

# MEMBER UPDATE

FISCAL YEAR 2020

**DURING THE PAST YEAR**, the Catholic Health Association of the United States has been committed to ensuring that our healing ministry remains vibrant and strong. As the collective voice for our members, we remain focused on advocating for public policy that promotes access to affordable care for all as a basic human right, strengthening our identity as a ministry of the Church, and bringing together our members and partners to advance the common good.

**As we face unprecedented public health, economic, and societal challenges, CHA has prioritized our work to meet the urgent needs of our time and carry out our mission of healing in this period of crisis.**

## COVID-19 Financial Assistance

CHA has been working with Congress and the Administration to address the ongoing critical need for funding, resources, and regulatory relief for our hospitals and long-term care facilities on the frontlines of care for COVID-19 patients. Working collaboratively with other national organizations, we've secured substantial financial resources for our members through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. CHA continues to advocate for additional federal funding while also providing members with technical assistance and implementation information for CARES funding and guidance for Medicare advanced payments, provider liability, Medicaid and Medicare 1135 waivers, telehealth regulations, community benefit costs, and Form 990 filings.



## Advocating for the ACA

Protecting and improving the Affordable Care Act (ACA) remains a priority for CHA. With the ACA facing additional legal challenges, CHA filed an amicus brief in the California v. Texas case urging the U.S. Supreme Court to not strike down the whole of the ACA. It's anticipated the high court could hear the case as early as the fall of 2020.



## A Voice for the Marginalized

CHA continues to speak out for racial justice and an end to health disparities and is actively working to develop a ministry-wide approach to addressing systemic racism. CHA remains committed to advocating for immigrants and joined with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and other Catholic organizations in supporting the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The U.S. Supreme Court agreed with our position in a June 2020 ruling that the Administration illegally ended DACA. CHA has also vocally opposed the Administration's expanded definition of public charge, which deters legal immigrants and their citizen family members from seeking medical care.



### [CHA's Vision for U.S. Health Care](#)

(updated in 2019) outlines the values and principles that CHA believes should be reflected in health care policy.

## Ethics During the Pandemic

In our ongoing commitment to bring our members timely and relevant information about critical ethical issues around COVID-19, CHA developed a series of [educational materials](#) for our members to help navigate the many challenges around resource allocation, end-of-life decisions, and the numerous clinical, business and social considerations that have arisen during the pandemic. Working in partnership with Georgetown University/Pellegrino Center for Clinical Bioethics, the Supportive Care Coalition, and several of our members, CHA produced more than 25 webinars on COVID-19-related ethics topics. In addition, we developed guidelines for scarce resources and Code status for COVID-19 patients and published a series of articles in [Health Progress](#) about the pandemic's impact on vulnerable populations, caregivers, and public policy. CHA is also working on ethical guidelines for coronavirus vaccine development, testing and distribution.



## Caregiver Wellness and Spirituality

Recognizing that during COVID-19 and its aftermath, self-care — body, mind and spirit — is essential for our ministry colleagues, CHA created a series of [well-being](#) and [spiritual resources](#) for members to access through our [coronavirus webpage](#). We've also offered a four-part webinar series on wellness and initiated a well-being task force comprised of physicians and executives in human resources, organizational development, mission and spiritual care to share best practices and opportunities to address moral distress and improve the caregiver environment.

## Church Relations

As a ministry of the Catholic Church, CHA works closely with Church leadership and local clergy to advance our mission. Our [Ministry Identity Assessment](#) has been adopted by members to measure and report the extent to which the values and commitments of Catholic identity are lived out in their organization, identify strengths and opportunities for growth and then develop a plan for continuous quality improvement that can be shared with staff, boards, sponsors, bishops and dicasteries of the Holy See. CHA's [Ministry Formation Framework](#) standardizes the content areas and pedagogy to help ground and guide formation for sponsors, boards, senior leaders, and all who work in our ministries. Our new [Sponsorship: Sustaining the Ministry](#) webinar series explores the theoretical and practical dimensions of contemporary sponsorship models and the distinctive roles and responsibilities of sponsors. CHA also offers workshops for priests and deacons on the Church's end-of-life tradition in collaboration with dioceses throughout the United States. In addition, CHA worked with the Liturgy Committee of the USCCB and the National Association of Catholic Chaplains to provide guidance on sacramental celebrations and the pastoral care of patients with COVID-19.



## Public Relations

Effectively telling the story of Catholic health care is vitally important to ensuring our ministry can continue to thrive. During COVID-19, CHA has utilized [Catholic Health World](#), our website, social media platforms and the news media to share stories and provide insights demonstrating how our members have responded to the call to care during the pandemic. During the past several months, CHA has engaged a consultant to conduct strategic research assessing the reputation of CHA and Catholic health care, exploring areas that cause conflicted feelings about our ministry, and ways to leverage our strengths. From that research, CHA will develop messages and communications tactics to better demonstrate the essentiality of Catholic health care in the United States.



## Strategic Planning

Following direction from the CHA Board of Trustees and guided by input from CHA members and data collected on economic, policy and ecclesial factors impacting the future of Catholic health care in the United States, CHA developed a strategic plan that identifies priorities for the association for the next three years. In the spring of 2020, the planning process was paused due to COVID-19. During the summer and fall of 2020, CHA and the Board are revisiting the plan's four areas of focus — access to care, healthy communities, thriving members, and a strengthened Catholic identity. The focus of the plan is to ensure that Catholic health care continues to thrive and fulfills its mission to care for all, with special attention to persons who are poor and vulnerable.