Co-Sponsor Memos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HCO 375</td>
<td>Murt, Thomas</td>
<td>Prohibits smoking in casinos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 385</td>
<td>Murt, Thomas</td>
<td>Requires each slot machine licensee to collect a $2 per patron admission fee to establish the Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Waiting List Account in the State Treasury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 388</td>
<td>Gingrich, Mauree</td>
<td>Provides for evaluation of gambling disorder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 404</td>
<td>Rapp, Kathy</td>
<td>Directs the Department of Health to establish the Early Childhood Vision Care Education Program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 428</td>
<td>Grove, Seth</td>
<td>Allows pharmacist the ability to administer the flu vaccine to patients over the age of 7 with parental consent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 430</td>
<td>DeLuca, Anthony</td>
<td>Directs DHS to establish sterilization, sanitation &amp; safety standards for any business engaged in tattooing or body piercing &amp; creates a central registry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 437</td>
<td>Cohen, Mark</td>
<td>Provides for the medical use of marijuana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 439</td>
<td>DeLuca, Anthony</td>
<td>Ensures that private practitioners and facilities remain “in network” if they are qualified and willing to accept the terms of the contract.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 447</td>
<td>Thomas, Curtis</td>
<td>Limits individuals with mental illness from receiving a gun permit and/or purchasing firearms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 450</td>
<td>Cutler, Bryan</td>
<td>Provides clearer language to better utilize Community Based Services Tax Credit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 453</td>
<td>Sainato, Chris</td>
<td>Extends the death benefit that is currently available to other emergency responders to members of the Pennsylvania Civil Air Patrol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 465</td>
<td>Kortz, Bill</td>
<td>Requires a retail establishment with toilet facilities for employees to allow customers who suffer from inflammatory bowel disease or other medical conditions that require immediate access to a toilet facility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 476</td>
<td>DeLuca, Anthony</td>
<td>Removes the requirement of financial obligation for family members for the care of indigent parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 477</td>
<td>Pickett, Tina</td>
<td>Holds passengers traveling in a vehicle involved in a serious accident as legally responsible as the driver of that vehicle for reporting the accident as soon as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCO 484</td>
<td>Murt, Thomas</td>
<td>Requires insurance companies to disclose whether or not</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
certain health care services relating to an acquired brain injury are covered under their health insurance policies.

**HCO 497**  Murt, Thomas  
Changes the professional title used by registered nurse practitioners (CRNPs) and eliminates the requirement for collaborative agreements between certified nurse practitioners and physicians.

**HCO 511**  Costa, Dom  
Permits the DOC to disclose the HIV, Hepatitis B, or Hepatitis C status of any infected prisoner to all correctional officers who are required to interact with the infected prisoner.

**HCO 512**  Costa, Dom  
Allows certain public employees in Allegheny County to retire early in the event of permanent mental or physical disability.

**HCO 527**  Freeman, Robert  
Allows the State Workers’ Insurance Fund (SWIF) within the Department of Labor and Industry to sell health insurance.

**HCO 529**  Mullery, Gerald  
Prohibits the use of both tobacco and nicotine based products in Commonwealth of Pennsylvania schools.

**HCO 536**  Mullery, Gerald  
Requires all members of the General Assembly to contribute towards the annual costs of their health insurance plan premium.

**HCO 542**  Davis, Tina  
Requires school employees to report alleged cases of abuse of older school students who suffer from serious mental or learning disabilities and have been placed in an individualized education program (IEP).

**HCO 552**  Oberlander, Donna  
Names a Chief Nursing Officer of the Commonwealth.

**HCO 555**  Saylor, Stanley  
Authorizes the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) to develop and implement a system for drug testing welfare recipients based on reasonable suspicion grounds.

**HCO 576**  Burns, Frank  
Addresses the issue of the Department of Public Welfare issuing gift cards as an incentive to participate in regular preventive care services.

**HCO 577**  Baker, Matt  
Creates an action for the release of confidential birth information.

**HCO 582**  Baker, Matt  
Gives the Department of Health the power to quickly add chemicals to the list of precursor substances under the Drug Act.

**HCO 583**  Sabatina, John  
Prohibits the discrimination of any potential organ transplant recipient on the basis of a physical or mental disability.

**HCO 597**  Baker, Matt  
Increases the grading for a person who impersonates a doctor of medicine and provides medical treatment.

**HCO 599**  Baker, Matt  
Changes the statute of limitations for infanticide to be on par with crimes of homicide.

**HCO 600**  Baker, Matt  
Clarifies that the Prevailing Wage Act does not apply to public works projects by or on behalf of hospitals, cancer treatment centers, nursing homes, and assisted living residences.

**SCO 451**  Hughes, Vincent  
Directs the Joint State Government Commission to convene an advisory committee for purposes of studying suicide in higher education.

**SCO 453**  Boscola, Lisa  
Excludes veterans' service-related disability compensation from being considered as income when determining eligibility for PACE & PACENET under the State Lottery Law.

**SCO 478**  Vance, Pat  
Authorizes the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council for a term of four years.

**SCO 497**  Yudichak, John  
Estabishes a process for the Department of Health and the Department of Environmental Protection to follow whenever
there is a suspected cancer or disease cluster.

Establishes a statute of repose in certain liability actions.

PA Bulletin

**DOH: APPROVED PREARREST AND EVIDENTIAL BREATH TESTING DEVICES**
The Department of Health published a list of prearrest breath testing devices and evidential breath testing devices. The full list of devices may be found in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. Questions regarding the list should be directed to Dr. James R. Lute, Assistant Bureau Director, Department of Health, Bureau of Laboratories, PO Box 500, Exton, PA 19341-0500, (610) 280-3464.

**DOH: LABORATORIES APPROVED TO DETERMINE ANALYSES OF BLOOD OR SERUM OR BOTH FOR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES UNDER THE CLINICAL LABORATORY ACT, THE VEHICLE CODE, THE FISH AND BOAT CODE AND THE GAME AND WILDLIFE CODE**
The Department of Health released a list of approved laboratories that perform analyses of blood and/or serum for the determination of controlled substances. Questions regarding this list should be directed to Dr. James R. Lute, Assistant Bureau Director, Department of Health, Bureau of Laboratories, PO Box 500, Exton, PA 19341, (610) 280-3464.

The Department of Health released a list of approved laboratories that perform alcohol analyses of blood and/or serum and plasma. Questions regarding this list should be directed to Dr. James R. Lute, Assistant Bureau Director, Department of Health, Bureau of Laboratories, PO Box 500, Exton, PA 19341, (610) 280-3464.

The Department of Health released a list of approved laboratories that perform analyses of urine for the determination of controlled substances or their biotransformation products. Questions regarding this list should be directed to Dr. James R. Lute, Assistant Bureau Director, Department of Health, Bureau of Laboratories, PO Box 500, Exton, PA 19341, (610) 280-3464.

**DOH: LABORATORIES APPROVED TO PERFORM BLOOD LEAD AND/OR ERYTHROCYTE PROTOPORPHYRIN DETERMINATIONS UNDER THE CLINICAL LABORATORY ACT**
The Department of Health released a list of approved laboratories that perform analyses of blood for lead or erythrocyte protoporphyrin content. Questions regarding this list should be directed to Dr. James R. Lute, Assistant Bureau Director, Department of Health, Bureau of Laboratories, PO Box 500, Exton, PA 19341, (610) 280-3464.

**DOH: TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**
The Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Board will hold a public meeting on Friday, February 6, 2015, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The meeting will be held in the large conference room of the Community Center, 2nd Floor, Giant Food Store, 2300 Linglestown Road, Harrisburg. For additional information contact Julie Hohnert, Division of Child and Adult Health Services at (717) 772-2762.

**L&I: MAXIMUM PENNSYLVANIA WORKERS' COMPENSATION PAYABLE**
The Department of Labor and Industry determined the maximum compensation payable under sections 105.1 and 105.2 of the Workers’ Compensation Act shall be $951 per week for injuries occurring on and after January 1, 2015. For purposes of calculating the update to payments for medical treatment rendered on and after January 1, 2015, the percentage increase in the Statewide Average Weekly Wage is 2.0 percent.
Upcoming Meetings & Events

**State Board of Pharmacy**
January 13, 2015 - 9:00 a.m. **Rescheduled from 1/20/15**
2601 North Third Street, Board Room B, Harrisburg
Board Meeting.
*Agenda*
For additional information: (717) 783-7156

**Department of Health**
January 14, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
Park Inn Radisson Harrisburg West, 5401 Carlisle Pike, Mechanicsburg
HIV Community Prevention Planning Committee Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 922-9384

January 14, 2015 - 10:00 a.m.
Health and Welfare Building, Room 812, 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg
Health Policy Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 772-5298

**Department of Human Services**
January 14, 2015 - 1:00 p.m.
Harrisburg Hilton, One North Second Street, Harrisburg
PA Developmental Disabilities Council Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 787-6058

**Department of Health**
January 15, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
Park Inn Radisson, Harrisburg West, 5401 Carlisle Pike, Mechanicsburg
HIV Community Prevention Planning Committee Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 922-9384

**Department of Human Services**
January 15, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
Harrisburg Hilton, One North Second Street, Harrisburg
PA Developmental Disabilities Council Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 787-6058

**State Board of Optometry**
January 15, 2015 - 9:00 a.m. **Canceled**
2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 783-7155

**Department of Health**
January 16, 2015 - 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 907, Health and Welfare Building, 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg
Renal Disease Advisory Committee Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 772-2762

**PA eHealth Partnership Authority**
January 16, 2015 - 10:00 a.m.
Finance Building, Room 502, 613 North Street, Harrisburg
Quarterly Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 265-7850
State Board of Pharmacy
January 20, 2015 - 9:00 a.m. **Rescheduled to 1/13/15**
2601 North Third Street, Board Room B, Harrisburg
Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 783-7156

State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators
January 21, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 783-7155

State Board of Nursing
January 22, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
2601 North Third Street, Board Room D, Harrisburg
Monthly Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 783-7142

State Board of Physical Therapy
January 22, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 214-1891

Department of Human Services
January 22, 2015 - 10:00 a.m.
Temple University Harrisburg, Lecture Hall 246/248, 234 Strawberry Square, Harrisburg
Medical Assistance Advisory Committee (MAAC) Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 772-6341

State Board of Dentistry
January 23, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 783-7162

State Board of Veterinary Medicine
January 23, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
2601 North Third Street, Board Room B, Harrisburg
Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 783-7134

State Board of Psychology
January 26, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 783-7155

State Board of Psychology
January 27, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg
Board Meeting.
For additional information: (717) 783-7155

Department of Health
January 29, 2015 - 10:00 a.m.
Health & Welfare Building, Room 129, 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg
Pharmaceutical Benefits Program Advisory Council Meeting Teleconference.
For additional information: (800) 922-9384
State Board of Examiners in Speech-Language and Hearing  
January 30, 2015 - 9:30 a.m.  
2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg  
Board Meeting.  
For additional information: (717) 783-1389

### Session Schedule

#### 2015 SENATE SESSION SCHEDULE

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<th>Month</th>
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<td>January</td>
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<td>February</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30</td>
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#### 2015 HOUSE SESSION SCHEDULE

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<td>February</td>
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<td>March</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 30, 31</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td>4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13</td>
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<td>1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30</td>
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### In the News

01-09-2015  **Scarnati Announces Senate Standing Committee Chairs for 2015-2016**  
(Press Release)

01-09-2015  **Senate Standing Committee Chairs for 2015-2016**  
(Press Release)

01-09-2015  **Cox, Gainey to reintroduce medical marijuana bill**  
(Press Release)

01-09-2015  **PA Health Care Quality Alliance, Health Care Improvement Foundation Complete...**  
(Press Release)

01-09-2015  **Two inmate deaths raise questions on Allegheny County Jail health care contractor**  
An outburst of obscenity led to the arrest of Clarence Jewett Jr. as he tried to enter his own apartment, and after 10 days at the Allegheny County Jail, the 62-year-old man was dead. Mr. Jewett had a history of mental health problems, but his family knew of... -  *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

01-09-2015  **FDA cites McKees Rocks food warehouse**
A McKees Rocks food warehouse that has a history of run-ins with local health inspectors has been cited by federal regulators for serious health code violations after a recent inspection found unsanitary conditions, including rodent and bird droppings on food items. - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-09-2015  Academic hospitals vie for new resources
Highmark and Allegheny Health Network closed out 2014 by announcing a 10-year clinical and research partnership with Baltimore-based Johns Hopkins Medicine. The alliance makes clear sense for the two Pittsburgh institutions — the Johns Hopkins name and its sterling medical... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-09-2015  Highmark, UPMC revise arguments since health care coverage contract expired in 2014
Few things in the world of health care have been as consistent as the positions of Highmark Inc. and UPMC in their contract battle. But all things change. UPMC wants all Highmark members to keep their UPMC physicians if that's their choice, flipping three years of pushing for a contract termination... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-09-2015  Talks to resolve $3.5M Monsour liens under way
Negotiations have commenced to resolve $3.5 million in liens leveled against the former Monsour Medical Center property in Jeannette, a county official said Thursday. "There's been productive dialogue with the two lien holders, the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. and the IRS, and we're hoping the issue will... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-09-2015  Ways to fight back after cancer diagnosis
By Kris Toomey Ambush is defined as an act of lying concealed so as to attack by surprise. I think that is exactly what our family experienced in October. My mother was having shoulder pain. After a few weeks of seeing doctors who were unable to determine the source of the problem, she went in for an MRI.... - Philadelphia Inquirer

01-09-2015  A revolutionary new treatment in a dangerous flu season
The annual scourge known as the flu is always a serious health threat, and this season's version is particularly nasty. Not yet at its peak, the 2014-15 influenza season has already killed at least 36 people in Pennsylvania and rendered nearly 20,000 others into... - Philadelphia Inquirer

01-09-2015  LVHN to open new rehabilitation facility
Lehigh Valley Health Network is opening an inpatient rehabilitation facility at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest in Salisbury Township. The 34-bed facility will occupy the sixth and seventh floors of the Kasych Family Pavilion's South Tower, LVHN announced Thursday. The L-shaped tower... - Allentown Morning Call

01-09-2015  LVHN to open new rehabilitation facility
Lehigh Valley Health Network is opening an inpatient rehabilitation facility at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Cedar Crest in Salisbury Township. The 34-bed facility will occupy the sixth and seventh floors of the Kasych Family Pavilion's South Tower, LVHN announced Thursday. The L-shaped tower... - Allentown Morning Call

01-09-2015  Smoking cessation program to be offered
A free program designed to help people who want to quit using tobacco was announced by the Greene County Tobacco Control Program. The Bee Free Program, which features Freedom from Smoking, is designed to help people gain strength and reinforcement to quit. The program will begin... - Washington Observer-Reporter

01-09-2015  York to help residents battle weight problems
The City of York is trying to encourage weight loss among its residents again in 2015. For the second year, the city and Weight Watchers International Inc. are registering residents for this
January 9, 2015

initiative. New this year, participants can pre-purchase 10 Weight Watchers vouchers... - *York Daily*

01-09-2015  **Red Cross blood drives scheduled**
The American Red Cross encourages eligible blood donors to start a lifesaving habit by becoming a regular blood donor this year, starting with National Blood Donor Month in January. January is a challenging time for blood donations. Inclement weather... - *Waynesboro Record Herald*

01-09-2015  **Medical offices renamed Summit Primary Care**
Four Summit Health family care practices were renamed Summit Primary Care as of Jan. 1. Summit Health began renaming family practices in summer 2014 to provide patients with more convenient service, according to Niki Showe, senior vice president for physician practices at Summit Health.... - *Waynesboro Record Herald*

01-09-2015  **Geisinger limits young visitors during winter**
DANVILLE - Geisinger Health System has issued restrictions temporarily prohibiting children under the age of 5 from visiting children's and women's inpatient units because of the seasonal increase in pediatric respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) cases. "The number of RSV infections in children rise during the fall and winter... - *Shamokin News-Item*

01-09-2015  **Overdose prevention training set**
STRATTONVILLE The Armstrong-Indiana-Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission is hosting an "Overdose Prevention and Response Training" from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 26, at the Structural Modulars, Inc. (SMI) building, located at 101 Southern Avenue Strattanville. For more information or to register... - *Oil City Derrick*

01-09-2015  **Unraveling the Key to a Cold Virus’s Effectiveness**
If there is a champion among contagions, it may well be the lowly rhinovirus, responsible for many of the coughs and sniffles that trouble us this time of year. Rhinoviruses are spectacularly effective at infecting humans. Americans suffer one billion colds a year, and rhinoviruses are the... - *New York Times*

01-09-2015  **House Fires Shot at Health Care Law, Seeking to Alter Critical Coverage Rule**
WASHINGTON — The House on Thursday easily passed legislation that would redefine a full-time worker under the Affordable Care Act, brushing aside qualms from conservatives and liberals who fear the bill would prompt employers to cut worker hours to avoid being forced to offer them health... - *New York Times*

01-09-2015  **Unraveling the Key to a Cold Virus’s Effectiveness**
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01-09-2015  **House approves two Obamacare tweaks intended to help small businesses**
The House of Representatives has wasted little time attempting to tweak the president’s health care law, already approving two bills that would revise some of the legislation’s most controversial rules for business owners. In one of the first pieces of legislation approved by the new... - *Washington Post*

01-09-2015  **Can Obamacare win over people and Congress?**
GALLUP REPORTED Wednesday that the national uninsured rate dropped to 15.5 percent of the non-elderly population, down from 20.8 percent a little over a year ago. Yes, the improving economy may have helped. But that’s also the period in which the Affordable Care Act, also
known as Obamacare, began... - Washington Post

01-09-2015  **Why the government pays researchers to drug mice, birds and even spiders**
Zebra finches, mice and spiders. They’ve all been drugged to benefit humankind. For many years, researchers have intoxicated animals in the name of science, often funding the work through federal grants from agencies such as the National Institutes of Health. The practice is controversial, but it... - Washington Post

01-09-2015  **Opinion: Epinephrine in every school will save children from severe allergic reactions**
By Wendy Antosiewicz Having a child diagnosed with food allergies is life-changing for the entire family. When Isabella was diagnosed with multiple food allergies, we had no idea what would lie ahead. We quickly learned the seriousness of her condition — Isabella has had more reactions than any of us can count. We’ve... - Trenton Times

01-09-2015  **Los Angeles County weighs merger of health agencies**
Amid a change in top leadership at Los Angeles County, the Board of Supervisors is considering a major overhaul of the way the county provides health services to its 10 million residents. Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich wants to merge the county's public health... - Los Angeles Times

01-09-2015  **California's soaring healthcare costs bode ill for the budget**
California's budget, which bounced back after years of deficits, is now being squeezed by rising healthcare costs for the poor and for retired state workers. The mountain of medical bills threatens to undermine Gov. Jerry Brown's efforts to strengthen state finances — his central promise of the past... - Los Angeles Times

01-09-2015  **Flu wallops Ohio as two more kids die**
This flu season has brought with it sobering reminders that the virus can be severe and deadly. Flu has killed two more Ohio children, a 4-month-old boy in Hamilton County and a 2-year-old girl in Allen County, bringing the number of deaths in children to four this year, Ohio Department of Health officials said.... - Columbus Dispatch

01-09-2015  **New type of cancer drug could get early approval**
TRENTON, N.J. — The first in a new class of cancer medicines, Pfizer’s Ibrance, appears poised for approval to treat advanced breast cancer within a few months and quickly could become a blockbuster, some analysts think. Analysts’ forecasts yesterday indicated that the U.S. Food and Drug... - Columbus Dispatch

01-09-2015  **Narcan training set for Saturday**
BLAIRSTVILLE — More than two years ago, a Blairsville woman turned her son’s death into something positive for the community. The Blairsville Community Support Group Against Drugs began in 2013 following the death of Blairsville graduate Corey McMillan who passed away... - Indiana Gazette

01-09-2015  **The insurance merry-go-round**
Opponents of single payer health insurance claim the current system is efficient and a single payer system would mess it up. So let’s examine a real life example of how private health insurance works. My doctor prescribed a simple procedure. I called the insurance company to... - Levittown Bucks County Courier Times

01-09-2015  **Deadly 'heroin' circulating in New Jersey, Pennsylvania doesn’t respond to Narcan, police warn**
Drugs being circulated as heroin, bearing one of three distinct labels, may not contain any heroin at all and have been linked to six overdose deaths in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York, New Jersey State Police said Thursday. Wax folds containing heroin are typically stamped
PinnacleHealth launches informational flu line
HARRISBURG — With flu levels peaking in the state, PinnacleHealth is offering its Flu Line where primary care providers will be available for advice about flu symptoms and where to go for treatment. The Flu Line is a community service and PinnacleHealth nurses will answer...

Two new employees join CRMC executive staff
SOUTH MIDDLETON TOWNSHIP — Carlisle Regional Medical Center on Thursday announced two new additions to the executive staff at the hospital. Mark Reyngoudt, the facility’s new chief financial officer began Dec. 29. He comes to Carlisle from Sharon Hospital in Sharon, Connecticut, where...

LIFE Pittsburgh plans expansion
A Parkway Center-based day program that replaces nursing home care for the elderly is preparing to add a fourth site, this time south of the city. LIFE Pittsburgh is screening several sites to develop a 30,000-square-foot center, Executive Director Joanne Gago said Thursday. A final decision is...

Sen. Bob Casey: repeal medical device tax, but not at expense of ACA
With a new year and new Senate alignment, Pennsylvania Sen. Bob Casey said again Thursday that Congress should repeal the medical device tax that was designed to help pay for part of the Affordable Care Act, but not at the expense of the whole law. “I have supported the repeal of the medical device tax,” Casey said in a...

Vulakovich Thanks Governor for Accepting Long Term Care Commission Report
(Press Release)

Governor Corbett Accepts Long-Term Care Commission Report
(Press Release)

Physician Anesthesiologists Week is Jan. 11-17
(Press Release)

Book on health care policy shines spotlight on UPMC
Pittsburgh’s health care market — and UPMC health system and its president and CEO Jeffrey Romoff, in particular — feature prominently in a new book by Steven Brill, the author of a groundbreaking 2013 Time magazine essay on medical bills. The portrait is not always flattering....

Aetna enrollees get faulty materials
Seniors enrolled in Aetna/Coventry Medicare Part D plans may be getting an unhappy surprise when they fill prescriptions: In some cases, the pharmacy they thought was in Aetna’s network actually isn’t. And one local pharmacist added that some low-income Medicare beneficiaries...

Helping hand: A robotic arm will give disabled people a lift
Jorgen Pedersen wants to do more than give people with disabilities a helping hand. He wants to give them a robotic arm. Mr. Pedersen is president and CEO of RE2, a Lawrenceville company that does the kind of high-tech work that has transformed Pittsburgh’s economy....

Therapy dogs trained to provide affection, comfort for ailing people
Bubbles sported a Mickey Mouse bandana and quiet confidence as she pranced around the Holiday Park fire hall in Plum, turning left and then right, and sometimes sitting or lying on the ground. Her classmates — including Crackers, Jackie, Mia, Onyx and Jake —... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-08-2015  Allegheny County records third flu-related death
Three people in Allegheny County have died from the flu this season, county Health Department officials said Wednesday at Board of Health meeting. The Health Department learned of the latest death, a 77-year-old woman, last week, said Dr. Kristen Mertz, the department's medical epidemiologist.... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-08-2015  Doctors say gun queries part of prevention effort
James J. Knights had a doctor's appointment for a sore hip when a nurse asked him whether he kept firearms at home. The 61-year-old retired special agent with the FBI in Pittsburgh was taken aback. "It's really no one's business. It's none of their business," said... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-08-2015  Allegheny County records third flu-related death
Three people in Allegheny County have died from the flu this season, county Health Department officials said Wednesday at Board of Health meeting. The Health Department learned of the latest death, a 77-year-old woman, last week, said Dr. Kristen Mertz, the department's medical epidemiologist.... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-08-2015  Flu cases pack Excela Health's hospitals in Westmoreland County
Excela Health System's hospitals have reached capacity levels because of a jump since the holidays in people with influenza or flu-like illnesses, officials said. Despite the increase, no one has been turned away at Excela's facilities in Westmoreland County, they said.... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-08-2015  Doctors say gun queries part of prevention effort
James J. Knights had a doctor's appointment for a sore hip when a nurse asked him whether he kept firearms at home. The 61-year-old retired special agent with the FBI in Pittsburgh was taken aback. "It's really no one's business. It's none of their business," said... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-08-2015  Allegheny County records third flu-related death
Three people in Allegheny County have died from the flu this season, county Health Department officials said Wednesday at Board of Health meeting. The Health Department learned of the latest death, a 77-year-old woman, last week, said Dr. Kristen Mertz, the department's medical epidemiologist.... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-08-2015  Dropping it all to pursue a dream of healthy living
Alene Brennan kept a revolutionary New Year's resolution: to create the career of her dreams. "I made my decision on Jan. 2, 2014," recalls the Mount Laurel resident, 35, who had been a corporate communications professional for a dozen years. "I gave my notice and put my house on the market. I quit, sold, and... - Philadelphia Inquirer

01-08-2015  Marijuana causes health issues; it should carry warning labels like tobacco: PennLive letters
Marijuana is used for a bunch of different reasons — religious, medical and recreational. Though marijuana is used for treating a wide range of diseases, including seizure disorder, bipolar, depression, anxiety, and chronic pain, it is often abused. I not condemning consumers of marijuana but I don't accept them either.... - Harrisburg Patriot-News

01-08-2015  Wilkes-Barre VA medical center undergoes audit
January 9, 2015

The veterans medical center in Wilkes-Barre provides a clean, safe care environment overall but stands to improve in some areas, including care of stroke victims, according to an audit released this week. The inspector general for the Department of Veterans Affairs was at the... - *Allentown Morning Call*

01-08-2015

**1,800 pounds of unwanted medication collected last year in Lehigh County**
More than 1,800 pounds of unwanted prescription medication was collected last year in Lehigh County’s first year of using collection boxes at local police departments. The collection boxes were installed in 12 police departments. At the end of the year, 1,871 pounds of unused, expired and unwanted medication was... - *Allentown Morning Call*

01-08-2015

**Dickensian nightmare persists in prisons**
Two centuries ago, prisons in this country were criminal holding pens in which men, women and children were thrown together to fend for themselves under filthy, brutal and inhumane conditions, where physical abuse by guards was the norm. A group of enlightened Philadelphians proposed a... - *Washington Observer-Reporter*

01-08-2015

**Modern challenges to ancient ethics oath**
The Hippocratic oath, a roughly 2,000-year-old text with only marginal relevance to medicine today, continues to have an outsize influence on us. The oath’s language and many of its concepts are more archaic than a washtub. A modern surgeon is not going to swear by Apollo. Nor is he... - *Scranton Times*

01-08-2015

**Flu, RSV prompts hospitals to alter visitation**
The flu is not the only disease on the rise. Geisinger Health System is seeing an increase in pediatric respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, cases, said spokesman Matt Van Stone. As a result, Geisinger has issued restrictions temporarily prohibiting children under age 5 from visiting children’s and women’s inpatient... - *Wilkes-Barre Citizens’ Voice*

01-08-2015

**Geisinger and Commonwealth Health place visitation restrictions on children**
WILKES-BARRE — A temporary restriction on visitations to Geisinger Health System and Commonwealth Health System health care facilities was announced Wednesday due to an increase in seasonal pediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus cases. Geisinger Health System issued the temporary restriction, prohibiting... - *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*

01-08-2015

**Geisinger and Commonwealth Health place visitation restrictions on children**
WILKES-BARRE — A temporary restriction on visitations to Geisinger Health System and Commonwealth Health System health care facilities was announced Wednesday due to an increase in seasonal pediatric Respiratory Syncytial Virus cases. Geisinger Health System issued the temporary restriction, prohibiting... - *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*

01-08-2015

**Iraq Veteran, Now a West Point Professor, Seeks to Rein In Disability Pay**
COLORADO SPRINGS — Nearly 200 sick and wounded soldiers in a gym at Fort Carson last month listened silently as Lt. Col. Daniel Gade offered a surprising warning: The disability checks designed to help troops like them after they leave the service might actually be harmful.... - *New York Times*

01-08-2015

**From a Pile of Dirt, Hope for a Powerful New Antibiotic**
An unusual method for producing antibiotics may help solve an urgent global problem: the rise in infections that resist treatment with commonly used drugs, and the lack of new antibiotics to replace ones that no longer work. The method, which extracts drugs from bacteria that live in dirt, has... - *New York Times*

01-08-2015

**To Treat Depression, Drugs or Therapy?**
You’re feeling down, and your doctor or therapist has confirmed it: You have depression. Now
what? Until recently, many experts thought that your clinician could literally pick any antidepressant or type of psychotherapy at random because, with a few clinical exceptions, there was little evidence to favor one treatment... - New York Times

01-08-2015 Methodology of Calculating Company Payments to Doctors
The pharmaceutical and medical device industries, even when required by the federal government, have not made it easy to track their expenditures on doctors and teaching hospitals. It has taken ProPublica several months to spot and fix errors in the Open Payments database, which the federal government released at the end of... - New York Times

01-08-2015 A Rhode Island Rule on Health Enrollment Offers a Consumer Experiment
Millions of people signed up for Obamacare health plans in 2014. But states and the federal government faced a quandary when it came to keeping them enrolled for 2015. They could set up an automatic renewal process, so that customers who took no action would just stay in their existing plans. Or they could require... - New York Times

01-08-2015 Under New York City Rule, It’s the Packaging, Not the Food, That’s to Go
The proposed mayoral ban — swift, decisive, stirring in the moment — does not always take. New Yorkers can still get cozy with an outsize soda, the carbonated nemesis that former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg failed to fell. Horse carriages, which Mayor Bill de Blasio once pledged to expel on... - New York Times

01-08-2015 For First Time, F.D.A. Panel Approves Generic Copy of Costly Biologic Drug
SILVER SPRING, Md. — An expert panel unanimously recommended on Wednesday that the Food and Drug Administration approve a cheaper copy of a special drug used in cancer therapy, paving the way for alternatives to an entire class of complex and costly drugs to enter the United States market.... - New York Times

01-08-2015 Health Premiums Rise More Slowly, but Workers Shoulder More of Cost
When Charlotte Alger, 25, was working at a Home Depot just outside Boston last year, she said she earned $10.75 an hour working on the sales floor in the woodworking department. She chose one of the more comprehensive health insurance plans offered, but it came with a whopping $3,000 deductible.... - New York Times

01-08-2015 The Drugs That Companies Promote to Doctors Are Rarely Breakthroughs
For more than five decades, the blood thinner Coumadin was the only option for millions of patients at risk for life-threatening blood clots. But now, a furious battle is underway among the makers of three newer competitors for the prescription pads of doctors across the country.... - New York Times

01-08-2015 New York Vaccine Requirement Is Lawful, a 2nd Court Says
New York State’s requirement that children be vaccinated before attending public school does not violate their constitutional rights, a federal appeals court in Manhattan said on Wednesday. In affirming the requirement’s constitutionality, a three-judge panel... - New York Times

01-08-2015 New class of antibiotic found in dirt could prove resistant to resistance
With bacteria evolving to resist antibiotics faster than scientists can concoct new drugs, the fight against resistant infections in hospitals and food supplies is a tough battle to win. But a newly discovered antibiotic may prove irresistible to bacteria. Every time an antibiotic is used, bacteria are getting to know it a little.... - Washington Post

01-08-2015 FBI: El Paso clinic victim was VA doctor who had filed complaint against alleged killer
The doctor who was fatally shot at an El Paso Veterans Affairs clinic on Tuesday had previously filed a threat complaint against his alleged killer, FBI officials said Wednesday. VA psychologist
Timothy Fjordbak, 63, was allegedly shot and killed by Jerry Serrato, 48, on the fourth floor of the El Paso Veteran Affairs... - Washington Post

01-08-2015 A class of expensive drugs is getting cheaper competition for the first time
A government panel Wednesday took a major step toward approving a copycat version of a blockbuster cancer drug, paving the way for a new class of cheaper medicines that could save consumers billions of dollars. An expert Food and Drug Administration panel unanimously recommended that... - Washington Post

01-08-2015 Improving Medicaid for 'Medically Complex' Kids
Finding care for children with medically complex or rare conditions—which may affect fewer than 100 kids nationwide—can force parents to tap into networks of highly-specialized physicians and hospitals scattered around the country. This is especially challenging when the children are covered by Medicaid,... - Stateline.org

01-08-2015 Patient visitations curtailed at Harford hospitals as flu season reaches potential peak
Nearly one in three people across Maryland tested for influenza during this flu season have been positive for the highly contagious and difficult-to-predict illness, and health officials are seeing similar numbers in Harford County. With that in mind, the operators of the county's two major hospitals have... - Baltimore Sun

01-08-2015 Opinion: Why people living with disabilities support death with dignity legislation
By Sara Myers and Dustin Hankinson "If you have a terminal illness, and are in great pain, I think you should have the right to end your life …. It is discrimination against the disabled to deny them the right … that able-bodied people have." Those are words famed physicist, best-selling author and U.S Presidential... - Trenton Times

01-08-2015 Latest measles outbreak highlights a growing problem in California
The issue of measles in California suddenly generated national headlines Wednesday thanks to a Disney connection. A person infected with measles is suspected of visiting Disneyland or Disney California Adventure Park in December after authorities discovered a... - Los Angeles Times

01-08-2015 So, wait, Obamacare worked after all? The chart that explains it all.
Despite predictions of doom and gloom -- and justifiable guffaws at a seriously buggy website -- the percentage of Americans without health coverage has decreased since Obamacare went onto the books a year ago. According to a new Gallup poll, the percentage of Americans without... - Harrisburg Patriot-News

01-08-2015 Vision, foresight set health coalition apart for 20 years
January 8, 2015 There are few better indicators of a community's vitality than its quality of health care. The Lycoming County Health Improvement Coalition recently marked its 20th year. more »» - Williamsport Sun-Gazette

01-08-2015 High-fructose corn syrup proves more harmful than table sugar in female mice, study shows
High-fructose corn syrup may be more toxic than table sugar in female mice, a new study shows. University of Utah biologists came to this conclusion when they fed mice sugar in doses proportional to what humans consume and found it reduced the females' reproduction rates by 26.4 percent and increased their chance of... - Somerset Daily

01-08-2015 Geisinger prepares to mark 100th
DANVILLE - The original dedication of the George F. Geisinger Memorial Hospital - slated for Sept. 25, 1915 - started out as an extravagant affair, featuring a parade, fireworks, a full musical program and a public address by M.G. Brumbaugh, the 26th Governor of Pennsylvania.... -
Capsule unveiling, documentary on tap for Geisinger celebration
DANVILLE - Highlights of Geisinger's planned Centennial events in 2015 include: - Time capsule unveiling: On Sept. 2, 1913, a time capsule was placed in the original cornerstone of the then George F. Geisinger Memorial Hospital. The contents of that time capsule will be unveiled at an employee event in... - Shamokin News-Item

Pocono Medical Center gave $27M in community outreach during fiscal 2014
Pocono Medical Center provided more than $27 million in community support in fiscal year 2014 in the form of free, uncompensated care to patients who could not afford to pay. The hospital provided care and free transportation for the elderly and the poor not paid by Medicare or Medicaid; community health, education and... - Pocono Record

Visitation restrictions imposed at Geisinger-Lewistown Hospital
January 8, 2015 From staff reports DANVILLE — Temporary visitation restrictions are in effect at Geisinger-Lewistown Hospital after Geisinger Health System announced the limitations on Wednesday. more »» - Lewistown Sentinel

Group sues over delay in opening of treatment facility
CHERRYHILL TOWNSHIP — A nonprofit group that has planned for more than a year to open a residential substance-abuse treatment center in a former personal care home near Penn Run has formally charged local officials with stymieing their attempts to open their facility.... - Indiana Gazette

Duke LifePoint reaches ‘definitive agreement’ to acquire Roaring Spring’s Nason hospital
ROARING SPRING – Nason Hospital is one step closer to joining Conemaugh Health System under LifePoint Hospitals ownership, leaders announced. Nason’s board of directors has reached a definitive agreement to be acquired by LifePoint, Conemaugh Chief Executive Officer Scott Becker... - Johnstown Tribune-Democrat

As Tax Season Nears, Those Insured Through Obamacare Have Extra Figuring To Do
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) – People who bought health insurance through the federal marketplace last year face extra steps on their 2014 tax returns, and maybe extra taxes too. The Affordable Care Act uses tax credits to “make” insurance affordable. The credits are based on income and most people estimated their... - KYW News Radio 1060

FDA Approves Quick And Easy Flu Test
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) – Just as the number of cases of the flu continues to climb, the Food and Drug Administration has just approved a faster, more accurate test that can be used in your local doctor’s office. With just a swab inside your nose, employees in the doctor's office now... - KYW News Radio 1060

Local hospitals penalized over infection rates
Four Bucks County health care facilities are being docked Medicare payments for having higher than average rates of conditions, including infections, acquired by patients under their care, according to government data. Lower Bucks Hospital in Bristol Township, Barix Clinics of Pennsylvania in... - Levittown Bucks County Courier Times

Flu outbreak spikes in York County
As flu season peaks, cases in York County are multiplying and patients are filling emergency departments and doctors' offices. York Hospital has seen a “dramatic increase in the number of flu-like illnesses” over the last couple of weeks, said spokesman Barry Sparks.... - York Dispatch
New Obamacare challenges as Medicaid payments are cut
Change is coming to doctors treating 68 million low-income Americans. Critics of Obama-care are calling the change — a dramatic cut to Medicaid reimbursements starting on Jan. 1 — a bait and switch scheme. Whatever it’s labeled, the nearly 50 percent cut in federal...

Judge approves Nason acquisition
HOLLIDAYSBURG - The acquisition of Nason Hospital by a for-profit, Brentwood, Tenn., company was approved late Wednesday by Blair County Judge Elizabeth Doyle following a hearing in which she was told there was overwhelming public and board support for the move....

Agencies closer to taking over Easter Seals
Area agencies are getting closer to adopting the role of providing outpatient therapeutic services to disabled children that has been handled by Easter Seals of Western and Central Pennsylvania. Tyrone Hospital, Kids First to offer outpatient services

Tyrone Regional looking to form new partnership
TYRONE - The Tyrone Regional Health Network plans to look into the formation of a partnership.

Would local Ebola treatment make you think twice about using a hospital? (poll)
Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg has been designated as one of four health facilities in Pennsylvania for treatment of people who have contracted the Ebola virus. Lehigh Valley Health Network officials said they looked at their capabilities, staff, preparedness and proximity to airports that...

Pennsylvania ranks low for alcohol poisoning deaths
Pennsylvania has one of the lowest death rates for alcohol poisoning in the country according to statistics released this month by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The center found that Pennsylvania had a rate of 6.5 alcohol poisoning deaths per million people between 2010 to 2012, placing it in the bottom...

County officials taking close look at opioid prescription practices
CARLISLE — Physicians didn’t used to prescribe pain medication in the same fashion they do today, said Dr. Carrie DeLone, the physician general for the state of Pennsylvania. In fact, it wasn’t until the mid-1990s — when Oxycontin came onto the scene — that doctors started prescribing pain medication for much...

PinnacleHealth Weight loss center to host open house
SILVER SPRING TOWNSHIP — The PinnacleHealth Weight Loss Center at 21 Waterford Drive, Silver Spring Township, will host an open house from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15. The open house will include free screenings and mini exercise classes, as well as healthy snacks and the chance to meeting the center’s staff....

HAP: IRS Issues Final Regulations for Tax-Exempt Hospital Requirements under...
(Press Release)

HAP: PA Insurance Department Announces End of Public Comment Period for...
(Press Release)

Conventional control might not be best for Type 1 diabetics
People with Type 1 diabetes face a daily balancing act to maintain blood-glucose levels close to normal without going over the cliff of low blood sugar, which can involve unconsciousness and even death without emergency care. So the longstanding debate in diabetes care has been how
close to normal... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-07-2015  
**Lunch contained insects at 3 West Allegheny schools**  
In an unappetizing twist on mystery meat, about 130 students at three West Allegheny elementary schools were accidentally served lunch with insects on the side. Brown rice containing rice weevils was immediately pulled from the service lines at Donaldson, McKee and Wilson elementary schools after officials... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-07-2015  
**Lawsuit ends prison solitary for mentally ill Pa. inmates**  
The state Department of Corrections has promised, in a lawsuit settlement released Tuesday, to apply new rules to its use of solitary confinement, including phasing it out entirely for inmates with serious mental illnesses. By mid-2016, prisons will stop punishing seriously mentally ill inmates... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-07-2015  
**Installing a carbon monoxide monitor is an important safeguard**  
Good editorial with helpful warnings about carbon monoxide poisoning (“Stay Warm and Safe,” Jan. 5). But I think you left out an important suggestion: Get an alarm! A CO monitor/alarm can be had for around $10 to $15 or a combination smoke/CO unit runs $30 to $35. There are many versions, including those that plug... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-07-2015  
**Backing Braddock: AHN’s health care center is a humane response**  
An urgent care center may be a welcome addition to any neighborhood, but never more so than in the case of the Allegheny Health Network’s facility that opened Monday in Braddock. Five years ago, the long-suffering former steel town lost its anchor with the closing of the former UPMC Braddock Hospital. UPMC had determined that... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-07-2015  
**With this flu season, worst is yet to come in Pittsburgh**  
The number of influenza cases in Allegheny County continues to rise, with local health officials already calling 2014-15 a bad flu season that is expected to get even worse. As of the most recent data reported on Jan. 1, the county had seen 1,948 flu cases, including two deaths, according to county Health Department... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-07-2015  
**Rice in some West Allegheny school lunches contained bugs**  
Rice contaminated with insects made its way onto students’ lunch trays in West Allegheny School District, where officials said Tuesday they were unaware of government regulations to store the grain at cool temperatures. District officials believe brown rice served to about 130 students in... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-07-2015  
**Lawsuit alleges Cherryhill officials have intentionally delayed opening of detox facility**  
An Indiana County nonprofit claims in a federal lawsuit that Cherryhill supervisors and the township’s code enforcement officer have deliberately delayed the opening of a 42-bed drug- and-alcohol rehabilitation facility through repeated delays in the permitting process.... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-07-2015  
**Fewer deaths, healthier lives for type I diabetics, Pitt study finds**  
Tiffany Merovich-Winter was barely a sixth-grader when she learned she had type I diabetes. Because her body wasn't producing insulin, she learned to monitor her blood glucose levels and give herself shots when the levels got too high. She switched to a pump about seven years ago, which took months to get used... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-07-2015  
**Not UPMC’s business**  
I recently visited my UPMC physician's office. Among the usual questions, the nurse asked if I'd had “weapons safety training.” I explained that I am a retired federal law enforcement officer and she could draw her own conclusions. Then she asked if there are weapons in my home. I declined to answer,... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review
01-07-2015  **She TKO'D Obesity!**  
MICHELE ELBERTSON, a 28-year-old Tabernacle, N.J., native is making a lot of waves as she continues on her personal quest to inspire and generate awareness about how she lost a jaw-dropping 260 pounds. In the past three years, this wonder woman has run over 38 half-marathons,... - *Philadelphia Daily News*

01-07-2015  **Deal aims to end solitary confinement for seriously mentally ill prisoners in Pa.**  
The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections has reached a settlement with the Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania requiring sweeping reforms in the care of inmates with serious mental illness in the state’s prison system. Inmates with serious mental illness or intellectual disabilities no longer... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*

01-07-2015  **FBI to question 'hundreds of witnesses' in Texas veterans' hospital shooting**  
EL PASO, Texas (AP) — The FBI plans to question hundreds of patients who may have witnessed a shooting at a West Texas veterans' hospital that left two people dead, including the suspected gunman, the agency said... - *AP*

01-07-2015  **Hershey Medical Center plans to build new data center**  
The Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center is developing plans to build a new data center in the field south of the Life Lion helicopter rescue center. Hospital personnel came to Derry Township supervisors Monday night seeking approval for their plans, which would add 64,554 feet to the medical center... - *Harrisburg Patriot-News*

01-07-2015  **Settlement calls for Pa. to expand treatment for mentally ill inmates**  
HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Pennsylvania prison inmates with serious mental illness who misbehave will be diverted to special treatment units instead of being put in isolated cells, according to a settlement released Tuesday... - *AP*

01-07-2015  **LVH-Muhlenberg to accept Ebola patients**  
Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg is now an official Ebola treatment center. The Pennsylvania Department of Health and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have given the hospital the designation, along with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the Hospital of the University of... - *Allentown Morning Call*

01-07-2015  **Parents of substance abusers get support from Community Help Centre program**  
Parents of people struggling with substance abuse will have a place to learn about addiction and share with each other starting later this month. The Community Help Centre announced a new program Tuesday called Parents of Addicted Children Come Together, with the first session planned for Jan.... - *State College Centre Daily Times*

01-07-2015  **2 more Pa. hospitals designated as Ebola treatment centers**  
PHILADELPHIA — Health officials have designated hospitals in central and eastern as Pennsylvania’s first Ebola treatment centers outside Philadelphia. Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center near Harrisburg and Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg in Bethlehem were added to the list Tuesday.... - *AP*

01-07-2015  **Pennsylvania to expand treatment for mentally ill inmates**  
HARRISBURG, Pa. — Pennsylvania prison inmates with serious mental illness who misbehave will be diverted to special treatment units instead of being put in isolated cells, according to a settlement released Tuesday. The settlement between the Corrections Department and the Disability Rights... - *AP*

01-07-2015  **Peters library to host program on health insurance**  
Margaret Deitzer gets all kinds of questions as the reference librarian at Peters Township Public
Library. And lately, many of the questions she was getting are about health care, particularly the government health care site, www.healthcare.gov. So, Deitzer and the library, along with Cornerstone Care of Waynesburg,... - Washington Observer-Reporter

01-07-2015  
**Effort on Ebola Hurt W.H.O. Chief**  
GENEVA — Under a stormy sky, on a boat to a G-8 summit meeting, a media-savvy Hong Kong pediatrician named Margaret Chan first met her country’s president, Hu Jintao. In a preview of the political maneuvering to come, he told her privately that China was considering... - New York Times

01-07-2015  
**Alcohol Poisoning Kills 6 Americans a Day, a Federal Report Finds**  
Six Americans die from alcohol poisoning daily on average, and mortality rates are highest among middle-aged men, federal health authorities reported on Tuesday. The report is the first in a decade by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to tally alcohol poisonings for the entire American population.... - New York Times

01-07-2015  
**Gates Foundation Uses Art to Encourage Vaccination**  
Artists, it’s fair to say, usually don’t know much about bacteria. Vik Muniz is an exception. Mr. Muniz, the Brazilian-born photographer known for his unorthodox materials, has been working with the M.I.T. bioengineer and designer Tal Danino on a series of trompe l’oeil images of... - New York Times

01-07-2015  
**Harvard Ideas on Health Care Hit Home, Hard**  
WASHINGTON — For years, Harvard’s experts on health economics and policy have advised presidents and Congress on how to provide health benefits to the nation at a reasonable cost. But those remedies will now be applied to the Harvard faculty, and the professors are in an uproar.... - New York Times

01-07-2015  
**Ohio getting about $600,000 in dialysis-kickback settlement**  
Ohio has joined four states and the federal government in settling allegations that DaVita Healthcare Partners paid kickbacks to physicians to refer patients to its dialysis clinics, including three clinics in Columbus. DaVita agreed to pay almost $22.4 million to resolve the allegations.... - Columbus Dispatch

01-07-2015  
**State health dept. approves Lehigh Valley hospital to treat Ebola patients**  
Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg is one of four hospitals approved to treat patients with Ebola, the state Department of Health said Tuesday. To prepare, the hospital at substantial cost created a patients’ room with negative pressure so air won’t blow into a hallway, a laboratory... - Wilkes-Barre Citizens’ Voice

01-07-2015  
**Local area already hit hard by influenza**  
The flu season was off to an early start as health officials report that more people are being diagnosed with the illness this year than they have in the recent past. - Uniontown Herald-Standard

01-07-2015  
**Today’s Editorial: Celebrating a century of success**  
At the age of 85, Abigail Geisinger decided to build a hospital in Montour County to honor her husband. She did so with a simple yet bold wish: Make my hospital right; make it the best. A century later, the original George F. Geisinger Memorial Hospital has grown into one of the largest and most successful rural healthcare... - Sunbury Daily Item

01-07-2015  
**Mental health and recidivism in the state prison system**  
Under the terms of a settlement between the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and advocates for the disabled, prison inmates diagnosed with serious mental illness will be diverted to special treatment units instead of being punished by placement in isolated cells.... - Somerset
Windber breast care center has new director
The Joyce Murtha Breast Care Center has a new director. Dr. Deborah Sims, a board-certified surgeon specializing in breast disease, brings 30 years of experience to the center, according to a press release from the facility. - *Somerset Daily*

H&R Block to answer ACA questions
SHAMOKIN - Anyone with questions about the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and how it might affect their 2014 tax return can have them answered during a special event Thursday. H&R Block will host ACA Q&A Day at 10,000 locations, including 24 S. Market St. in the city, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.... - *Shamokin News-Item*

More flu cases confirmed across Pa.
The flu season that has led to crowded emergency rooms and doctors offices continues, as Pennsylvania saw more than 12,000 confirmed cases last week. There have been nearly 18,000 confirmed cases from Sept. 28 through Saturday, according to the latest state Health Department report. In Berks,... - *Reading Eagle*

Hershey Medical Center, Lehigh Valley Hospital designated as Ebola centers
Two regional hospitals were added to the list of Ebola treatment centers, the state Department of Health announced Tuesday. Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center in Dauphin County and Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg in Lehigh County were designated as centers to... - *Reading Eagle*

Muhlenberg hospital one of few approved by state to treat Ebola
Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg is one of four hospitals approved to treat patients with Ebola, the state Department of Health said Tuesday. To prepare, the hospital at substantial cost created a patients' room with negative pressure so air won’t blow into a hallway, a laboratory... - *Hazleton Standard-Speaker*

Geisinger temporarily limits young children from visiting some inpatient units at its hospitals
Geisinger Health System has issued restrictions temporarily prohibiting children under the age of 5 from visiting children's and women's inpatient units because of the seasonal increase in pediatric respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) cases. “The number of RSV infections in children rise during the fall... - *Pocono Record*

Hospitals named treatment centers
Hospitals named treatment centers - *Lewistown Sentinel*

Penn State Hershey Medical Center designated Ebola treatment center
Secretary of Health Michael Wolf Tuesday announced that Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg have been designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as official Ebola treatment centers in... - *Lebanon Daily News*

No health insurance? Penalties to rise in 2015
WASHINGTON >> The cost of being uninsured in America is going up significantly next year for millions of people... - *AP*

EDITORIAL: Fit for Life project aims to improve health of Pottstown tri-county area
At the start of a new year, people resolve to eat less, exercise more and embrace healthier lifestyles. In the Pottstown tri-county area, this comes with a good bit of reason and many local
resources in an initiative known as “Fit for Life.” Fit for Life is a partnership of The Mercury and Pottstown Area Health and... - Pottstown Mercury

01-07-2015  Editorial: Homelessness can be helped by Affordable Care Act
With the first winter storm of the year under our belts, awareness of the elements and the toll they take on the elderly and otherwise vulnerable is once again heightened. For two groups of people in Chester, that point was painfully brought home six weeks ago with the death of Elva Mae Parker.... - Primos Delaware County Daily and Sunday Times

01-07-2015  Montco dental clinic seeking patients with gum disease
BLUE BELL The Dental Hygiene Clinic at Montgomery County Community College’s central campus is recruiting patients with periodontal (gum) disease for the spring semester. Patients will be screened for eligibility on Jan. 26 by appointment, and those who qualify will begin treatment the following week. Additional.... - Philadelphia Inquirer

01-07-2015  Medicare facts for new or pre-retirees
A “Medicare Facts for New or Pre-Retirees” seminar will be held 6 to 8:30 p.m. Jan. 13 in Meeting Room 1 of the Penn State Extension Offices, 112 Pleasant Acres Road. This free event will be presented by the York County Area Agency on Aging APPRISE Program. Topics to be covered include: Review of Medicare benefits;... - Hanover Evening Sun

01-07-2015  Group sues over delay in opening of treatment facility
PITTSBURGH — A nonprofit group that has planned for more than a year to open a residential substance-abuse treatment center in a former personal care home near Penn Run has formally charged local officials with stymieing their attempts to open their facility.... - Indiana Gazette

01-07-2015  EDITORIAL: Repeal the medical devices tax
Repealing the federal medical devices tax -- a two-year-old measure enacted as part of the Affordable Care Act -- is no longer a partisan kickball in Washington. Now that Republicans have majority control of the Senate as well as the House of Representatives, the issue is no longer reconciling differences.... - Easton Express-Times

01-07-2015  Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg named official Ebola treatment center
Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg is one of 46 hospitals nationwide selected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as an official Ebola treatment center. The Bethlehem-based hospital and Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center are Pennsylvania's latest official treatment centers, according to... - Easton Express-Times

01-07-2015  Lehigh Valley Health Network saw need for Ebola treatment center in region
Lehigh Valley Health Network took notice when patients that contracted Ebola overseas began landing at airports in close vicinity to the region. The network's incident management team got to work, considering where it could treat Ebola patients, how to keep staff and patients safe and began... - Easton Express-Times

01-07-2015  Penn Doctor: Radiation Plus Hormone Therapy Can Benefit Older Men With Prostate Cancer
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — A local researcher has proof that some older cancer patients will do well with a well-known treatment combination. Men with prostate cancer that has spread outside the gland may be treated with the combination of hormone and radiation therapy, but Dr. Justin.... - KYW News Radio 1060

01-07-2015  Changing How PA Department Of Corrections Deals With Mentally Ill Inmates
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — Pennsylvania’s Department of Corrections signed a settlement agreement this week that changes the way the agency treats inmates with serious mental illness. According to the federal lawsuit filed in 2013, many seriously mentally ill inmates...
Pennsylvania's state prisons were kept in solitary...

01-07-2015  Death Of NJ Firefighter Inspires Push For Measure That Would Ensure Health Insurance Coverage For Families Of First Responders
CINNAMINSON, NJ (CBS) – It’s been seven weeks since Cinnaminson firefighter Christopher Hunter died and his presence is still strongly felt throughout the department he served for more than 20 years. “If it happened in this department he was involved in it and to try to...

01-07-2015  6 Lancaster County employers named “Fit-Friendly” by Heart Association
Six Lancaster County employers were named “Fit-Friendly Worksites” by the American Heart Association on Tuesday. Benecon was named a platinum worksite, while Donegal Mutual Insurance, Eastern Alliance Insurance, Kellogg, Penn Manor School District and Precision Medical Products were named gold worksites.

01-07-2015  Substance abuse and mental health facility opens in Wrightsville
Elements Behavioral Health, a national provider of behavioral health care programs, said Tuesday it has opened a state-of-the-art substance abuse and mental health treatment center in Wrightsville. The Brightwater Landing addiction and mental health center at 1166 Hilts...

01-07-2015  Hershey Med is designated an Ebola treatment center
Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center is now one of four Pennsylvania hospitals designated official Ebola treatment centers. The Pennsylvania Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced the designation today, adding Hershey Med and Lehigh...

01-07-2015  Flu cases up 86 percent in a week in Lancaster County
There were 304 newly reported flu cases in Lancaster County last week, according to figures published Tuesday morning by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. The county's cumulative total from Sept. 28 through Saturday now stands at 658, an increase of 86 percent compared with a week before.

01-07-2015  Experimental program helps seniors move out of the nursing home
Donna Giron is frail. She has Crohn’s disease and uses a wheelchair to get around because walking exhausts her. But she doesn’t want to be in the nursing home where she has lived since May. Giron, 65, is looking to rent a small house in the industrial town in the...

01-07-2015  Taxpayers will cover psychiatric reviews
DANVILLE — Montour County taxpayers will be billed up to $6,000 for psychiatric evaluations of two defendants who can’t afford their own testing to help their...

01-07-2015  Mumps outbreak stumps Allegheny County health officials
An outbreak of mumps in Allegheny County has been confined to the Pittsburgh Penguins organization, health officials said today. Center Sidney Crosby, defenseman Olli Maatta, right winger Beau Bennett, winger Steve Downie and goalie Thomas Greiss were diagnosed with the...

01-07-2015  Marijuana causes health issues; it should carry warning labels like tobacco: PennLive letters
Marijuana is used for a bunch of different reasons — religious, medical and recreational. Though marijuana is used for treating a wide range of diseases, including seizure disorder, bipolar, depression, anxiety, and chronic pain, it is often abused. I not condemning consumers of marijuana but I don't accept them either....
January 9, 2015

01-07-2015 **From a Pile of Dirt, Hope for a Powerful New Antibiotic**
An unusual method for producing antibiotics may help to solve an urgent global problem: the rise in infections that resist treatment with commonly used drugs, and the lack of new antibiotics to replace ones that no longer work. The method, which extracts drugs from bacteria that live in dirt, has... - *New York Times*

01-07-2015 **New class of antibiotic found in dirt could prove resistant to resistance**
With bacteria evolving to resist antibiotics faster than scientists can concoct new drugs, the fight against resistant infections in hospitals and food supplies is a tough battle to win. But a newly discovered antibiotic may prove irresistible to bacteria. Every time an antibiotic is used, bacteria are getting to know it a little... - *Washington Post*

01-07-2015 **Donations sought for family that got married in Hershey Medical Center**
Donations are continuing to be accepted for the family of Aric Mercado, the Harrisburg man who got married Dec. 31 while battling cancer in Penn State Hershey. Gift cards and donations are being collected at Sutliff Volkswagen in Harrisburg by Aric's former co-workers, said Angie Little.... - *Harrisburg Patriot-News*

01-06-2015 **Hennessey to Retain Chairmanship of House Aging and Older Adult Services...**
(Press Release)

01-06-2015 **Which States Have the Savviest Health Exchange Consumers?**
(Press Release)

01-06-2015 **State Approves PSNA as Provider of Mandated Child Abuse Education**
(Press Release)

01-06-2015 **RCPA Marks Start of 2015-16 Legislative Session**
(Press Release)

01-06-2015 **PHCA/CALM Names Dawn Murr-Davidson Director of Quality Initiatives**
(Press Release)

01-06-2015 **Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and Lehigh Valley Hospital...**
(Press Release)

01-06-2015 **Watson to Continue Legislative Role in Protecting Children**
(Press Release)

01-06-2015 **Allegheny Health Network opens urgent care center in Braddock**
No one from UPMC showed up for Monday’s ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Allegheny Health Network’s urgent care center in Braddock. That’s understandable, of course. UPMC is five days into a bitter divorce from AHN and its parent company, Highmark Health, that could end up... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

01-06-2015 **Sharpsville to resume school after concern about mumps**
School and after-school activities will be back in session today at Sharpsville Area School District in Mercer County, after classes were canceled Monday as a precaution against two suspected cases of the mumps. The two suspected cases were brought to the attention of superintendent... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

01-06-2015 **Pennsylvania prison system develops separate housing for mentally ill inmates**
Inmates with serious mental illnesses will no longer be locked in cells all day, under new policies outlined Monday by state prison officials. The change, which follows scathing criticism of the
Department of Corrections’ handling of mentally ill inmates, is meant to address one... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-06-2015

Allegheny County’s flu cases on the rise
The number of influenza cases in Allegheny County continues to rise, with local health officials already calling 2014-15 a bad flu season that is expected to get even worse. As of the most recent data reported on Jan. 1, the county had seen 1,948 flu cases, including two deaths, according to county Health Department... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-06-2015

Health happenings: Jan. 6, 2015
Classes/workshops: Excela Health is offering “Breastfeeding Success” from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Thursday in conference room D, on the first floor of Westmoreland Hospital, Greensburg. Call 1-877-771-1234. Penn State Extension is offering “Cooking for Crowds: A... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-06-2015

Dept. of Health: UPMC, Highmark must resolve ‘continuity of care’ conflict
Creating fresh uncertainty for southwestern Pennsylvania’s under-65 health consumers, the state Department of Health is contesting UPMC’s position that nearly all Highmark Health customers should be able to see their UPMC physicians, into 2015 and beyond, for non-serious,... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-06-2015

UPMC monetizes tech, services through its subsidiaries
An aging American population with unhealthy lifestyles is good for UPMC for-profit subsidiary Procirca. The Oakland medical services company has benefited from a rise in heart disease and other cardiac conditions by providing technical support to heart surgeons across the country.... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-06-2015

GOP quick strikes are expected on health care, pipeline in Congress
WASHINGTON — Poised to assume control of the House and Senate when Congress convenes Tuesday, Republicans said they intend to address issues that have bipartisan support and work toward tax reform, trade promotion, infrastructure spending and reining in the Obama administration’s... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-06-2015

Allegheny Health Network’s Braddock Urgent Care Center open for business
Phyllis Brown was disgusted when the UPMC Braddock hospital was demolished in 2010. “We have a lot of seniors here,” said Brown, 73, a lifelong Braddock resident. “They were like, ‘What are we going to do?’ ” After five years without a hospital, residents, community leaders and... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-06-2015

Highmark, UPMC bicker over ‘continuity of care’ provision in consent agreement
It’s a new year, and there’s a new fight between UPMC and Highmark Inc. over in-network access to the region’s biggest hospital system. In the latest turn in a long-standing feud, the Pittsburgh health giants are bickering over a provision of a state-negotiated consent agreement they... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-06-2015

Top Lehigh Valley health events include winter bird hike, Medicaid info session
WINTER BIRD HIKE 1 Pack your binoculars and head out to Trout Creek Park near Dixon Street in Allentown, for a winter bird hike starting at 10 a.m. Jan. 18. You’ll walk along the banks of the creek looking for birds and their winter shelters. Afterward you can make a pine-cone feeder for birds in your.... - Allentown Morning Call

01-06-2015

Glitch blocks 2015 prescription benefits for Northampton County employees
Northampton County employees, already fretting about major cuts in their medical benefits in 2015, discovered something worse when they refilled prescriptions after the first of the year. No benefits at all. County officials say an “input error” held up the new prescription plans... -
Allentown Morning Call

01-06-2015

**Allegheny Health opens Braddock Urgent Care Center**
BRADDOCK, Pa. — Highmark Inc.’s Allegheny Health Network has opened an urgent care center in Braddock, a Pittsburgh suburb where the rival University of Pittsburgh Medical Center closed a hospital almost five years ago... - AP

01-06-2015

**Spike in flu prompts Geisinger to offer free flu shots in Wilkes-Barre Township**
Last week when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported the flu had met its criteria for an epidemic in the United States, with 15 children dying from complications of the disease, Geisinger officials decided to offer free flu vaccinations.... - Wilkes-Barre Times Leader

01-06-2015

**Time dwindling to weigh in on Highmark, Blue Cross of NEPA merger**
WILKES-BARRE — A merger with Highmark Inc. encompassing 540,000 Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania’s health care subscribers is reaching its final application stage as the deadline for public input closes in four weeks. The Pennsylvania Insurance Department announced Monday the public input... - Wilkes-Barre Times Leader

01-06-2015

**Adult separation anxiety can harm patient, family**
Most people are aware of the separation anxiety that children may undergo when their mother or father go out for the evening or just leave the house for a short period of time. Tears start flowing and loud, shrieking cries emanate from the youngster who just minutes previously was happy playing with one of his or her toys.... - Hazleton Standard-Speaker

01-06-2015

**All clear: Sharpsville can reopen after mumps scare**
The school year is back to normal after a one-day interruption because of a report of mumps in Sharpsville Area School District. ’We'll be open as usual,” Superintendent Dr. Brad Ferko said Monday of Tuesday classes, winter sports and other extracurricular activities.... - Sharon Herald

01-06-2015

**Editorial | Cancer deaths in decline**
Are we winning the fight against cancer? The latest statistics from the American Cancer Society seem to indicated so. In its “Cancer Statistics, 2015,” the society reports that the death rate from the disease in the United States has dropped 22 percent from 1991, when it reached its peak. Two decades ago, about 215 people in... - Johnstown Tribune-Democrat

01-06-2015

**Officials predict ‘a bad flu year’**
Flu cases have surged over the past few weeks, with more on the way, experts say. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, along with the state Health Department, say influenza is widespread in Pennsylvania, with confirmed cases in every county. Cambria County had 52 cases confirmed through Dec. 27, and Somerset had 40,... - Johnstown Tribune-Democrat

01-06-2015

**Can’t pay taxes?**
January 6, 2015 The article in the paper regarding the difference in prices for medical, procedures in local hospitals made me curious about what is in the report mentioned. more »» - Williamsport Sun-Gazette

01-06-2015

**Hospital CEO: Change will bring financial stability**
Titusville Area Hospital announced Monday that it has become designated as a critical access hospital — a change that will bring an increase in compensation from Medicare and Medicaid, according to hospital officials. The change in designation went into effect Dec. 11.... - Titusville Herald

01-06-2015

**Losing the Fight Against Tuberculosis**
On a recent morning at Persahabatan Hospital in East Jakarta, patients, some from remote
villages accessible only by boat, gathered in a waiting room. Nearby, lab technicians used new diagnostic technology to test sputum samples for multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, in an effort to tackle a... - New York Times

01-06-2015

Stop Subsidizing Big Pharma
WASHINGTON — ROBERT J. BEALL, the president and chief executive of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, called his recent decision to sell the royalty rights to his organization’s research a “game changer.” Indeed: Deals like this, in which an investment company paid the foundation $3.3... - New York Times

01-06-2015

Cancer’s Random Assault
It may sound flippant to say that many cases of cancer are caused by bad luck, but that is what two scientists suggested in an article published last week in the journal Science. The bad luck comes in the form of random genetic mistakes, or mutations, that happen when healthy cells divide.... - New York Times

01-06-2015

Scrutiny for Laxatives as a Childhood Remedy
The Food and Drug Administration has raised new questions about the safety of an adult laxative routinely given to constipated children, sometimes daily for years. The agency has asked a team of scientists in Philadelphia to look more closely at the active ingredient in Miralax and similar generic products,... - New York Times

01-06-2015

Harvard Ideas on Health Care Hit Home, Hard
WASHINGTON — For years, Harvard’s experts on health economics and policy have advised presidents and Congress on how to provide health benefits to the nation at a reasonable cost. But those remedies will now be applied to the Harvard faculty, and the professors are in an uproar.... - New York Times

01-06-2015

Justice Dept. Sues Doctor Paid Richly by Medicare
One of the nation’s top-billing doctors, a cardiologist who collected more than $18 million in payments from Medicare in 2012, has been accused by the federal government of performing unnecessary procedures on patients. The Justice Department announced on Monday that it had joined two... - New York Times

01-06-2015

Gilead Strikes Hepatitis Drug Deal With CVS Health
Gilead Sciences struck back on Monday against its rival AbbVie in a budding marketing war over costly hepatitis C drugs, winning exclusive access to many patients whose prescriptions are managed by CVS Health. CVS Health, the nation’s second-largest pharmacy benefits manager, said... - New York Times

01-06-2015

Veterans discharged after sexual trauma push for VA health benefits
It took Navy Airman Apprentice Elena M. Giordano nine years to finally be granted service-connected disability compensation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for the post-traumatic stress disorder she suffered after multiple sexual assaults. Until recently, she was also not eligible for any VA medical care or other... - Washington Post

01-06-2015

Main Street Morning: Controversial health insurance plans
Welcome to Main Street Morning, The Washington Post’s daily collection of news affecting entrepreneurs, start-ups and small businesses, with a special focus on policy, politics and government. Here’s what’s affecting my small business, my clients and other entrepreneurs today.... - Washington Post

01-06-2015

No deadly habit is better than any other
January 6, 2015 Young people have made tremendous progress when it comes to the fight against cigarette smoking. In fact, a recent anti-smoking campaign touts, “We can be the
PMC announces new affiliation
Pocono Medical Center announced recently that it is entering into a new agreement with Lehigh Valley Health Network to provide medical director and professional services for radiation oncology at the Dale and Frances Hughes Cancer Center. Patients will be cared for by the physicians who provide radiation oncology... - Lewiston Times News

Author details nicotine battle in 'Quit or Die Trying'
Author Allison Beard was signing copies of her book, "Quit or Die Trying," about nicotine addiction, at the Lebanon Community Library Monday. Allison Beard, the Lebanon County author of 'Quit of Die Trying,' which is about her struggles and experience with tobacco addiction, signs a copy of... - Lebanon Daily News

Presentation on dementia Jan. 15 at The Birches
NEWTOWN TOWNSHIP — A presentation on caring for loved ones with dementia will be held at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 15 at The Birches at Newtown senior living community, 70 Durham Road, Newtown Township. Dr. G. Peter Gliebus, director of the Alzheimer's disease and cognitive... - Levittown Bucks County Courier Times

Department posts Healthy PA benefit comparisons
The Jan. 1 start of Healthy PA meant benefit changes for some people, and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services has posted a chart showing what those changes are. Healthy PA is Gov. Tom Corbett's version of Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act, and it has three plans.... - Lancaster Intelligencer Journal

ConnectCare3 to get own offices on West Airport Road
ConnectCare3 will be moving in late February from 147 W. Airport Road, Lititz, which it shares with sister company Benecon Group, to its own space at 116 W. Airport Road, Lititz. ConnectCare3 advocates for patients with serious medical issues and their families and helps them navigate the health-care system so they can obtain... - Lancaster Intelligencer Journal

Tamiflu supplies are spotty here
Filling a Tamiflu prescription has been a hit or miss proposition in Lancaster County lately, according to local pharmacists. "You might have to call around to get a prescription filled, but somebody in the county would have it," said Tim Rohrer, a pharmacist at... - Lancaster Intelligencer Journal

DA: Former Nurse Accused Of Sexually Assaulting Patient At Rehab Center In Lehigh County
BETHLEHEM, Pa. (CBS) – Authorities say a Quakertown man, who was a nurse at a Bethlehem rehabilitation center, has been charged with sexually assaulting a nonverbal patient. Officials say 45-year-old- Robert Poindexter is charged with assaulting the 50-year-old patient, who has extremely limited movement.... - KYW News Radio 1060

Suicide in 2014: York sees all-time high, rolls out prevention efforts
In 2014, 84 people killed themselves in York County — a record high. About 81 percent were male, and about 60 percent were 46 or older, according to a year-end report issued by the York County Coroner's Office. At least three people were part of murder-suicides. Five were military... - York Dispatch

County contracts with new psychiatric rehabilitation provider
County contracts with new psychiatric rehabilitation provider By Scott K. Seeley CLARION NEWS Writer CLARION Clarion County will soon have a new service provider for its state-
mandated psychiatric rehabilitation program. As of Jan. 5, Community Guidance Center of Indiana, Pa., a private...

01-06-2015  **Shippensburg company fined for repeated safety violations**
SHIPPENSBURG >> Domestic Casting Co. has been cited and fined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration for the eighth time since 2011. OSHA said Monday that its three most recent inspections in June and July at the Shippensburg facility found 27 total violations and issued $152,912 in...

01-06-2015  **Geisinger Health Plan offering free flu shots through January**
BLOOMSBURG — Geisinger Health Plan is organizing flu-shot clinics throughout January. Anyone over 18 can get the shot...

01-06-2015  **2014 grants from the Berwick Health and Wellness Fund**
BERWICK — The Berwick Health and Wellness Fund made multi-year grant payments this year to the Columbia County...

01-06-2015  **Pa. settles lawsuit over treatment of mentally ill inmates**
HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania prison officials are promising to provide specialized treatment for mentally ill inmates in a settlement of a lawsuit filed by advocates for disabled...

01-06-2015  **Fewer deaths, healthier lives for type I diabetics, Pitt study finds**
Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh have found that people with diabetes who stick to an intensive therapy that aims to keep blood glucose levels steady throughout the day may live longer and healthier lives. The study, published Tuesday in the Journal of the American Medical...

01-06-2015  **Study: Tighter control of type 1 diabetes leads to greater life expectancy**
People with type 1 diabetes who intensively control their blood glucose soon after diagnosis are likely to live longer than those who do not, according to a study published online today in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Over about three decades, the group whose diabetes was tightly controlled...

01-06-2015  **Two more Pennsylvania hospitals designated as Ebola treatment centers**
PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Federal and state health officials have designated hospitals in central and eastern Pennsylvania as the state’s first Ebola treatment centers outside Philadelphia...

01-06-2015  **LVH-Muhlenberg named an Ebola treatment center**
Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg is now an official Ebola treatment center. The Pennsylvania Department of Health and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has given the hospital the designation, along with Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and the Hospital of the University of...

01-06-2015  **Penn State Hershey selected to treat Ebola patients**
Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center has become one of about 50 hospitals in the United States designated to care for Ebola patients. The designation was made by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. On Tuesday, Lehigh Valley...

01-06-2015  **Hershey Medical Center plans to build new data center**
The Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center is developing plans to build a new data center in the field south of the Life Lion helicopter rescue center. Hospital personnel came to Derry Township supervisors Monday night seeking approval for their plans, which would add 64,554
feet to the medical center... - Harrisburg Patriot-News

01-06-2015  **State settles: Solitary confinement for mentally ill Pa. prisoners to end**
The state Department of Corrections has promised, in a lawsuit settlement to apply new rules to
its use of solitary confinement, including phasing it out entirely for inmates with serious mental
illnesses. The department's 34-page pact with the Disability Rights Network,... - Pittsburgh Post-
Gazette

01-05-2015  **Pickett to Continue Service as Insurance Chairman in House**
(Press Release)

01-05-2015  **UPMC for Best Health Now Available in 32 Pennsylvania Counties**
(Press Release)

01-05-2015  **Speaker-Designate Turzai Announces House Committee Chairs for the 2015-16...**
(Press Release)

01-05-2015  **Insurance Department to Close Public Comment Period on Highmark's Proposal to...**
(Press Release)

01-05-2015  **Department of Aging Receives Grant for Volunteer Initiatives**
(Press Release)

01-05-2015  **PA Court Issues Significant Year End Ruling on PTSD Workers Compensation Case**
(Press Release)

01-05-2015  **PA Pro-Life Federation Report: Abortions Drop to All-Time Low in PA**
(Press Release)

01-05-2015  **Secretary of Aging Appointed to National Family Caregiving Study Group**
(Press Release)

01-05-2015  **IRRC submits Comments to the State Board of Nursing**
(Press Release)

01-05-2015  **Concussion study finds shorter rest period just as effective for adolescents**
It might seem sensible for parents to "cocoon" their children so they can recover from a
concussion. That could mean five days in a darkened room devoid of superhero movies, Wiz
Khalifa music, bright lights and smartphone chirping, but a randomized controlled trial that a
former University of Pittsburgh Medical Center... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-05-2015  **Whether a patient has weapons in the home should remain private**
I recently visited my UPMC physician. As I answered the usual questions, I was surprised when
the nurse asked if I’d had “weapons safety training.” I explained I was a retired federal law
enforcement officer and she could draw her own conclusions. Then she asked if there were
weapons in my home. I declined to answer,... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-05-2015  **Stay warm and safe: Guard against CO poisoning from heat sources**
Every year, more than 400 people in the United States die from unintentional exposure to
carbon monoxide, the odorless, colorless gas produced by malfunctioning furnaces and small
gasoline engines, stoves, generators, lanterns and gas ranges. On Thursday, a 17-year-old from
Central Pennsylvania succumbed and become... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
01-05-2015  **Efforts under way for breast milk bank in Pittsburgh**
When Teresa Vinisky gave birth to premature twins in 2002, she was in a bind common to mothers of preemies — she wanted to breastfeed because doctors told her it would help ward off specific complications, but she couldn't produce enough milk. The hospital could only give them formula, and eventually, the smaller... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-05-2015  **Researchers interview bereaved to find best ways to support grieving military families**
With his wife and child close, Army Maj. Chad Wriglesworth battled skin cancer for more than a year before dying at 37... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-05-2015  **Mercer school district closes Monday amid possible mumps outbreak**
By WPXI A Mercer County school district is closed Monday because of a possible mumps outbreak. All buildings in the Sharpsville Area School District are closed and all athletic events have been cancelled, according to an announcement on the district website. Health officials said the most common symptoms of mumps include fever,... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

01-05-2015  **Big investments for ACA innovation lab, but most results still pending**
Jay Hancock , Kaiser Health News The health law’s ambitious lab for transforming how medicine is delivered and financed submitted its official report card to Congress on Tuesday, boasting of a few early results but mostly showing many works in progress. If you’re covered by Medicare, Medicaid or even private insurance,... - Philadelphia Inquirer

01-05-2015  **Glitch blocks 2015 prescription benefits for Northampton County employees**
Northampton County employees, already fretting about major cuts in their medical benefits in 2015, discovered something worse when they refilled prescriptions after the first of the year. No benefits at all. County officials say an “input error” held up the new prescription plans... - Allentown Morning Call

01-05-2015  **American Cancer Society needs volunteer to drive patients**
TAYLOR — The American Cancer Society needs drivers for the Road to Recovery program, which transports needy patients to treatment centers. The program needs volunteer drivers in all counties, but has a strong need for drivers in Lackawanna County in the Scranton and Clarks Summit areas,... - Scranton Times

01-05-2015  **Commonwealth Health invests heavily in area**
We at Commonwealth Health do what most people do at this time of year — reflect on the past year and setting goals for the new year. We are proud of our accomplishments in 2014 and excited about our plans for 2015. Our mission as the region’s largest health care provider is to touch as... - Scranton Times

01-05-2015  **Limiting Rest Is Found to Help Young Concussion Patients**
Experts recommend that young people who have suffered a concussion get one or two days of rest at home, until symptoms start resolving, before gradually returning to school and physical activity. But scientific evidence to support this approach is sparse, and some... - New York Times

01-05-2015  **Doctor, Shut Up and Listen**
HARRISBURG, Pa. — BETSY came to Dr. Martin for a second — or rather, a sixth — opinion. Over a year, she had seen five other physicians for a “rapid heartbeat” and “feeling stressed.” After extensive testing, she had finally been referred for psychological counseling for an anxiety disorder.... - New York Times

01-05-2015  **Healthy Body, Unhealthy Mind**
MANY of my friends were shocked some years ago when I cut down on my junk-food intake. Even my wise old physician was a little put out. He had more or less given me the green light to
the “golden arches” a few years before when, one afternoon, following my annual checkup, he’d... - New York Times

01-05-2015  U.S. health-care worker exposed to Ebola arrives in Nebraska for observation
A U.S. health-care worker exposed to the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone arrived at a Nebraska hospital on Sunday for observation and potential treatment. The patient, who has not been identified, arrived at the Nebraska Medical Center’s Biocontainment Unit mid-afternoon.... - Washington Post

01-05-2015  Some forced to buy on health insurance exchanges for the first time
The outrage was swift and loud. Millions of people were feared to be in danger of losing their health insurance last year because their plans did not comply with the Affordable Care Act. To keep people covered and quell consumer anger, President Barack Obama and... - Baltimore Sun

01-05-2015  Opinion: Greater access to vaccinations will save millions more of the worlds’ children
By Marc Tolo The number of children around the world who die before reaching their fifth birthday is tragically high. But it is dropping. As we entered the new millennium, the annual death toll for young children was nearly 10 million. Last year, it was a little over six million.... - Trenton Times

01-05-2015  Mercer school district closes Monday amid possible mumps outbreak
A Mercer County school district has closed “due to a possibility of mumps.”.. - AP

01-05-2015  Possible mumps cases close Mercer County school district
The Sharpsville Area School District is closed today while district officials look into possible cases of mumps in the Mercer County district. An alert on the district's website advised parents of the closure for grades K-12 at the district’s three schools. Athletic events also have... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-05-2015  Gordon Freireich: A problem as plain as the nose on my face (column)
The problem was as plain as the nose on my face. In fact, the problem was the nose on my face. A while ago, I developed a blemish on the side of my nose. Since I was not planning on doing any male cologne advertisements in the near future, I did not think too much about it.... - York Daily

01-05-2015  Report: Patient charges vary at area’s hospitals
December 30, 2014 By MIKE REUTHER mreuther@sungazette.com Patient charges for medical conditions and surgical procedures vary among hospitals in central Pennsylvania, according to a recent report. more »» - Williamsport Sun-Gazette

01-05-2015  Conditions, procedure charges are compared
Here are the average patient charges of area hospitals for the 17 medical conditions and surgical procedures included in the PHC4 report: - Williamsport Sun-Gazette

01-05-2015  Cheers to a 100th birthday, athletes and helping families; jeers to failing to pass a bill
Cheers and jeers from the last week of news: Happy 100th birthday to the Sayre Theatre. The theatre opened a whole century ago, in 1915, bringing movies, as well as live theater and cultural events to the community. To celebrate, the Bradford County Regional Arts... - Towanda Daily Review

01-05-2015  A fitting solution
VENANGO COUNTY — UPMC Northwest, in Seneca, is now offering free wigs to cancer patients. The program is a collaboration with the American Cancer Society. Wigs can be
January 9, 2015

expensive, but through the American Cancer Society Free Wig Salon Program, patients can select a free, high-quality wig from among a... - Titusville Herald

01-05-2015

**Experts: Furnace checks, carbon monoxide detectors are critical**
Two Valley heating business experts are asking homeowners and landlords to check their furnaces at least once a year and to install carbon monoxide detectors in their homes. Brian Kapp, owner of Brian’s Heating & Electrical in Mifflinburg for 20 years, and Glenn Holler, owner of Glenn Holler Chimney Sweep in Middleburg... - Sunbury Daily Item

01-05-2015

**Medicare should re-evaluate hospital fines**
Medicare is fining a record number of hospitals — 2,610 — for having too many patients return within a month for additional treatment. Under the new fines, three-quarters of hospitals that are subject to the Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program are being penalized. Over the... - Somerset Daily

01-05-2015

**PMC cancer center connects to Lehigh Valley Health Network**
Pocono Medical Center is entering into a new agreement with Lehigh Valley Health Network to provide medical director and professional services for Radiation Oncology at the Dale and Frances Hughes Cancer Center. Patients will be cared for by the physicians who provide radiation... - Pocono Record

01-05-2015

**Cancer, heart disease remain top causes of death**
By STEPHEN DENNIS Staff writer In a year full of Ebola scares, flu threats and respiratory illness EV-D68, cancer was the leading cause of death in Venango County. According to the 2013 health profile from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, cancer and heart-related disease are the most common causes of... - Oil City Derrick

01-05-2015

**Ivory retires from UPMC Altoona**
Sharolyn Ivory of Patton, a case manager from UPMC Altoona, has retired with 42 years of service. She was a staff nurse in pediatrics at Altoona Hospital upon graduation from the Altoona Hospital School of Nursing in 1972. Ivory was promoted to charge nurse in 1975 and served for two years before... - Johnstown Tribune-Democrat

01-05-2015

**Thomas completes FBI crisis training**
Mike Thomas, manager of security at Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, has earned a certification in FBI Crisis Negotiation Training to assist in local community crisis situations. Thomas will be called to assist the Special Emergency Response Team in various situations including when an individual is barricaded or in need of... - Johnstown Tribune-Democrat

01-05-2015

**Marijuana: A plant or medication for the masses?**
It’s been thousands of years since people have been using marijuana around the world. And cultivating marijuana goes back to 2700 B.C. when China and India were used as a treatment for rheumatism, malaria and other things. Then the Spanish brought marijuana to America in 1545, following the... - Hazleton Standard-Speaker

01-05-2015

**Crozer Keystone boards make donations to local charities**
The Crozer Keystone Boards that include the Board of Directors, Health Services Board, Crozer-Chester Foundation and Delco Memorial Foundation, continued their annual contributions for two local agencies that provide compassionate assistance for local residents who require a helping hand.... - Primos Delaware County Daily and Sunday Times

01-05-2015

**Letter: Coverage of heroin issues wins plaudits for Times**
To the Times: We believe the Delaware County Daily Times should be commended for its recently published series of articles and editorials on the growing epidemic of heroin and
prescription drug abuse. The pieces covering this information were well-written and accurately describe the serious threat... - *Primos Delaware County Daily and Sunday Times*

01-05-2015  **Grand View Health welcomes first babies of new year**
West Rockhill >> All boys, all 21 inches and all firstborns. The first three New Year’s babies reported born at area hospitals had those three things in common in addition to being born Jan. 1, 2015. Thuy and Jeffrey Nemec, of Souderton, welcomed the first baby — perhaps... - *Lansdale Reporter*

01-05-2015  **Susquehanna Health facility gets new owner**
WILLIAMSPORT - Susquehanna Health has announced the sale of The Meadows personal care facility in Montoursville to The Park Home, Inc., a local nonprofit organization with a mission rooted in supporting initiatives that improve the lives of senior citizens. The sale became final Jan. 1.... - *Lock Haven Express*

01-05-2015  **Research funding close to the top**
LEWISTOWN - Every year, The American Cancer Society uses donations to fund cancer research across the country. - *Lewistown Sentinel*

01-05-2015  **January is Radon Awareness Month**
The second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking has levels three times higher in homes in Lewistown than the Environmental Protection Agency-established safe level. Radon trails behind smoking as a leading cause of lung cancer - *Lewistown Sentinel*

01-05-2015  **Physician assistant joins Primary Health**
LEWISTOWN - Certified physician assistant Jeremy Tipton has joined the Primary Health Network's Lewistown Community Health Center to offer family medicine services. - *Lewistown Sentinel*

01-05-2015  **HMC sets up online child abuse training**
Look Out for Child Abuse will train early child care workers about new state laws. Penn State Hershey has set up an online training program designed to help those who work with children to meet new state regulations. The iLook Out for Child Abuse, created by Penn State Hershey Center for the... - *Lebanon Daily News*

01-05-2015  **Age Wave Initiative to hold health forum at HACC**
HACC Lebanon will host a community forum, “Take 5 to Feel Alive,” on Jan. 13 in the multipurpose room from 8 a.m. until noon. The event is sponsored by the Age Wave Initiative of Lebanon County. Speakers include HACC president John Sygielski and Dr. Christopher... - *Lebanon Daily News*

01-05-2015  **Armstrong Health Center offering monthly educational program in Kittanning**
Senior citizens, the disabled and their caregivers who are looking for ways to improve health and prevent injuries can find help through the new “Wellness Wednesday” outreach program in Kittanning. The programs will be held on the first Wednesday of every month from 10 to... - *Kittanning Leader-Times*

01-05-2015  **Health Officials: Lab Test Results Negative For Measles In Potential Case In Delaware And Philadelphia Counties**
HARRISBURG, Pa., (CBS) — The Pennsylvania Department of Health announced Friday that lab test results came back negative in a potential case of measles in Delaware and Philadelphia counties that was announced on Wednesday. “Based on initial information received from those involved in the... - *KYW News Radio 1060*
01-05-2015  **Heroin remains 'primary drug' for Bucks County addicts**
Heroin maintains its hold on Bucks and Montgomery counties. It was the “primary drug of use” for half of all addicts seeking government help in 2014, according to figures released this week by government agencies. Bucks reported an overall 4.6 percent rise in addicts seeking treatment... - *Levittown Intelligencer*

01-05-2015  **Greater personal responsibility, cost and collaboration in health world**
After 84-year-old Teresa Ward fell and broke her hip last year, the doctors warned her family they could expect her to live another six — maybe eight — months. Such major medical setbacks typically accelerate the progression of Alzheimer’s disease, the most common form of dementia, which Ward was... - *Levittown Intelligencer*

01-05-2015  **Department posts Healthy PA benefit comparisons**
The Jan. 1 start of Healthy PA meant benefit changes for some people, and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services has posted a chart showing what those changes are. Healthy PA is Gov. Tom Corbett’s version of Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act, and it has three plans:... - *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal*

01-05-2015  **Don’t heed the anti-vaxxers: Get the flu vaccine**
The Issue As of Dec. 30, Lancaster General Health had 265 positive diagnoses for the flu — both inpatient and outpatient — with 103 hospitalized. The flu is widespread in Pennsylvania; according to the state Department of Health, Pennsylvania has had 16 fatalities already this flu season. A... - *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal*

01-05-2015  **Pa. a Safe Haven for newborns**
Thanks to LNP for Tuesday’s front-page story on the anniversary of the death of Baby Allison (“Unsolved”). I have been a maternal child health nurse for over 40 years and I am a passionate advocate for promoting awareness of Pennsylvania’s Safe Haven program.... - *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal*

01-05-2015  **Flu 'widespread' in Pennsylvania; 354 cases in Lancaster County**
The number of flu cases in Lancaster County more than doubled in a week, according to the state Department of Health’s latest data. However, the county’s incidence of flu remains lower than the state average. From Sept. 28 through Dec. 27, the cumulative number of cases here was 354,... - *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal*

01-05-2015  **Department posts Healthy PA benefit comparisons**
The Jan. 1 start of Healthy PA meant benefit changes for some people, and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services has posted a chart showing what those changes are. Healthy PA is Gov. Tom Corbett’s version of Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act, and it has three plans:... - *Lancaster Intelligencer Journal*

01-05-2015  **Police: Nurse charged with sexually assaulting Manor Care patient**
After a Lehigh County grand jury investigation, Bethlehem police have charged a man who worked as a nurse at a rehabilitation center with sexually assaulting a "non-verbal" patient. Robert Poindexter, 45, of 25 Congress Court in Quakertown, was charged Monday with sexually assaulting a 50-year old women in May 2013. Police... - *Allentown Morning Call*

01-05-2015  **EDITORIAL: Critics running out of reasons to oppose medical marijuana**
What more do Pennsylvania lawmakers need before they take the common-sense, compassionate step to legalize medical marijuana? Twenty-three states already allow doctors to prescribe medicines derived from the cannabis plant. The Justice Department signaled in 2013 it would not challenge those... - *York Dispatch*

01-05-2015  **Flu virus onset ‘like an explosion’**
It's the time of year when used tissues pile up on work desks and hand sanitizer is always within reach. - Altoona Mirror

01-05-2015
Addicts resisting state program
HOLLIDAYSBURG - Blair County President Judge Jolene G. Kopriva is finding that some addicts who have not been successful in her drug court resist a state drug program that she believes has been effective. - Altoona Mirror

01-05-2015
Bethlehem nurse allegedly sexually assaulted disabled patient
A Quakertown man who worked as a nurse at a Bethlehem rehabilitation facility is accused of sexually assaulting a disabled patient who could not speak, and was caught by a co-worker, according to Lehigh County prosecutors. Robert Poindexter, 45, of the first block of Congress Court, is charged... - Easton Express-Times

01-05-2015
ONGOING: Mental health concerns, new leads in missing student case
The family of College junior Timothy Hamlett — the former track and field athlete who went missing on Dec. 26 — disclosed more information on the investigation and Hamlett’s state of mental health. The Port Authority Police Tour Commander Lieutenant Brown confirmed that the former... - Daily Pennsylvanian

01-05-2015
Cheers & Jeers ...
Cheer Cheers and congratulations to Evans City and Seven Fields. After more than 18 months of preparation, The neighboring municipalities launched their joint regional police department Tuesday during a swearing-in ceremony at the Seven Fields borough building.... - Butler Eagle

01-05-2015
Flu fighters
My sincere thanks to the staff and management at New Haven Court Assisted Living Facility. During the past several weeks, there has been a huge influx of flu viruses in Western Pennsylvania. To protect their residents, the staff has done an amazing job of keeping the residents safe by serving their meals in their... - Butler Eagle

01-05-2015
Nasty, early season for flu
A mixture of some of the aspects we love about the holidays — close contact with loved ones, special holiday gatherings and shopping amid a sea of strangers — likely contributed to a spike in flu cases in Butler County. It is a flu season that experts say likely is to prove significant.... - Butler Eagle

01-05-2015
Army Corps: Nuke cleanup now $350M up from $44M
PITTSBURGH (AP) — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers estimates it will spend at least $350 million more over the next 10 years to dig up and haul away nuclear waste from a dump site about 35 miles northeast of Pittsburgh... - AP

01-05-2015
Dept. of Health: UPMC, Highmark must resolve 'continuity of care' conflict
Memo from the state to those Highmark patients seeking to maintain relationships with their long-time UPMC physicians: Don’t get your hopes up. In a letter to the CEOs of both UPMC and Highmark, the state Department of Health said it’s contesting UPMC’s position that nearly all... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

01-05-2015
PinnacleHealth launches flu information line
The day after Christmas, state health officials said there were 478 cases of influenza in Cumberland, Dauphin, Perry, Lebanon, York and Lancaster counties. The number of cases was expected to peak around New Year’s Day. While patients can call their primary care provider they also can call... - Harrisburg Patriot-News
January 9, 2015

01-04-2015  **G.O.P. Turns to the Courts to Aid Agenda**
As Republicans prepare to take full control of Congress on Tuesday, the party’s leaders are counting on judges, not their newly elected majority on Capitol Hill, to roll back President Obama’s aggressive second-term agenda and block his executive actions on health care, climate... - *New York Times*

01-04-2015  **What doesn’t kill you doesn’t necessarily make you stronger**
When I was 15, I attended a writing workshop with a girl who had been sexually abused by a family member, trauma that she explored in her poetry. She said she was offended when people told her: “I’m really sorry that happened to you.” She felt like they were saying they wanted to... - *Washington Post*

01-04-2015  **How to cure the pandemic that women face**
When violence is inflicted upon women and girls, we rightly think of it as a crime and a tragedy. But we should also recognize it for what it truly is: a global pandemic and a public health crisis. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 30 percent of the... - *Washington Post*

01-04-2015  **New Baltimore VA head promises to restore trust -- in time**
Veterans who showed up at the Baltimore offices of the VA had many things to gripe about—an 800 number that never seemed to work, a confusing process for getting benefits for PTSD and a feeling that the process of applying for help robbed them of their dignity.... - *Baltimore Sun*

01-04-2015  **FDA drug approvals reached 18-year high in 2014**
The Food and Drug Administration approved 41 first-of-a-kind drugs in 2014, including a record number of medicines for rare diseases, pushing the agency's annual tally of drug approvals to its highest level in 18 years... - *AP*

01-04-2015  **Doctors predict revolution coming in breast cancer care**
A breast cancer diagnosis once loomed as a likely death sentence, a traumatizing battle fraught with chemotherapy, radiation or radical surgery, even in a best-case scenario. Today doctors predict new treatments will revolutionize care during the next decade, knocking mortality rates to dramatic lows with genetic tests... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

01-04-2015  **Early intervention effort in Pittsburgh credited for drop in partner deaths; program to expand in Pa.**
In a year when the number of killings in Pittsburgh soared, the number of intimate-partner homicides dropped nearly by half, a credit to a Pittsburgh police program established to identify victims in high-danger relationships, officials said. The program is being expanded to Pennsylvania State Police and municipal... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

01-04-2015  **A new approach to New Year’s resolutions**
A new year brings fresh resolutions. Lose weight, get more exercise, keep a neater house - wait, aren't those the same as last year's? And the year before that? Ninety percent of New Year's resolutions fail, even for people who are high achievers in other parts of their lives. That's why, on Jan. 1, lots of... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*

01-04-2015  **Check Up: Some guidance on when to start mammograms**
It seems counterintuitive, but detecting breast cancer early is not automatically a good thing. That dilemma is at the heart of the never-ending debate over starting mammography screening before age 50. Now, a team led by obstetrician-gynecologist Margaret Polaneczky has... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*

01-04-2015  **Penn doctor going back for second tour fighting Ebola in Africa**
Trish Henwood is home from Liberia, where she spent five weeks working in an Ebola treatment
unit, but on Monday the University of Pennsylvania emergency department physician is going back. Henwood, 34, director of global initiatives for the emergency department of... - Philadelphia Inquirer

01-04-2015  **False alarm on measles, Pa. says**  The Pennsylvania Department of Health said late Friday that tests for measles had come back negative in a case that it had alerted the public about previously. The person who had been described as a “likely” measles case had visited a CVS/Pharmacy in Wayne on Sunday evening and the Please Touch Museum in... - Philadelphia Inquirer

01-04-2015  **New brain-imaging approach could help smokers quit**  Everybody knows it’s really hard for smokers to quit. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania think a quick brain scan could someday make quitting easier - or at least more effective. In a recent study, they found that certain changes in the brain, visible... - Philadelphia Inquirer

01-04-2015  **Region’s health-care stocks surged in 2014**  Health-care stocks secured five of the top 10 spots in a ranking of 2014 stock-market performance by members of The Inquirer's Philly50, the list of the most valuable publicly traded companies in the region. It was a strong year overall. Only eight of the 50 stocks saw their values... - Philadelphia Inquirer

01-04-2015  **Veterans Crisis Line available for those in need**  Pete Albert, suicide prevention coordinator at the Butler VA facilities, receives an average of five to 10 phone calls a week on the Veterans Crisis Line. The calls are from veterans or from family members or friends who care about a veteran. - Beaver County Times

01-04-2015  **Misuse of pain medication not always what it seems**  I am writing in response to all the media attention given to our society as whole regarding the misuse of prescription pain medication. It is leading our young people (and older as well) to become dependent on it and then to turn to the deadly use of heroin. I certainly see the plight here, but I am... - Beaver County Times

01-04-2015  **The scourge of heroin, Reading Eagle's Local Newsmaker of the Year**  More than a decade ago, heroin evoked the image of a homeless man standing under a bridge with a needle sticking out of his arm. - Reading Eagle

01-04-2015  **Former addict talks about turning her life around**  Armed with a box of dirty clothes, one shoe and someone else’s checkbook, Jodi Holland checked into the Bethesda Mission in Harrisburg - Reading Eagle

01-04-2015  **Woman struggles to kick heroin habit, even after boyfriend’s overdose**  Watching her boyfriend die in Reading Hospital of a heroin overdose should have been enough to make Carrie Owens never want to touch the drug - Reading Eagle

01-04-2015  **Some veterans struggle after discharge from service**  troops after returning home from overseas. A 2014 Department of Veteran’s Affairs scandal revealed problems veterans face when seeking medical care. But other problems exist, including long wait times to receive GI Bill benefits and the Basic Allowance for Housing,... - Washington Observer-Reporter

01-04-2015  **Flu cases spike in Luzerne County**  Flu cases have erupted in Luzerne County and throughout the state and country over the last week, and a mutated strain has made the flu shot less effective. As of Dec. 27, the state
Department of Health revealed a significant increase in flu diagnoses for Luzerne County, with confirmed cases nearly... - Wilkes-Barre Citizens’ Voice

01-04-2015

**Flu rages, fears mount as students head back to school**
The scene is set for the flu season, already deadly, to take a dramatic turn for the worst in the Lehigh Valley. Circulating is a particularly nasty strain of the flu against which the vaccine offers little protection. And now, just as students are getting ready to go back to school, where germs are freely exchanged like knockoff... - Allentown Morning Call

12-30-2014

**Study offers hope for Duchenne patients**
Don’t underestimate a father’s determination. Ty Ballou of Ben Avon was eager for a new treatment for his son Ryan, now 27, who has Duchenne muscular dystrophy, uses a wheelchair and already “has outlived what his life expectancy would have been.” After helping to inspire a researcher to test a new drug regimen, he raised... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

12-30-2014

**Which fitness option is best for you?**
“We are not here to kiss your butt, only to kick it if that’s what you need,” say the staff at Planet Fitness, which opened its sixth location in the area in the Penn Hills shopping center last month. The average person gains a little more than a pound between Thanksgiving... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

12-30-2014

**Being uninsured in U.S. will cost more**
WASHINGTON — Being uninsured in America will cost you more in 2015... - AP

12-30-2014

**Health happenings for Tuesday, December 30, 2014**
Blood Drives • To find a blood drive near you call: The Central Blood Bank, 412-209-7000 or 1-800-310-9551. The American Red Cross, 1-800-733-2767. For bloodmobile locations, check Seminars/Lectures • Mon-Vale Health Resources is presenting a program on varicose veins at... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

12-30-2014

**Human trafficking and health care worker awareness**
Each year, the Super Bowl attracts large crowds to the city hosting the most popular sporting event of the year. The Super Bowl, as a yearly gathering of hundreds of thousands, also is a busy time for those involved in human trafficking. In July of 2014, the Pennsylvania Joint State Commission released an update... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

12-30-2014

**Just who’s stupid?**
Commentary persists regarding Jonathan Gruber’s comment in reference to the Affordable Care Act: “Lack of transparency is a huge political advantage. And basically, call it the stupidity of the American voter ... that was really, really critical for the thing to pass.”... - Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

12-30-2014

**Being uninsured in America will cost you more**
WASHINGTON (AP) - Being uninsured in America will cost you more in 2015... - AP

12-30-2014

**Medicaid enrollment problems plague N.J.**
Since New Jersey expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, its efforts to enroll thousands of low-income residents have been hampered by low staffing and antiquated technology. Gov. Christie championed the expansion, and, indeed, 300,000 New Jersey adults have enrolled in Medicaid, the federal program for the poor and... - Philadelphia Inquirer

12-30-2014

**New documentary addresses stress, suicide among police officers**
About a year ago, Philadelphia Police Chaplain Luis Centeno was approached by Stephen McWilliams, who teaches a social documentary film class at Villanova University. McWilliams was initially interested in profiling the chaplain, but as they talked, both began to see a more meaningful project - about a dark secret,... - Philadelphia Inquirer
12-30-2014

LETTERS - Dec. 30

ISSUE | MEDICAL POT For the children The arbitrary classification of cannabis as a prohibited drug because it is habit-forming prevents children with ravaging diseases from pursuing the happiness promised by the nation’s founders (“Desperate to get pot for ill...” - Philadelphia Inquirer

12-30-2014

Commonwealth Health hospitals won’t identify first baby of 2015

Traditionally revealed in a front page news story, Lackawanna County’s first baby of the New Year instead will be kept a secret in 2015. Calling it a child safety measure, Community Health Systems-owned hospitals, including Moses Taylor Hospital in Scranton, will not publicize... - Scranton Times

12-30-2014

Be realistic about 2015 health goals

The start of a new year is somewhat similar to the start of the season of your favorite sports team. It doesn’t matter that they finished in fourth place last year, because this year will be different. Although a few of your better players were traded, you gained some others... - Hazleton Standard-Speaker

12-30-2014

Survey shows progress on health front

One of the most troubling aspects of the high costs of America’s health care is that so many expensive treatments are for preventable diseases tied to lifestyle decisions rather than genetics or pathology. It’s great news for the economy, rather than for young people alone,... - Pottsville Republican and Evening Herald

12-30-2014

Meeting planned to explain Farm Bill programs

December 29, 2014 Obamacare has provided health insurance for people across the country. The federal government is also making sure your crops are covered, too. more »» - Warren Times Observer

12-30-2014

Editorial: EMS funding dispute in Exeter could put lives at risk

There is much that can be debated when it comes to the role of local government and other institutions that serve the community. But there is >> Continue The Issue: The Exeter Ambulance Association announced it will close by March without township financial support.... - Reading Eagle

12-30-2014

Ohio State hospitals turn away ER patients

Ohio State University’s emergency departments have been turning away patients far more often in recent months as a result of overcrowding. From July through November, Ohio State diverted patients to other local hospitals for approximately 378 total hours, or the equivalent of nearly 16... - Columbus Dispatch

12-30-2014

Overdose patients end up repeatedly in hospital

State health officials hope to curb overdose deaths by using hospital data to target patients who have been admitted for previous overdoses but survived. The state Department of Health and Mental Hygiene announced plans Monday to offer rehab services and drug education to these patients — many of... - Baltimore Sun

12-30-2014

Earlier, more severe flu season hits Maryland

It's shaping up to be a nasty flu season, with an earlier start and more severe cases, according to hospitals that have begun limiting visitors in an attempt to stem infections. On Monday, Anne Arundel Medical Center became the latest to bar children and those who have mild flu symptoms, such as coughs and aches, from... - Baltimore Sun

12-30-2014

Success of Kentucky’s Health Plan Comes With New Obstacles
LOUISVILLE, Ky. — In many ways, Kentucky, a poor state with a starkly unhealthy populace, has become a symbol of the Affordable Care Act's potential. Largely because the state chose to expand Medicaid, the drop in the uninsured rate has been among the sharpest in the nation. Hospital revenues... - New York Times

12-30-2014
**Health Law Helped Adults. Now, What About Children?**
With the Affordable Care Act seemingly off to a good start in its first year, increasing access to insurance coverage for adults, attention is likely to turn to an older program for children that will come to an end in 2015 if it is not reauthorized: the Children’s Health Insurance... - New York Times

12-30-2014
**Survey shows progress toward healthier society**
One of the most troubling aspects of the high costs of America’s health care is that so many expensive treatments are for preventable diseases tied to lifestyle decisions rather than genetics or pathology.... It’s great news for the economy, rather than for young people alone, that... - Shamokin News-Item

12-30-2014
**Crawford County hit hard this flu season**
Influenza has hit Crawford County far harder than any of the region's other counties. Crawford County reported 118 cases of the flu, according to the most recent data from the State Department of Health, which is from September 19 through December 20 of this year.... - Oil City Derrick

12-30-2014
**Montgomery County officials issue Code Blue alert**
NORRISTOWN >> Montgomery County officials have issued a Code Blue cold weather warning starting Tuesday night due to anticipated low temperatures. The warning goes into effect at 9 p.m. and ends at 9 a.m. on Friday. The county issues a Code Blue weather warning for residents without shelter... - Pottstown Mercury

12-30-2014
**Top Story: Montgomery County sells Parkhouse geriatric facility in Upper Providence**
UPPER PROVIDENCE >> In March, Montgomery County unloaded the Parkhouse Providence Pointe geriatric facility, selling it to Mid-Atlantic Healthcare LLC for $41 million. Montgomery County commissioners’ Chairman Josh Shapiro explained that when he, Leslie Richards and Bruce L. Castor Jr., came into office they did... - Norristown Times Herald

12-30-2014
**Safety a priority at area hospitals**
At 1:30 p.m. July 24, 49-year-old Richard Plotts is accused of walking into a Delaware County health center, griping about its gun ban. Burdened with mental health issues and a criminal history involving drugs and guns, police say Plotts pulled a .32-caliber revolver from his... - Lehighton Times News

12-30-2014
**Seven Mountains EMS helps with Narcan distribution in region**
December 30, 2014 By JIM RUNKLE jrunkle@lockhaven. more »» - Lock Haven Express

12-30-2014
**Online fundraiser set up for Hannah Ginion**
BRISTOL TOWNSHIP — A new online fundraising campaign has been started to help the family of little Hannah Ginion, who lost her battle with Krabbe disease Sunday after inspiring a law to update Pennsylvania’s newborn screening list. "At this time we have decided to reactivate this page to collect any... - Levittown Bucks County Courier Times

12-30-2014
**Bensalem grad builds device to speed test for diseases**
As an adult struggling through a course requirement for her nursing degree, Debbie Issadore felt like she just couldn’t pick up algebra. At the same time, her sixth-grade son, David, was learning algebra for the first time at school. Fortunately for Debbie, David sat her down and explained it... - Levittown Bucks County Courier Times
He's the local face of a national health care company
Russell Baxley came to Lancaster Regional Medical Center in July 2013 as chief operating officer. Since then, changes have come fast. The for-profit facility on College Avenue — once St. Joseph’s Hospital — had been one of 71 hospitals owned by Florida-based Health... - Lancaster Intelligencer Journal

Flu hits local nursing homes
For nursing homes and their residents, flu season has terrible timing this year. "We've had a few cases over the past two weeks," said Stephanie Hoffman, director of quality improvement and risk management and compliance at Landis Homes on East Oregon Road. RELATED: Pa. flu season's shaping up to be a nasty one... - Lancaster Intelligencer Journal

Montgomery County Cancer Survivor Celebrates Spot In Major Endurance Event
PHIADLPHIA (CBS) — A Montgomery County man who became the first cancer survivor and heart transplant recipient to ever finish a full-Ironman distance race now has a ticket to take part in one of the most prestigious athletic events on the planet. Four years ago, Derek Fitzgerald spent the holidays in the hospital in need... - KYW News Radio 1060

Bows of Hope raising money for American Cancer Society
BROCKWAY – Guardian Elder Care and several of its ancillary units are teaming up with 29 of its skilled nursing homes and two personal care homes to raise money for the American Cancer Society through “Bows of Hope." Guardian’s Clinical Reimbursement Service Division is coordinating the... - DuBois Courier-Express

Bushkill Township student filmmaker releases documentary targeting depression, teen suicide
A DeSales University aspiring independent filmmaker is hoping to send a message through his latest documentary: Depression and self harm shouldn't be swept under the rug. In October 2012, Kyle Mahaney, 21, a senior at DeSales in Upper Saucon Township and living in Bushkill Township, met up with childhood friend,... - Easton Express-Times

Sen. Mike Folmer and York County mother on MSNBC to talk medical marijuana
Republican Sen. Mike Folmer, whose district includes part of York County, appeared on the MSNBC show "Taking the Hill" live Sunday night to discuss his sponsorship of legislation to legalize medical marijuana in Pennsylvania. Folmer was joined by Springettsbury Township mother Angela Ferro, whose son... - York Dispatch

Light ‘em up for the last time as Beaver County’s tobacco ban starts Thursday
BEAVER — Smoking gets snuffed out Thursday, but not necessarily from a New Year's resolution. That's because the first day of 2015 will usher in the new smoking ban for Beaver County properties and affiliated parking areas. Public parks are not affected, county officials have said, except for the Old Economy Park... - Beaver County Times

Flu cases spike to nearly 200 in Franklin County
HARRISBURG >> Franklin County is seeing more flu cases this season than most other Pennsylvania counties. Flu reports have soared in recent weeks, and the Pennsylvania Health Department says influenza is widespread and affecting at least half the state. The number of patients with flu-like symptoms and going to the emergency... - Chambersburg Public Opinion

Stomach bug biting many in Midstate
HARRISBURG — Many in the Midstate are coming down with stomach bug, also known as norovirus. Heidi Mansbarger said her granddaughter recently came down with the illness. “It's very painful,” she said. “She was bent over a lot with pain in her stomach.” Health experts with
the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said... - *Carlisle Sentinel*

**12-30-2014**

**Pennsylvania's death toll rises from flu**
The number of flu-related deaths this season in Pennsylvania has risen to 16, the state health department announced today. That's up 45 percent from the 11 deaths reported as of Dec. 20. The news comes as the Centers for Disease Control announces flu and pneumonia deaths have reached an epidemic level this season.... - *Harrisburg Patriot-News*

**12-30-2014**

**Flu deaths are at epidemic threshold, Centers for Disease Control says**
We have reached an epidemic level of flu and pneumonia deaths in the U.S. this season, according to the Centers for Disease Control. As of Dec. 20, 15 children in nine states had died of flu and pneumonia, and it is widespread in 36 states, said the CDC. The proportion of deaths from the disease was at the epidemic threshold,... - *Harrisburg Patriot-News*

**12-29-2014**

**Vaccines for all: The U.S. can help save millions of children**
Here’s a horrific fact: More than 6 million children under age 5 die each year, many from common diseases such as diarrhea and pneumonia. Vaccines that people in industrialized nations take for granted are unavailable to children in the developing world. Solving this health crisis will take more than scientific and medical... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

**12-29-2014**

**Chinese medical staff absorb UPMC’s ‘people-oriented care’**
Chinese doctors, nurses and administrators visiting UPMC East in Monroeville are learning the importance of people skills, an official with the Xiangya Hospital said this week. “The most interesting thing that we've found here is the concept of patient-centered or people-oriented (care) …just everything in the... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

**12-29-2014**

**Alcohol violations among youth trending downward in Pennsylvania**
Among Pennsylvania's population of underage drinkers, it’s the sixth-graders who concern Felicity DeBacco-Erni the most. Many are just 11 years old. “What kind of high are they going to need by the time they're in eighth grade, by the time they're in 10th grade, by the time they're in 12th grade... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

**12-29-2014**

**Baby who inspired new Pa. screening law dies**
A Bucks County baby who this year became the namesake for a state law requiring hospitals to test newborns for certain rare disorders, died Sunday, Dec. 28. Hannah Ginion would have turned 2 on Jan. 15. She suffered from Krabbe disease, an inherited condition that destroys nerve cells.... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*

**12-29-2014**

**Innovative treatment helps toddler with artery condition**
Watching 20-month-old Natalie Grace Van Wyk grab her father's cellphone and dash around in pink cowboy boots at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, you might think the little girl was normal and healthy. And you'd almost be right. Natalie is a medical miracle, thanks to an innovative prenatal and... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*

**12-29-2014**

**Millions Have Already Enrolled In 2015 Health Policies, Deadline Still 7 Weeks Off**
Julie Rovner, Kaiser Health News What a difference a year makes. With its technical troubles largely behind it, healthcare.gov enrolled 1.9 million new customers for health insurance between Nov. 15 and Dec. 18. At the same time, another 4.5 million existing policyholders either... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*

**12-29-2014**

**In Hunting Park, nuns provide free hospice care to cancer patients**
It is called Sacred Heart Home, and its work is just that: sacred. For 84 years, a group of nuns has been caring for poor people dying from cancer in their gleaming home on the edge of Hunting Park. They do it free of charge. The Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne accept no payment of any kind from... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*
**Delco Medical Reserve Corp seeks volunteers**

DELAWARE COUNTY Medical Reserve Corps is looking for volunteers. MEDIA The Delaware County Medical Reserve Corps is looking for volunteers. Those interested can attend an orientation session from 7 to 9 p.m. on Jan. 20 at the Delaware County 911 Center, 360 N. Middletown Rd., Media. - *Philadelphia Inquirer*

**Old fashioned data breach: Independence Blue Cross paper records tossed in trash**

Independence Blue Cross on Friday disclosed a data breach affecting 12,500 of its more than 2.5 million members. Unlike most high-profile cases of personal data loss, such as the one at Target stores last year affecting 70 million people, the IBC case did not... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*

**Baby who inspired Pa.’s newborn testing law dies**

LEVITTOWN, Pa. — A suburban Philadelphia toddler whose battle with a rare degenerative genetic disorder inspired the state to expand medical testing for newborns has died... - *AP*

**Herald of better health**

One of the most troubling aspects of the high costs of America’s health care is that so many expensive treatments are for preventable diseases tied to lifestyle decisions rather than genetics or pathology. It's great news for the economy, rather than for young people alone,... - *Scranton Times*

**Blood donor sites remain open**

SCRANTON — The American Red Cross will continue to have blood or platelet donation sites open during the holiday season, a time when “holiday activities, inclement weather and seasonal illnesses, like the flu, can often result in fewer donations,” Colin Riccobon, external... - *Scranton Times*

**Drugstores, retailers dive deeper into vaccines**

Walgreens provided enough flu shots last season to protect a population roughly twice the size of Los Angeles... - *AP*

**In a New Approach to Fighting Disease, Helpful Genetic Mutations Are Sought**

Doug Whitney should have died years ago. The 65-year-old resident of Port Orchard, Wash., has a devastating gene mutation that — according to the medical literature — causes early onset Alzheimer’s disease in everyone who inherits it. The mutation killed Mr. Whitney’s mother and nine of her 13 siblings,... - *New York Times*

**Health Law Helped Adults. Now, What About Children?**

With the Affordable Care Act seemingly off to a good start in its first year, increasing access to insurance coverage for adults, attention is likely to turn to an older program for children that will come to an end in 2015 if it is not reauthorized: the Children’s Health Insurance... - *New York Times*

**Ebola’s lessons, painfully learned at great cost in dollars and human lives**

A year after it began, the Ebola epidemic in West Africa continues to be unpredictable, forcing governments and aid groups to improvise strategies as they chase a virus that is unencumbered by borders or bureaucracy. The people fighting Ebola are coming up with lists of lessons learned —... - *Washington Post*

**Top health care stories of 2014: People suffering without health care finally get major help**

Here are the major health stories that impacted the midstate in 2014: 1. Corbettcare:

Pennsylvanians rang in 2014 with their federal tax dollars paying for health care in numerous
other states. (States which had already accepted the Obamacare Medicaid expansion.) But Gov. Tom Corbett did it his... - Harrisburg Patriot-News

12-29-2014 Baby who inspired Pennsylvania’s newborn testing law dies
LEVITTOWN, Pa. — A suburban Philadelphia toddler whose battle with a rare degenerative genetic disorder inspired the state to expand medical testing for newborns has died... - AP

12-29-2014 Survey gives promising picture of nation’s health
One of the most troubling aspects of the high costs of America’s health care is that so many expensive treatments are for preventable diseases tied to lifestyle decisions rather than genetics or pathology. It’s great news for the economy, rather than for young people alone, that... - Towanda Daily Review

12-29-2014 Doctor discusses health, reproductive system with Belle Vernon students
Dr. Paul Cervone is used to the occasional squirm or smirk when he addresses students on the topics of health and the reproductive system. Also known as Col. Paul Cervone, division surgeon, 28th Infantry Division, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, he sometimes addresses members of the... - Tarentum Valley News Dispatch

12-29-2014 HEALTH AFFILIATION
(EDITOR'S NOTE: Today the Sun-Gazette continues its annual look back on the major news stories of the year in a special series, Stories of 2014. This series continues through the end of the year.) - Williamsport Sun-Gazette

12-29-2014 Flu season is in full swing
From Summit Health The Pennsylvania Department of Health announced earlier this month that influenza is “widespread” in Pennsylvania. According to Ericka Kalp, director of epidemiology and infection prevention for Summit Health, influenza is being diagnosed more frequently... - Waynesboro Record Herald

12-29-2014 Meeting planned to explain Farm Bill programs
Obamacare has provided health insurance for people across the country. - Warren Times Observer

12-29-2014 Mapping the overlap of mental health and legal systems
People with mental illnesses could be better served by Fayette County’s criminal justice system with better data management, which is one goal professionals from various legal and social service agencies identified to help that population of county residents at a recent workshop.... - Uniontown Herald-Standard

12-29-2014 Five things to know about Affordable Care Act open enrollment
It’s hard to believe that 14 months have passed since the Healthcare.gov website flickered to life — with a few glitches — and people began to enroll for health insurance through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. But it’s open enrollment season again, and Pennsylvania’s belated... - York Daily

12-29-2014 Heroin in York County: As year ends, toll keeps rising
Heroin abuse — and the deaths that often come with it — have reached epidemic levels in York County, officials say. The drug is nothing new. Nearly two decades ago, teens from rural areas in Pennsylvania were driving to the open-air markets in Philadelphia, known as... - York Daily

12-29-2014 York Wellspan pharmacist has license suspension stayed for probation
A decision to indefinitely suspend the pharmacist license of a Wellspan York Hospital employee was stayed in favor of probation, according to a consent agreement and order before the state
Board of Pharmacy. In March 2012, officials said Matthew Crouse, 30, of York, began suffering... - York Daily

12-29-2014

Allow more donors
When you donate blood, the American Red Cross performs many tests to make sure your contribution is safe to be used by sick patients at area hospitals. For that reason, it makes sense that homosexuals be allowed to donate blood. - Somerset Daily

12-29-2014

Editorial | Striving for quality care
The bad news: Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, and many other hospitals across the state and nation, have seen their Medicare reimbursements cut by 1 percent because of infections or preventable complications for patients. The good news: Memorial’s rates for hospital complications are actually... - Johnstown Tribune-Democrat

12-29-2014

Editorial | Striving for quality care
The bad news: Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, and many other hospitals across the state and nation, have seen their Medicare reimbursements cut by 1 percent because of infections or preventable complications for patients. The good news: Memorial’s rates for hospital complications are actually... - Johnstown Tribune-Democrat

12-29-2014

Health Department: Confirmed Cases Of Flu In Pa. Rising Rapidly
PHILADELPHIA (CBS) – Officials at the Pennsylvania Department of Health say at least 11 people have died of the flu so far this year, and cases of influenza are on the rise. The number of flu illnesses spiked to more than 2,500 last week. That's more than double from the week before and five times more than the first... - KYW News Radio 1060

12-29-2014

Little Girl Who Inspired ‘Hannah’s Law’ Passes Away
LEVITTOWN, Pa. (CBS) – The young girl who was the inspiration behind the signing of a Krabbe Disease Screening Bill, better known as “Hannah’s Law,” has died, according to the Hope for Hannah Facebook page. The bill was named for Hannah Ginion, a Bristol Township, Bucks County... - KYW News Radio 1060

12-29-2014

business in brief: PMMC welcomes new neurologist
Pottstown >> Steven Bojarski, MD has joined the active medical staff at Pottstown Memorial Medical Center, department of Internal/Family Medicine -- Neurology. Bojarski graduated from the University of Rome "La Sapienza" medical school, located in Rome, Italy. He completed residency training at... - Pottstown Mercury

12-29-2014

Editorial: Talk up the success of health care reform
As Republicans in Congress gear up in January for their most aggressive attack yet on President Barack Obama’s health care reforms, here’s something they probably won’t mention: The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced last week that U.S. health care spending grew... - Primos Delaware County Daily and Sunday Times

12-29-2014

People with disabilities finally ABLE to save
People with disabilities and their families live in our neighborhoods and towns. They have lives that mirror the lives others live — working, owning a home, going to school. But they also have expenses that many times are greater than those without disabilities, including the costs of medical... - Lancaster Intelligencer Journal

12-29-2014

Nonprofit donates $33,000 to fight pancreatic cancer
An area nonprofit struck another blow against pancreatic cancer recently by donating $33,000 to the pancreatic cancer research team at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia. Fund A Cure For Pancreatic Cancer, started by former Newtown Township... - Levittown Intelligencer
12-29-2014  Bristol Twp. baby that inspired 'Hannah's Law' passes away
One-year-old Hannah Ginion, of Bristol Township, has passed away. Hannah, whose battle with Krabbe disease inspired a law to update Pennsylvania's newborn screening list, died Sunday morning. She would have turned 2 Jan. 15. “Hannah was called home to be with the angels this morning. She went... -  Levittown Intelligencer

12-29-2014  Bushkill Township student filmmaker releases documentary targeting depression, teen suicide
A DeSales University aspiring independent filmmaker is hoping to send a message through his latest documentary: Depression and self harm shouldn't be swept under the rug. In October 2012, Kyle Mahaney, 21, a senior at DeSales in Upper Saucon Township and living in Bushkill Township, met up with childhood friend,... -  Easton Express Times

12-29-2014  LETTER: Naxolone kits a 'huge' step
We would like to extend a thank you to Capital BlueCross for partnering with the Pennsylvania District Attorney's Association for supplying naloxone overdose rescue kits to 21 counties throughout Pennsylvania. Enabling York County police departments to carry naxolone is a huge step in... -  York Dispatch

12-29-2014  Top health care stories of 2014: People suffering without health care finally get major help
Here are the major health stories that impacted the midstate in 2014: 1. Corbettcare: Pennsylvanians rang in 2014 with their federal tax dollars paying for health care in numerous other states. (States which had already accepted the Obamacare Medicaid expansion.) But Gov. Tom Corbett did it his... -  Harrisburg Patriot-News

12-29-2014  Staff uses its talents to cheer patients at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center
Staff members in the critical and progressive care heart and vascular inpatient units at Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center for the fourth year spread holiday cheer for the patients by putting their artistic talents to work. The critical care staff members painted holiday scenes and symbols on the... -  Harrisburg Patriot-News

12-29-2014  In Hunting Park, nuns provide free hospice care to cancer patients
It is called Sacred Heart Home, and its work is just that: sacred. For 84 years, a group of nuns has been caring for poor people dying from cancer in their gleaming home on the edge of Hunting Park. They do it free of charge. The Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne accept no payment of any kind from... -  Philadelphia Inquirer

12-29-2014  How Ebola Roared Back
On the flight back to Atlanta, Dr. Pierre Rollin snoozed in Seat 26C in his usual imperturbable way, arms folded, head bobbing, oblivious to loudspeaker announcements and the periodic passing of the galley cart. Continue reading the main story The Path of the Outbreak... -  New York Times

12-28-2014  As Medicaid Rolls Swell, Cuts in Payments to Doctors Threaten Access to Care
Just as millions of people are gaining insurance through Medicaid, the program is poised to make deep cuts in payments to many doctors, prompting some physicians and consumer advocates to warn that the reductions could make it more difficult for Medicaid patients to obtain care.... -  New York Times

12-28-2014  Female veterans battling PTSD from sexual trauma fight for redress
Thousands of female veterans are struggling to get health-care treatment and compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs on the grounds that they suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder caused by sexual trauma in the military. The veterans and their advocates call it
12-28-2014  **Dying and profits: The evolution of hospice**  
The influx of for-profit companies into the hospice field has benefited patients, advocates say, because the commercial companies made big investments in technology, focused on efficiency and made care more accessible. But a Washington Post analysis of hundreds of thousands of U.S. hospice... - *Washington Post*

12-28-2014  **The administration could be missing a major chance to boost Obamacare enrollment**  
A little more than a month into Obamacare's second-ever open enrollment period, at least 6.4 million people have already signed up for 2015 health plans, the Obama administration announced earlier this week. That number includes 1.9 million people who are first-time customers on HealthCare.gov,... - *Washington Post*

12-28-2014  **What were the Post-Gazette's top 10 news stories of 2014?**  
Startling news came out of Harrisburg in waves in 2014, featuring an unlikely new governor, another disgraced Supreme Court justice and some very consequential court rulings declaring Pennsylvania laws unconstitutional. The staff of the Post-Gazette believed those statewide events overshadowed... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

12-28-2014  **Programs foster leadership in most ‘cared-for’ generation**  
Amanda Olar had an abundance of empathy for others. She’d earned an undergraduate degree in neuroscience from Allegheny College and spent more than two years working at Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh. But she discovered quickly, after enrolling in business school at Carnegie... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

12-28-2014  **Care with comfort: Palliative medicine is having a greater impact**  
For a person receiving medical care, there’s a time when comfort is as key as the best prescription drug. For someone with a serious illness, palliative care, an underutilized and misunderstood medical specialty, can be just what the doctor ordered. Especially if that doctor is Robert Arnold, the region’s top advocate... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

12-28-2014  **Most youth head injuries are not from organized sports**  
The Post-Gazette published a Forum commentary by James Bukes on Dec. 14 (“The End of Football?”) regarding long-term injuries from football and how they could bring high school and youth football to an end. My 25-plus years in sports medicine tells me not to put the carriage in... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

12-28-2014  **Patients unsettled as Highmark contract with UPMC ends**  
Many patients are approaching 2015 with concern and uncertainty: Highmark Inc.’s longstanding contract with UPMC ends Wednesday. Among them is Allegheny County Controller Chelsa Wagner, who pushed up a surgical procedure into late December to ensure her affordable access to... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

12-28-2014  **Fábregas: 5 healthy wishes for the new year**  
Let’s all agree on something about 2014: As far as health stories are concerned, it was a hypochondriac’s worst nightmare. We had Ebola, measles, enterovirus 68 and, just when we thought we were in the clear, the mumps. Thank you, Sidney Crosby. As if that wasn’t crazy enough, we had Dr. Oz giving us ridiculous miracle... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

12-28-2014  **Well Being: Author warns of dangers of exercise**  
This is the time when many of us pledge to do better in the new year. Among the top resolutions routinely are to lose weight and get more exercise. Before joining the health club or buying fitness equipment, you may want to read a provocative new book, *Exercise Will Hurt You: Concussion, Traumatic...* - *Philadelphia Inquirer*
Taking a look at anxiety in autism
Some of the autistic children Connor Kerns works with have odd fears: exposed pipes, bubbles on pizza, a microwave's beep. These may seem innocuous to many people, but for someone with autism, they can trigger a wave of worry and anxiety. About 40 percent to 60 percent of people with autism have a diagnosable... - Philadelphia Inquirer

Looking back at Ebola crisis
Remember Ebola? Only two months ago, many Americans were gripped by fear of the uncontrollable spread of an apparently incurable disease that, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, could strike 1.4 million people in West Africa before it was under control.... - Philadelphia Inquirer

Health insurance company discloses data breach
A Philadelphia-based health insurance company has disclosed a data breach affecting more than 12,000 customers... - AP

Officials: Flu activity widespread in Pennsylvania
Health authorities say flu activity is widespread in Pennsylvania, meaning it's affecting at least half the regions of the state... - AP

Tamiflu hard to find this flu season
Forget "Frozen" dolls and Minecraft gear. This year's hot holiday item has been Tamiflu. And just like desperate parents scrambling to find toys on Christmas Eve, area patients have had to shop around to find the antiviral drug. The medication can't cure the flu, but it does shorten the duration and... - Allentown Morning Call

The future of aging focuses on people and communities
Pat Gallaway loves living in a neighborhood. The Mount Lebanon resident loves looking out her window and seeing the children coming and going from school. She loves being connected to the community. It's where she raised her own kids. And it's where she now works to... - Beaver County Times

Gun violence tops list of 2014's local stories
The year 2014 opened with a homicide in the city of Erie, and the violence continued through December. In between, Erie County experienced a brutally cold winter, helped oust an incumbent governor for the first time in state history and watched as ethics charges against a judge roiled the Erie County Courthouse.... - Erie Times-News

Binding arbitration for UPMC, Highmark
With the UPMC-Highmark separation now only a week away, the two Pittsburgh health giants are headed to binding arbitration after they were unable to agree to terms on physician contracts. In a letter Tuesday to UPMC president and CEO Jeffrey Romoff and Highmark... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Corizon’s failures: Mounting evidence shows lousy care at Allegheny County jail
It’s been a year since Allegheny County put its medical provider for the jail on notice that the honeymoon in their new business relationship was over. It’s clear now that the county’s marriage to Corizon Health Inc. is failing, and it’s the inmates who are suffering the... - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The public no longer trusts UPMC’s promises
After months of telling Highmark insurance-holders they would be denied access to their UPMC physicians come Jan. 1, UPMC now says Highmark patients can receive “in-network” rates for UPMC doctors in order to guarantee “continuity of care” (“Highmark Clients Keep UPMC... -
Joint practice: AHN and Johns Hopkins broaden their affiliation
While it was good news in January when the Allegheny Health Network announced its cancer care partnership with Johns Hopkins Medicine, it's even better news that the two have decided to expand their collaboration. The broader affiliation will give AHN and its parent, Highmark Health, more... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

Cosmetic surgery growing in popularity among men
Plastic surgeon Leo McCafferty believes selfies have something to do with it. “There are all of these pictures and you say to yourself, ‘I look older than I feel,’ ” Dr. McCafferty said during a recent interview in his Shadyside office. “People are working longer and people want to... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

Allegheny County gets set to take over drug testing
A nonprofit responsible for conducting drug tests at Allegheny County courts and children, youth and family centers could dissolve as the county health department takes over the service. Handling the drug tests in-house will increase the quality of the work,... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

Highmark-UPMC doctor dispute goes to binding arbitration
UPMC and Highmark Inc. will enter binding arbitration to settle a dispute over physician contracts, because a state-ordered mediation failed, officials said Wednesday. The Pittsburgh health giants are fighting over Highmark's decision last month to terminate contracts with 689 UPMC doctors, a move that UPMC said... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

Highmark backtracks on policy not to pay for anesthetic during colonoscopies
Health insurer Highmark Inc. has stepped back from a proposal to stop paying for full anesthesia for some patients undergoing colonoscopies, a spokesman said Tuesday. The controversial plan called for changes in the insurer's coverage of propofol, a general anesthetic that some experts say makes patients more... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

Pair of W.Pa. practices team for Medicare program
Two of the largest independent physician practices in Western Pennsylvania are teaming for a government program that pays medical providers for keeping patients healthy and out of the hospital. Genesis Medical Associates Inc. and Preferred Primary Care Physicians Inc.... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

Flu season picking up in time for the holidays
Now you've got a legitimate reason not to kiss Aunt Mildred at Christmas dinner. Flu is ramping up just in time for the height of the holidays, worrying doctors that touchy-feely celebrations could accelerate the virus' spread and help kick up an extra-nasty season.... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

Strip District-based Net Health casts its net wider
Net Health has quadrupled its workforce and more than tripled its revenue during the past three years as medical practices increasingly go digital. The Strip District-based software company, which employs more than 200 people, is growing quickly because outpatient specialty providers, such as... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

Former Gateway Health vice president sues company
A former vice president at a Downtown health insurer claims in a federal lawsuit filed Tuesday that the company fired her because of her race and illegally tapped her phone. Janice Prewitt of Collier, who is black, says in the lawsuit that Gateway Health Plan's Patricia Darney, who became the chief executive officer in... - *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*
Give nurses greater say in setting health-care policy
By Susan B. Hassmiller and Susan Reinhard Some of the largest health-care systems in America do not have any nurses serving on their boards of directors. That is a huge oversight, especially in a time of rapid change in health-care delivery. Consumers and providers... - Philadelphia Inquirer

Will exercise & nutrition slow down early puberty?
BEING THE mother of a 6-year-old, I go to lots of children's birthday parties. I've been noticing a phenomenon called precocious puberty, which hits girls especially hard, though increasingly I've noticed it in boys, too. I'll find myself thinking, "Whoa! She's 7? She's developing breasts and... - Philadelphia Inquirer

As docs face big cuts in Medicaid pay, patients may pay the price
Phil Galewitz, Kaiser Health News Andy Pasternak, a family doctor in Reno, Nev., has seen more than 100 new Medicaid patients this year after the state expanded the insurance program under the Affordable Care Act. But he won't be taking any new ones after Dec. 31. That's when the... - Philadelphia Inquirer

The link between imperfect vaccines and disease
(INside Science) -- A new mathematical model that tests the effectiveness of different vaccine types could help explain why certain diseases are still prevalent despite mass vaccination programs. The model, which is detailed in a study published in a recent issue of the... - Philadelphia Inquirer

Thousands of Pennsylvania residents ready for affordable health insurance
About 84,000 Pennsylvania residents with lower incomes have signed up for government funded health insurance that kicks in Jan. 1. On Dec. 1 the state began enrolling people in Healthy Pennsylvania, which is Gov. Tom Corbett's version of the Medicaid expansion called for in... - Harrisburg Patriot-News

Harrisburg-area docs offering non-surgical cosmetic procedures with good results, cheaper cost
One family trait that Jennifer Olszewski would rather do without is, lucky for her, something she can do something about. "My family all has that loose part of the neck; you know, the 'turkey neck.' I want to try to prevent that," said the Swatara Township woman who,... - Harrisburg Patriot-News

Allen C. Minor: Congress can save the Affordable Care Act
What does the future hold for the controversial Affordable Care Act now that the Republican Party will control Congress? Prior to it becoming law, 50 million people in the United States did not have health insurance, and health care costs were increasing at an... - Allentown Morning Call

Northampton County workers lining up at the operating tables
Northampton County clerical specialist Sharon Wengryn had been limping for months when she decided to finally have foot surgery last week. Turns out, her decision had less to do with the fact that her doctor has been recommending it for months and everything to do with the reality that... - Allentown Morning Call

Affordable Care Act’s Tax Effects Now Loom for Filers
If you decided to skip health insurance this year, consider this: Unless you can prove you have a valid excuse, you will be liable for a penalty during the coming tax season — and the time to start making your case is now. That's not all. People who bought subsidized insurance through one of... - New York Times
January 9, 2015

12-26-2014  Race to Deliver Nicotine’s Punch, With Less Risk
NEUCHATEL, Switzerland — Deep inside a modernist research center on the edge of a mountain lake here, automated smoking machines sample the future of nicotine. Scientists at Philip Morris International are experimenting with ways to deliver nicotine — Big Tobacco’s addictive lifeblood — that are... - New York Times

12-26-2014  Ebola Sample Is Mishandled at C.D.C. Lab in Latest Error
A laboratory mistake at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta may have exposed a technician to the deadly Ebola virus, federal officials said on Wednesday. The technician will be monitored for signs of infection for 21 days, the incubation period of the disease.... - New York Times

12-26-2014  People Are Shopping for Health Insurance, Surprisingly
As we’ve said many times before, it really pays for returning customers to the Obamacare insurance marketplaces to shop around for a 2015 health plan. Recent data from the federal government shows that a surprising number of people are doing just that. More than 30 percent of federal marketplace customers who re-enrolled for... - New York Times

12-26-2014  Affordable Care Act’s Tax Effects Now Loom for Filers
If you decided to skip health insurance this year, consider this: Unless you can prove you have a valid excuse, you will be liable for a penalty during the coming tax season — and the time to start making your case is now. That’s not all. People who bought subsidized insurance through one of... - New York Times

12-26-2014  How Affordable Care Act Rules Affect Your Taxes
If you are one of the millions of people who bought health care through a health insurance exchange, filing your tax return may require more effort this year: This is the first time taxpayers will have to report their health care status on their tax returns.... - New York Times

12-26-2014  Some Top Officials Knew of V.A. Woes, Before the Scandal
Long before revelations in the spring that the Veterans Affairs hospital in Phoenix had manipulated waiting lists to hide that veterans were facing long delays to see doctors, senior department officials in Washington had been made aware of serious problems at the hospital, according to filings... - New York Times

12-26-2014  Struggling and Caring for Premature Babies
Hope Clark’s twin girls are both healthy now, but when they were born at 29 weeks in October 2013, each baby weighed just 2 pounds, 8 ounces, and neither could breathe on her own because their lungs were not yet fully developed. Kalee had bleeding in her brain and doctors are still monitoring... - New York Times

12-26-2014  How Affordable Care Act Rules Affect Your Taxes
If you are one of the millions of people who bought health care through a health insurance exchange, filing your tax return may require more effort this year: This is the first time taxpayers will have to report their health care status on their tax returns.... - New York Times

12-26-2014  Fast food consumption is out of control—and it could be blunting children’s brains
Fast food consumption isn’t merely connected to increases in pant size—it’s tied to significant decreases in test scores among school children, according to a new national study. Researchers at Ohio State University used data from a nationally representative sample of some 11,700 children to measure how fast food... - Washington Post

12-26-2014  Lessons from the Ebola outbreak in West Africa
THE OUTBREAK of the Ebola virus in West Africa this year came as a surprise. Perhaps no one
could have predicted that such a terrible scenario would unfold. But over the past decade, there have been four major outbreaks of infectious disease caused by a virus: severe acute respiratory... - Washington Post

12-26-2014  Californians warned to avoid caramel apples after listeria outbreak
Amid a deadly listeria outbreak across California and nine other states, public health authorities are warning consumers against eating prepackaged caramel apples. Related Business Safeway pulls caramel apples amid listeria scare See all related 8 Listeria has been implicated in three deaths, including one in California,... - Los Angeles Times

12-26-2014  Southwestern Home Care named to elite list
Southwestern Home Care was recently named to the HomeCare Elite List of Agencies. The HomeCare Elite recognition program lists the top 25 percent of home health agencies in the country. The National Research Corporation analyzes publicly available data from Home Health Compare and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS... - Washington Observer-Reporter

12-26-2014  Hospitals seeing spike in flu cases
Hospitals in Washington and Greene counties are beginning to see a spike in the number of flu cases. Mary Kaufman, communication specialist with Monongahela Valley Hospital, said the hospital's emergency department has treated more than 100 cases of flu since the week of Nov. 30.... - Washington Observer-Reporter

12-26-2014  Without vaccination, flu can kill - using healthy bodies as transportation
The flu can kill — it does every year. And without the vaccination, healthy adults, though not in much danger of losing their own lives to the virus, can become accessories to those deaths. Thanks to a particularly nasty strain of the influenza virus, this winter... - Scranton Times