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## Academy News

### Welcome our New Staff Member: Kat Caudle, MPA!



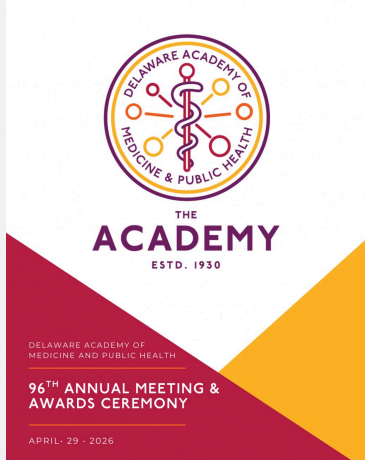
Kat Caudle is our new Government Relations Manager at The Academy. Kat comes to us after working for the State of Delaware at the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) Division of Waste and Hazardous Substances (DWHS).

While at DWHS Kat worked as the Communications and Outreach manager and worked on PFAS remediation in Delaware, the Delaware Recycles Program, and the Delaware Brownfields program. Before working for the State of Delaware, Kat was the Political and Legislative Director at Delaware Public Employees Council 81—Delaware's largest public employee union.

There she helped usher into law paid leave for state employees, paid leave for all Delawareans, increases to the Delaware minimum wage, and she represented nurses and CNAs at several state and private facilities.

Kat lives in Pike Creek with her dog Bailey, her niece and nephew and their family dog Bourbon. When she isn't in Dover at Legislative Hall, she can be found sailing the Kalmar Nyckel, reading books, and hanging out at her favorite State Park—White Clay Creek. She is looking forward to advocating for public health and working with all of you.





## 96th Annual Meeting & Awards Ceremony

Please join President Stephen C. Eppes, MD, and the board and staff of the Academy at the Hyatt Place Wilmington Riverfront as we honor **Dr. David Paul** and the **Delaware Healthy Mother & Infant Consortium**, hear from Delaware's Secretary of Health and Social Services, **Christen Linke Young**, and recognize those making a difference in health and medicine!

**When:** Wednesday, April 29, 2026 | 6 PM

**Where:** Hyatt Place Wilmington Riverfront | 760 S. Justison St, Wilmington, DE 19801

[Register Here](#)

*If you are interested in sponsoring please visit our [sponsorship page](#)*


## Applications Open: Legacy Student Financial Aid Program for Medical & Dental Students

The Academy is now accepting applications for Delaware residents pursuing medical or dental degrees (DO, MD, DDS, or DMD). The program provides interest-free tuition loans ranging from \$4,000 to \$15,000 annually, supported through Academy endowments. Repayment does not begin until after graduation, helping reduce financial burden while students complete their training. Applications are open **through May 15**. A limited number of awards are available, with preference given to returning recipients who continue to qualify.

*For questions or assistance, contact*  
**Dayzha Washam, BA, Student Financial Aid Coordinator at**  
[dwasham@delamed.org](mailto:dwasham@delamed.org)

### Legacy Student Financial Aid Program

for Physicians & Dentists




**Objectives of the Loan Program:**  
The objective of the Delaware Academy of Medicine's Legacy Student Financial Aid program is to provide tuition loans to Delaware residents studying medicine and dentistry and pursuing a terminal degree of DO, MD, DDS, and DMD. These loans are interest-free during the time the students are in medical or dental school and repayment does not begin until graduation (see Requirement of Loans on back).

**About Funding:**  
These funds are made available through special endowments to the Delaware Academy of Medicine. Loans to students are made in the range of \$4,000 to \$15,000 annually—the amount of funding available is determined by annual loan repayment from previous loan recipients and endowment fund performance. There is a limited number of loans available; preference is given to previous loan recipients who continue to qualify.

**Application Guidelines**  
**All applicants must meet all eligibility requirements and all deadlines in order to be considered for an award.**

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to completely and correctly submit the application and requirements. Applications are accepted until **May 15th** of each year.

Have Questions? Need Assistance?  
 Contact: Dayzha Washam, BA, Student Financial Aid Coordinator      Email: [dwasham@delamed.org](mailto:dwasham@delamed.org)  
 Phone: 302-733-3892      Website: [www.delamed.org](http://www.delamed.org)

 **ACADEMY**

[Apply Here](#)



## Rural Health Skills Day Recap

Local high school students got an inside look at healthcare careers during “Explore Rural Medicine,” a hands-on skills day at TidalHealth Nanticoke. Students learned directly from physicians, residents, and medical students while practicing clinical skills like CPR, intubation, EKGs, and vitals assessment. Participants also toured key hospital services, including the operating room, where they saw the Da Vinci surgical system, as well as radiology, a community health van, and a mobile mammography unit. Gov. Matt Meyer and TidalHealth Nanticoke President Penny Short shared insights on mentorship, pursuing passions, and healthcare opportunities in rural Delaware. Hosted by the DIMER Committee on

Rural Health in partnership with the Academy, Delaware Health Sciences Alliance, and Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, the event aimed to inspire and strengthen the future healthcare workforce in Sussex County.

## Thank You to Our DoMore24 Supporters!

Thank you to everyone who supported the Academy during this year's DoMore24 campaign. Thanks to your generosity, we raised \$1,525 to support the work of the Immunization Coalition of Delaware. Your contributions help strengthen vaccine education, outreach, and advocacy efforts across our state. We are grateful for your commitment to advancing public health in Delaware.



## Delaware News



### Save the Date: Public Health Advocacy Day

Public Health Advocacy Day will bring together community leaders, public health professionals, and advocates in Dover to engage directly with policymakers on the importance of investing in public health across Delaware. The event will highlight how public health programs save lives, strengthen communities, and reduce healthcare costs, while providing organizations the opportunity to showcase their policy priorities and advocate for stronger, healthier communities statewide.

**When:** May 20th, 2026 | Begins 9 AM

**Where:** Legislative Hall 411 in Dover, DE

## Fourth Annual Advancing Healthy Lifestyles Conference

The Fourth Annual Advancing Healthy Lifestyles Conference will take place on June 4, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Bally's Dover Casino Resort. This year's theme, Taking Action for Healthier Communities, will bring together public health professionals, community leaders, and advocates for a full day of learning, collaboration, and innovation. The conference will feature keynote speaker Sam Kass, former Senior White House Policy Advisor for Nutrition and Executive Director of Let's Move!. Attendees can participate in engaging sessions on community health initiatives, technology and health access, and childhood obesity prevention, along with TED Talk-style presentations, poster sessions, interactive activities, networking opportunities, and the chance to earn Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) continuing education credits. Register [here](#).

## Senate Bill 1 Sparks Debate Over Health Care Costs

Delaware lawmakers introduced Senate Bill 1, a proposal **aimed at rebalancing health care spending**, strengthening primary care, and lowering costs for residents and employers. Supporters highlight potential savings of up to \$442.7 million annually, improved health outcomes, and sustained investments in primary care, while aligning with Governor Matt Meyer's goals for affordability and access. The Medical Society of Delaware praised the legislation for reinforcing structural supports for community-based practices and promoting long-term system resilience. Opponents, including the Delaware Healthcare Association, warn SB 1 **could threaten the state's top-ranked hospital quality**, cut at least \$165 million in resources, risk 1,500 health care jobs, and reduce access to care. They argue that the bill bypasses collaborative, expert-led approaches that have historically ensured high-quality care and call for a more measured extension of

current primary care reforms. This debate reflects a broader tension in Delaware over cost containment, primary care investment, and maintaining quality health care for a growing and aging population.

### What else we are reading:

- [DE Invests Over \\$8M to Accelerate Statewide Early Literacy Strategy](#)
- [DNREC Seeks Proposals for Community Water Quality Improvement Grants](#)
- [State Employees Face Sevenfold Copay Increase for Weight-Loss Drugs](#)
- [UD Debate on Biological Sex Draws Criticism from LGBTQ Advocates](#)
- [Budget Hearing Highlights \\$200M DHSS Request & Debate Over New Medical School](#)
- [New Castle County Council Approves First-Ever Data Center Regulations](#)
- [Rising Costs, Falling Prices Challenge Delaware's Agricultural Sector](#)
- [South Bethany Beach Ranked #5 for Top Beach Destination in US](#)
- [New Executive Director of Wilmington VA Medical Center](#)
- [Court Backs State Authority, Clears Path for Offshore Wind Substation in DE](#)
- [Free CreatiVeterans Art Program Expands, Helping Veterans Heal Through Creativity](#)

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## National News

### Confirmation of Dr. Casey Means as Surgeon General Faces Stalled Senate Vote

Dr. Casey Means, wellness influencer and Trump's nominee for U.S. surgeon general, faces a stalled confirmation nearly a month after a tense Senate hearing. Senators raised concerns about her past vaccine comments, inactive medical license, and close alignment with Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., whose efforts to scale back vaccine recommendations have drawn criticism. Means' supporters, including Make America Healthy Again activists, have urged phone campaigns to sway undecided senators, but doubts remain about her ability to secure committee and full Senate approval. Her nomination has already taken nearly 300 days, far exceeding the typical confirmation timeline for Trump-era nominees.

### One-Third of U.S. Adults Turn to AI for Health Advice

A KFF Poll found that roughly 32% of U.S. adults have used AI tools for health information, including 29% for physical health and 16% for mental health. Use is highest among younger adults, uninsured individuals, and Black and Hispanic populations. Key drivers include the desire for quick advice (65%), researching before seeing a provider (41%), and privacy (36%). Access and affordability barriers also play a role, especially for younger and lower-income users. Despite widespread privacy concerns (77%), 41% of AI health users report uploading personal medical information into chatbots, highlighting the growing role of AI in health decision-making.

### Telehealth Abortions Rise 26% in States With Bans as Cross-State Travel Declines

A new Guttmacher Institute report finds that telehealth abortion prescriptions increased from 72,000 to 91,000 between 2024 and 2025 in states with near-total abortion bans, while travel across state lines to access care fell 16%. Legal protections, such as shield laws, have enabled clinicians to provide virtual abortion services despite restrictions. The total number of clinician-provided abortions in the U.S. remained stable at around 1.12 million, the highest since 2009. The findings highlight a significant shift in how people in restrictive states are accessing abortion care amid ongoing debates over FDA regulations and mifepristone access.

### What else we are reading:

- Pregnant Migrant Minors Trapped in Texas Amid Abortion Crackdown
- FDA: Raw Farm Cheddar Likely Source of Multi-State E. coli Outbreak
- Court Halts Health Secretary RFK Jr Overhaul of Vaccine Schedule
- One in Four People Consider Quitting Over Mental Health at Work
- Johns Hopkins Launches Global Consortium to Find Hepatitis B Cure
- Cali's Engineered Stone Workers Face Deadly Silicosis Epidemic Despite New Law
- New Initiative Addresses Racial Bias in Kidney Testing, Boosting Transplant Access
- NM Jury Rules Meta Harmed Children's Mental Health, Violated State Law
- FDA Approval of Fecal Transplants Brings Standardization and Restricted Access
- NIH's 2025 Grant Cuts Disproportionately Hit Women and Early-Career Researchers

## Save the Date: Ready. Set. Action! NPHW

### Flood the Feed

APHA wants you to “Flood the Feed” with positive, action-oriented messaging about public health. They need your help and involvement to post simultaneously with them on this year’s theme of “Ready. Set. Action!” as they highlight the strength and impact of the public health community. **Sign up to participate here.** (Can't access the link? **Email APHA instead**).



## Global News

### US Global Health Pullback Sparks International Public Health Concern

A sweeping rollback of U.S. global health engagement—including withdrawal from the World Health Organization, funding cuts to major programs, and proposed vaccine policy changes—could trigger a surge in infectious diseases worldwide, experts warn. While some services have partially rebounded and Congress preserved limited short-term funding, projections estimate millions of additional deaths by 2030 if cuts persist. Disruptions to programs like HIV treatment, malaria control, and maternal health services are already straining vulnerable health systems. Researchers argue these actions may meet the criteria for a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), a designation historically reserved for outbreaks like COVID-19. Such a declaration could mobilize international coordination and funding, but also risks political backlash and further weakening global cooperation. Regardless, experts stress urgent collective action is needed to prevent widespread health impacts and stabilize global health infrastructure.

### Cuba Faces Drug Surge and Energy Crisis Amid U.S. Blockade

Cuba is facing a dual crisis with a rise in drug-related **emergencies and a severe energy shortage** following a U.S.-imposed oil blockade. Emergency room visits in Havana for drug issues nearly doubled from 467 in 2024 to 886 in 2025. Blackouts, water shortages, and disruptions to hospitals, schools, and transportation have intensified. Trash is piling up, surgeries are delayed, and public protests, which are rare in Cuba, have emerged. The crisis is compounded by the **return of hundreds of Cuban doctors** from overseas contracts, which historically funded the domestic health system but now strains both Cuba and host countries. Authorities are seeking solutions and negotiating with the U.S. to ease the situation.

# Global Gag Rule Linked to 11% Rise in Maternal Mortality in Countries Dependent on US Family Planning Aid

A new observational study spanning 1985–2023 across 150 countries finds that fluctuations in US foreign aid for family planning under the Mexico City Policy, commonly known as the Global Gag Rule (GGR), significantly affect maternal mortality. Countries heavily reliant on US aid experienced an estimated 10.5–11% increase in maternal deaths per 100,000 live births when the policy was reinstated under Republican administrations, offsetting roughly one-fifth of global progress in reducing maternal mortality since 1985. Mechanisms include decreased contraceptive use, increased unmet need for contraception, and reduced skilled birth attendance. The findings underscore the vulnerability of global health systems to abrupt donor policy changes and highlight the importance of stable international support for reproductive health services.

## What else we are reading:

- [UK Saves £14 Billion by Recruiting Overseas Doctors & Nurses](#)
- [Analysis Suggests WeChat Post May Reveal Unreleased Data on Wuhan Market](#)
- [Study Finds Genetics Drive Suicide Risk but Not Sex Differences](#)
- [Thai Court Holds Australian Mine Operator Liable for Toxic Contamination](#)
- [Suriname Faces Rapid Chikungunya Spike, True Cases Estimated at 4,000](#)
- [Type 5 Diabetes Emerges as Hidden Threat for Undernourished Africans](#)
- [From Silence to Support: Kyrgyzstan's Three-Decade Fight Against Domestic Violence](#)
- [Plastic Additives Linked to Nearly 2 Million Preterm Births, Study Finds](#)
- [Review Links Vaping to Early Cancer-Related Changes in Mouth and Lungs](#)

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## Additional Resources

Delaware Health and Social Services - [Public Health Information Portal](#)

Trust for America's Health: Wellness and Prevention Digest - [Subscribe](#)

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