reimburse pharmacies for prescription drugs in order to receive discounted prices and rebates. Effective in 180 days.

Bill History:

01-23-17 H Filed
02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health

 [HB 192](#) [Gainey, Ed](#)

(PN 249) The Nursing Facility Accountability Act provides for living wage accreditation for nursing facilities and for employer responsibility penalties for nursing facilities; establishes the Employer Responsibility for Public Assistance Fund; imposes penalties on nursing facilities with employees on Medical Assistance and other state funded public assistance programs; and requires nursing facilities to report certain information related to jobs and wages. Effective in 90 days.

Bill History:

01-23-17 H Filed
02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health

 [HB 196](#) [Gainey, Ed](#)

(PN 251) Amends the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act further providing for definition of hypodermic syringes by exempting administered syringes from being considered as drug paraphernalia and implementing a statewide needle and syringe exchange program. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-23-17 H Filed
02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health

 [HB 197](#) [Gainey, Ed](#)

(PN 252) The Patient Comfort Act establishes a Patient's Bill of Rights for Palliative Care and Pain Management which includes the informing by a physician of all available options related to terminal care. The bill also requires the Department of Health to establish a Palliative Care and Pain Management Task Force tasked with helping patients gain access for services and propose solutions for addressing gaps in services.

Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-23-17 H Filed
02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health

 [HB 200](#) [Toohil, Tarah](#)

(PN 253) Amends the Early Intervention Services System Act further providing for title of the act by changing the Department of Public Welfare to the Department of Human Services; providing for definitions of "postpartum depression," for high risk child identification, assessment and tracking system; and making editorial changes. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-31-17 H Filed
02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Children and Youth

 [HB 224](#) [Simmons, Justin](#)

(PN 193) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, authorizing school bus drivers to administer epinephrine auto-injectors, provided the driver adheres to established policies and has successfully completed a training program that shall be developed and implemented by the Department of Health. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-25-17 H Filed
01-31-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education
02-06-17 H Meeting set for 11:00 a.m., Room G50, Irvis Building, House Education -- House Education

 [HB 235](#) [Watson, Katharine](#)

(PN 201) The Opioid Abuse Child Impact Task Force Act establishes a task force responsible for identifying strategies and making recommendations on prioritizing the prevention and health of substance-exposed infants and improving outcomes for recovering pregnant and parenting women. The 13-person task force is comprised of the Secretary of Human Services or a designee, the Secretary of Health or a designee, the Secretary of Drug and Alcohol Programs or a Designee, three members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, three members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and four members appointed by the governor. The task force is required to hold a minimum of five meetings prior to November 30, 2017, and issue a report with their findings by January 31, 2018. The act shall expire on March 1, 2018. Effective immediately.

Bill History:

01-25-17 H Filed
01-31-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Children and Youth

 [HB 238](#) [Kampf, Warren](#)

(PN 204) The Fairness in Claims and Transparency (FaCT) Act details provisions relating to apportionment of responsibility. Further provides for statement; service; duty of the plaintiff; and liability. The act is intended to provide transparency of claims made against bankruptcy trusts and in the tort system; to facilitate fair and appropriate compensation to plaintiffs with a rational allocation of responsibility to all persons, whether current defendants or not, consistent with existing State law; to preserve the resources of defendants involved in tort claims and bankruptcy trusts to help promote adequate recoveries for deserving plaintiffs; and to ensure that liabilities properly borne by bankruptcy trusts are not imposed upon defendants in the

tort system. Effective in 90 days.

Bill History:

01-26-17 H Filed
01-31-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary

N [HB 239](#) [Toepel, Marcy](#)

(PN 261) The Rare Disease Advisory Council Act establishes the Rare Disease Advisory Council and provides for its powers and duties, intended to focus on the needs of the rare disease community and the actions necessary to address those needs. The bill places duties regarding the council on the Department of Health, the Insurance Department, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Education. Effective immediately.

Bill History:

01-26-17 H Filed
02-01-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health

N [HB 243](#) [Tallman, Will](#)

(PN 207) Amends Titles 23 (Domestic Relations) and 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure), in proceedings prior to petition to adopt, further providing for grounds for involuntary termination; and, in juvenile matters, further providing for disposition of dependent child. Title 23 is amended to state that the rights of a parent in regard to a child may be terminated after a petition is filed on the grounds of the repeated and continued abuse of alcohol or a controlled substance by the parent that has placed the health, safety or welfare of the child at risk and the abuse of alcohol or a controlled substance cannot or will not be remedied by the parent. Title 42 is amended to state that the court shall also consider the use of alcohol or controlled substances at each permanency hearing. The failure of a drug test requested by the county agency or the refusal to participate in a drug test requested by the county agency shall constitute prima facie evidence of the use of alcohol or a controlled substance that places the health, safety or welfare of the child at risk. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-26-17 H Filed
01-31-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary

N [HB 268](#) [Keller, Mark](#)

(PN 227) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in riot, disorderly conduct and related offenses, granting civil immunity to licensed veterinarians who report, in good faith and in the normal course of business, a suspected incident of animal cruelty to the proper authority. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:







01-27-17 H Filed
01-31-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary

N [HB 271](#) [Ortitay, Jason](#)

(PN 229) Amends Title 4 (Amusements), in administration and enforcement relating to gaming, further providing for compulsive and problem gambling program by requiring the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs to maintain one toll-free problem gambling telephone number to be used at all Pennsylvania casinos. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-30-17 H Filed
01-31-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Gaming Oversight

 HB 272	Driscoll, Michael	(PN 230) The Heimlich Maneuver Training Act requires establishments that serve food to train food servers and supervisors on the Heimlich maneuver techniques as established by the Department of Labor and Industry. Effective in 60 days.
Bill History:		01-30-17 H Filed 01-31-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Labor and Industry
 HB 273	Donatucci, Maria	(PN 231) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in firearms and other dangerous articles, further providing for definitions, for sale or transfer of firearms and for Pennsylvania State Police and providing for self-exclusion from purchasing a firearm. The bill requires the Pennsylvania State Police to establish and maintain a list of persons self-excluded from purchasing a firearm or receiving a firearm by transfer. A person may, as established by the Pennsylvania State Police, request placement on the voluntary self-exclusion list for one year, five years or a lifetime. A person whose name appears on the voluntary self-exclusion list may voluntarily surrender to the Pennsylvania State Police any firearm owned or possessed by the person. Effective in 60 days.
Bill History:		01-30-17 H Filed 01-31-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary
 HB 288	Heffley, Doyle	(PN 282) The Abuse-Deterrent Opioid Analgesic Drug Products Coverage Act provides for coverage requirements by an insurance carrier or health insurance plan for abuse-deterrent opioid analgesic drug products. A health insurance carrier or health insurance plan shall provide coverage on its formulary, drug list or other lists of similar construct for at least one abuse-deterrent opioid analgesic drug product per opioid analgesic active ingredient. Requires the Department of Health to adopt mandatory, evidence-based guidelines for prescribing abuse-deterrent prescription opioids and to develop educational materials to explain the risks associated with all opioids. Effective in 60 days.
Bill History:		02-01-17 H Filed 02-02-17 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Insurance
 HB 305	Costa, Dom	Amends the Confidentiality of HIV-Related Information Act, further providing for legislative intent and for definitions; providing for certification of significant exposure of inmates's blood or bodily fluid.
Bill History:		02-02-17 H Filed
 HB 306	Costa, Dom	Amends the Confidentiality of HIV-Related Information Act, further providing for prevention of transmission of infectious diseases and for confidentiality of records.
Bill History:		02-02-17 H Filed
 HB 312	Costa, Dom	Amends the Osteopathic Medical Practice Act, further providing for reasons for refusal, revocation or suspension of license.
Bill History:		02-02-17 H Filed

N HB 313	Costa, Dom	Amends the Practical Nurse Law, further providing for refusal, suspension or revocation of license and grounds.
Bill History:		02-02-17 H Filed
N HB 314	Costa, Dom	Amends the Professional Nursing Law, further providing for refusal, suspension or revocation of licenses.
Bill History:		02-02-17 H Filed
N HB 315	Costa, Dom	Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in emergency medical services system, providing for dismissal upon conviction of certain offense.
Bill History:		02-02-17 H Filed
N HB 317	Costa, Dom	Amends the Medical Practice Act of 1985, further providing for reasons for refusal, revocation, suspension or other corrective actions against a licensee or certificate holder.
Bill History:		02-02-17 H Filed
N SB 3	Brooks, Michele	(PN 283) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in abortion, defining "dismemberment abortion," further providing for medical consultation and judgment and for the offense of abortion on unborn child of 24 or more weeks gestational age by reducing the prohibition to 20 weeks, prohibiting dismemberment abortion before 20 weeks of gestational age and further providing for reporting. Effective in 60 days.
Bill History:		02-02-17 S Filed 02-02-17 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Judiciary
N SB 200	Bartolotta, Camera	(PN 254) Amends the Early Intervention Services System Act further providing for the title of the act; in general provisions, further providing for definitions, for State interagency agreement, for other duties of State agencies and for council; and, in Statewide system for provision of early intervention services, further providing for requirements, for program regulations and standards, for administration by Department of Public Welfare, for administration by Department of Education and for child identification, assessment and tracking system. The bill makes numerous editorial updates and adds that at-risk children include those who have a parent that is either at high risk for or is diagnosed as having postpartum depression and who are referred by a physician, health care provider or parent. Effective in 60 days.
Bill History:		01-31-17 S Filed 01-31-17 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Health and Human Services
N SB 218	Leach, Daylin	(PN 263) Amends Title 20 (Decedents, Estates and Fiduciaries), in health care, further providing for definitions, for legislative findings and intent, for when living will operative, for revocation and for authority of health care agent and providing for living will and other advance health care directives registry; and making editorial changes. The bill provides for the establishment of a registry of living wills and other advance health care directives, accessible by all physicians. An attending physician shall make a reasonable effort to determine if a patient has executed a living will and other advance health care directives. Notification of a revocation shall be made to the

Department of Health, which shall record the revocation.
Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-31-17 S Filed
01-31-17 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Judiciary

N [SB 221](#) [Greenleaf, Stewart](#)

(PN 204) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in minors, establishing the offense of selling or furnishing dextromethorphan to minors. A person making a retail sale of a finished drug product containing any quantity of dextromethorphan shall obtain proof of age from the purchaser before completing the sale, unless the purchaser's outward appearance is such that a person would reasonably presume the purchaser to be at least 25 years of age. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-31-17 S Meeting set for 11:30 a.m., Room 8E-B East Wing, Senate Judiciary -- Senate Judiciary
01-31-17 S Voted favorably from committee on Senate Judiciary
01-31-17 S Reported as committed from Senate Judiciary
01-31-17 S First consideration
02-06-17 S Set on the Senate Calendar

N [SB 244](#) [Leach, Daylin](#)

(PN 226) Amends The Insurance Company Law by requiring insurance companies to provide coverage for eating disorders. The bill also provides certain restrictions on insurance companies while providing coverage. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-27-17 S Filed
01-27-17 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Banking and Insurance

N [SB 246](#) [Leach, Daylin](#)

(PN 228) The Safe Food and Safe Families Act prohibits the administration of certain antimicrobial agents in agriculture; provides for inspection and testing of agricultural operations, for enforcement, for reporting by agricultural operations and for alternatives to administration of antimicrobial agents to animals; and makes related repeals. A person may not: (1) Administer to an animal a nontherapeutic amount of penicillin, tetracycline, erythromycin, lincomycin, bacitracin or virginiamycin; (2) Administer to an animal a nontherapeutic amount of any other antimicrobial agent designated by the department; or (3) Administer to an animal an antimicrobial agent for growth promotion. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-27-17 S Filed
01-27-17 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs

N [SB 257](#) [Ward, Kim](#)

(PN 237) Amends The Insurance Company Law establishing the Quality Eye Care for Insured Pennsylvanians Act. Stipulates that no insurance policy, vision care plan or government program may impose a condition or restriction on an eye care provider that is not necessary for the delivery of services or materials or that has the effect of excluding the eye care provider from participation in the insurance policy, vision care plan, government program or any of the participating provider panels for those entities. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-27-17 S Filed
01-27-17 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Banking and Insurance

N [SB 263](#) [Baker, Lisa](#)

(PN 245) Amends the Pennsylvania Election Code, in voting by qualified absentee electors, further providing for applications for official absentee ballots repealing provisions that require an absentee voter to submit a written statement asserting continuing disability every four years, thus allowing the voter to be a permanent absentee voter. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-30-17 S Filed
01-30-17 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate State Government

N [SB 274](#) [Gordner, John](#)

(PN 264) Amends the Professional Nursing Law defining "certified registered nurse anesthetist"; further providing for registered nurse, clinical nurse specialist, use of title "C.N.S." and credentials and fraud; and providing for certified registered nurse anesthetist and qualifications. Effective in 60 days.

Bill History:

01-31-17 S Filed
01-31-17 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Consumer Protection & Prof. Licensure

Committee News

Senate Judiciary Committee

1/31/17, 11:30 a.m., Room 8E-B, Capitol East Wing
By Aaron Rider, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

N [SB 221 Greenleaf, Stewart](#) - (PN 204) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in minors, establishing the offense of selling or furnishing dextromethorphan to minors. A person making a retail sale of a finished drug product containing any quantity of dextromethorphan shall obtain proof of age from the purchaser before completing the sale, unless the purchaser's outward appearance is such that a person would reasonably presume the purchaser to be at least 25 years of age. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

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House Democratic Policy Committee

2/1/17, 10:00 a.m., Muhlenberg College, Allentown

The committee held a public hearing in Allentown on suicide prevention in teens and young adults.

Press Conferences

POLICY SECRETARY DISCUSSES CREATION OF NEW DEPARTMENT

By Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | January 30, 2017

Sarah Galbally, Secretary of Policy and Planning, along with representatives from the Pennsylvania Partnership for Children, the Pennsylvania Mental Health Association and AARP Pennsylvania conducted a telephone conference call with reporters to discuss Gov. Tom Wolf's recently announced plan to create a [Department of Health and Human Services](#). Under the Governor's proposal, the Departments of Aging, Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), Health, and Human Services would be consolidated into the one umbrella department. The proposal is to be part of the Governor's 2017-2018 budget, which will be unveiled next week.

Sec. Galbally told reporters, "By creating a new, unified Department of Health and Human Services, we will dramatically improve our ability to deliver services that will improve lives while reducing costs to taxpayers." She explained, "Over the past several months Gov. Wolf has worked closely with the Departments of Aging, Drug and Alcohol Programs, Health, and Human Services to identify and break down silos and re-imagine how we deliver critical services." Sec. Galbally further highlight four key items of the proposal:

- This is a new agency.

- This is about improving the delivery of services not cutting services.
- Programs for seniors including those funded by the lottery will continue.
- Staffing reductions will be minimal.

Sec. Galbally commented, “The administration along with the four secretaries has dedicated a significant amount of time over the last few months in designing this new agency.” She added, “While additional details will be made available next week, we are committed to working with stakeholders, employees and residents over the next five months to ensure concerns are appropriately addressed.”

Sec. Galbally responded to questions from reporters.

Do you have a number on the amount of savings from this proposal?

Those details will be released next week as part of the governor’s budget address.

What is the timeline for creating this agency and the costs involved in doing so?

Over the last few months we have been working with the four agencies involved to figure out where we can bring down silos and better align programs. That will be reflected in the governor’s budget. Our goal is that we have legislation passed by the end of June and begin transitioning to a new agency come July 1. We feel we are in a really good place and we are excited about the opportunity to work with stakeholders, employees and residents to make sure we are addressing any concerns that they may have in regards to the new consolidated agency.

You mentioned the four secretaries. Did that include Gary Tennis or his new replacement and have any of the other secretaries expressed concerns over this consolidation?

[Former DDAP Secretary] Gary Tennis and [Acting DDAP Secretary] Jennifer Smith have both been engaged in this process. The three remaining secretaries are all on board with what the governor wants to do and they are all working productively toward that end.

Have you spoken to legislative leaders about this?

Our legislative office did reach out to the leaders on Friday and the secretaries are reaching out to their committees’ leadership today to continue these discussions.

Does this require legislative approval?

We will need legislation to create the new agency and to repeal the legislation that has created the other four agencies.

If there is not going to be any reduction in the staffs, where will the savings be?

We have already implemented a complement freeze which has reduced unfilled complement spaces and again as we continue to work towards this our goal is any further complement reduction is minimal if any. There will be more details in the governor’s budget address next week.

What has been the complement reduction thus far?

I do not have the exact numbers on what the complement reduction has meant on those four agencies but we can follow-up with that. Back in December, the governor announced and informed all cabinet agencies that unfilled complement positions were being eliminated as we work to address this \$3 billion deficit.

How will this new agency improve the response to what we have now if there should be a public health crisis such as a measles epidemic or a meningitis outbreak?

We would have more resources all in one place and we are bringing down silos which naturally exist between agencies we currently have. I don’t necessarily have a good example for you on a public health crisis and response to that. I think this will better facilitate conversation.

It was just a few years ago the drug and alcohol Drug and Alcohol Program was created to be a separate department because that was to make it more effective. What is the wisdom of now rolling that back just after creating it a few years ago?

I think our experience over the past two years is that we have a lot of agencies working in similar ways to address this epidemic. Bringing it under one umbrella will allow us to improve our response to the epidemic. As was noted in the [press release](#) that was sent our earlier today the governor will be creating a cabinet-level position focused on heroin and opioid policy so that elevation will continue to be a really important issue for the governor.

With the structure of this new department, does it only have one Secretary and how many representatives in the cabinet will it have?

There will be one secretary and as noted in the press release; there will be a cabinet-level position on the heroin and opioid epidemic. Additional details about the structure of the department will be included in the governor's budget address next week.

Is the structure going to be one over-arching agency with bureaus within?

Yes. All our agencies are essentially a secretary and an executive staff and deputates that fall under the agency. That will continue to be the model for this new agency. We are creating those deputates in a way that we are breaking down silos.

Will everybody still have to call different phone number for services or will one person be able to handle all that information?

Our goal is that one person will be able to handle all of that information especially as it relates to different populations that are seeking services.

Do you anticipate you will have this ready to go starting July 1?

We are going to begin transitioning to a new agency on July 1. We recognize a transition is not going to happen overnight.

Are you just changing the deck chairs on the Titanic and changing the sign outside of an office or is there really going to be meaningful change in savings and services?

There really is going to be meaningful change. We have identified the programs each agency has and where we have coordination and where we have duplication and where we can put those in one deputate.

Is the title of the person who is going to be in charge of this unified department going to be Secretary of Health and Human Services?

Yes.

Is there going to be a separate secretary for the opioid crisis or will that person have a title of some sort?

There will be a cabinet-level position. The exact title has not been determined.

Will that person have a budget, staff and resources at their disposal?

That person will work in more of a policy capacity in concert with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. It will be similar to how the Physician General works right now.

What happens to the secretaries in the existing agencies?

As of right now, we are focusing on creating one agency with one secretary and we will continue to address issues like that as this process rolls out.

How many other states have a similar set up and are modeling this after other states?

I believe there are 15 states that have an integrated health and human services department.

You said at the outset you do not have a savings number for this yet and that any future staffing cuts would be minimal if any. Do you expect that there will be some cost savings from this?

There will be cost savings and that information will be included in the governor's budget next week.

What is the current complement in each of the four departments and what is your goal for the overall personnel size?

In terms of current complement, we will have to follow-up with that information. In terms of our goal, that information will be available next week.

Could give you some example of how this will save money?

We are essentially breaking down silos. We are creating new deputates that are taking different programs from different agencies and bringing them together to be run in a more succinct way that will cut down on the extra resources that we put out there by having these programs run by multiple different agencies.

How long have the discussions been going on with the four departments?

The administration has been looking at this for months. I recall conversations going back to last August.

Are there any other proposals for agency consolidations in the budget?

The governor has looked and will continue to look at a merger of the Department of Corrections and Probation and Parole. That is it for the time being.

###

LAWMAKER WANTS TO EXPAND DEPARTMENT, NOT END IT

By Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | January 31, 2017

Yesterday Gov. Tom Wolf announced a plan to consolidate the Departments of Aging, Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), Health, and Human Services into the one umbrella Department of Health and Human Services. Today Rep. Gene DiGirolamo, chairman of the House Human Services Committee, held a news conference to say he is going to “vehemently and adamantly oppose the governor’s proposal to do away with the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.” He explained, “I like the governor. I really think he is a good man and I know he very passionately cares about this issue of addiction and treatment.” Rep. DiGirolamo noted that this morning the governor made an [announcement](#) that his proposed budget will include \$10 million to provide Narcan across the state. He commented, “This is not personal. This is about policy and where we are going moving forward.”

Rep. DiGirolamo told reporters, “I am going to oppose this measure and I am going to propose restructuring of the department.” He announced he will be introducing legislation in the near future that “would strengthen DDAP by consolidating alcohol and drug services from other state agencies into the cabinet level agency.” Some of the drug and alcohol services he proposed to be consolidated include:

- The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse in the Department of Human Services
- The Safe Schools Office in the Department of Education which provides support for K-12 drug and alcohol abuse prevention/education and student assistance programs)
- The Prescription Drug Monitoring Program in the Department of Health
- The Centers of Excellence in the Department of Human Services
- The Medical Marijuana Program in the Department of Health

Noting he was the prime sponsor of the legislation enacted in 2012 to create the DDAP, Rep. DiGirolamo said it was established “to bring focus, visibility, coordination and muscular leadership to the alcohol and drug problems across the state.” He observed, “Since its inception, the agency has been highly successful in addressing these goals in ways that would not have been possible as a bureau.” Regarding the governor’s plan to consolidate the four agencies, Rep. DiGirolamo commented, “I fully expect that if these four agencies are combined into one massive agency, drug and alcohol will once again get lost in the maze of governmental bureaucracy at a time when people need access to these lifesaving services.”

Rep. DiGirolamo also announced plans to introduce legislation creating an Emergency Addiction Treatment Fund in DDAP to go to counties to fund Narcan for local police, EMS and others, drug and alcohol counseling in county jails and other related programs. Moneys for the fund would come from a ten percent impact fee on the sale of opioids in the Commonwealth. He also pointed that in December, Congress enacted legislation sending one-time money to states to address the heroin/opioid epidemic. According to Rep. DiGirolamo, Pennsylvania’s share will be a little more than \$25 million for this federal fiscal year and another \$25 million for the next federal fiscal year. He suggested using the federal money to renovate and staff empty state hospitals and other state-owned buildings so they can be used for addiction treatment that private providers could operate. Rep. DiGirolamo explained that on weekends it can be hard to find an empty detoxification bed in the Commonwealth and pointed out that 35 counties do not have a detoxification facility.

Rep. Thomas Murt (R-Montgomery) commented that he shares Rep. DiGirolamo’s concern about the governor’s proposal. He said, “We know Gov. Wolf as a leader of great compassion and empathy and devotion to human services.” Rep. Murt added, “We just have a disagreement with which way we should go with his proposal.” He told reporters, “I support efficiencies in government wherever they can be achieved but this proposal by the governor has been made with precious little detail for us to discern.” Rep. Murt observed, “This is a massive transformation of a large part of state government with few particulars for us to consider.” He explained that for him personally his concern is about how the governor’s proposal might impact individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. Rep. Murt added that he wants to hear the governor’s plan to shrink the waiting list of intellectually disabled people in need of services.

Rep. DiGirolamo responded to questions from reporters.

Clearly, Gov. Wolf and his administration are selling the idea of providing a one-stop shop and making government services a lot less complicated for Pennsylvanians. Do you see any way to take your ideas and roll them into his proposal?

I just disagree with that. With the Drug and Alcohol Programs, we were there before for such a long time and it just didn't work being a bureau in a large department. Back then it was in the Department of Public Welfare. It just didn't work. You had a bureau, a head of a bureau but they weren't there when decisions were being made. I think if you go out in the field with everybody who deals with drug and alcohol they will tell you the same thing. The bureau was just buried in a large department that dealt with 100 different issues. I don't know how we would get the recognition that it deserves. I just disagree with that. We are talking about a Department of Health and Human Services. We are just going to have a behemoth of a bureaucracy and you can't bury this important issue in a large department like that. We have been there and it didn't work back then and it is not going to work today.

###

COALITION LAUNCHES "PENNSYLVANIA'S CHOICE" INITIATIVE

Kevin Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | January 31, 2017

A diverse group of Pennsylvania organizations held a rally in the Main Rotunda today, one week ahead of Gov. Tom Wolf's budget proposal to lobby legislators to fix Pennsylvania's broken tax system.

Jeff Garis, Director of Outreach and Engagement for the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center, lamented to those assembled that "if the state cannot secure new revenues it will be unable to make the investments that communities across the state need to survive." He explained that Pennsylvania families could suffer from more cuts to essential health and human services programs. He blamed the lack of real reform on the myriad business interests that control the legislature.

Marc Stier, Director of the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center, declared that in there are two fundamental differences in the function of government. Many in Pennsylvania's legislature, he continued, say government does little good, that it's too big, and too expensive. "When governments are well-funded they do an extraordinary job," he admitted, citing that adequate school funding could make Pennsylvania nationally and internationally competitive academically.

Focusing on the issue on government spending, Stier enlightened the group by pointing out that "Government spending has declined since former Gov. Tom Corbett was in office," Stier proclaimed.

Stier addressed the backward nature of the tax system, which he denounces for taking middle- and lower-income people rather than those who earn greater money. "We believe that a broken people should get tax decreases; we shouldn't be raising the taxes for the people at the top."

He outlined several steps to increase revenue without taxing low- and middle-income individuals and families:

- Raising the minimum wage to \$15.00
- Increasing corporate taxes
- Imposing a severance tax for natural gas fracking
- Fix Personal Income Tax

Valerie Allman, member of One Pennsylvania, and a veteran of the Armed Forces, is the mother of two Pittsburgh-area students. She explained that her youngest child is enrolled in early child care and has special needs that are contingent upon state funding.

"Underfunding our public education system is not just damaging to special needs children, but all children," she implored. "About half of the 8.1 million children in the nation do not receive early childhood education," she said. She reported that 20,000 of them live in Allegheny County alone. Regarding the cost of education, she noted that preschool is \$650 per month, and that daycare would cost \$1,300 per month. "Most people we know can't afford that. Sending your child to preschool for two years costs more than college tuition."

Rev. Sally Jo Snyder, Director of Advocacy and Consumer Engagement for the Consumer Health Coalition, opined that "the long-standing safety net that services seniors, persons with disabilities, and children is facing its biggest threat," referring to the upcoming budget season. She is optimistic that the government will do the right thing and

increase revenues needed to help Pennsylvanians whose health care will be impacted by the repeal of the Affordable Care Act.

“We must raise revenue; to not do so is to doom the citizens of our Commonwealth. The time is always right to do the right thing. Fixing our broken tax system to make it a more fair, more just reality. The time is now to do the right thing,” Snyder announced.

Alyssa Schatz, Vice President of Advocacy for the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, described the current state of Pennsylvania’s mental health network by reflecting some statistics. According to Schatz:

- Less than 50 percent of adults with mental health conditions are able to access health care
- 40 percent of youth who need mental health treatment can access Pennsylvania’s health care system
- o Only 20 percent of those have access to consistent care

Deneene Brockington, Director of Government & Community Relations for Resources for Human Development, said she was present today “to give perspective about the scope of people that direct support professionals serve, and in particular the people on the front lines providing this work,” – direct support professionals, Brockington explains – “who care about and are invested in their work.”

She outlined a series of human services sectors where direct support professionals have been and will be affected if the tax burden for working people remains unchanged:

- Drug/alcohol counselors
- Mental illness practitioners
- Health care providers for low income housing people

After relating a personal anecdote, Brockington pivoted back to the employees – professionals, she emphasized – who make this care possible. She added that the Commonwealth needs to increase wages for direct support professionals because it will not only improve the quality of life for Pennsylvania’s vulnerable residents, but that higher wages will also provide a return on its investment and positively contribute to the state’s economy.

Tom Herman, President of the Service Employees International Union, Local 668, stated that SEIU represents 20,000 union service professionals in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He said SEIU explicitly represents those in the emergency services such as those who staff 9-1 emergency call centers in counties across the state, court employees, probation officers, and many more.

“Emergency services workers are united in their dedication to serving and delivering essential public services to all the people of Pennsylvania,” Herman says. “The recent crisis in unemployment compensation shows what happens when you put such little value in the most important asset – its people. Tens of thousands of workers will be penalized through no fault of their own. We need to put people before politics.”

“We can’t keep cutting the workforce and expect to get the job done,” Herman said. “Our members touch the lives of real people in every town across Pennsylvania, and anything short of full funding in the human services budget would be a step in the wrong direction.” To do so, he warns, would endanger the lives of millions of Pennsylvania residents.

John Meyerson, Consultant on Legislation & Political Action for the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 1776, retail, food processing, public service, and in state wine and spirits shops bringing in almost \$600 mil per year into the state treasury. “Pennsylvania has the best, most productive workers in the world – right here!” He proclaimed. He asserted that every budget has been balanced on the back of working families for the past six years.

Meyerson listed three key actions that legislators can do this budget season:

- Shift the tax burden from those in lower tax brackets to those in higher tax brackets
- Tax the Marcellus Shale industry in Pennsylvania
- Raise the minimum wage to \$15.00

“If you don’t listen to us,” he cautioned, “we will be back. And we will not be back alone. We are not speaking for ourselves. We are representing tens of thousands of people across the Commonwealth. We will be back in numbers.”

###

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH KICKS-OFF AMERICAN HEART MONTH

By Jessica Richardson, PLS Intern | February 1, 2017

Department of Health Secretary Karen Murphy, alongside other members of the administration and the American Heart Association, today officially kicked-off American Heart Month in the Capitol Rotunda.

In attendance was Barbara Bowker, chairman of the board of directors of the American Heart Association of the Capitol Region, Secretary Leslie Richards from the Department of Transportation, Secretary Cindy Dunn from Department of Natural Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Acting Secretary Jennifer Smith from Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine and Dr. Loren Robinson from the Department of Health Deputy Secretary Health Promotion Disease Prevention.

Sec. Murphy thanked Sen. Lisa Baker (R-Luzerne) for taking a resolution to the Senate floor to designate Friday as Wear Red Day in the commonwealth.

“We are all in red to encourage Pennsylvanians to get screened,” Sec. Murphy said. Approximately 610,000 people die from heart disease including one in three women, according to Murphy. She said that more women die each year from heart disease than breast cancer. She explained that there are easy steps such as exercise, quitting smoking and talking to a health care provider.

Today, the Department of Health is offering free blood pressure screening for everyone passing the Rotunda. Murphy said high blood pressure is a silent killer and getting blood pressure checked could mitigate the progression of heart disease.

Bowker said that today heart disease remains the number one killer of men and women. She outlined the three steps to preventing and fighting heart health, “Know your number, learn your family history and talk to your doctor about managing your risks.”

“American Heart Health Month may be the shortest month of the year but 28 days is plenty of time to do all the steps,” Bowker said.

Bowker encouraged Pennsylvanians to wear red on Friday, February 3 to help encourage women to learn about their risk of heart disease. All the women in attendance were the first to get their blood pressure checked in the Capitol Rotunda.

###

GOV. WOLF AND STATE OFFICIALS ANNOUNCE MEDICAID EXPANSION RESULTS

By Andreas Diener, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | February 2, 2017

Gov. Tom Wolf held a press conference today in the Governor’s Reception Room to announce that the 2015 Medicaid expansion has resulted in 700,000 individuals [enrolling and gaining access](#) to health care since implementation. He was joined by Rep. Gene DiGirolamo (R-Bucks), Department of Human Services Secretary Ted Dallas, and Insurance Department Secretary Teresa Miller.

Gov. Wolf began his remarks showing a testimonial video of a cancer survivor who was able to receive treatment because of the expansion. “In February of 2015 I moved to expand Medicaid for Pennsylvanians to ensure that more Pennsylvanians can receive affordable, straightforward, accessible health care without the unnecessary delays and confusion,” he said. “And so today over 700,000 Pennsylvania’s now have health insurance who didn’t have it before I expanded Medicaid.” He went on to say Pennsylvania is now down to 6.4 percent uninsured, down from 10.2 percent in almost a year. Gov. Wolf specifically highlighted the issue of infants born with addiction, saying the crisis is everywhere in the state.

“We need to understand what the new administration in Washington is going to do with the Affordable Care Act,” Gov. Wolf continued. “If it’s repealed at the federal level, over a million Pennsylvanians will lose access to health care and over 100,000 will lose access to treatment for substance use disorder that they’re currently getting.” He said the act has been providing good things and voiced hope that the Trump administration will continue the programs. “We all know the Affordable Care Act is not perfect, but it’s a really good start,” he concluded.

Sec. Dallas discussed the numbers behind the expansion. “The single most important thing to remember about any of the numbers I’m about to rattle off to you is there’s a human being behind every single one of these numbers,” he explained. He highlighted various aspects of the [expansion report](#), including:

- 706,281 people enrolled
- \$4.6 billion spent for expansion recipients
- 124,170 people with substance abuse disorder diagnosis newly eligible
- An increase in Medicaid providers of 4,422 physicians, 601 dentists, and 444 registered nurse practitioners.

“In that first year... it created over 15,000 jobs, generated over \$2.2 billion in economic activity, and increased tax revenue by \$53 million,” he added. “A repeal of the Affordable Care Act, that will go away unless there is a replacement.” He said benefits of the act have been statewide and implored the Trump administration to think of the individuals who have benefited.

Rep. DiGirolamo referenced his personal story of not being able to afford health care and feeling like his entire family was at risk as a result. He said he had been working to expand Medicaid and was thrilled when Gov. Wolf took up the issue. “It has taken an enormous amount of pressure off of our counties,” he explained. “These people, if they did not have expanded Medicaid, would have been showing up at the counties for help...and they wouldn’t have the money. This has actually been lifesaving.” He applauded Gov. Wolf for his important actions, and concluded by imploring Congress to either refrain from repealing the Affordable Care Act or have a similar program to replace it.

Questions were taken from the media.

The 100 percent federal funds end next year, what is the cost estimate for that?

Sec. Dallas said he does not have the exact budget number. He explained that when the state moved to expansion, there was over \$50 million in 100 percent state dollars which was saved and would now be up to \$620 million if still covered by the state.

Are you putting money in the budget for the state share in 2017?

Gov. Wolf said it will be in the budget but said he is not sure what will come out of Washington before then.

There are a lot of rural counties that have benefited, how do you get that message across?

Gov. Wolf said the expansion has benefited all areas of the state. He said rural health providers also depend on Medicaid as they operate on a thin margin.

Rep. DiGirolamo said the benefits across the state have affected every family in some way.

Can you comment on the Environmental Protection Agency warning?

Gov. Wolf said he has not read the warning yet but will be taking serious action to deal with the issue.

Have you had conversations with Congress members about maintaining the Affordable Care Act?

Gov. Wolf said he has had some and sent a copy of his letter to every Pennsylvania member, but has not received a response from any Republicans. He said it should be seriously discussed in Washington.

What is your response to rising premium costs even for healthy people?

Gov. Wolf said it is not perfect but is the first step towards a more rational health care system. He mentioned previous rules mandating treatment even if it could not be paid for which was taken up by other payers and businesses, which he described as unfair.

Is there a cost savings estimate for the announced department merger?

Gov. Wolf said it would be in the tens of millions of dollars. He added that it will break down communication barriers and allow more efficient collaboration.

Rep. DiGirolamo said the two most important goals right now, aside from keeping the Medicaid expansion, is continuing efforts for Naloxone availability and increasing bed availability in detox and treatment centers.

###

PA Bulletin

BPOA: CONSENT FORM FOR PRESCRIBING OPIOID MEDICATIONS TO A MINOR

The Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs provided notice of the approval of the consent form for prescribing opioid medications to a minor, effective upon publication and available at www.dos.pa.gov/ProfessionalLicensing.

DOH: TEMPORARY SCHEDULING OF SUBSTANCE: U-47700 (AKA PINK) AS A SCHEDULE I CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

The Department of Health issued notice of intent to issue a final notice to temporarily schedule the synthetic opioid, 3,4-dichloro-N-[2-(dimethylamino)cyclohexyl]-N-methylbenzamide (also known as U-47700 or PINK) as a schedule I controlled substance. Details are available in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

Upcoming Events

House Education

February 6, 2017 - 11:00 a.m., Room G50, Irvis Office Building
[HB 224](#) Simmons, Justin Amends Public School Code re epi-pens

Press Conference

February 6, 2017 – 12:00 p.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg
Introduction of E-Prescribing Legislation

State Bd of Social Wkrs, Marriage & Fam. Therapists & Prof. Coun.

February 7, 2017 - 9:30 a.m. 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1389

State Board of Medicine

February 7, 2017 - 9:00 a.m. 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1400

State Board of Massage Therapy

February 7, 2017 - 9:30 a.m. 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7155

House Insurance

February 8, 2017 - 9:00 a.m., Room 140 Main Capitol
Public hearing on Drug Price Transparency

House Health

February 8, 2017 - 9:30 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building
To consider: [HB 126](#) Baker, Matt Act re epinephrine auto-injectors [HR 27](#) Baker, Matt Resolution re unethical organ transplants

Press Conference

February 8, 2017 – 10:00 a.m. Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg
Sens. Scavello, Tartaglione, & Advocates to Announce Spinal Cord Disability Research Legislation

Department of Human Services

February 8, 2017 - 10:00 a.m. Commonwealth Tower, 6th Floor, Room 38 A/B, 303 Walnut Street, Harrisburg
Fee-for-Service Subcommittee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 257-7792

Department of Human Services

February 8, 2017 - 10:00 a.m. Health & Welfare Building, Room 129, Harrisburg
LIHEAP Advisory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 257-7792

Department of Human Services

February 8, 2017 - 10:00 a.m. PCCD Offices, Commission Meeting Room, Ground Floor, 3101 N. Front Street, Harrisburg
Children's Advocacy Center Advisory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 265-8497

State Board of Osteopathic Medicine

February 8, 2017 - 9:30 a.m. 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-4858

Press Conference

February 9, 2017 – 10:00 a.m. Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg
United Way of PA 2-1-1 Day 2017

Department of Aging

February 9, 2017 - 10:00 a.m. Department of Aging, Conference Rooms A, B, & C, 5th Floor, 555 Walnut St., Harrisburg
Long-term Care Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 705-7296

PA Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse (DDAP)

February 13, 2017 - 1:00 p.m. PA Child Welfare Resource Center, 403 E. Winding Hill Rd., Mechanicsburg
Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 214-1937

Department of Human Services

February 14, 2017 - 10:00 a.m. Rachel Carson State Office Building, 1st Floor, Room 105, 400 Market St., Harrisburg
Long Term Care Subcommittee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-8412

State Board of Podiatry

February 15, 2017 - 9:30 a.m. 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-4858

Session Schedule

Senate

February 6, 7, 8
March 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29
April 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26
May 8, 9, 10, 22, 23, 24
June 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

Senate budget hearings

February 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28
March 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

House

February 6, 7, 8
March 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22
April 3, 4, 5, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26
May 8, 9, 10, 22, 23, 24
June 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

House budget hearings

February 21, 22, 23, 27, 28
March 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9

In the News

02-02-2017 [Department of Human Services Selected to Speak at National Medicaid...](#)
(Press Release)

02-02-2017 [What Medicaid Expansion Means to Brian](#)
(Press Release)

- 02-02-2017 [Over 700,000 Additional Pennsylvanians Enrolled in Governor Wolf's Medicaid...](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-02-2017 [HAP: PA Senate Intends to Reintroduce Telemedicine Legislation](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-02-2017 [HAP: Commonwealth Fund Survey Findings Show ACA Has Improved the Ability of...](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-02-2017 [HAP: New Administration Seeks Regulatory Relief](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-02-2017 [Capital BlueCross, Lancaster General Health Announce Accountable Care...](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-02-2017 [DeLuca Bill on Pharmaceutical Transparency to Receive Public Hearing Feb. 8](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-02-2017 [How the New Department of Health and Human Services Will Support Seniors](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-02-2017 [Department of Human Services - Medicaid Expansion Report](#)
(Testimony)
- 02-02-2017 [Medicaid Expansion Results Snapshot](#)
(Testimony)
- 02-02-2017 [Understanding giardia and water concerns: A Q&A with Dr. Marc Itskowitz](#)
Marc Itskowitz is an internal medicine doctor and director of the Center for Perioperative Medicine for Allegheny Health Network. Today he answered questions for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that have been raised in the wake of the city's concern that giardia could have spread through the water... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Here's how to reform health care](#)
By Randy Oostra Our nation's health care system is a mess. The industry spends \$3 trillion annually and constitutes more than 17 percent of the nation's GDP. For patients and their families, shouldering the burden of rising health care costs often leads to financial hardship and is the No. 1 cause... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Monday's Allegheny County vaping public hearing: what to expect](#)
The Allegheny County Council's Health and Human Services Committee's public hearing on the controversial proposed vaping ban is set for Monday evening. Those who want to address council must sign up by phone — by Friday — or via an online form by Sunday night.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Veterans Affairs pick David Shulkin pledges to save agency](#)
WASHINGTON — Physician David Shulkin headed toward likely confirmation as President Donald Trump's Veterans Affairs secretary, after offering repeated assurances Wednesday to sometimes skeptical senators that he will work quickly to meet the medical care needs of millions of veterans without... - [AP](#)
- 02-02-2017 [This doctor used to think his Philly hospital was immune from political anxiety](#)
For the past several decades the feeling in the medical and scientific community was that we were immune to politics, that we were above it, safe in our realms of patient care and

academics. It took a divisive presidential campaign, and then an act of horrible violence, to shake that... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

02-02-2017

[Norristown State Hospital closure troubles families](#)

David Bolin spent 30 years working for a tax-exempt organization that provided community-based services to elderly, mentally ill, and intellectually and developmentally disabled individuals. But now he finds himself in the unexpected position of pushing against the... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

02-02-2017

[This common disease is a bigger killer than you think](#)

Diabetes is a bigger killer than government statistics would lead you to believe. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention put it at No. 7, behind heart disease, cancer, chronic lower respiratory disease, accidents, stroke, and Alzheimer's disease.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

02-02-2017

[15 ways to keep your kids active during the winter months in the Philadelphia area](#)

Winter is the time of year when cabin fever sets in and kids get rambunctious, having been cooped up too long with few ways to expend their energy. So here is a list of activities to keep your children active, healthy, and happy this season. Skating The Blue Cross RiverRink (101 S. Columbus Blvd., 215-925-RINK,... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

02-02-2017

[Long-time scion of Boscov's diagnosed with late-stage cancer: report](#)

Pennsylvania retail icon Albert R. Boscov has been diagnosed with late-stage cancer. The 87-year-old chairman of Boscov's Department Stores, based in Reading, told employees in a letter Wednesday morning thanking them for their service to the company, The Reading Eagle reported Wednesday. The company... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)

02-02-2017

[Poor drinking water oversight could have 'serious public health implications' for Pennsylvanians, EPA says](#)

Pennsylvania's failure to enforce safe drinking water standards due to inadequate staffing could have "serious public health implications," according to federal regulators, and cost the state millions in federal funding. That warning came in a Dec. 30 letter from the U.S. Environmental... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)

02-02-2017

[2-year-old dies after 'faith' stops couple from seeking medical care](#)

A Berks County couple who told police their faith forbids them from seeking medical treatment has been charged in the recent death of their 2-year-old daughter, according to an Associated Press report. Jonathan and Grace Foster of Upper Tulpehocken Township were charged... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)

02-02-2017

[Women are overdosing at this Pa. prison](#)

An investigation into how a woman managed to overdose over the weekend while lodged at the Cambria County Prison was already ongoing when another woman overdosed Wednesday, according to WJAC-TV. The second woman, who was not immediately identified, was found... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)

02-02-2017

[Heart surgery results getting better in Pennsylvania](#)

Fewer people are dying or getting sick after heart surgery in Pennsylvania, where the price of cardiac care varies widely from hospital to hospital throughout the state and even within the Lehigh Valley. The mortality rate for coronary artery bypass graft surgery and/or heart... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)

02-02-2017

[Lynn Township neighbors pepper medical marijuana firm with questions](#)

LYNN TOWNSHIP—Put it out there that you're planning to grow medical marijuana in the neighborhood, and people sit up and take notice. More than 40 Lynn Township residents

gathered at the Lynnport Community Fire Company Wednesday night, sitting on folding chairs as TruVo Health... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)

- 02-02-2017 [Retail legend Albert Boscov tells employees he has late-stage cancer](#)
Albert Boscov, longtime chairman of Boscov's Department Stores, has told employees he has late-stage cancer. Boscov related the news in a letter to the Berks County-based retail chain's 8,000 employees Wednesday morning, said Boscov's nephew, Jim Boscov, who was promoted to the company's third-generation CEO in 2015.... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Care before insurance](#)
By James Huffman As Democrats used to be fond of saying, elections have consequences. One consequence of the 2016 election is that the Affordable Care Act is doomed, though most of its benefits are likely to survive. President Trump has declared that everybody should be guaranteed health insurance.... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Scranton eyes pilot pre-arrest drug treatment program](#)
The Scranton Police Department hopes to offer certain opioid addicts a chance for treatment that, if successfully completed, won't result in any charges filed for potential crimes, authorities said. The department is preparing to apply for a federal grant of about \$730,000... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Local health care foundation awards \\$720,000 in grants](#)
A nonprofit that uses horses to help veterans suffering from post traumatic stress disorder conquer their symptoms got a \$15,000 boost to further its mission. Equines for Freedom, among 22 other nonprofits awarded by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Health Care Foundation in its 2016 grant cycle, got the money... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 02-02-2017 [With grant in place, mental health group looks to train hundreds in crisis intervention](#)
JESSUP — A Scranton-based mental health group will use a \$830,000 grant to fund mental health training for area law enforcement agencies and reimburse towns worried about cost, the nonprofit's chief said Tuesday. The effort builds on the success of the local crisis intervention team,... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Their view: A tribute to the nurse anesthetist](#)
As anyone who has undergone a surgical procedure can attest, the experience is frequently accompanied by anxiety and fear of the unknown. Often a patient's concern involves pain associated with the surgery, either during the procedure itself or during the postoperative period.... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Commissioner said interest expressed in buying Health Center](#)
There have been expressions of interest by would-be buyers of the Washington County Health Center. Prior to Wednesday's workshop meeting of the county board of commissioners, Commissioner Diana Irey Vaughan said there were four would-be bidders who registered online with the county.... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Methadone clinic opens in North Union Township](#)
A methadone and suboxone clinic with the capacity to treat 400 people recovering from opioid addiction has opened at the site of a former clinic in North Union Township. Colonial Management Group of Maitland, Florida, opened the Uniontown Metro Treatment Center at 1023 Pittsburgh Road last... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Berks district attorney: Death of 2-year-old was preventable \(VIDEO\)](#)
When Ella Grace Foster started showing signs of a cold, her parents did nothing. When the 2-year-old's symptoms worsened in the days that followed, they did nothing. And when her fever spiked and her breathing became labored, still they did nothing. Jonathan David and Grace

Anne Foster did not call an ambulance or rush to a... - [Reading Eagle](#)

- 02-02-2017 [What happens when religious faith doesn't allow medicine?](#)
Reading, PA Different religions and cultures often maintain views on health care practices that differ from what medical professionals believe to be best. However, two instructors at Alvernia University agreed that the rejection of any medical care by Jonathan David and Grace Anne Foster and their... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Retail icon Al Boscov diagnosed with late-stage cancer](#)
Albert R. Boscov, chairman of Boscov's Department Stores, has late-stage cancer, company officials confirmed Wednesday. Boscov, 87, has been ailing for a while and informed employees of the largest family-owned department store chain in the country that he has been... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 02-02-2017 [West Pottsgrove Township site considered for medical marijuana operation](#)
West Pottsgrove Township, PA A Haverford-based company is looking for West Pottsgrove Township's blessing to move forward with an application to build a marijuana growing facility. The application by Holistic Industries of Pennsylvania would be for a 100,000-square-foot structure on a 22-acre site off West High Street.... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Nurse accused of sexually assaulting patient now facing trial](#)
A former St. Luke's University Hospital nurse accused of sexually assaulting a patient is now facing trial in the case. John Spanogle, 31, of the 1700 block of North New Street in Bethlehem, waived his preliminary hearing Wednesday on a single count of indecent... - [Easton Express-Times](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Mon Valley Hospital changes ER visitor policy](#)
Monongahela Valley Hospital has changed its emergency department visitor policy to provide patients increased safety and privacy in the treatment area. The policy is effective immediately. "We know when people are ill or injured they want their loved ones with... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Ortitay bill to streamline problem gambling assistance](#)
State Rep. Jason Ortity, R-South Fayette Township, has introduced legislation to streamline the commonwealth's problem gambling assistance telephone number and codify current practice involving education, awareness and training for problem gaming. HB271 would require the Department of Health to establish and... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Bartolotta co-sponsors postpartum depression bill](#)
State Sen. Camera Bartolotta, R-Carroll Township, along with state Sen. Judy Schwank, D-Fleetwood, reintroduced legislation that would extend early intervention services to newborn and infant children of mothers affected by postpartum depression. Pennsylvania has a monitoring system in place to protect infants who suffer... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)
- 02-02-2017 [If you didn't get a flu shot, it's not too late](#)
You can help stop the flu. It's not too late. The Pennsylvania Department of Health recently reported a statewide uptick of influenza activity and severe illness - 477 new cases were reported this week in Pennsylvania, according to Jane Haney, a licensed practical nurse... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Nurse at LIFE Geisinger accused of stealing patients' pain medication](#)
KULPMONT — A registered nurse is accused of stealing Oxycodone pills from patients at LIFE Geisinger Adult Day Center, Kulpmont in June and July 2015. - [Shamokin News-Item](#)
- 02-02-2017 [LETTER: Fluoridation of water can have educational, economic benefits](#)

Meadville residents have shared their views about fluoridation, so I would like to share my perspective as an educator. Education can be a great equalizer by giving every child a chance to learn, work hard, grow up and use their God-given talents to build a successful life.... -

[Meadville Tribune](#)

02-02-2017

[Editorial | Special Olympians head home with medals, fond memories](#)

John Reynolds, Kristine Stout and Jordan Reedy thrive on competition. And they enjoy the celebrations and bling that comes with winning. Reynolds, Stout and Reedy competed in skiing on Monday and Tuesday during the Special Olympics Pennsylvania Winter Games at Seven Springs Mountain... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)

02-02-2017

[Start kids early on dental health](#)

Most parents know that feeding their children nutritious food leads to better general health, but it also leads to better dental health-and vice versa. "Diet has a great influence on how much decay kids will have," said Bob Zimmerman, DDS, of Cornerstone Family Dentistry in Waynesboro and Blue... - [Waynesboro Record Herald](#)

02-02-2017

[The working poor aren't finding anything sweet in Philly's soda tax: Daren Bakst](#)

By Daren Bakst Philadelphia's experience with the "soda tax" should serve as a cautionary tale to other Pennsylvania cities. DAREN BAKST HEADSHOT.pngDaren Bakst (Heritage Foundation photo) With the dawn of 2017, the City of Brotherly Love launched an egregious... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)

02-02-2017

[New Rules Aim to Keep Patients on Medications That Work](#)

When she was 12, Logan began having suicidal thoughts. She started cutting herself and withdrew from her friends. She went from being a straight-A student to a failing one, and had to give up a coveted spot at her magnet school in Tennessee. Logan's psychiatrist prescribed the antidepressant Pexeva, which for... - [Stateline.org](#)

02-02-2017

[Obamacare enrollment up in Maryland, despite uncertainty](#)

Amid uncertainty about the future of the national health care law, record numbers of Marylanders signed up for coverage this year, according to figures released by the state Wednesday. In what could be the final enrollment period of the Affordable Care Act, nearly 432,000 Maryland residents signed up for the law's various... - [Baltimore Sun](#)

02-02-2017

[Critics slam Kasich's flat-funding of drug-addiction fight](#)

Ohio Gov. John Kasich stood firm Wednesday against charges from lawmakers and others that the state is not doing enough to tackle the nation's leading number of drug-overdose deaths, principally from opioids. Noting that his budget proposal maintains the state's \$1 billion-a-year... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)

02-02-2017

[Hormone Blockers Can Prolong Life if Prostate Cancer Recurs](#)

At 12 years, the men who had both treatments were also much less likely to have died from their prostate cancer — 5.8 percent versus 13.4 percent — or to have the cancer spread around their bodies — 14.5 percent versus 23 percent. "This is a big deal," said Dr. Ian M. Thompson Jr., of the Christus... - [New York Times](#)

02-02-2017

[Johns Hopkins Hospital inspires mistrust and fear in parts of East Baltimore](#)

BALTIMORE — As "Big Mike" Saunders watched an excavator knock down another house in his old neighborhood, he pulled out his phone and searched for a picture. Like many here, when Saunders thinks about the forces that buffet East Baltimore's poor residents, it quickly comes... - [Washington Post](#)

02-02-2017

[Opinion | The Trump administration threatens to imperil women's health worldwide](#)

SOME SAY the "Mexico City policy" — a restriction on U.S. funds to international organizations

that provide, advise or discuss abortions — looks like a game of ping-pong. Republican administrations implement the rule, and Democratic ones volley it back. If so, President Trump has... - [Washington Post](#)

- 02-02-2017 [Public weighs in on pending closure of civil unit at Norristown State Hospital](#)
NORRISTOWN >> What's next? That was the most frequently asked question at a public hearing Tuesday at Norristown State Hospital to discuss the recently announced plans to close the facility's civil unit. While almost everyone who attended agreed that deinstitutionalization... - [Phoenixville News](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Cranberry mom heads up area fight against diabetes](#)
Cindy Zerbe is like many mothers. She juggles attending various sporting events involving her sons and helping with homework and day to day life. But unlike many families, the Zerbes are facing a battle. Garrett Zerbe, the youngest son of Pat and Cindy Zerbe, was diagnosed with... - [Oil City Derrick](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Public weighs in on pending closure of civil unit at Norristown State Hospital](#)
NORRISTOWN >> What's next? That was the most frequently asked question at a public hearing Tuesday at Norristown State Hospital to discuss the recently announced plans to close the facility's civil unit. While almost everyone who attended agreed that deinstitutionalization... - [Norristown Times Herald](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Risk to women's health benefits seen in health law repeal](#)
WASHINGTON >> From a return to higher premiums for women to gaps in coverage for birth control and breast pumps, the Republican push to repeal the Obama-era health care law already is raising concerns that women could be hit hard... - [AP](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Long-awaited program lets people with disabilities save money without losing benefits](#)
Pennsylvania is slated to join states around the nation offering a program that allows people with disabilities to save up to \$14,000 a year without losing government benefits. Without the program, recipients can't have more than \$2,000 in savings -- something advocates have long said shackles them to a life of poverty. The... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Dire warning about ACA repeal](#)
It is with a heavy heart that I write this letter. Early in the morning of Jan. 12, the Republicans in the U.S. Senate effectively guaranteed the death of health insurance for up to 30 million Americans. I will bet many of you who are reading this voted for Donald Trump or a... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Pa. senate bill aims to extend services for mothers, children impacted by postpartum depression](#)
A recent senate bill aims to amend the Early Intervention Services System Act to include postpartum depression as an at-risk category. SB200, sponsored primarily by Sen. Camera Bartolotta, would extend early intervention services to provide assistance to mothers and... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Long-awaited program lets people with disabilities save money without losing benefits](#)
Pennsylvania is slated to join states around the nation offering a program that allows people with disabilities to save up to \$14,000 a year without losing government benefits. Without the program, recipients can't have more than \$2,000 in savings -- something advocates have long said shackles them to a life of poverty. The... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Repeal of Affordable Care Act is a serious threat](#)
For almost a million of our neighbors in Pennsylvania, the Affordable Care Act provides the means to health insurance they can use. Whether you are a mother of two in West Philadelphia

insured through the expansion of Medicaid or a small-business owner in Newtown who purchases health care on... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)

- 02-02-2017 [Physician coalition led by Bucks County pediatrician meeting with lawmakers about how to 'heal' health care](#)
Doctors don't typically speak out publicly about problems with health care, but a Bucks County pediatrician says it's time they make their voices heard. On Thursday, Dr. Marion Mass and a new coalition of her colleagues from across the country will talk with lawmakers about how to solve some of the... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 02-02-2017 [U.S. warns Pennsylvania over safe drinking water violations](#)
HARRISBURG — Gov. Tom Wolf's administration says it is trying to address a warning by a federal official that the state isn't appropriately enforcing safe drinking water standards... - [AP](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Harrisburg protest urges Toomey to protect ACA](#)
Tuesday marked the final day Americans could enroll in 2017 health care plans through the Affordable Care Act, and many gathered in Harrisburg to urge Sen. Pat Toomey to make sure those plans are available in the future. A group of about 100, mostly women, protested outside Toomey's office in... - [York Dispatch](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Owning a 'medical marijuana' businesses will be expensive](#)
Any county resident hoping to cash in on the pending "medical marijuana" business needs to act quickly to apply for the limited permits and be prepared to pay some serious fees. Applications for medical marijuana grower and processors and dispensaries became available Jan. 17. Permit applications will be accepted from Feb. 20... - [Clarion News](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Abortion is death care](#)
Abortion is death care By Dorothy G. (Knight) Burchett New Castle (formerly of Clarion) I have a few words of contemplation for the women who marched on Washington, D.C. and other cities Jan. 21, especially those who chanted, "My body, my choice." It's not your body that is removed from the womb, harvested of body parts,... - [Clarion News](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Pa. bracing for rough flu season peak](#)
HARRISBURG – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports flu cases are at epidemic levels across 37 states. More than 200,000 Americans are sent to the hospital during flu season. The CDC has tracked an increase in flu-related deaths. So far in Pennsylvania, there have been 33 reported flu-related deaths this... - [Carlisle Sentinel](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Chipotle, Opa, among Philly eateries closed for health violations](#)
The city asked — or ordered — nearly two dozen restaurants to close temporarily for health violations between Jan. 16 and Feb. 1. Repeat violators included Opa, at 11th and Sansom Streets, which missed out on Restaurant Week after failing multiple consecutive inspections. It was... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Grads sing praises of Treatment Court](#)
Local program a national model. LEWISBURG — Five men and five women graduated Wednesday from Treatment Court of the 17th Judicial District. Their class was the first to graduate since the alternative sentencing program was recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and National Association of Drug Court Professionals... - [Milton Standard](#)
- 02-02-2017 [Marijuana facility on the fast track](#)
SOUTH AVIS — Plans for creating a medical marijuana facility in South Avis were placed on the fast track Wednesday in Pine Creek Township. After hearing more details about the proposal from legal representatives and others outlining security steps for Terrapin Care Station, the township... - [Lock Haven Express](#)

- 02-02-2017 [**CNA training available for adult learners**](#)
LEWISTOWN — Area residents can be ready for a new career in just three weeks. The Mifflin County Academy of Science and Technology is recruiting adult students for its certified nurse aide training program. Ben Glover, supervisor of adult education, said the school has transitioned... - [Lewistown Sentinel](#)
- 02-02-2017 [**Hospital authority announces new officers**](#)
Dana Henry was reappointed as a member of the Indiana County Hospital Authority for a five-year term expiring Jan. 1, 2022, during the Jan. 11 Indiana County Board of Commissioners meeting. All officers of the authority were re-elected to one-year terms at the... - [Indiana Gazette](#)
- 02-02-2017 [**Sen. White calls for drug pricing review**](#)
Speaking on the floor of the Senate on Monday, State Sen. Don White, R-Indiana, announced plans to reintroduce legislation calling for a thorough review of prescription drug pricing in Pennsylvania. "Health care costs overall are out of control and pharmaceuticals are a... - [Indiana Gazette](#)
- 02-02-2017 [**Proponents of Obamacare apprehensive about possible repeal**](#)
The fate of Obamacare still remains a mystery after Donald Trump's first 12 days as president. Conventional wisdom says that with the support of a Republican majority in Congress, Trump will be able to repeal the majority of provisions set forth by the Affordable Care Act, a central campaign promise. Trump believes that... - [Daily Pennsylvanian](#)
- 02-02-2017 [**With ACA repeal looming, Highlands focuses on future**](#)
As President Donald Trump's plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act continues to move forward, rural hospitals in the U.S. could face issues. A Jan. 19 article from Kaiser Health News focused on how the repeal of Obamacare could hit hospitals like Highlands Hospital, which... - [Connellsville Daily Courier](#)
- 02-02-2017 [**Summit school fails new lead test**](#)
As Summit Township Elementary School parents prepare to send their children to Broad Street Elementary School, a new report reveals that there still are unacceptable amounts of lead in Summit Elementary's water. Butler School Board President Nina Teff said at an informational meeting... - [Butler Eagle](#)
- 02-02-2017 [**State budget challenges demand long-term fixes**](#)
With Gov. Wolf's third budget address on the horizon, Pennsylvania's financial woes demand long-term fixes, not last-minute dealmaking. Gov. Tom Wolf's budget annual address is on the horizon, and so is a staggering budget deficit. Pennsylvania is barreling into the 2017 fiscal year with a massive... - [Butler Eagle](#)
- 02-02-2017 [**Rethink fracking**](#)
I would not be so foolhardy as to declare that the lead situation at Summit Elementary School is attributable to fracked wells in proximity — six as close as 700 feet — but I have been assured by experts that if there were problems with one of the nearby wells, changes in the chemistry of the... - [Butler Eagle](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**Secretary of Health Urges Pennsylvanians to Get Their Blood Pressure ...**](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-01-2017 [**ELAP Services Announces Management Appointments**](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-01-2017 [**AARP Launches Campaign to Protect Medicare**](#)

(Press Release)

- 02-01-2017 [Pennsylvania Business and Health Care Leaders Join Forces to Seek ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 02-01-2017 [Slow pace of Obamacare repeal leaves House conservatives fuming](#)
By Sahil Kapur / Bloomberg News WASHINGTON — House Republicans voiced frustrations Tuesday about slow-moving efforts to unwind Obamacare, urging their leaders to pick up the pace on a top campaign promise. “Let’s get rid of it,” Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio told reporters... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Coraopolis family gets reprieve of \\$300,000 on drug that’s helping their son](#)
A medicine costing \$300,000 a year was helping slow a fatal disease in a 16-year-old Coraopolis boy, while also threatening to bankrupt his family. Things turned worse when Highmark, the family’s health insurer, twice denied to cover the drug, which is called eteplirsen. The boy’s mother... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Natural gas is improving our air](#)
By State Sen. Guy Reschenthaler Brian O’Neill’s Jan. 15 column in the Post-Gazette (“Put Methane in Its Place, not the Atmosphere”) was missing a crucial fact: Pennsylvania’s air is getting cleaner because of increased natural gas production. Patrick McDonnell, the acting state secretary of environmental protection,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Laundry overseer weighs in on UPMC mold crisis](#)
A health care laundry oversight group that accredited the linen vendor embroiled in two wrongful death lawsuits connected to the UPMC mold crisis said Tuesday that its standards are extensive and rigorous. “Those standards deal with processing health care laundry in the safest... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Teva loses patent case for blockbuster multiple sclerosis drug](#)
Shares of Teva Pharmaceutical Industries fell Tuesday after a federal court in Delaware rejected four of the drugmaker’s claims of patent infringement on its top-selling multiple sclerosis medicine. The patents cover a 40 milligram injection of Copaxone that patients... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Health, fitness, and nutrition advice is always changing!](#)
Have you ever wondered why health, fitness, and nutrition advice is always changing? Not long ago, eggs were bad for you. Now the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction. Now they’re the perfect food, and, yes, eat the yolks, too. For decades, 30 minutes a day of exercise three times a week was the... - [Philadelphia Daily News](#)
- 02-01-2017 [When did conservatives stop loving Obamacare?](#)
by Robert I. Field, Ph.D., J.D., M.P.H., Blog Editor and Professor at Drexel University Kline School of Law & Dornsife School of Public Health @RobertIField Consider a health reform plan based on the principle that “all citizens should be guaranteed universal access to affordable health care.” It... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Baer: Gov. Wolf’s wonderful world of consolidation](#)
So Gov. Wolf wants to consolidate four state agencies in the sprawling state bureaucracy into one. At last, a brave new world of less red tape and more taxpayer savings, right? And fashioned by a Democrat! Instead of separate departments of Human Services, Aging, Drug & Alcohol,... - [Philadelphia Daily News](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Commentary: Doctors writing prescription to improve U.S. health care](#)
By Marion Mass Health care in America has been sick for decades, but the acuity of the illness

has progressed rapidly in recently years. Sadly, the Affordable Care Act doubled down on the failing system and has put families at a breaking point. No one can argue with the affordability... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Wolf calls for \\$10 million to equip police with Naloxone](#)
Gov. Wolf will include \$10 million in his proposed budget to equip first responders and police officers with Naloxone, an emergency treatment for opioid overdoses. Saying that Naloxone already has rescued more than 2,300 people from overdoses in Pennsylvania, Wolf called it "just a first step" in fighting... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Gov. Tom Wolf vows to keep substance abuse a priority in department consolidation](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf disagrees with a Bucks County Republican lawmaker when it comes to how state government can best serve the needs of those struggling with substance addictions. Moving drug and alcohol services housed in other departments to the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs as Rep. Gene DiGirolamo, R-Bucks... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Educators must bargain for sick days under new proposal; 'it's a fairness issue,' lawmaker says](#)
Sabbatical, sick and bereavement leaves have been a staple in public school educators' benefits package for decades because state law required them to be. Legislation that narrowly won Senate Education Committee approval on Tuesday would change that and allow them to become a topic at the... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Wolf to seek another \\$10M to help reverse drug overdoses](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf will ask lawmakers for another \$10 million to help save the lives of people overdosing on heroin or prescription drugs... - [AP](#)
- 02-01-2017 [With grant in place, mental health group looks to train hundreds in crisis intervention](#)
JESSUP — A Scranton-based mental health group will use a \$830,000 grant to fund mental health training for area law enforcement agencies and reimburse towns worried about cost, the nonprofit's chief said Tuesday. The effort builds on the success of the local crisis intervention team,... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Efficiency for its own sake](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf's plan to consolidate four state agencies into a new Department of Health and Human Services apparently won't do much to resolve the state government's growing budget problems. The governor plans to reveal in his Feb. 7 budget address the savings that... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Wilkes-Barre Twp. schedules public meeting and vote on medical marijuana ordinance](#)
Medical marijuana ordinance vote. What: Wilkes-Barre Township council will hold a public meeting and vote on an ordinance governing the location of medical marijuana growers/processors and dispensaries in the township. When: 7:30 p.m. Monday Where: Wilkes-Barre Township Municipal Building, 150 Watson St.,... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Report: WB General has high readmission rates for heart valve replacement](#)
While the two local hospitals that perform cardiac surgery generally had outcomes within expected ranges, Wilkes-Barre General did have higher-than-expected readmission rates for procedures involving valve replacement, according to a new report. The Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council released the report,... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Need for HIV tests riles patients of Berks dental practice](#)
Bern Township, PA It was the longest 72 hours of her life. Dawn Sheaman received a mysterious letter one Saturday afternoon in December addressed to her from the Pennsylvania Department of Health. As she read its contents, her heart rate spiked, and she began to pace

the... - [Reading Eagle](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Berks County continues to lead region with 1,269 confirmed cases of flu](#)
Harrisburg, PA The flu cases continue to increase across Pennsylvania. There were more than 4,600 positive flu reports in the state last week, the highest single-week total since reporting began Oct. 2. Berks County continues to lead the region with 1,269 confirmed cases of the... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 02-01-2017 [State lawmaker criticizes Wolf's plan to merge agencies](#)
One day after Gov. Tom Wolf proposed a merger of the state Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs and three other state agencies to streamline services and save money, Bucks County state Rep. Gene DiGirolamo proposed doing the opposite. DiGirolamo, a Republican, said Tuesday in a Capitol press conference that... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Berks County medical practices to join Penn State Health St. Joseph](#)
Penn State Health St. Joseph is expanding its network of doctors in Berks County. On Tuesday, St. Joseph officials announced the acquisition of Commonwealth Primary Care group, which has physician practices in Fleetwood and Oley and Exeter townships. TODAY'S SPONSOR:... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Wolf to seek another \\$10 million to help reverse drug overdoses \(VIDEO\)](#)
Norristown, PA Gov. Tom Wolf announced Tuesday that his proposed budget will include \$10 million in funding to provide police officers across the state with the overdose-reversal drug naloxone. Wolf, a York County Democrat, made the announcement at a press conference... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 02-01-2017 [UPMC Hamot president to retire June 30](#)
UPMC Hamot President Jim Fiorenzo, who started working for the Erie hospital as a pharmacist in 1975, will retire this summer. Fiorenzo, 65, has served as Hamot president since 2012, following John Malone's retirement as chief executive. Hamot Chief Operating Officer David... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Gov. Wolf wants \\$10M more for Pa.'s opioid battle](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf is asking for another \$10 million to battle Pennsylvania's heroin and opioid epidemic. Wolf will ask lawmakers for that amount and include it in his 2017-18 budget proposal, his office said Tuesday. The money will be available through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime... - [Easton Express-Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Toomey mum on what replaces Affordable Care Act | Letter](#)
If a homeowner has a roofing problem, she repairs or replaces her roof. Removing a roof without replacement is folly. When it comes to the Affordable Care Act, a roof covering nearly all Pennsylvanians, Sen. Pat Toomey and the Republican Party are playing the fool, offering a tear-off... - [Easton Express-Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Urge your senators to vote against Price](#)
Recently, I've been seeing a campaign-style ad on TV urging viewers to call Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa., and demand that he vote to confirm President Donald Trump's Health and Human Services nominee, U.S. Rep. Tom Price of Georgia. The ad from right-wing Super PAC Future45 also states that Price is... - [Beaver County Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Wolf wants \\$10 million to provide Naloxone to police, first responders](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf will be seeking \$10 million in his proposed 2017-18 budget to provide an overdose antidote to first responders and police across Pennsylvania. "Expanding access to Naloxone is crucial in continuing our fight against the opioid epidemic," Wolf said in a statement. "We cannot... - [Beaver County Times](#)

- 02-01-2017 [**New bill would prohibit DEP from enacting tougher methane standards than EPA**](#)
A bill in the state Senate could handcuff the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection in enacting tough regulations on methane emissions, but it is receiving opposition from environmentalists and Gov. Tom Wolf. At its core, the bill would prohibit the DEP from enacting any methane... - [Beaver County Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**Health Center is a community service**](#)
The money expended on a facility like the Washington County Health Center should not be looked on as a “loss.” It’s a service to the people of Washington County, like roads, police, or any such community service. If it is sold, some organization will be trying to manipulate its services... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**Health Center is a community service**](#)
The money expended on a facility like the Washington County Health Center should not be looked on as a “loss.” It’s a service to the people of Washington County, like roads, police, or any such community service. If it is sold, some organization will be trying to manipulate its services... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**Employees, unions await final tallies in hospital layoffs**](#)
Lehigh Valley Hospital-Pocono surgeon Dr. Nche Zama accredited the opening of St. Luke's Monroe Campus hospital for staffing changes. The effect of the most recent staff layoffs at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Pocono has still not reached a final resolve, nearly one week... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**Letter: Place moratorium on fracking**](#)
Fifteen years ago, as the director of a local nonprofit, I switched our office building from electrical baseboard heat, which likely relied on polluting coal-burning power plants, to clean-burning propane, a by-product of natural gas. Many others did likewise and the boom was on as companies... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**Race is on for marijuana permits in York County**](#)
Companies hoping to cash in on Pennsylvania's budding medical marijuana industry have set their sights on York County. At least six groups have called Springettsbury Township in the past month to ask about zoning for medical marijuana-related properties, said Jessica... - [York Daily](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**ACA open enrollment ends today**](#)
The open enrollment period for 2017 health insurance coverage available through the federal marketplace at www.Healthcare.gov ends today, and officials at Pennsylvania's Insurance Department are urging those who don't have insurance to buy into the program — despite the uncertain future... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**Staggering statistic**](#)
Most everyone realizes Pennsylvania has a problem with drug abuse. However a staggering statistic reveals how the epidemic has grown. - [Somerset Daily](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**Gibbons named president of UPMC Hamot in Erie**](#)
David Gibbons, president of UPMC Northwest, has been named president of UPMC Hamot, according to a news release from the hospital in Erie. The move comes after Hamot President Jim Fiorenzo announced his retirement on Tuesday. Gibbons also had been serving as Hamot's executive vice... - [Oil City Derrick](#)
- 02-01-2017 [**Health fair set Feb. 17 at UPMC Northwest**](#)
In recognition of American Heart Month, UPMC Northwest will offer a free community health fair from 8 a.m. to noon, Friday, Feb. 17. The event will be held at UPMC Northwest's courtyard

conference room. The health fair will feature free screenings including blood pressure,... - [Oil City Derrick](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Talk of Repeal Sends People Running to, and From, Affordable Care Act](#)
The number of people who signed up for or renewed coverage during this fourth enrollment period will be an important sign of whether the individual insurance market will remain stable over the coming months as Republicans work to repeal the law and try to come to a consensus on what... - [New York Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Trump Vows to Ease Rules for Drug Makers, but Again Zeros In on Prices](#)
Battered by public outrage over the rising costs of drugs in recent years, the drug industry has regarded Mr. Trump warily in recent weeks. Pharmaceutical and biotechnology stocks rallied after his election as investors bet that Mr. Trump would reduce corporate taxes and adopt more... - [New York Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Paul Ryan's claim that 'more and more doctors just won't take Medicaid'](#)
"The problem that we're seeing in Medicaid is more and more doctors just won't take Medicaid, because they lose money on Medicaid." — House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.), town hall on CNN, Jan. 12, 2017 During a town hall on Republican plans to repeal and replace the Affordable... - [Washington Post](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Ohio launches trauma recovery network for victims of violent crime](#)
Ohio will follow California as the second state to offer a network of support services to victims of violent crime, including sexual assault and human trafficking, in a partnership between hospitals and victim services agencies. The announcement of a \$2.6 million grant divided among five agencies came... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Gov. Wolf Asking Lawmakers For Another \\$10 Million To Battle Opioid Epidemic](#)
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — With the opioid epidemic continuing to grow in Pennsylvania, Gov. Tom Wolf says he will ask lawmakers for another \$10 million to provide more life-saving naloxone to first responders and police. This is an effort to expand access to naloxone, which can prevent overdose... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 02-01-2017 [PA Governor To Request \\$10M To Make Sure Law Enforcement Has Access To Narcan](#)
NORRISTOWN, Pa. (CBS) — Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf stopped in Montgomery County today to announce he's requesting \$10 million in the upcoming budget to make sure law enforcement across the commonwealth has access to the opioid-overdose-antidote Narcan. Governor Wolf says since law enforcement in Pennsylvania started carrying... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 02-01-2017 [The Legislature should proceed with caution on the governor's plan to create a Department of Health and Human Services](#)
THE ISSUE Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf announced his plan Monday to create a state Department of Health and Human Services as part of his 2017-18 budget. Wolf wants to consolidate four state agencies into a single department as a partial answer to a massive budget deficit. Wolf, a Democrat, wants to... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 02-01-2017 [FDA issues new warning against homeopathic teething products with belladonna](#)
The Food and Drug Administration is urging parents not to use Hyland's homeopathic teething products because it may contain high levels of belladonna, a toxic chemical. Standard Homeopathic Co., the Los Angeles-based maker of Hyland's, discontinued its product in October, but has not issued a recall.... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Pa. lags behind other states on protecting children from lead poisoning](#)
The Pennsylvania Legislature will have the chance, once again this year, to act on several

measures to reduce the chances of lead poisoning in children. Other states already have acted to protect their children. Bills that are expected to come before the Pennsylvania House and Senate in... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Brian Fitzpatrick to host health care listening tour](#)
Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick announced Tuesday he would conduct a series of sit-down meetings and listening events with Bucks and Montgomery county physicians, experts and patients focused on health care reform. "The American people deserve elected officials who are willing to... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Gov. Wolf announces \\$10M naloxone budget proposal during event in Montgomery County](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf says he will ask for \$10 million to put the overdose-reversing drug naloxone in the hands of more police and first responders statewide when he takes his 2017-18 budget proposal to the General Assembly next week. Wolf announced the plan during a news conference Tuesday at the Montgomery... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Toohil legislation tackles postpartum depression](#)
Seeking to assist mothers who are struggling with postpartum depression and their infants, state Rep. Tarah Toohil on Tuesday reintroduced legislation that would make them eligible for early intervention services. Toohil, R-116, Butler Township, was the prime sponsor of a similar measure... - [Hazleton Standard-Speaker](#)
- 02-01-2017 [New agency to run crucial programs](#)
HARRISBURG — The creation of a new umbrella state department overseeing Medicaid, lottery benefits for senior citizens and opioid abuse programs won't lead to cuts in existing state services, a Wolf administration official said. The merger of the departments of Human Services, Health, Aging, and Drug... - [Hazleton Standard-Speaker](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Harrisburg protest urges Toomey to protect ACA](#)
Tuesday marked the final day Americans could enroll in 2017 health care plans through the Affordable Care Act, and many gathered in Harrisburg to urge Sen. Pat Toomey to make sure those plans are available in the future. A group of about 100, mostly women, protested outside Toomey's office in... - [York Dispatch](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Opiate use still top issue](#)
MIFFLINTOWN – The rash of drug overdose deaths seems to have slowed in recent weeks, however, officials in drug and alcohol services are warning that the problem hasn't gone away. During Tuesday's weekly meeting of the Juniata County Commissioners, Mike Hannon, executive director of the Juniata Valley Tri-County Drug and... - [Lewistown Sentinel](#)
- 02-01-2017 [St. John Neumann receives grant](#)
St. John Neumann Regional School has received a \$500 ExxonMobil Educational Alliance grant. Principal Sister Virginia Stephanie said the gift will be used to provide supplies for the school STEM Club. "It is with much gratitude that I accept this \$500 check,"... - [Lehighon Times News](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Gettysburg Rocks starts Thursday](#)
Thousands of dollars are expected to be raised as festival-goers rock out at 15 venues over three days across Adams County - or at least, that's the hope. Gettysburg Rocks started in 2014 with a mission to provide aid to the Four Diamonds fund, which helps pay for care of children with cancer at Penn... - [Gettysburg Times](#)
- 02-01-2017 [Couple awarded \\$14.5M in lawsuit](#)
An Ohio couple whose child was born at Clearfield Hospital in 2012 has been awarded \$14.5

million by a civil court jury in the U.S. District Court in Johnstown. The verdict, believed to be the largest ever returned in the Johnstown federal court, found that a Clearfield physician, Dr. Thomas A. Carnevale,... - [Altoona Mirror](#)

- 02-01-2017 [DA: 250 pounds of meds collected in Blair last quarter](#)
 Nearly 250 pounds of unwanted or expired medication was collected in Blair County during the last quarter of 2016, according to the Blair County District Attorney's Office. The secure collection boxes, located at the police departments in Altoona, Logan Township, Hollidaysburg and Tyrone, have been in place since mid-2014... - [Altoona Mirror](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Briefcase](#)
 HOLLIDAYSBURG Presbyterian Village receives honor as expert on aging Presbyterian Village at Hollidaysburg has been recognized as one of 16 Certified Centers for Successful Aging in the nation. Founded by Masterpiece Living, CSA recognition is awarded to leaders in the... - [Altoona Mirror](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Help stop smoking](#)
 I am writing in support of SB87 currently being discussed in Harrisburg. SB87 is known as "The Tobacco Cessation Treatment Act." Cigarette smoking has been implicated in heart disease, high blood pressure and many forms of cancer, including lung and esophageal.... - [Butler Eagle](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Women's Wellness Event set at VA](#)
 The fourth annual Winter Women's Wellness Event will be held at the VA Butler Healthcare auditorium on Friday. The event, which runs from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., will introduce women veterans to VA services and programs. There will be a light lunch, a healthy pizza cooking demonstration by the... - [Butler Eagle](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Summit classes canceled for week](#)
 SUMMIT TWP — A test conducted last week revealed E. coli bacteria in the untreated well water at Summit Township Elementary School. The Butler School District announced Monday night that classes at the school will be canceled for the rest of the week. Teachers and staff at the... - [Butler Eagle](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Heart surgery results getting better in Pennsylvania](#)
 Fewer people are dying or getting sick after heart surgery in Pennsylvania, though the price of cardiac care varies widely from hospital to hospital throughout the state and even within the Lehigh Valley. The mortality rate for coronary artery bypass graft surgery and/or heart... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Gov. Christie calls for 864 new mental-health and substance-abuse beds](#)
 As part of its fight against the opioid crisis in New Jersey, Gov. Christie on Tuesday called for the addition of 864 beds in 13 counties for the treatment of individuals with behavioral-health and substance-abuse disorders. The targeted counties now have 678 adult psychiatric beds, according to a... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

- 02-01-2017 [Allegheny Health Network reports bigger than expected \\$39M loss](#)
 Allegheny Health Network reported an operating loss of \$39 million for 2016, more than the hospital system projected it would lose for the year amid rebuilding efforts by owner Highmark Health. The seven-hospital system anticipated an operating loss of \$29.3 million... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)

- 01-31-2017 [Two Medical Marijuana Dispensary Training Classes in Pennsylvania ...](#)
 (Press Release)

- 01-31-2017 [Quality Up, Mortality and Readmission Rates Down for Heart Surgery ...](#)

(Press Release)

- 01-31-2017 [Independence Blue Cross is helping people sign up for insurance before ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [PHCA Response to Department Consolidation Announcement by Gov. Wolf](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [Toohil Reintroduces Postpartum Depression Bill](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [Walgreens Boots Alliance and Rite Aid Enter into Amendment and Extension ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [DiGirolamo Announces Plan to Expand the Department of Drug and Alcohol ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [Governor Wolf Makes Benefits Information More Accessible for Veterans ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [How the New Department of Health and Human Services Will Help People ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [Senator White Calls for Review of Rx Pricing in Pennsylvania](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health Partners ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [Governor Wolf Announces \\$10 Million Budget Proposal to Increase Overdose ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [Capital BlueCross Earns Global Recognition for Excellence in Employee ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [Pa. Homecare Association CEO Comments on Governor's Proposal for Health ...](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-31-2017 [Wolf administration: Merger of health departments will lead to 'minimal' layoffs, won't bring cuts in service](#)
HARRISBURG — Wolf administration officials said Monday their plan to consolidate four state agencies into a single department overseeing health and human services programs will likely lead to only “minimal” layoffs and won’t result in program cuts. In their first public statements on the plan, officials said the proposed... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-31-2017 [New SkinGun treatment for burns in development at UPMC Mercy](#)
During Fourth of July weekend in 2009, Matt Uram was standing near a fading bonfire when someone decided to rekindle it by throwing gasoline on the flames. The resulting blast of fire burned him along the right side, forehead to leg, save for areas covered by clothing. His wife put out the... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Some pregnant jail inmates released after lawsuit alleging poor conditions](#)
Facing a lawsuit alleging poor conditions and cruel punishments for pregnant women, the

Allegheny County Jail has eased discipline and started to work with courts to release some of the dozen or so inmates who are with child. On Dec. 19, five inmates represented by Bret Grote of the Abolitionist Law... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)

- 01-31-2017 [As Republicans unwind ACA, the health savings account might have its moment](#)
Questions continue about what will replace the Affordable Care Act as the GOP makes good on promises to unwind President Barack Obama's signature health care reform law, but experts say two things are certain: consumers will shoulder a bigger share of health care costs in the future and health... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-31-2017 [As Republicans unwind ACA, the health savings account is having its moment](#)
Questions continue about what will replace the Affordable Care Act as the GOP makes good on promises to unwind President Barack Obama's signature health care reform law, but experts say two things are certain: consumers will shoulder a bigger share of health care costs in the future and health... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Gary Rotstein's What's New in Aging blog](#)
Pennsylvania has had a Department of Aging for the past 38 years dedicated to programs and services for adults 60 and older, who now number 2.9 million in the state, but Gov. Tom Wolf has a proposal to change that. In a consolidation plan he suggests would increase government efficiency... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Medicaid expansion repeal worries Pennsylvania patients](#)
Going without health insurance meant living with bouts of sharp pain for Todd Whiting. Flare-ups of kidney stones, which he said felt like claws piercing his back, threatened to drop him to his knees at any time, said Whiting, 54, of Green Tree. The owner of a singing telegram business inherited from his mother, Whiting... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 01-31-2017 [ACA & hard workers](#)
I am 28 years old and was fortunate enough to benefit from President Obama's administration and his plan to allow people under the age of 26 to stay on their parents' health-insurance plans. This, in and of itself, helped me to keep my health insurance. By the time... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Walgreens slashes offer for Rite Aid](#)
Walgreens substantially lowered its offering price for drugstore rival Rite Aid and, facing resistance from regulators, raised the number of stores it would be willing to unload to ease monopoly concerns... - [AP](#)
- 01-31-2017 [New clinic aims to remove barriers to immunization](#)
When Allegheny County decided to move its immunization clinic, it did so with style — and substance. The health department's former location, with one vaccination room, on Forbes Avenue in Oakland wasn't meeting the needs of a county with a population of more than 1.2 million. On Wednesday, County Executive Rich... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Christie's Rx on addiction: Insurance coverage mandate advances](#)
As part of his promise to tackle drug addiction, Gov. Christie is pushing to mandate insurance coverage for substance-abuse treatment. But the plan is raising concerns over costs and availability of treatment beds. Legislation advanced Monday by Senate and Assembly committees would require... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 01-31-2017 [With Mumps cases at 10-year high, are Philly-area college students at risk?](#)
Mumps, an airborne virus that is extremely contagious, is spreading quickly in Washington State where hundreds have contracted the disease and public health officials are scrambling to find a solution. College campuses, like the many that cover the Philadelphia region, may be... -

[Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

- 01-31-2017 [UnitedHealthcare gives Camden health-care coalition \\$15 million, takes Brenner](#)
Jeffrey C. Brenner isn't changing his office. The primary care physician will still commute across the Ben Franklin Bridge to the same building in Camden, where he founded the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers. He's not moving out of his West Philadelphia home either, even though... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Beyond 'Just Say No': Schools teach about opioid dangers](#)
TRENTON, N.J. (AP) - Schools are going beyond "Just Say No" as they teach students as young as kindergartners about the dangers of opioids in the hope that they don't later become part of the growing crisis... - [AP](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Gov. Tom Wolf Administration official: Department consolidations are 'not about service cuts'](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf envisions his proposal to consolidate four departments into a new unified Department of Health and Human Services will create one-shop stops for Pennsylvanians seeking a variety of social services. Many details about the new agency's structure and amount of cost savings... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 01-31-2017 [New report shows heart surgery deaths rates for Pa. hospitals, surgeons](#)
Here are some of the overall findings of the report: -- The number of people who died at the hospital during or shortly after CABG fell by 53 percent between 1994 and 2015. In 1994 the mortality rate was 3.2 percent; it fell to 1.5 percent. -- PHC4 began reporting on heart valve mortality in 2005. From 2005 to... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Senate promises hearings to vet Gov. Tom Wolf's department consolidation proposal](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf's proposal to consolidate four departments into one unified agency will not be considered by the Senate without holding some hearings on it first. Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman, R-Centre County, promises that several standing committees in the Senate will vet the proposal to gain a better... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Walgreens slashes offer for Rite Aid, pushes back deadline](#)
Walgreens substantially lowered its offering price for drugstore rival Rite Aid and raised the number of stores it would be willing to unload to ease monopoly concerns. The companies initially expected to sell no more than 500 stores, but that was pushed to 1,200 under the new terms announced Monday.... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 01-31-2017 [John Cramsey-led anti-heroin group: 'We are the warriors fighting for our children's lives](#)
Days after the death of a teenager he tried to save from a New York City heroin den last summer, John Cramsey on Sunday led a march of 50 people chanting "enough is enough" past two Allentown motels, one of which has been the scene of heroin-related arrests.... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Pa. Gov. Tom Wolf wants to merge four health/human services agencies into one](#)
In an effort to save money in next year's deficit-laden budget, Gov. Tom Wolf on Monday revealed plans for merging four agencies into one department. Wolf's plan, which needs legislative approval, would create the Department of Health and Human Services by combining the departments of Human... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Future of ACA remains unclear for Pennsylvanians](#)
The end of open enrollment for insurance plans covered under the Affordable Care Act is Tuesday, but as Congress prepares to make changes to the legislation, Pennsylvania Insurance Commissioner Teresa Miller and Auditor General Eugene DePasquale vowed to continue their support for provisions of... - [State College Centre Daily Times](#)

- 01-31-2017 [Virginia group targets Casey on HHS nominee](#)
A group with ties to the Chicago Cubs and President Donald Trump bought television commercials here to convince U.S. Sen. Bob Casey to play ball and back Mr. Trump's nominee for health and human services secretary. The 45Committee spent \$19,205 on 125 commercials on WNEP-TV, WBRE-TV and... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Commonwealth Health opens high-tech ambulance dispatch center in Scranton](#)
Commonwealth Health's ambulance service unveiled a new state-of-the-art dispatch center Monday. Commonwealth Health Emergency Medical Services (CHEMS) center on Remington Avenue converted space used for training to double the size of its dispatch operation to about 1,800 square feet from where about 38 ambulances are... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Report: WB General has high readmission rates for heart valve replacement](#)
While the two local hospitals that perform cardiac surgery generally had outcomes within expected ranges, Wilkes-Barre General did have higher-than-expected readmission rates for procedures involving valve replacement, according to a new report. The Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council released the report,... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Meeting on proposed closure of Hamburg Center draws packed house](#)
Everyone who testified at a public hearing Monday concerning the closure of the Hamburg Center agreed on putting the welfare of its 80 residents first. Not all agreed, however, on how to achieve that goal. More than 80 people, including advocates and relatives of residents, packed... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Governor to call for consolidation of four Pa. agencies](#)
Harrisburg, PA Gov. Tom Wolf is poised to ask legislators to fold four departments that deal with public health and welfare issues into one huge, new agency to streamline services and save taxpayers money. He announced his intention to create a Department of Health and Human... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Berks reactions mixed to consolidating agencies](#)
Reading, PA The prospect of eliminating Pennsylvania's standalone drug and alcohol agency after only five years drew mixed reviews from Berks County observers Monday. Pennsylvania Secretary of Policy and Planning Sarah Galbally told reporters that Gov. Tom Wolf wanted to merge the Department of Drug and Alcohol... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Our view: A deal is a deal; restore Erie's casino fees](#)
Pennsylvania's broke. A nearly \$2 billion shortfall is projected for 2017-18 and Gov. Tom Wolf says he won't seek any broad-based tax increases. Instead, Wolf has been cutting costs and streamlining government in the weeks leading to his February budget address. A state prison and two state... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Mon Valley Hospital receives recognition for knee and hip replacements](#)
MONONGAHELA – William Hearn had knee-replacement surgery at Mon Valley Hospital two weeks ago, and its staff had him on his feet, relatively pain free, about three hours later. “I was in the recovery room a little after 8 a.m., and they had me up and walking at 10:30 a.m.,” said Hearn, of Monongahela.... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Red Cross is in need of blood donations](#)
Red Cross is in need of blood donations The American Red Cross is fighting through an emergency blood shortage and your donation can make all the difference for patients in need. To donate, register online at redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-733-2767. The following is a list of local blood drives.... - [Pocono Record](#)

- 01-31-2017 [**The ongoing Gosnell blackout**](#)
L. BRENT BOZELL III And TIM GRAHAM Six years ago, a deeply disturbing story emerged from a poor neighborhood in Philadelphia. In a horrific 261-page report, prosecutors accused abortion doctor Kermit Gosnell of delivering seven babies alive and then killing them by snipping their spinal chords with scissors, as well as... - [Williamsport Sun-Gazette](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Using antibiotics properly**](#)
Antibiotics are medicines used to treat infections or diseases caused by bacteria. Unfortunately, according to Dr. Matthew Meeker, family practice physician, UPMC Susquehanna, antibiotics often are used and even prescribed incorrectly and therefore not effective in treatment.... - [Williamsport Sun-Gazette](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**New info reverses some common peanut beliefs for babies**](#)
Peanut allergy is the most common and severe of all food allergies. And, it's on the rise. For someone with a peanut allergy, exposure to small amounts of peanut oil or dust can be life threatening, with reactions ranging from an itchy tongue to anaphylactic shock, and even death.... - [Williamsport Sun-Gazette](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Your Health**](#)
UPMC Susquehanna announces healthy events scheduled to provide health information and benefit the community. They are as follows: 11:30 a.m. to noon Thursday and Feb. 9, 16, 23 Introduction to Guided Meditation Thursdays in February at The LifeCenter, 641 Walnut St. The class is open... - [Williamsport Sun-Gazette](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Butler County school closed for new water concern: E. coli**](#)
BUTLER, Pa. — A Butler County elementary school that closed for two days last week after high levels of lead were found in its water is closing for the rest of this week because of a new water contaminant: E. coli... - [AP](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Repeal and replace with what again? Right, there is no replacement: PennLive letters**](#)
My family and I are one of the many millions of Pennsylvanians who have benefited from the ACA (Obamacare). There are over seven million Pennsylvania who have been helped in various ways by this law, including over 1.3 million children. On Jan. 13, Congress is planning to start the repeal process without an... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Former home health aide enters no-contest plea to theft offenses**](#)
SUNBURY — A former home health aide pleaded no contest Monday to multiple theft-related offenses and will be sentenced within 90 days. Tammy Brown, 32, of Shamokin, pleaded no contest before Northumberland County President Judge Charles Saylor to a felony of theft by unlawful... - [Shamokin News-Item](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**OD deaths in Valley nearly double**](#)
Nearly twice as many people died of a drug overdose in three Valley counties in 2016 than the year before. Coroners from Northumberland, Snyder and Union counties reported a combined 36 deaths due to overdose last year — up 80 percent from 20 reported in 2015.... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Asperger diagnosis doesn't stop swimmer from college competition**](#)
Anita and Brian Murphy knew something was "not quite right" with their six-year-old son, Sean, 15 years ago. When he entered kindergarten, it became even more obvious. After doing tests, doctors diagnosed Sean with Asperger's Syndrome, a condition linked to autism, as well as attention deficit hyperactivity... - [New Castle News](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Court in Johnstown awards record malpractice verdict**](#)
An Ohio child born with cerebral palsy and other health issues was awarded \$14.5 million for

medical mistakes that led to those injuries four years ago, a federal jury ruled. The decision against Penn Highlands' Clearfield Hospital and obstetrician Thomas Carnevale is believed to be the largest ever awarded in... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)

- 01-31-2017 [Betsy DeVos Invests in a Therapy Under Scrutiny](#)
Neurocore has not published its results in peer-reviewed medical literature. Its techniques — including mapping brain waves to diagnose problems and using neurofeedback, a form of biofeedback, to treat them — are not considered standards of care for the majority of the... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Protecting Birth Control Access in Oregon](#)
If the Affordable Care Act is repealed, coverage of birth control with no co-payment is one of many benefits that Americans could lose. Now legislators in Oregon have introduced a bill intended to protect access to birth control in the state, along with a broad range of other reproductive... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-31-2017 [ACA enrollment period ending amid uncertainty about Trump's impact on it](#)
The Affordable Care Act's fourth open-enrollment season draws to its scheduled close at midnight Tuesday amid uncertainty over how much actions by the Trump administration to undercut the law might affect the number of Americans signing up for health insurance through its marketplaces.... - [Washington Post](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Drug overdoses leading to increased organ donation](#)
As a small silver lining in the drug epidemic, organ donations from drug users have risen across the nation, providing a miracle for those in need of transplants. The Center for Organ Recovery & Education, or CORE, reported a 28 percent increase in organ donations from overdose deaths from... - [Somerset Daily](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Upper Merion EMS gain added protection through body armor program](#)
UPPER MERION >> The men and women who dedicate themselves to emergency treatment of the township's sick and injured now have their own extra layer of protection. Lafayette Ambulance and Rescue Squad recently announced the procurement of body armor for its EMTs and paramedics.... - [Phoenixville News](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Drug collection box installed at Forest County Courthouse](#)
Forest County residents now have a safe place to dispose of unused or unwanted medications. A drug collection box has been installed in the main lobby of the Forest County Courthouse in Tionesta and it will be available during normal business hours. The box is made possible by a grant through the Pennsylvania District... - [Oil City Derrick](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Moylan hopes to open macrobiotic diet resource center](#)
NEW PHILADELPHIA — Dr. David J. Moylan III, the Schuylkill County coroner, would like to open a resource center to promote the macrobiotic diet. It's a diet of whole grains, bean products and sea vegetables, and Moylan said, "it basically translates into long life."... - [Pottsville Republican and Evening Herald](#)
- 01-31-2017 [Wolf to Seek Another \\$10M to Help Reverse Drug Overdoses](#)
HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Gov. Tom Wolf will ask lawmakers for another \$10 million to help save the lives of people overdosing on heroin or prescription drugs... - [AP](#)
- 01-31-2017 [New Urgent Healthcare Center Opens Its Doors In South Philadelphia](#)
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — A new urgent care center in South Philadelphia is open and ready to serve the community. Vybe Urgent Care has four centers throughout Philadelphia, and earlier today they opened their latest one on Broad Street. "These centers are here and designed to bring accessible and affordable... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)

- 01-31-2017 [**With ACA Deadline Looming, Why You Should Still Sign Up**](#)
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — There are less than two days left to sign up for health insurance through the Affordable Care Act, and Philadelphia’s biggest provider advises doing it, regardless of the threat that the Act will be repealed. Dan Hilferty of Independence Blue Cross says the company has contracts in... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Manor Twp. woman at heart of assisted suicide case dies; funds raised for husband**](#)
A Manor Township man charged with helping his wife commit suicide is getting some financial help from a friend of his wife. Police said 60-year-old Philip M. Benight took his 73-year-old wife, Rebecca Benight, out of a nursing home and gave her a prescription-drug... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Second Lancaster County hospital announces behavioral health expansion plan**](#)
WellSpan Ephrata Community Hospital today announced plans for a \$3.4 million expansion of its behavioral health unit that will more than double its capacity. That makes it the second county hospital to reveal such plans in the past year, following Lancaster General Health’s announcement that it will... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Just 15 percent of family doctors think Obamacare should be repealed**](#)
Just 15 percent of family doctors think the Affordable Care Act should be repealed, a national survey says. Researchers talked to 426 primary care physicians after the election and reported strong support for the law known as Obamacare and for many of its key provisions.... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Chilling record: opioid fatalities**](#)
Bucks County set a chilling record last year, according to county coroner Joseph Campbell: In 2016, the number of deaths from opioid addiction increased 50 percent over the previous year, to 185. In neighboring Montgomery County, the increase in drug-related overdose... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Holy Redeemer, Philmont Guidance Center partner to expand behavioral health services**](#)
Holy Redeemer Health System and Philmont Guidance Center on Monday announced a new partnership designed to meet a growing demand for inpatient and community-based behavioral health services. “This affiliation strengthens our recognition of the need for better... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**OSHA fines Whitemarsh mental health facility for workplace violence violations**](#)
A Whitemarsh mental health facility was fined \$32,158 for allegedly exposing its employees to workplace violence and other hazards. According to a statement issued by the U.S. Department of Labor, Brooke Glen Behavioral Hospital was cited by the Occupational Safety and Health... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Holy Redeemer, Philmont Guidance Center partner to expand behavioral health services**](#)
Holy Redeemer Health System and Philmont Guidance Center on Monday announced a new partnership designed to meet a growing demand for inpatient and community-based behavioral health services. “This affiliation strengthens our recognition of the need for better... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**Jury awards \\$14.5 million verdict in cerebral palsy birth**](#)
JOHNSTOWN, Pa. A federal jury says a Pennsylvania hospital and obstetrician should pay an Ohio couple \$14.5 million after delivery mistakes left their son with cerebral palsy... - [AP](#)
- 01-31-2017 [**SCI Forest staff participate in naloxone training**](#)
SCI Forest staff participate in naloxone training MARIENVILLE Through a working relationship

with the Forest County District Attorney's office, the Forest County Drug Task Force and Armstrong, Indiana and Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission, approximately 70 SCI Forest... - [Clarion News](#)

- 01-31-2017 [New grant helps families with disabilities](#)
The Clarion County Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Administration recently received \$5,000 in grant money from the state Department of Human Services. The money is to share with other Northwestern Pennsylvania counties to encourage and support families with disabilities.... - [Clarion News](#)

- 01-31-2017 [Scandal unfolded in front of Pa. mandated reporters](#)
Cindy Michelini is taking it personally. The rest of us should take it personally, too. The Summit Elementary School water scandal has caused strife not only to the parents of students exposed to water tainted with lead and copper, but also to the teachers like Michelini, entrusted with the care of the... - [Butler Eagle](#)

- 01-31-2017 [Governor announces plans to combine four state health agencies](#)
HARRISBURG, Pa. -- Call it addition by subtraction. Governor Tom Wolf, in an attempt to save money and "reduce red tape", announced plans on Monday to consolidate four state health departments into one. The administration hopes to open a new budget season on July 1 by combining... - [FOX 43](#)

- 01-31-2017 [Gov. Tom Wolf to propose folding 4 Pa. agencies into 1](#)
Facing a severe budget squeeze, Gov. Tom Wolf is pushing to consolidate four state agencies into a new Department of Health and Human Services, a move intended to eliminate duplication and red tape, while streamlining delivery of services to seniors, people with intellectual and physical... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)

- 01-30-2017 [Planned Parenthood Pennsylvania Advocates Issues Statement of Support ...](#)
(Press Release)

- 01-30-2017 [SEIU: Governor Wolf's New Dep. of Health and Human Services Increases ...](#)
(Press Release)

- 01-30-2017 [PHCA Response to Department Consolidation Announcement by Gov. Wolf](#)
(Press Release)

- 01-30-2017 [Statement On Governor Wolf's Department Consolidation Proposal](#)
(Press Release)

- 01-30-2017 [PAMED Response to Multi-Department Merger Announced by Gov. Wolf](#)
(Press Release)

- 01-30-2017 [Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC Recertifies HIMSS Stage 7 Designation](#)
(Press Release)

- 01-30-2017 [Governor Wolf Announces Plan to Create Department of Health and Human Services](#)
(Press Release)

- 01-30-2017 [In Philadelphia, Governor Wolf Hosts Discussion on Efforts to Combat the...](#)
(Press Release)

- 01-30-2017 [Water restrictions imposed at VA hospital in Oakland](#)
Water restrictions will remain in place for at least another 14 days at the Veterans Affairs

Hospital in Oakland after Legionella bacteria was found in multiple areas of the hospital. “Nobody is sick. Nobody has Legionnaires’ disease,” hospital spokesman Mike Marcus said. “This is all being done out of an abundance... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)

- 01-30-2017 [**Advocates concerned about proposals to block grant Medicaid**](#)
The threat to the health care safety net for the vulnerable comes not just from the planned rollback of the Affordable Care Act, advocates say, but from proposed changes to Medicaid. Medicaid is one of the largest programs providing health insurance for children, the poor, the elderly and those with disabilities.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Private insurers may lead in developing systems that integrate treatment between medical and dental care**](#)
Before scheduling a hip or knee replacement procedure, retired orthopedic surgeon Edward Kelly says he often insisted on examining the patient’s mouth first. “Many medical problems occur because of infections that might take place in the mouth,” said Dr. Kelly, who now serves as volunteer... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Schools reach beyond ‘Just Say No’ for opioids**](#)
TRENTON, N.J. — Schools are going beyond “Just Say No” as they teach students as young as kindergartners about the dangers of opioids in the hope that they don’t later become part of the growing crisis... - [AP](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Water restrictions imposed at VA hospital in Oakland**](#)
Water restrictions will remain in place for at least another 14 days at the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Oakland after Legionella bacteria was found in multiple areas of the hospital. “Nobody is sick. Nobody has Legionnaires’ disease,” hospital spokesman Mike Marcus said. “This is all being done out of an abundance... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Westmoreland victims of addiction honored, mourned at Remembrance Day event**](#)
The slim young woman in the back pew fought back tears as images of those who have lost their lives to addiction streamed on a screen in front of her. Ashley Berger-Wannamaker, 32, who attended the service with her sister, said she was addicted to opioids in 2010 when their mother died of an... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Communities come together to mourn those lost to drug addiction on National Day of Remembrance**](#)
Louise Ballard of Brackenridge still struggles to understand the opioid epidemic after losing her grandson to an overdose in April. “This has been an eye-opener for me,” Ballard said. “I’m praying for this epidemic in this valley.” Ballard’s grandson, Qwinn Ballard, was just 24 when he died. She said she... - [Tarentum Valley News Dispatch](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Effective anti-drug education**](#)
Regarding the news story “Gov. Wolf: Too many roadblocks in state’s battle against opioid addiction” : Everyone is seeking happiness. Individuals who have the mental capacity to make the right decisions make the decision to use drugs. Focus an effective attack on the problem at the beginning: more education... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Obamacare open enrollment ends Tuesday — possibly forever**](#)
Tuesday will be the last day of open enrollment for health insurance this year under the Affordable Care Act — and possibly the last day ever for Obamacare enrollment if Republican opponents of the health law have their way. For millions of Americans, open enrollment is the time to go online to... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**John Cramsey-led anti-heroin group: ‘We are the warriors fighting for our children’s lives**](#)
Days after the death of a teenager he tried to save from a New York City heroin den last

summer, John Cramsey on Sunday led a march of 50 people chanting "enough is enough" past two Allentown motels, one of which has been the scene of heroin-related arrests.... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)

01-30-2017

[PA Budget Crunch: Deficit-driven cuts mean hard choices for local families](#)

Reann Hinkle cannot speak for herself. She cannot feed herself. She cannot bathe herself. Hinkle, 66, is mentally disabled. And, she is one of the many faces of the "reinvent, restructure, redesign government" movement that is shaping Pennsylvania's budget politics in the... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)

01-30-2017

[NHC challenge to start again next month](#)

Last year, the Bald Eagle Area School District beat out other local school districts to win the Nutrition Habit Challenge. This year, starting Wednesday and lasting through February, the BEA community will work to defend that title. NHC is an annual challenge created by Bruce and Kym Burke, owners of One on... - [State College Centre Daily Times](#)

01-30-2017

[Geisinger research reveals underdiagnosed, undertreated genetic disorder](#)

It's not just diet and exercise — high cholesterol has more to do with heritage than experts previously thought, according to new research. A genetic disorder that prevents the body from clearing out bad cholesterol is twice as common as the medical community at large believed, and it... - [Scranton Times](#)

01-30-2017

[14-year-old Scrantonian girl hosts nonprofit fundraiser](#)

At 14, Angel Kropiewnicki has already planned two concerts and raised thousands for her charitable giving causes. The Scranton High School freshman, founder of her own charity nonprofit, "ARK helps," held her second benefit ARK Fest music festival Sunday at the Leonard Theater on Adams Avenue in Scranton.... - [Scranton Times](#)

01-30-2017

[Details due on state agencies consolidation](#)

HARRISBURG — The debate about restructuring state government is accelerating with a proposal from Gov. Tom Wolf to merge four state agencies into a new Department of Health and Human Services. The administration plans to release details today about consolidating the... - [Scranton Times](#)

01-30-2017

[Officials stay away from BMI in weight-loss journey, offer alternative focus](#)

During just about every weight-loss journey, the words "body mass index" play a role, particularly on the clinical side. Nutritionists, dieticians, physical trainers and physicians have been using the BMI to measure body fat based on the height and weight of an... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)

01-30-2017

[Health briefs 1-30-17](#)

Events n Monongahela Valley Hospital Blood Drive at the Anthony M. Lombardi Education Conference Center, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Friday. For information: 724-258-1282. n Exercise classes, Tuesdays and Thursdays, Center in the Woods, 130 Woodland Court, Brownsville. Classes include chair dancing at 9:30 a.m.... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)

01-30-2017

[Spouse of cancer victim says call on hospice care for broad range of support](#)

Greg Kiddy and his wife, Betsy, had just returned from a European vacation to find their garden choked with weeds. So, on that late August afternoon in 2013, Greg was reclaiming his garden weed by weed, pruning and clipping bushes as he worked. Then he heard the side door open and saw Betsy, tears streaming down her... - [Reading Eagle](#)

01-30-2017

[Professionals help terminally ill woman face the inevitable](#)

Betty Dries studied her reflection in the mirror, noting how cancer had changed her face. Medications had bloated it, and surgeons removed her left eye in an attempt to stop the

disease's spread. The surgery took away her sense of smell and feeling in her face.... - [Reading Eagle](#)

- 01-30-2017 [Dave Mowery: More transparency, accountability needed from state drug agency](#)
The drug crisis isn't going away. It would have been naive to think all the attention that has been paid to it was going to single-handedly reverse the death toll. Quite the opposite has happened. More than 3,500 people died of drug overdoses in the state in 2015. That's... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Cocalico Regional Leaders hold Anti-Heroin Task Force community event](#)
Denver, PA More than 160 residents attended the quarterly Cocalico Regional Leaders meeting that kicked off the year with a Cocalico Anti-Heroin Task Force community event. Anne Brubaker brought her son Ryan J., 13, a middle school student, to the event at Cocalico High School.... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Erie clinic to provide free dental services for children](#)
At Fortis Institute, treat bags with dental care products are prepared for Give Kids A Smile Day. GREG WOHLFORD/ERIE TIMES-NEWS At Fortis Institute, dental hygiene students Nicole Marsh, 23, left, and Sirena Plott, 21, join Karen Omniewski, right, department chair of the... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 01-30-2017 [In private hands, can the health center maintain quality care?](#)
The writing is on the wall: Washington County Health Center is almost certainly going to be sold to private owners. One of the few remaining counties in Pennsylvania that still operates a nursing home, Washington County has been considering pulling itself out of... - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Gov. Wolf, Monroe community discuss addiction epidemic](#)
It's unfortunately now an old story in the Poconos. Someone gets injured and goes to their doctor, who over-prescribes them painkillers. The patient gets hooked, but can no longer afford or access these painkillers and turns to heroin which is cheaper and more available.... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Upwards and outward](#)
Kevin Kunzmann A flier for a pizza party to commemorate St. Luke's Monroe Campus hospital's 10,000th emergency department visit laid on the neat counter of an untended nurse's station. Nearby, two nurses shuffled a patient in a gurney through the busy hall. There was no telling whether they would make... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 01-30-2017 ['Too Good for Drugs' program offered to Montoursville students](#)
In an effort to educate young people about the risks of substance abuse and to help equip them with the tools to stay drug free, the West Branch Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission offers a program called "Too Good for Drugs." The commission recently expanded the program into the... - [Williamsport Sun-Gazette](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Fundraiser benefits local who has cystic fibrosis](#)
A fundraiser on Saturday benefited 28-year-old Mark Bell of Asylum Township, who has cystic fibrosis. The benefit included a spaghetti dinner, a bake sale, a Chinese auction and a gun raffle. The funds raised will help pay for Bell's medical expenses and transportation to his treatment in... - [Towanda Daily Review](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Guests eat and drink for a good cause at Pints for Peds](#)
DANVILLE — They came for more than the handcrafted beer and buffet dinner. Gretchen Kane of Pottsville said she heard about the Pints for Peds event on television and she and her husband, Jim, decided to go. Their reason was likely the same as the rest of the 80 people who

showed up... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)

- 01-30-2017 [For Some, the Affordable Care Act Is a Lifesaver. For Others, a Burden.](#)
 "It Would Significantly Improve My Life" Allison Maurer, 31, Harrisburg, Pa. It would significantly improve my life: lower premiums, more quality care, and more choices. We paid \$486 per month last year for my daughter and me, plus the \$4000 for my son's birth. We later switched to my... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-30-2017 [A Republican Plan for Medicare Gets a Revival](#)
 One way to do that is to tie the subsidy to the average premium of all Medicare plans, including that of traditional Medicare. This is how the Medicare drug program, Part D, already works. For Part D, Medicare collects bids from all plans that reflect their costs of providing the required,... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Bike Medics Bring Speedy Emergency Care to Patients](#)
 When actress Carrie Fisher suffered cardiac arrest near the end of a flight to Los Angeles just before Christmas, some of the first emergency medical crews to arrive on the scene were on two wheels: medics on bicycles who helped resuscitate the "Star Wars" star.... - [Stateline.org](#)
- 01-30-2017 [N.J. deserves its F for lack of effort to stop this habit | Editorial](#)
 In 2010, the year Gov. Chris Christie took office, the state was funding smoking-cessation programs to the tune of \$7 million. By three years later? Zero dollars. In 2002, when tobacco control was high on the state's agenda, New Jersey was supporting 17 centers designed to help smokers quit. Today? None.... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 01-30-2017 [California's new pot economy valued at \\$7 billion](#)
 The future of California's legal marijuana industry is being shaped in a warren of cubicles tucked inside a retired basketball arena, where a garden of paper cannabis leaves sprouts on file cabinets and a burlap sack advertising "USA Home Grown" dangles from a wall... - [AP](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Ohio didn't investigate most lead poisonings of kids, report says](#)
 CLEVELAND - Ohio health agencies have struggled to investigate childhood lead poisoning cases and thousands of referrals were left without investigation in recent years, according to a newspaper review of data on the performance of more than a dozen of the state's health districts... - [AP](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Obamacare repeal uncertainties worry central Ohio hospitals](#)
 As President Donald Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress work to dismantle and replace the Affordable Care Act, hospital officials nationwide are watching to see how that will affect their work to provide health care and what a replacement will mean to their bottom line.... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 01-30-2017 [City considered for medical marijuana grow](#)
 New Castle is being considered as a potential site to grow medical marijuana. Keith Morgan and Richard Genderson of Holistic Industries said Pennsylvania, which in December approved medical marijuana, will soon be accepting applications for 12 growing/processing operations to be spread... - [New Castle News](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Changes coming to Ellwood City Historical Society operations](#)
 The Ellwood City Historical Society is headed in a new direction. The revamping of the organization entails some key changes for its base of operation, the Ellwood City History Center, making it even more attractive for those who visit there and those who want to learn more.... - [New Castle News](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Insurance bills are a premium pain](#)

There is a full bag of “pet friendly” ice melting crystals on the porch. It’s for sprinkling on the front walk and has been unopened for a month. That may change with colder weather coming and a winter that may finally start acting like one. CLOSE Kids have a little fun on the ice as they wait for their school bus... - [Lebanon Daily News](#)

01-30-2017

[COLUMN: Let's make repeal and replace about empowerment and control](#)

“Repeal” and “replace” are the new buzzwords, with no signs of being bumped from the headlines anytime soon. Since the 2016 election, the Affordable Care Act has been in the crosshairs of the Republican-controlled Congress and Donald Trump. The vow to repeal... - [Meadville Tribune](#)

01-30-2017

[Letter to the editor | Don't ax ACA before alternative in place](#)

Jan. 22 marked the 44th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s decision granting women a limited right to abortions. Many of my evangelical and Catholic friends have marched in protest and have voted for Donald Trump to reverse that decision and to support the right to life.... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)

01-30-2017

[Advocates promote awareness of prenatal drug abuse](#)

The recent death of Summer Chambers – a 5-month-old who perished of dehydration and starvation after the apparent fatal overdoses of her parents – has prompted conversations across the state about the welfare of children. The incident Dec. 22 in Johnstown’s Kernville neighborhood drew... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)

01-30-2017

[SSMSE helps in fight against cancer](#)

ST. MARYS, PA South St. Marys Street Elementary's Relay Recess had a special meaning this year as the opening lap of the event was dedicated to fellow student David Smith, who recently diagnosed with leukemia. The event supports the Relay For Life of Elk County along with cancer... - [Saint Marys Daily Press](#)

01-30-2017

[Experts say tick activity prevalent this winter](#)

Local health professionals are warning residents about an upswing in tick activity this winter season. Unseasonably warm winter temperatures have caused an increase in ticks and Lyme disease in the past couple of years, said Drew Bell, an entomologist from Franklin.... - [Oil City Derrick](#)

01-30-2017

[Montgomery County officials remember overdose victims, raise awareness](#)

NORRISTOWN >> As part of a national initiative, Montgomery County officials who oversee drug prevention, intervention and treatment programs paused Friday to remember those who have died from addiction-related causes and to raise awareness about the heroin epidemic currently plaguing communities.... - [Phoenixville News](#)

01-30-2017

[Protesters want Costello to keep the Affordable Care Act](#)

WEST CHESTER >> Roughly two dozen protesters rallied outside of a local Republican congressman’s office in West Chester, hoping to convince him to vote against potentially repealing the Affordable Care Act. Organized by an group called the Costello Constituent Action Group,... - [West Chester Daily Local News](#)

01-30-2017

[Avon Grove warns parents of whooping cough](#)

PENN >> The Avon Grove School District administration has informed parents of elementary school students via a letter that a student in the Intermediate School has come down with whooping cough. Director of Pupil Services Jeremy Curtis said he was notified by the school... - [West Chester Daily Local News](#)

01-30-2017

[300 protest outside Meehan’s office over repeal of Affordable Care Act](#)

SPRINGFIELD >> About 300 people lined Sproul Road in front of the district office of U.S. Rep.

Patrick Meehan, R-7, of Chadds Ford, Saturday to express their concerns regarding the Republican push to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Meanwhile, another group of protesters rallied in defense of the ACA in... - [Primos Delaware County Daily and Sunday Times](#)

- 01-30-2017 [**Despite cigarette tax increase, Pennsylvania gets another failing grade on tobacco control**](#)
Tossed cigarette butts on Columbia Avenue. Despite a \$1 per pack cigarette tax increase that went into effect in August, Pennsylvania has gotten yet another set of failing grades from the American Lung Association on tobacco control. "The 15th annual report grades states and the federal government on... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Autism Resource Center reopens at Lancaster Public Library**](#)
The Autism Resource Center reopened this month at Lancaster Public Library with new resources and a layout to better accommodate patrons on the autism spectrum. "The collection was never unavailable," said library director Heather Sharpe. "It was relocated to the main floor of the... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Life-saving naloxone prices soar along with its usage**](#)
Dr. Michael Reihart sprays naloxone during a press conference announcing that first responders will carry the drug to help save lives of people overdosing on heroin. The price of the one drug that can reverse a heroin overdose if given in time is skyrocketing at the same time the opioid epidemic is worsening,... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Pennsylvania needs to adopt CPR legislation**](#)
Would you know what to do if you saw someone suffer a sudden cardiac arrest? Would you know how to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation? Were you taught these skills in school? The American Heart Association is committed to building healthier lives free from cardiovascular disease and stroke. Nationally, about 326,000... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Speaking out for Pennsylvanians at risk of losing health insurance**](#)
As a native of Millersville and a proud graduate of Penn Manor High School, I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the community in which I grew up and the public school teachers who prepared me for a lifetime of learning. After graduating from Penn State University, I am now fortunate to be a... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Bucks, Montgomery health experts: Number of students not vaccinated on the rise**](#)
If there's one thing that peeves Dr. David Damsker, the director of the Bucks County Department of Health, it's parents who won't vaccinate their kids. "I get so annoyed," Damsker said, when children get a preventable disease because their parents didn't vaccinate them. Not only does it hurt their... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Grave danger: Ask Trump to keep his promises on health care**](#)
Orthopedic Surgeon, Rep. Tom Price from Georgia is President Trump's nominee for secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), the department that oversees the safety-net programs that people of modest and low incomes depend on. Price, who represents a wealthy Atlanta suburb, has voted 60... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Non-profit autism service gets a big boost**](#)
MONTANDON — A non-profit with a mission of providing comprehensive autism services recently got a big boost from a dedicated group of runners. CJ's Resolution Challenge, a timed running event held Jan. 7 at R.B. Winter State Park, featured 170 runners taking on a 1.6-mile course over... - [Milton Standard](#)
- 01-30-2017 [**Special meeting set to focus on rehab center**](#)
DUNNSTOWN — A town hall-style meeting to provide information and answer questions about

a proposed rehabilitation center to treat adolescents suffering from drug and alcohol abuse will be held next week. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 2, in the Dunnstown Fire... - [Lock Haven Express](#)

- 01-30-2017 [Use of naloxone up as calls for overdoses continue to climb](#)
Citizens' Ambulance Service responded to 17 calls for drug overdoses in the first 20 days of this year. "What we've seen isn't slowing," said Randy Thomas, operations manager at Citizens'. The climb of heroin-related calls is startling. It looks like a global... - [Indiana Gazette](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Medical marijuana facility proposed in Norwegian Twp.](#)
Medical marijuana could soon be grown in Schuylkill County. DocHouse LLC wants to have a growing and cultivating facility in Norwegian Township along Route 61 near the Fairlane Village mall. The company is based in Chester Springs, according to state Department of Corporations... - [Lehighon Times News](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Merging 4 agencies seen as way to cut red tape, not programs](#)
HARRISBURG, Pa. Gov. Tom Wolf's administration says a plan to consolidate four state public health agencies into a single department will improve efficiency and eliminate red tape... - [AP](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Wolf says merger of four health departments won't bring cuts in service](#)
HARRISBURG — Gov. Tom Wolf said this morning that his plan to consolidate four state agencies into a single department overseeing health and welfare programs would allow more effective delivery of services and won't lead to any program cuts. "This new department will streamline government and allow the commonwealth... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Reporter's Notebook: Do great work](#)
Vanessa Pellechio The opioid epidemic is here. It's evident from the front page story. I don't plan to stop covering this issue because it is something that needs to be published time and time again to create more awareness. - [Gettysburg Times](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Penn State professor speaks about combating mosquito-spread diseases](#)
Science enthusiasts gathered in the Thomas Building on Saturday morning to hear Matt Thomas, Professor and Huck Scholar in Ecological Entomology, speak about the dangers and solutions to mosquito-borne diseases. The lecture, entitled "The Rise and Fall of Diseases Caused by Insects,"... - [Penn State Daily Collegian](#)
- 01-30-2017 [UPUA collaborates with College of Health and Human Development to promote healthy habits](#)
Setting health related goals and sticking to them can be difficult for some, but Nutrition Habit Challenge Day— hosted today in the Hetzel Union Building-Robeson Center by the University Park Undergraduate Association — encourages people to do just that. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., students can register to participate in the... - [Penn State Daily Collegian](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Penn Health System settles improper Medicare billing lawsuit for \\$845,000](#)
The University of Pennsylvania Health System paid \$845,000 to settle a lawsuit over "improperly billing Medicare" for unnecessary cardiovascular procedures, according to a United States Attorney's Office press release. In the Jan. 19 press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office in the... - [Daily Pennsylvanian](#)
- 01-30-2017 [Suit: Surgery at GMC left woman paralyzed](#)
DANVILLE — A 21-year-old woman became paralyzed from the waist down after Geisinger surgeons operated on her spine, a lawsuit claims. In the years since,... - [Bloomsburg Press Enterprise](#)

- 01-30-2017 [**Kenney: ACA repeal would leave 200,000 in Philly uninsured**](#)
Mayor Kenney joined a chorus of local officials who say repealing the Affordable Care Act without replacement would have a devastating impact, particularly on Philadelphia residents. Kenney and city controller Alan Butkowitz sent a joint letter to the three congressmen and two senators representing Philadelphia, Monday, saying more... - [*Philadelphia Inquirer*](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Growing up sick: Study of pediatric diabetes shows need for action**](#)
Kids are growing up fast these days. They're getting adult-type diseases faster, too, according to a study that highlights anew the need for healthy, active lifestyles. Between 2011 and 2015, the number of claims for Type 2 diabetes more than doubled among people 22 and younger, according to the study of data from... - [*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Health agencies say UPMC mold report doesn't warrant new investigation**](#)
Two government agencies say they have no plans to do any more investigating of the fatal mold outbreak at UPMC, despite a recently uncovered internal UPMC report that found mold on freshly cleaned laundry in a hospital and in the laundry facility where hospital linens were cleaned.... - [*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Dog undergoes rare spinal-cord surgery as UPMC neurosurgeon, radiologists give assistance**](#)
Last September in Littleton, Colo., Anchor achieved expert status in "water work," with her impressive range of canine skills to rescue distressed humans in water. Yet, during those trials, the athletic, well-trained and boldly majestic dog startled everyone when she fell off... - [*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Abortion opponents march with strong political support**](#)
Carolyn Martin of Upper St. Clair recalls riding on a Greyhound bus to attend the first March for Life in 1974, held to protest abortion and mark the first anniversary of the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision making it legal. She's been to a rally every year since, either in Washington or another... - [*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Gov. Tom Wolf planning to merge 4 agencies in health, welfare**](#)
Facing deepening budget woes, Gov. Tom Wolf wants to merge into a single department four agencies that oversee Pennsylvania's massive health and public welfare programs, according to an email that circulated Friday to state employees who would be affected by the proposal.... - [*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**'Living' the opioid epidemic**](#)
A year ago, I woke in the night with pain so severe I was crying before I was fully aware of what was happening. A 50-year-old cop sobbed like a child in the dark. It was a ruptured disc and related nerve damage. Within a couple of months, it became so severe that I could no longer walk or stand. An MRI later, my... - [*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Sunday pops**](#)
Having added nearly 3,000 hotel rooms in the past two years, the seven-county Pittsburgh metro region's average occupancy rate in November was 60.3 percent, down 9.6 percent from a year earlier; rates fell just 0.4 percent, but per-room revenue was down 10 percent. Given those indicators... - [*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Westmoreland County pilot program geared to helping overdose survivors**](#)
The Westmoreland County Drug Overdose Task Force is developing a pilot program that will send an intervention team to the homes of overdose survivors. Task force director Tim Phillips hopes that a face-to-face meeting in the days after a near-fatal drug overdose will push survivors toward treatment... - [*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*](#)

- 01-29-2017 [**Pa. Gov. Wolf to seek consolidation of 4 health agencies**](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf's administration is notifying state officials and employees that he wants to consolidate four state agencies into a single department as the first-term Democratic governor deals with a massive budget deficit... - [AP](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Legionella found in multiple areas at Pittsburgh VA hospital**](#)
Routine water testing at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare campus in Pittsburgh's Oakland section revealed bacteria that cause Legionnaires' disease in several areas throughout the facility, VA officials said Saturday. The findings prompted VA officials to implement water restrictions in many... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Poll finds worries of loss of health care**](#)
Though "Obamacare" still divides Americans, a majority worry that many will lose coverage if the 2010 law is repealed in the nation's long-running political standoff over health care... - [AP](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Pennsylvania's huge GOP majorities could test a Wolf veto**](#)
The largest Republican majority in the Pennsylvania state Senate in nearly 70 years is wasting no time in flexing its conservative muscle, advancing bills that ultimately could test whether a veto by Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf can withstand an override vote... - [AP](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Expert: 'I would put money' on linens causing UPMC mold outbreak**](#)
A hospital environmental expert who detected mold on linens supplied to UPMC from a DuBois laundry facility told the Tribune-Review on Friday that he believes laundry was the source of fungal infections that killed transplant patients at the health giant's hospitals.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Inquirer Editorial: Votes to kill Obamacare without a replacement make no sense**](#)
Health care is not available if it is not affordable. That's the lens that should be used to look at any idea from Washington as President Trump and the Republican-controlled Congress attempt to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. Not much is known about what a possible replacement would cover, but the... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Beyond 'Just Say No': Schools teach about opioid dangers**](#)
Schools are going beyond "Just Say No" as they teach students as young as kindergartners about the dangers of opioids in the hope that they don't later become part of the growing crisis... - [AP](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Anti-abortion groups hold triumphant rally after Obama years**](#)
The politically ascendant anti-abortion movement gathered Friday for a triumphant rally on the National Mall, rejoicing at the end of an eight-year presidency that participants said was dismissive of their views... - [AP](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Conservatives feel happy about Trump's Supreme Court options**](#)
Conservatives' wishes for the next Supreme Court justice boil down to a few words: no more Souters... - [AP](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**In Pa. budget crunch, Wolf wants to merge four departments**](#)
Facing deepening budget woes, Gov. Wolf is seeking to merge four state agencies that oversee Pennsylvania's massive health and public welfare programs into a single department, according to an email that circulated Friday to state employees who would be affected by the proposal.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 01-29-2017 [**Boosted by fentanyl, suburban counties join Philly in setting drug death records**](#)
Stephanie Machen traveled a terrible path before Bensalem police discovered her body last February, ditched in the dead leaves along a quiet road near I-95, drenched by a cold rain. The

Bucks County coroner determined that the 25-year-old had overdosed on heroin mixed with fentanyl, a powerful narcotic meant only for the worst... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Pro-life breakfast attendees feel encouraged](#)
In the 44 years since the landmark Roe v. Wade decision, Helen Gohsler has never felt more encouraged. The president of the Scranton chapter of Pennsylvanians for Human Life, Mrs. Gohsler said that with Donald Trump as president, the unborn have a greater chance for life.... - [Scranton Times](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Letters to the Editor 1/29/2017](#)
Editor: It's important to let our community know about the presidential election's impact. So, this is for anyone suffering the fear, hopelessness and rage of feeling misunderstood, marginalized and accused of victimizing others because they fight for equality. It is for those struggling to believe in a government... - [Scranton Times](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Area residents visit nation's capitol for 44th March for Life](#)
Several area residents spent their Friday in Washington, D.C., at the 44th March for Life. The demonstration typically takes place on the Friday closest to Jan. 22, the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, but according to March for Life organizers, this year it was held a week later because of the... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Officials give residents this prescription drug reminder: 'Lock 'em up'](#)
Numerous local officials working in the area of crime, drug abuse and aging met with local representatives at the Luzerne County Courthouse on Friday, ushering in the beginning of a multi-county initiative to stop prescription medication from getting into the wrong hands.... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Their view: Repeal of ACA will affect substance abuse treatment](#)
As Congress and President Donald Trump's administration consider legislation to replace the Affordable Care Act, they would do well to keep in mind one facet of this law which is providing immense help to as many as 114,000 Pennsylvanians, according to Medicaid and a Harvard Medical School... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Transitional rehab helps 101-year-old recover](#)
At age 101, Madeleine Park was the oldest patient at the transitional rehabilitation unit at Allied Services John Heinz Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine in Wilkes-Barre Township. "I will be 102 this August," said Park, who was working on a puzzle in the unit.... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)

- 01-29-2017 [National pro-life movement has local ties to Beaver County](#)
For two consecutive weekends, activists from all over the world gathered in Washington, D.C., to have their voices heard. On Friday, hundreds of thousands who support the pro-life movement March for Life held signs in opposition to abortion. The was the 44th annual... - [Beaver County Times](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Pa. needs drug treatment, saner sentencing laws | Editorial](#)
The announcement of the closing of SCI Pittsburgh -- Pennsylvania's oldest and most expensive-to-run state prison -- comes as a relief to four other towns that had been on the short list for shutdowns. Many counties depend on the presence of a state prison to support jobs and boost sagging... - [Easton Express-Times](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Erie residents protest abortion rights at March for Life](#)
At least three busloads of people from the Erie area attended the anti-abortion rally in the nation's capital. More than 170 people from the Erie region were in the nation's capital Friday for the March for Life rally on the National Mall. The annual event brings out anti-abortion activists

from across the country... - [Erie Times-News](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Erie County's flu season in full swing](#)
Reported flu cases more than double last week in Erie County. Flu season is starting to peak in Erie County as the number of reported cases more than doubled last week. One-hundred eighty-six flu cases were reported to the Erie County Department of Health for the week ending Jan. 21, an increase from the... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Caring to the end: How hospice changes the way we die \(Part Six\)](#)
For many reasons, doctors refer patients to hospice later, rather than sooner. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Caring to the end: How hospice changes the way we die \(Part Five\)](#)
Though administrators discourage nurses from claiming individual patients, Carly considered Pauline hers. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Caring to the end: How hospice changes the way we die \(Part Four\)](#)
Hospice work can be rewarding for nurses, but also emotionally taxing. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Caring to the end: How hospice changes the way we die \(Part Three\)](#)
Most patients with Pauline's diagnosis live about a month. She lived 22. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Harry Deitz: Understanding the importance of hospice care](#)
After experiencing its benefits in my own life, I wanted readers to grasp it, too. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Caring to the end: How hospice changes the way we die \(Part Two\)](#)
Something is becoming clear: Dying comfortably is in. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Caring to the end: How hospice changes the way we die \(Part One\) \(PHOTO GALLERY AND VIDEO\)](#)
Patients ready to stop treatment are asking to die at home, and the medical community is responding. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Letter: Stopping abortion is most important issue](#)
Ending heinous practice far more important than matters of presidential personality. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Caring to the end: How hospice changes the way we die \(Part Eight\)](#)
While the dying look for something that gives them hope for the future, the caregivers can lean on faith for emotional survival. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Caring to the end: How hospice changes the way we die \(Part Seven\)](#)
The demand for hospice care is growing; there's an aging tsunami coming. - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Anti-abortion marchers hopeful for changes under a Trump administration](#)
Anti-abortion marchers hopeful for changes under a Trump administration - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 01-29-2017 [At least three local groups vie for limited number of medical marijuana permits](#)
At least three local groups vie for limited number of medical marijuana permits "I'm excited that this law is finally entering the implementation phase," said state Sen. Pat Stefano, R-Bullskin Township, a co-sponsor of the medical marijuana bill. "There are a number of benefits that... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Panel: Promise of medical cannabis must rise to federal legal challenges](#)

Panel: Promise of medical cannabis must rise to federal legal challenges - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)

- 01-29-2017 [Congressman Murphy wants to revamp HIPAA privacy rules](#)
Congressman Murphy wants to revamp HIPAA privacy rules - [Washington Observer-Reporter](#)
- 01-29-2017 ['Changing hearts and minds': Pennsylvanians march against abortions in D.C. rally](#)
Three hours from Washington, D.C., Mary Langan leads a bus of men, women and children from St. Paul the Apostle in Annville in prayer. The melodic recitations go on as each person follows on their rosary. It's the same prayers many others are reciting as they drive to join one another... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Gov. Tom Wolf proposing to consolidate four departments into one](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf's administration alerted employees of four departments on Friday that he was proposing to consolidate their agencies into one unified agency called the Department of Health and Human Services. This move, which Wolf will announce formally on Monday, will impact... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Fellowship Manor named Best Nursing Home and other company news](#)
Grand View Health announced that it has been named to the Top 500 of the 2016 HomeCare Elite, a recognition of the top-performing home health agencies in the United States. For more than 10 years, HomeCare Elite has annually identified the top 25 percent of agencies, and highlights the top... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 01-29-2017 [In marijuana competition, a tension between clinical, alternative medicine](#)
Tim Charles describes himself as a serial entrepreneur. The Allentown native has dabbled in energy efficiency, international trade, manufacturing and real estate. Now, Charles, CEO of PA Cannabis LLC, hopes to bring medical marijuana to Main Street via a dispensary that offers patients a holistic approach to... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Pa. abortion foes optimistic about policy changes under Trump](#)
As abortion opponents descended on the National Mall Friday for the movement's 44th annual rally, Pennsylvanians in the crowd described a much different tone this year with a new Republican president in the White House. Optimism, encouragement and hope were how attendees from the Allentown... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Trump's Pick for Health Secretary Under Scrutiny for Investments](#)
In one example, Mr. Price bought stock in Zimmer Biomet, a company that makes orthopedic implants, shortly before he introduced legislation that could have protected the company from financial losses because of new federal regulation. His investment in a tiny Australian company, Innate Immunotherapeutics, was... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Sign Up for Health Care Coverage? 'Absolutely,' Experts Say](#)
THE final deadline for enrolling in health insurance for 2017 under the Affordable Care Act is on Tuesday. But with so much turmoil and uncertainty surrounding the law's future, should consumers bother to shop for coverage? Yes, say policy experts and consumer advocates. Health plans — and... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-29-2017 [In Private, Republican Lawmakers Agonize Over Health Law Repeal](#)
In their private session, the recording of which was first reported on by The Washington Post, Republicans revealed that they understood the predicament they had largely created for themselves. "I recognize that we can't keep Obama's promises," Representative Tom MacArthur of New Jersey said. "They were wrong to... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-29-2017 [Anti-Abortion Marchers Draw Inspiration From an Unlikely Source](#)

The two officials, Vice President Mike Pence and Kellyanne Conway, a counselor to the president who has been a leading figure in the anti-abortion movement for two decades, told the marchers of the White House's dedication to their cause. "Life is winning again in America," Mr. Pence said to cheers from... - [New York Times](#)

01-29-2017

[Why Succeeding Against the Odds Can Make You Sick](#)

The focus on black adolescents is significant. In much of this research, white Americans appeared somehow to be immune to the negative health effects that accompany relentless striving. As Dr. Brody put it when telling me about the Pittsburgh study, "We found this for black persons... - [New York Times](#)

01-29-2017

[Donald Trump, the Religious Right's Trojan Horse](#)

When, last October, a recording emerged of Mr. Trump's boasting to a TV host about grabbing women "by the pussy," many secular conservatives urged him to step aside, but most of the religious right stayed true. Ralph Reed, the founder and chairman of the Faith and Freedom... - [New York Times](#)

01-29-2017

[Troops Who Cleaned Up Radioactive Islands Can't Get Medical Care](#)

Roughly 4,000 troops helped clean up the atoll between 1977 and 1980. Like Mr. Snider, most did not even wear shirts, let alone respirators. Hundreds say they are now plagued by health problems, including brittle bones, cancer and birth defects in their children. Many are already dead. Others... - [New York Times](#)

01-29-2017

[Opinion | Secondhand sugars are the new secondhand smoke — and they're harming children](#)

Michael I. Goran is professor of preventive medicine and pediatrics at the University of Southern California and co-director of the school's Diabetes and Obesity Research Institute. Emily Ventura is a writer, nutrition educator and public health advocate. If you saw a pregnant woman smoking, you would undoubtedly be concerned... - [Washington Post](#)

01-29-2017

[Opinion | We kept our baby. Here's how Republicans can prove that they're pro-life, too.](#)

In 2012, while expecting our first (and only) child, my husband and I went in for a routine ultrasound. The technician saw something and alerted the resident perinatologist, who alerted the genetics team. We quickly wiped the gel from my belly, and they escorted us down the hall. In the rush, the... - [Washington Post](#)

01-29-2017

[Opinion | Science might save my daughter. Don't kill it.](#)

Cancer won't seem to leave my family alone. My grandmother, my mother, my father. Then my daughter, her fifth Christmas spent in intensive care after 11 hours of brain surgery. A year later, it came for my wife. Our daughter sat looking small and frail, shielded by a pair of oversize pink... - [Washington Post](#)

01-29-2017

[Of buckets, bridges and backpacks: GOP grapples with health-care lexicon](#)

At times, congressional Republican leaders sound like MBA professors trying to teach their students the right buzzwords to understand the nation's health-care system. Several of them talk about "buckets" for understanding the process for repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act. One lawmaker described... - [Washington Post](#)

01-29-2017

[Mr. President, use a litmus test to choose your Supreme Court nominee](#)

This week, President Trump will exercise one of the president's most important powers: nominating someone to fill an empty seat on the Supreme Court. Many conservatives made peace with Trump because he promised to appoint "judges very much in the mold of Justice [Antonin] Scalia."... - [Los Angeles Times](#)

01-27-2017

[Stateline: As More Voters Legalize Marijuana, States Left With Regulatory...](#)

(Press Release)

- 01-27-2017 [**Governor Wolf Hosts Discussion in Monroe County on Efforts to Combat the...**](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-27-2017 [**Highmark Announces Sales Leadership Additions in Central, Northeastern PA**](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-27-2017 [**HAP: National Governors Association Urges Congress to Keep Patients at the...**](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-27-2017 [**HAP: New Report Looks at Premature Mortality in U.S.; Public Health Successes...**](#)
(Press Release)
- 01-27-2017 [**Trump administration pulls back on HealthCare.gov ads**](#)
WASHINGTON — The Trump administration says it is pulling back advertising to promote HealthCare.gov as open enrollment draws to a close for this year... - [AP](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Highmark opens the door to health care pricing**](#)
Shopping for medical care is like shopping for nothing else: the charge is almost never known until the patient gets the bill. Now, health insurer Highmark Health is cracking a door into the arcane world of health care pricing by trying to guide members to the lowest cost,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Mold that led to patients' deaths may have come from linens, UPMC report says**](#)
An internal UPMC report filed Thursday in a civil lawsuit says an investigation found mold at a Clearfield County laundry facility that washes all of its 22 hospitals' linens, including for UPMC Presbyterian and Montefiore hospitals where five transplant patients were infected with... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**These senators must think they know more than health pros**](#)
While agreeing with Brian O'Neill's column about the harmful effects of leaking methane into the atmosphere ("Put Methane in Its Place, Not the Atmosphere," Jan. 15), which has a global warming potential more than 25 times greater than carbon dioxide, I also find the... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Members of Congress are gambling with our health**](#)
Gambling is common practice across the world, and it takes place in many forms. For some, it is an enjoyable and more-or-less harmless hobby, but for others it is a dangerous and hurtful addiction. There is one group of gamblers whose activities can no longer be ignored.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Bed linens filled with mold blamed for deadly crisis in UPMC report**](#)
Bed linens supplied to UPMC and possibly hundreds of other health care facilities carried fungus linked to a deadly mold crisis, according to an internal report commissioned by UPMC. The report, filed Thursday in Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas as part of two ongoing wrongful death lawsuits against the health giant, shows... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Linen service in UPMC mold report grew dramatically from small start**](#)
Paris Healthcare Linen Services, the company at the center of a UPMC mold report, has grown exponentially during the past three decades. The business that began as a family-owned dry cleaner in tiny DuBois has become a multimillion dollar entity with more than 800 employees providing... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)

- 01-27-2017 [**New insurance policy: Abandon ACA exchanges to avoid losses**](#)
Aetna became the latest health insurer to cast doubt upon its future in the Affordable Care Act's insurance exchanges after it called off a planned expansion Tuesday and suggested it could abandon that market completely... - [AP](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Don't fund drug users**](#)
Regarding the article "Gov. Wolf: Too many roadblocks in state's battle against opioid addiction" : Sorry these self-induced drug users are weak and — you're right — will keep using. So why should we as taxpayers fund them? They will rob, steal, threaten, use and abuse to get their drugs and, in... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Two more heart-surgery patients fault Penn for infections**](#)
Two more heart-surgery patients are accusing the University of Pennsylvania Health System of failing to prevent dangerous infections linked to a widely used device called a heater-cooler. One of them, Robert Gerngross, underwent valve-replacement surgery two years ago at Penn Presbyterian... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Where does Pennsylvania rank on the most expensive states for smokers?**](#)
A new study has found that smoking not only ruins your health, but it also damages your cash flow. Wallethub, a financial advisory site, performed a study looking at the financial impact smoking has on smokers finances. The study looked at factors such as out-of-pocket costs, health care expenses, income loss due... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**LVHN campus layout coming this year, project engineer says**](#)
When will Lower Nazareth LVHN campus layout be submitted? A sprawling health care campus in Lower Nazareth Township has moved closer to breaking ground, with a plan for what it will actually look like being the next step. The Board of Supervisors on Wednesday gave the go-ahead to Lehigh Valley... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Sheriff, DA to 'lock up' prescription drugs today**](#)
WILKES-BARRE — The sheriff and the district attorney will "lock 'em up" at the Luzerne County Courthouse today. No one will be arrested, though. Luzerne County Sheriff Brian Szumski, District Attorney Stefanie Salavantis, state Rep. Karen Boback, other officials and members of the... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Trustees, others meet about Hamburg Center closing \(VIDEO\)**](#)
Tilden Township, PA Public hearing When: Monday from 1 to 4 p.m. Where: Hamburg Borough Building, 61 N. Third St., Agency involved: Pennsylvania Department of Human Services To comment: Those wishing to speak during the hearing are asked to register by contacting Connie Meeker at 717-783-8964 or cmeeker@pa.gov. Written... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Our view: Fresh fare coming to Erie's 'food deserts'**](#)
We can't live on bread alone. Canned or heavily processed foods comprised largely of salt, fat and sugar won't cut it either. Erie's poorest neighborhoods have taken body blows in recent years, from regular outbursts of gunfire to the limited selection of food they can... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Erie hospital joins Parkinson's research project**](#)
Hamot Health Foundation will provide \$300,000 to help UPMC Hamot doctors improve speech in Parkinson's patients. Neurosurgeons have been using deep-brain stimulation for almost 30 years to reduce tremors and muscle rigidity in people with Parkinson's disease.... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**LVHN advances plans for 180-acre campus in Lower Nazareth**](#)
Lehigh Valley Health Network is moving forward with plans for a proposed 180-acre health care

campus in Lower Nazareth Township. Wednesday night, township supervisors approved several waivers and deferrals dealing with the project and passed a subdivision resolution that... - [Easton Express-Times](#)

- 01-27-2017 [ACA must be improved, not simply destroyed](#)
I was just told by a friend that the Affordable Care Act was dying on its own. If so, why did we see membership numbers climbing by more than 600,000 this past month? Many naysayers want to see the ACA repealed. They are saying that they want Donald Trump to keep his promise to repeal and replace. But replace with... - [Beaver County Times](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Youth Ambassadors promote understanding of mental health](#)
ROCHESTER TWP. -- The Beaver County System of Care reconvened its Youth Ambassador program Thursday for a daylong workshop at Rochester Area High School. The organization, in partnership with several other local organizations, launched the Youth Ambassador program last fall as a way to help spread... - [Beaver County Times](#)
- 01-27-2017 [More layoffs at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Pocono](#)
Second round of layoffs for the former Pocono Medical Center hospital in two months. The Lehigh Valley Hospital-Pocono laid off more employees Thursday. The former Pocono Medical Center hospital - which announced the layoff of more than 60 registered nurses in December prior to its merger with the... - [Pocono Record](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Medicare penalizes Geisinger for third consecutive year](#)
Three Geisinger hospitals are among 769 hospitals nationwide the federal government is penalizing with reduced Medicare payments. The reduction is due to high rates of patient injuries, including for the first time the spread of antibiotic-resistant germs in assessing penalties.... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Not all plans to replace Obamacare cover pre-existing conditions](#)
WASHINGTON — As Republicans in Congress work to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, many say they want to keep guaranteed insurance for people with pre-existing medical problems. However, fissures are emerging among Republicans trying to decide what that... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Sam Contakos | It's time for gov't to lead fight against drugs](#)
Christmas has come and Christ has been forgotten. He came to Earth to save mankind and all God's creation. He came to show us that God loves us, his creation. Instead men (not all, but too many) have denied the message of truth and love that Christ brought. Our streets are laden with the bodies of children and their parents who... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Program drums recovery into addicts](#)
A drum circle is any group of people playing (usually) hand-drums and percussion in a circle. They are distinct from a drumming group or troupe in that the drum circle is an end in itself rather than preparation for a performance -- a jam session on percussion, if you will.... - [Lebanon Daily News](#)
- 01-27-2017 [PA County commissioners list legislative priorities](#)
Increased health and human services funding tops the list The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania unveiled its legislative priorities for the coming year in Harrisburg this week. Concern about flat and declining state funding for the many human health... - [Lebanon Daily News](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Meadville firm to provide anesthesia work at TAH](#)
This week, Titusville Area Hospital announced a partnership with Anesthesia Consultants of Meadville, to provide professional anesthesia services at TAH, effective this month. According to

Jacqueline Leshar, director of marketing for both Titusville Area Hospital (TAH) and Meadville Medical Center, in the last several... - [Titusville Herald](#)

- 01-27-2017 [New Prospects for Growing Human Replacement Organs in Animals](#)
Another group, headed by Tomoyuki Yamaguchi and Hideyuki Sato of the University of Tokyo, and Hiromitsu Nakauchi of Stanford, has reversed diabetes in mice by inserting pancreas glands composed of mouse cells that were grown in a rat. The Salk team's report is published in... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Mr. Trump's 'Gag Rule' Will Harm Global Health](#)
With a single memorandum, President Trump may well have made it harder for health workers around the world to fight cancer, H.I.V., Zika and Ebola. The memorandum, signed on Monday, reinstates and expands a policy barring health organizations abroad, many of which provide an array of services,... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Why Succeeding Against the Odds Can Make You Sick](#)
The focus on black adolescents is significant. In much of this research, white Americans appeared somehow to be immune to the negative health effects that accompany relentless striving. As Dr. Brody put it when telling me about the Pittsburgh study, "We found this for black persons... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Days Before a Deadline, Trump Team Cancels Ads for Obama Health Plan](#)
WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is pulling back advertisements that encourage people to sign up for health insurance under former President Barack Obama's health care law. The ads were to have run in the next few days of the annual open enrollment period, which ends on Tuesday. In the last few years, large numbers of... - [New York Times](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Trump's plan to roll back Medicaid will especially affect his voters](#)
On Sunday, the Trump administration signaled its intention to convert Medicaid to a block-grant program, giving states more flexibility in how they finance health care for low-income residents. If implemented as part of an Obamacare repeal, the change would likely result in overall less... - [Washington Post](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Manor Township man charged with assisting in the attempted suicide of his wife](#)
A Manor Township man is charged with trying to help his wife commit suicide, according to police. Philip M. Benight, 60, of Conestoga, is charged with the second-degree felony count of causing or aiding suicide for his role in the attempted suicide of his wife, Rebecca, 73, police said.... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Toomey should keep 'Obamacare'](#)
U.S. Sen. Pat Toomey, who calls for the repeal of the Affordable Care Act with no provision for replacement, is acting only for headlines and not in the best interests of his constituents. As an independent contractor, I must purchase my own health insurance.... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Trump admin cancels paid-for Obamacare ads in move critics call 'sabotage'](#)
The home page of healthcare.gov as of Jan. 27, 2017. The Trump administration said Thursday night it is pulling back advertising to promote HealthCare.gov as open enrollment draws to a close for this year. A statement from the Health and Human Services Department said the... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Stay in health insurance market, state official tells Pennsylvanians](#)
The future of the Affordable Care Act — aka Obamacare — is cloudy, to say the least, but that's no reason for Pennsylvanians to stay out of the health insurance marketplace, Pennsylvania's insurance commissioner said Thursday. On the contrary, "it is still extremely important that you

purchase health... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)

- 01-27-2017 [Lead found in water in York and Perry counties](#)
Not all states agree water should be tested for lead in schools. Some residents in York and Duncannon, Perry County are dealing with higher levels of lead in their drinking water, according to reports in the York Dispatch and Fox 43. Government-mandated testing done in September revealed elevated levels of... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Horsham To Receive \\$10 Million To Fight Water Pollution](#)
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — Horsham Township is getting \$10 million from the state to help in the ongoing battle against water tainted by chemicals used in fire-fighting foam at the former naval air base. The \$10 million from PennVest, Pennsylvania's infrastructure investment... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Report States 'Fat Shaming' May Lead To Greater Risks Than Obesity](#)
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — Millions of Americans struggle with their weight. It's known to increase the risk of things like diabetes and heart disease. New research says that fat shaming can also increase those same risks. Researchers from Penn Medicine say obese people are often stereotyped as... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Keep Obamacare until it can be improved](#)
When Obamacare was being drafted, former Democratic Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi was mocked and scorned when she said, "... We have to pass the bill so that you can find out what's in it..." That sounded crazy. Now, it's as if Donald Trump and the Republicans are proclaiming,... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Bucks County DA pleads with Newtown Borough to have cops carry naloxone](#)
Bucks County District Attorney Matt Weintraub wants 100 percent of all Bucks County police departments to mandate their officers to carry the opioid antidote naloxone. One department, though, is holding up his goal, he said. And that's Newtown Borough. Weintraub recently attended a borough council meeting and pleaded with its... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Video: Vaccine hesitancy can spread serious illnesses](#)
The National Association of County and City Health Officials has noticed an increase in vaccine hesitancy and warns that serious illnesses like whooping cough can spread when vaccine rates are low. - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Radon letters spook Warminster residents](#)
Earlier this month, approximately 9,000 Warminster households received letters in the mail urging them to test their homes for the radioactive gas radon. While some residents took to Facebook concerned that something dangerous was afoot in the township, officials say the letters were only... - [Levittown Intelligencer](#)
- 01-27-2017 [Gov. Wolf announces \\$25M investment in rural health system](#)
HARRISBURG —As in other states across the nation, providing access to quality health care for Pennsylvanians residing in rural communities has become increasingly challenging. Since 1990, health outcomes in rural communities across America have deteriorated. While people living in urban areas have seen better health... - [Lewistown Sentinel](#)
- 01-27-2017 [A controversial shake up in Harrisburg](#)
Gary Tennis "separated" from Wolf administration. An article released by the Reading Eagle Tuesday has sparked some controversy in Harrisburg. "Gary Tennis will no longer serve as Secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs. Deputy Secretary Jennifer Smith will serve as Acting Secretary," explained a press... - [Kittanning Leader-Times](#)

- 01-27-2017 [**City files civil complaint against owners of former St. Joe's hospital**](#)
Hazleton officials have decided to file a civil complaint against the owner of the former St. Joseph Hospital after conferring about the property on Thursday, code department supervisor Charles Pedri said. The civil complaint could lead to fines of \$18,000 a day — the maximum... - [*Hazleton Standard-Speaker*](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Gov. Wolf given 'clean bill of health' after cancer treatment**](#)
Gov. Tom Wolf said today that he has received a “clean bill of health” from his doctor after receiving treatment for his prostate cancer. Mr. Wolf, 68, announced that he had cancer in February. He said the cancer was found early through a routine check-up. At the time,... - [*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Medical marijuana growing facility proposed for county**](#)
BROOKVILLE — Things may soon be growing in Jefferson County. This growth is not traditional however. This growth involves the cultivation of medical marijuana. Tuesday, the Jefferson County Commissioners revealed that Global Resource Operations of Nashville, Tenn., was interested in a 25 acre parcel in the... - [*DuBois Courier-Express*](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Renovation plan begins at Uniontown Hospital**](#)
A new and improved main entrance to the Uniontown Hospital opened recently, marking the beginning of a multi-phase renovation plan. - [*Connellsville Daily Courier*](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Upper Allegheny, Kaleida Health move step closer to affiliation**](#)
The New York State Department of Health Committee on Establishment and Project Review on Thursday voted to approve the active parent model for Upper Allegheny Health System and Kaleida Health. The Upper Allegheny certificate of need (CON) application will now move for... - [*Bradford Era*](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Water quality issue in Kane area not a health threat**](#)
For Kane area customers of Pennsylvania American Water, issues reported this week on the smell and taste of the water do not pose a health threat. Gary Lobaugh, the company's external affairs manager for Western Pennsylvania, explained, “Pennsylvania American Water issued a water... - [*Bradford Era*](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**With Tennis ousted, DDAP faces more ethical questions**](#)
Despite the firing of DDAP Secretary Gary Tennis, the agency still faces serious questions about whether it's abdicated its responsibilities to lobbyists. Just as oil and water don't mix, there's no room in Pennsylvania's Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs for lobbyists.... - [*Butler Eagle*](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**District addresses water woes**](#)
SUMMIT TWP — Students returned to Summit Township Elementary School today after classes were canceled on Tuesday and Wednesday while district officials prepared the building to operate without running water for drinking or hand washing. Water was shut off to the sinks and water fountains in the school last... - [*Butler Eagle*](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**DA: Police to review who knew about school's lead problem**](#)
BUTLER, Pa. A prosecutor says state police will try to determine who knew what about problems with high levels of lead in water that forced a western Pennsylvania elementary school to close for two days earlier this week... - [*AP*](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**UPMC mold transplant lawsuits now targeting linen firm, too**](#)
PITTSBURGH An attorney for the families of two organ transplant patients who are blaming their deaths on a mold outbreak at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center is now also targeting the hospital network's linen vendor... - [*AP*](#)

- 01-27-2017 [**Elder Care: Consequences of improper hospital admission and observation policy**](#)
 Since the word admission is defined literally as the process of being allowed to enter a place, common sense would suggest that a hospital patient is admitted when taken from the hospital emergency room to spend a night in a bed upstairs. Unfortunately, Medicare regulations allow hospitals not to “formally... - [Carlisle Sentinel](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Penn State nursing students to host bone marrow drive**](#)
 MONT ALTO - A cheek swab and the submission of basic information are all it takes to join a bone marrow donor registry. Penn State’s chapter of the Student Nurses’ Association of Pennsylvania (SNAP) will sponsor a donor registry drive in the Science Technology Building (room 114) at Penn State Mont Alto on Monday, Jan. 30... - [Chambersburg Public Opinion](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Marijuana facility proposed in Hellam Township**](#)
 A group hopeful to break into the state's emerging medical marijuana business market has filed plans with Hellam Township. Viridis Medicine LLC is proposing to build a nearly 50,000-square-foot medical cannabis grower/process facility at 6287 Lincoln Highway, according... - [York Dispatch](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**York VA seeking vets who served at Camp Lejeune**](#)
 York County has a large population of veterans that may be eligible for services recently established by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. The department has established a presumptive service connection for veterans suffering from disabilities that resulted from consuming... - [York Dispatch](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**DA: Police to review who knew about school's lead problem**](#)
 A prosecutor says state police will try to determine who knew what about problems with high levels of lead in water that forced a Butler Area School District elementary school to close for two days earlier this week.... - [AP](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Anti-heroin group founded by John Cramsey holding rally around two Allentown motels**](#)
 The anti-heroin group Enough is Enough will be holding a rally and march around two east Allentown motels on Sunday afternoon. The group will meet at 1 p.m. behind the Redner's Quick Shoppe gas station in the Airport Road Plaza, 1135 Airport Road, and begin marching at 2 p.m.,... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**Behind closed doors, Republican lawmakers fret about how to repeal Obamacare**](#)
 PHILADELPHIA — Republican lawmakers aired sharp concerns about their party’s quick push to repeal the Affordable Care Act inside a closed-door meeting Thursday, according to a recording of the session obtained by The Washington Post. The recording reveals a GOP that appears to be filled with doubts about how... - [Washington Post](#)
- 01-27-2017 [**France Bans Free Soda Refills in Attack on Obesity**](#)
 In 2004, France banned vending machines from schools. In 2011, it limited servings of french fries to once a week in school cafeterias. A year later, it imposed a “soda tax.” On Friday, the government said no restaurants can offer free refills of sodas and other sugary drinks.... - [New York Times](#)