

01-26 Policy Matters

Subject: Addressing AI, Highlighting Maternal Care, and Meeting Community Needs

Preheader: Here, Policy Matters. Learn the latest from UPMC's Government Affairs team.



In this edition of *Policy Matters*, we spotlight how UPMC is advancing innovation, strengthening care delivery, and partnering with leaders across Pennsylvania to meet the evolving needs of our communities.

As artificial intelligence rapidly reshapes the health care landscape, UPMC is helping define what safe, ethical, and effective adoption should look like. This is an issue of growing importance for policymakers as AI becomes more deeply embedded in clinical workflows, patient communication, and operational decision-making.

With insights from Rob Bart, MD, UPMC's chief medical information officer, we highlighted examples showcasing how responsible AI governance can enhance quality, expand access, and protect patient trust at a moment when clear frameworks and public-private collaboration are essential.

This month's updates also highlight UPMC's continued commitment to maternal health. Recent news includes national recognition for high-performing maternity care and the expansion of UPMC Magee-Womens services in Washington County.

Additional stories showcase investments in pediatric care, workforce development, and community-based initiatives that improve health and economic opportunity across the commonwealth. Together, these efforts reflect UPMC's ongoing partnership with policymakers to strengthen health systems, support local communities, and ensure high-quality care is accessible to all Pennsylvanians.



Rob Bart, MD, CMIO of UPMC, Presented on AI at 2026 Pennsylvania Healthcare Summit

Rob Bart, MD, chief medical information officer, UPMC, addressed attendees at *City & State's* 2026 Pennsylvania Healthcare Summit with his presentation, "Partnering for Responsible AI: A Framework for Safe and Ethical Adoption."

Dr. Bart showcased how UPMC and the larger Pittsburgh ecosystem are pioneering the integration of AI in health care while maintaining rigorous patient safety and ethical standards.

Drawing on UPMC's expertise in clinical innovation, governance, and real-world AI implementation, Dr. Bart noted the importance of health systems and policymakers collaborating on responsible AI adoption. He also examined opportunities to enhance care access and quality, especially in rural communities, while keeping privacy, security, and trust at the forefront of AI deployment.



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Recognizing Maternal Health Awareness Day and UPMC Magee-Womens' Commitment to Quality Care

U.S. News & World Report released its 2026 Best Hospitals for Maternity Care ratings. The publication recognized six UPMC hospitals as High Performing for their strong outcomes in uncomplicated pregnancies and commitment to safe, evidence-based maternity care.

In addition, seven UPMC hospitals earned the Maternity Care Access designation. This distinction recognizes the hospitals for providing high-quality maternity services in communities that would otherwise face significant access barriers. Four hospitals received this honor for the first time.

These *U.S. News* ratings were especially meaningful achievements as we recognized Maternal Health Awareness Day on Jan. 23.

Learn more about our maternity rankings



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UPMC Magee-Womens Is Now Available at UPMC Washington, Expanding Access to Advanced Women's Care Close to Home

UPMC Washington announced the renaming of the CARE Center for Family Birth and Women's Health to UPMC Magee-Womens in Washington. The move aligns local women's and maternal health services with the nationally recognized UPMC Magee-Womens brand.

The event highlighted UPMC's commitment to expanding access to high-quality care close to home. It underscored the system's broader \$300 million, 10-year investment in Washington and Greene counties.

UPMC leadership and local elected officials participated in the announcement, including:

- Nick Sherman, Washington County commissioner.
- JoJo Burgess, mayor, City of Washington.
- Nate Nevala, district chief of staff, U.S. Rep. Guy Reschenthaler (PA-14).
- Casey Grealish, executive assistant to Electra Janis, Washington County commissioner.

The announcement reinforced the strong regional partnership, patient impact, and continued investment in the community.

[Learn more](#)



UPMC Joined Governor Shapiro and Community Leaders to Discuss Harrisburg Revitalization Priorities

Elizabeth Ritter, president, UPMC Harrisburg, UPMC Community Osteopathic, UPMC Carlisle, and UPMC West Shore, participated in a recent meeting with Governor Josh Shapiro, Department of Community and Economic Development Secretary Rick Siger, and local elected officials to discuss ongoing revitalization efforts in the City of Harrisburg.

Elizabeth underscored UPMC's longstanding commitment to downtown Harrisburg and the broader capital region. She emphasized our continued partnership with city leadership and our dedication to serving the needs of the community.

The discussion brought together public officials, small businesses, and community partners, as each contributes valuable perspectives on the city's future. As work moves through a newly established collaborative group, we will ensure that UPMC's engagement will help support meaningful progress.



UPMC Leadership Joins Officials in Honoring Susquehanna Regional EMS

At the Susquehanna Regional EMS (SREMS) annual meeting, Pennsylvania State Representatives Joe Hamm, Jamie Flick, and Clint Owlett presented SREMS with a citation recognizing its selection as the 2025 Dick Ferneau Career EMS Service of the Year.

Leaders at the annual meeting noted that "Susquehanna Regional EMS is more than a vital link in central Pennsylvania's healthcare system – it is a model for how modern EMS can blend clinical excellence, innovation, and community partnership into a cohesive mission."

The meeting also included participation from Senator Yaw's office, Rep. GT Thompson's office, and local county commissioners.



UPMC Western Maryland Government Affairs Summit Prepares for an Active Legislative Session

At UPMC Western Maryland's Government Affairs Summit, leaders briefed local, state, and federal officials on the upcoming transition to the CMS AHEAD model in 2026. As part of its longstanding commitment to advocacy, UPMC continues to champion policies that strengthen access to high-quality, patient-centered care across the region. The Maryland Hospital Association, including presenter Jake Whitaker, outlined key legislative priorities such as payer denials, liability reform, and staffing mandates. Attendees also discussed Medicaid changes and opportunities within the CMS Rural Health Transformation Program. Maryland lawmakers will convene for the 2026 legislative session in Annapolis from January 14 through April 13.

UPMC Hanover Debuts 'Pediatrics Pod' to Provide Care Closer to Home

UPMC Hanover in York County has opened a newly renovated inpatient Pediatrics Pod to provide hospital care closer to home for local children.

The three-bed unit treats children with illnesses as well as those ages 8 and older who are recovering from general and orthopaedic surgery. The new space features a layout that better supports staff needs. It also includes a negative-pressure room and new cardiac monitoring equipment.

[Learn more](#)



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New Mayor of Pittsburgh Brought Christmas Cheer to UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh

On Dec. 22, newly elected Pittsburgh Mayor Corey O'Connor accompanied PGA Tour golfer and Pittsburgh native Neal Shipley for a special visit to UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. They delivered gifts to patients and spread some extra holiday cheer.

[Learn more](#)

UPMC Schools of Nursing Celebrate More Than 380 New Graduates

UPMC Schools of Nursing recently celebrated the graduation of more than 380 nursing students across seven campuses. Approximately 300 graduates already accepted positions at UPMC. Nearly 600 nurses graduated during the 2025 academic year.

This milestone reflects UPMC's commitment to growing its nursing schools and building a robust pipeline of future health care professionals to deliver high-quality care throughout Pennsylvania and beyond.

[Learn more](#)



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UPMC Pathways to Work Partners with Grant Associates to Expand Job Opportunities in Duquesne, Pa.

The UPMC Pathways to Work team proudly partnered with Grant Associates — a leading workforce development organization — to expand the EARN program and bring sustainable job opportunities to Duquesne, Pa.

As part of the grand opening at their new locations, UPMC Pathways participated in a career fair designed to serve the local community, particularly people who receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits who are seeking job placement and training.

In 2025, the UPMC Pathways to Work program connected with and served more than 3,300 individuals.

[Learn more about Pathways to Work](#)



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A Beacon of Hope: UPMC Health Plan's Neighborhood Center Transforms Erie Community

The Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry highlighted UPMC Health Plan's Erie Neighborhood Center in a recent article.

Program manager Drevell Showers leads the neighborhood center. Drevell takes pride in connecting resources and filling gaps so people in Erie can live healthier, happier lives.

"It's a safe space where people can get resources and find their voice," Drevell says. "We're in the heart of the neighborhood, triaging needs, engaging with our neighbors, and pumping in resources."

[Learn more](#)

UPMC Health Plan Named 2025 Human Experience Pinnacle of Excellence Award® Winner

Press Ganey, the global leader in health care experience solutions and services, named UPMC Health Plan a 2025 Human Experience Pinnacle of Excellence Award® winner. This award is part of Press Ganey's annual ranking of the top health plans, hospitals, and health systems across the country, according to performance in a variety of experience metrics.

[Learn more](#)

Better Food, Better Health: AJMC Video Series Highlights UPMC's Pilot Food and Nutrition Initiative

A new video series from the *American Journal of Managed Care* shares insights and learnings about Better Food, Better Health — a pilot food and nutrition initiative facilitated by UPMC Community HealthChoices and community collaborators.

- **Episode 1** — [Redefining Chronic Disease Care Through Nutrition.](#)
- **Episode 2** — [Empowering Members by Confronting Health Care Barriers.](#)
- **Episode 3** — [Creating a Blueprint for Success.](#)
- **Episode 4** — [Thinking Outside the Box.](#)

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UPMC's Government Affairs Team is committed to delivering relevant and timely news on the latest health care trends, medical research, and clinical developments as they relate to public health issues.

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