



## **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2008 HEADLINES:**

**\*\*SPECIAL LEAP YEAR EDITION\*\***

**[House panel hears concerns over state budget imbalance](#)**

**[PAC Golf Outing will feature new date and new course](#)**

**[MFP Balancing Committee meets to discuss subcommittee recommendations](#)**

**[ULTCB Administration Subcommittee struggles with directive](#)**

**[Do you have a place to rest after convention?](#)**

**[Back by popular demand—discounted CEUs](#)**

**[Update from CMS](#)**

**[Governors pushing for Medicaid funding in second stimulus package](#)**

**[Study shows dramatic rise in short-stay residents](#)**

**[No time? Get CEUs online](#)**

---

**[House panel hears concerns over state budget imbalance](#)** – An Ohio House panel continued hearing concerns Wednesday over Gov. Ted Strickland’s plans to address an estimated \$733 million biennium budget imbalance, with advocates for mental health, education and senior services voicing various objections. The complaints began in earnest almost immediately after the governor announced his package of cuts in late January, and they picked up steam this week during the hearings held by the House Finance & Appropriations Committee. Although required legislation for certain aspects of the Governor’s plan isn’t expected to surface until later this spring, and many of the cuts don’t require General Assembly approval, the panel kicked off the two days of hearings with a presentation from the Office of Budget and Management on Tuesday. **Medicaid:** Mary Wachtel, director of health policy for Voices for Ohio’s Children and also a member of the Campaign to Protect Ohio’s Future, urged in prepared testimony the continuation of budget initiatives “to provide access to affordable health care for our state’s uninsured children.” She lauded the inclusion of Medicaid expansions for children in the budget measure, HB 119 and lamented the fact that the federal government blocked the state’s efforts to expand SCHIP coverage. The Ohio Council for Home Care, raised concerns over the delay in hiking Medicaid reimbursement rates for PASSPORT and other home care services. AARP Ohio reiterated their group’s support for home-based services such as PASSPORT versus nursing facility care when appropriate. The Ohio Hospital Association (OHA) asked lawmakers to: revise the time span of the Medicaid reimbursement rate freeze; bolster hospital payments with Merck settlement funds; and have ODJFS “develop a method to more accurately reflect the true fiscal impact of its policies in both the fee-for-service and managed care areas.” According to OHA, Medicaid payments to Ohio hospitals in FY 2006 were \$305.7 million short of covering the costs of providing the services. **Mental Health Cuts:** Constituencies of the two mental health facilities slated for closure in Dayton and Cambridge were among the first in line to take their pleas directly to the General Assembly during the public testimony segment. Gov. Strickland’s push to close the facilities is part of nearly \$31.7 million in planned biennium cuts to ODMH. (Source: Gongwer News Service, Feb. 27, 2008)

**[\(Back to top\).](#)**

**[PAC Golf Outing will feature new date and new course](#)** – This year the PAC golf outing will be a little different. No longer will you need gloves and coats to brave the frigid weather

that was synonymous with OANH golf, as this year the outing is slated for June! The fifth Annual OANH PAC Golf Outing will take place on Thursday, June 5 at the private Scioto Reserve Golf Club in Powell. Registration and lunch will begin at 11:30 a.m. with a shotgun start at 1 p.m. After a challenging game of golf, attendees will stay at the course for food, drinks and prizes at "19<sup>th</sup> Hole." Prices are \$250 per golfer or \$950 per foursome. A variety of sponsorships are available, to ensure your company will receive great exposure. Watch your mail and *The Weekly* for more information or you can contact [Dawn Kennedy](#). ([Back to top](#)).

### **MFP Balancing Committee meets to discuss subcommittee**

**recommendations** – The full Money Follows the Person (MFP, also called HOME Choice) Balancing Committee met this week to discuss draft recommendations from several subcommittees. In November, the full committee was divided into four subcommittees, with each one assigned a topic. After many hours of meetings, the 'Criteria,' 'Housing and Supportive Services,' 'Facility Based Capacity,' and 'Home and Community Based and State Plan Services' subcommittees presented recommendations for any last comments or suggestions. Below is a brief summary of recommendations directly related to the skilled nursing facility or assisted living industry. Most of the recommendations do not address ICF-MR issues as those have been deferred to the Futures Committee.

- **The Criteria subcommittee** recommended that a small workgroup of interested parties convene to discuss substantial changes to the level of care and PASRR rules. The recommendations noted that there was insufficient time for the Criteria subcommittee to adequately determine how any rule changes would impact both providers and consumers. The workgroup is to critically examine the impact any changes would have on these individuals.
- **The Housing and Supportive Services subcommittee** recommended using a "Home First" concept to divert SNF funding to adult group homes and other community living environments. Although this is already being implemented for PASSPORT and RSS individuals, the issue was raised as to how it would be implemented in a non-waitlist scenario such as group homes. The subcommittee could not reach consensus on several recommendations that address the AL waiver waitlist, particularly on grandfathering in AL facilities that do not meet the current requirements and making adjustments to the current AL waiver reimbursement system. The group did agree to recommend increasing a person's personal need allowance for Part D co-pays and to recommend creating a room and board subsidy for couples that do not qualify for SSI.
- **The Facility Based Capacity subcommittee** recommended that a stakeholder group be convened to investigate making changes to current Certificate of Need process and criteria, allowing the movement of beds across county lines, reinstating a modified bed need formula, and creating a bed buyback or bed conversion program.
- **The Home and Community Based and State Plan Services subcommittee** suggested several services that should become 'card' services (available to Medicaid consumers) including adult day services, and expanding nursing, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. The subcommittee also recommended streamlining the prior authorization process, having Medicaid services available the same day as discharge from a hospital or SNF, and expanding consumer direction where possible.

The Academy will make the final recommendations available once they have been accepted by the ULTCB. If you would like more information, please contact [Chris Murray](#). ([Back to top](#)).

**ULTCB Administration Subcommittee struggles with directive** – The Administration Subcommittee of the Unified Long Term Care Budget (ULTCB) Workgroup met late last week to discuss its role in relation to recommendations accepted by the full ULTCB Workgroup. After reviewing a project timeline for the administration of the ULTCB, the group looked at recommendations that had been accepted by the ULTCB Workgroup to determine what administrative and budget functions the group needed to address. The discussion eventually focused on the role of the Administration Subcommittee and what recommendations they should focus on and to what level of detail the subcommittee needs to provide. It became clear that the subcommittee's IT recommendations would be dependant upon the structure of the new Medicaid Information and Technology System (MITS) and the ability to either change MITS or create new programs that integrate with it. The subcommittee also will look to the ULTCB Workgroup for guidance as to the prioritization of recommendations. For more information, contact [Chris Murray](#). ([Back to top](#)).

**Do you have a place to rest after convention?** – Have you secured your convention sleeping room? If not, now is the time to guarantee you have a hotel room for the 2008 OANH Annual Convention & Trade Show. The 2008 convention will be held Wednesday - Friday, October 22-24, 2008 at the Hilton Columbus at Easton. Sleeping rooms sell out fast, so secure yours today. The Academy has negotiated a special discounted rate of \$164 per room/per night. To make a reservation call the Hilton at 614/414-5000 and mention the **group code NRS**.  
([Back to top](#)).

**Back by popular demand—discounted CEUs** – The Academy has once again partnered with PureService Pharmacy and several drug manufacturers to offer a new regional education program at a greatly discounted price. This new class will cover a variety of incontinence issues. It will be held in Cincinnati on May 20 and in Cleveland in September 16. It will offer four BENHA CEUs and lunch at a greatly reduced price! Academy members may attend this program for only \$35 and non-members may attend for \$50. Watch your mailboxes and faxes for information. For questions, contact [Dawn Kennedy](#). ([Back to top](#)).

**Update from CMS** – The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently released the following information of interest to long-term care providers:

- **GPRA**

[View the Excel spreadsheet](#) that contains two tables, one for each GPRA goal, which shows the GPRA rates from CY 2003, Quarter 3 through CY 2007, Quarter 3 for Regions V and VII. The Regional Office project to reduce the restraint and pressure ulcer rates was in place for 18 months, from April 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007. The baseline rate was the rate for CY 2005, Quarter 4 (highlighted row). The last row in each table is the rate at the end of the project. Regions V and VII exceeded their restraint goals. Region VII met its pressure ulcer goal and Region V missed its pressure ulcer goal by one percentage point. While the 18 month period is now over, reductions of restraint use and pressure ulcer prevalence are goals on which CMS is still working.

- **Nursing Home Transparency and Improvement Act of 2008**

Senators Kohl and Grassley introduced the Nursing Home Transparency and Improvement Act of 2008 (Senate bill 2641) on February 14. Attached is a press release about the bill. The Congressional Record weblink where the record of the bill being introduced can be found at: [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?position=all&page=S1058&dbname=2008\\_record](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?position=all&page=S1058&dbname=2008_record).

- **Recalls and Warnings**

- ◇ [Fentanyl Patch Recall Expanded](#): The recalled lot numbers associated with the recall are found in the press release at [http://www.fda.gov/oc/po/firmrecalls/actavis02\\_08.html](http://www.fda.gov/oc/po/firmrecalls/actavis02_08.html).
- ◇ [Portable Electric Heaters](#): Region V forwarded information related to the voluntary recall of portable electric heaters imported and distributed by Aloha Housewares due to fire hazard.
- ◇ [Wall Furnaces](#): Region V also forwarded information related to the voluntary recall of direct-vent wall furnaces manufactured by Rinnai America Corp.

([Back to top](#)).

### **Governors pushing for Medicaid funding in second stimulus package**

– Governors are pressing Congress to include funding for Medicaid in a second economic stimulus package, *CongressDaily* reports. A bipartisan group of governors on Monday morning met with President Bush and administration officials to push a second package; however, Bush indicated that he likely would not support the effort, according to *CongressDaily*. The group also plans to meet with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) on Tuesday. Pelosi met with a group of Democratic governors on Monday afternoon. Vermont Gov. Jim Douglas (R) said his top priority in a second stimulus package is Medicaid funding. Governors at the winter meeting of the [National Governors Association](#) on Monday were expected to approve an interim resolution adopted in January that calls for a stimulus package that would provide \$6 billion in Medicaid assistance, among other measures. In addition, some governors say that Congress must place a moratorium on a Bush administration regulation that would make it more difficult for states to expand SCHIP eligibility to children in families with incomes greater than 250% of the federal poverty level (Goode, *CongressDaily*, 2/25).

(Source: Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report. Feb 26, 2008.)

([Back to top](#)).

**Study shows dramatic rise in short-stay residents** – A new analysis of trends in New York nursing home care reads like a summary of what is happening a round the country. In short: more shorter stays for residents, as well as more sicker or cognitively impaired residents. Ten-year trends for New York's nursing homes (1996 to 2005) showed that, despite lower average occupancy rates (from 96.9% down to 93.2 %), the annual number of nursing home admissions per bed more than doubled (0.78 to 1.76). Also, the number of residents staying less than two months tripled, according to the report, which was released Tues day by the United Hospital Fund. Professor Thomas Dennison of the Center for Policy Research at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs wrote the report for the Medicaid Institute at United Hospital Fund.

(Source: McKnight's.com Daily Update)

[\(Back to top\).](#)

**No time? Get CEUs online** – Do you still need CEUs for your license renewal but don't have any time to be out of the office? Utilize the Academy's virtual university and get up to five CEUs without leaving your office! These online classes have been approved by BENHA (Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators), and administrators may use online or home study courses to fulfill up to five of their yearly 20 hour CEU requirement. A few of the available classes are:

- How to Deal with Difficult People
- Bloodborne Pathogens Basic
- Healthcare Suite - Infection Prevention
- Preventing AIDS and Hepatitis B in the Workplace
- Healthcare Compliance Suite - Workplace Violence in the Healthcare Industry

You may sample any class for free, with no commitment . If you would like to take the class and receive CEU credit from BENHA, the cost is \$20; however, Academy members receive a discount. Members will need to use a discount code, which is available by the logging into the OANH website. Go to [www.oanonline.org](http://www.oanonline.org) now to learn more about these courses. If you have any questions, please contact [Dawn Kennedy](#). [\(Back to top\).](#)

*A publication of The Ohio Academy of Nursing Homes, Inc. All rights reserved. 2008©  
To unsubscribe from this newsletter, [click here](#) and type "unsubscribe" in the subject line.*