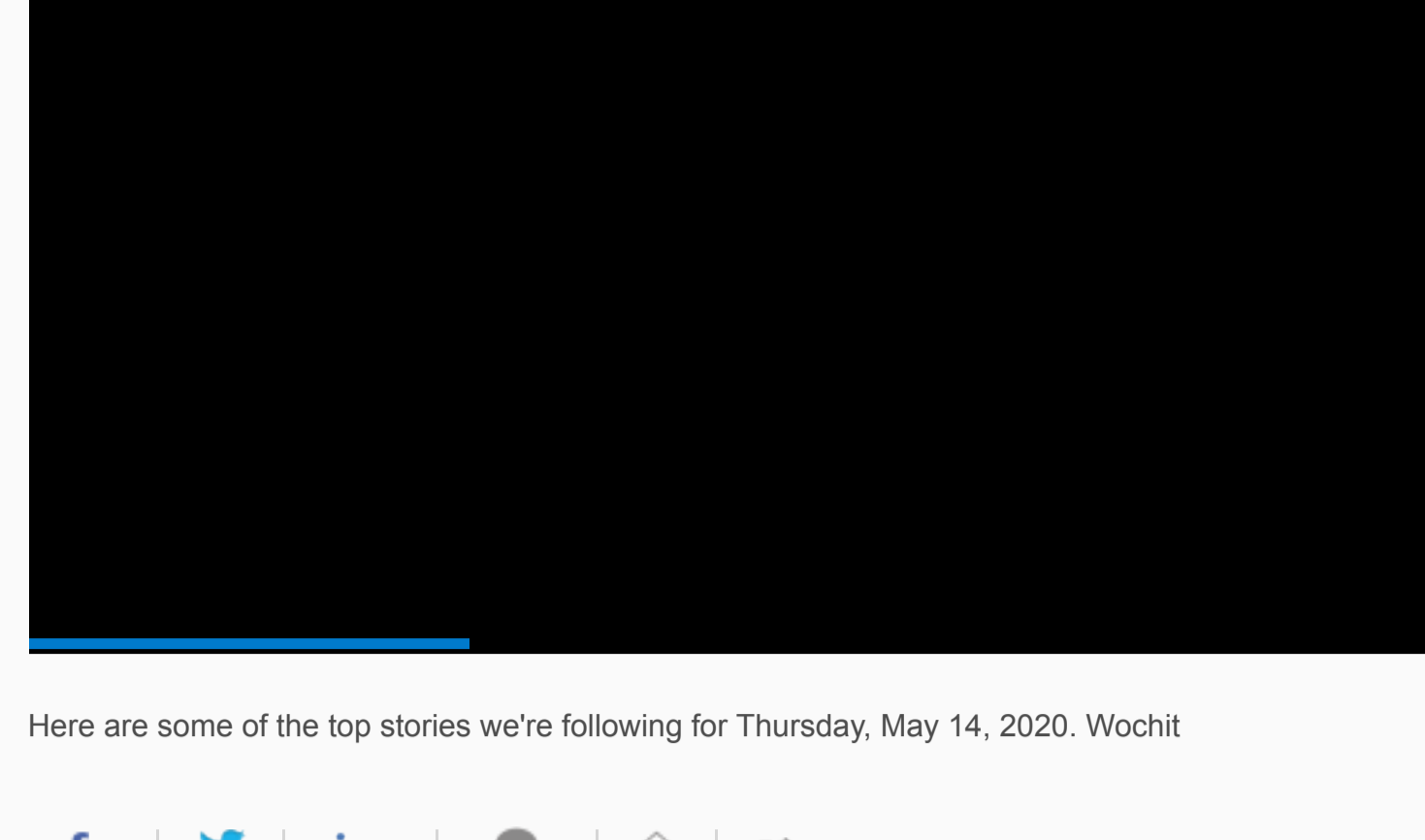




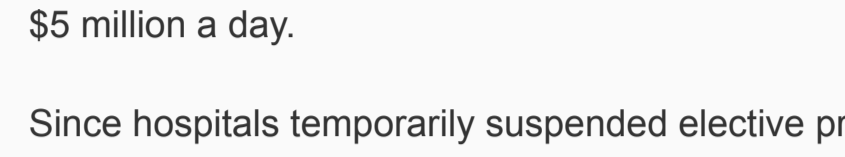
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Because of coronavirus, Delaware hospitals say they are losing \$5 million a day

Meredith Newman, Delaware News Journal | Published 12:33 p.m. ET May 14, 2020 | Updated 1:06 p.m. ET May 14, 2020



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As the coronavirus continues to touch — and hurt — almost every aspect of life in Delaware, the front-line health system industry says it is collectively losing more than \$5 million a day.

Since hospitals temporarily suspended elective procedures, there has been a significant reduction in revenue, health system executives said. Fewer patients are also seeking necessary care, since many are afraid to go to hospitals out of fear of contracting the virus.



Christiana Care Health System, the largest private employer in Delaware, will increase its minimum wage to \$15 starting in February. (Photo: JENNIFER CORBETT/THE NEWS JOURNAL)

The increased need, and sometimes higher prices, for personal protective equipment and testing supplies has also burdened hospital budgets.

Some fear the impacts will be long-lasting.

"I have incredible anxiety about some of our members being able to exist ... absent of financial support," said Wayne Smith, president and CEO of the Delaware Healthcare Association, which represents all the acute care hospitals in the state.

BACKGROUND: [Here's why Delaware's economy may never look the same after the coronavirus pandemic](#)

In April, hospitals across the country received \$50 billion in funding aid relief from Congress. The money is intended to help cover expenses and loss of revenue.

Although Delaware acute hospitals received about \$85 million in aid, this money only covers about two weeks of losses, Smith said. Since the pandemic began in mid-March, the hospitals have lost about \$170 million each month.

Trinity Health Mid-Atlantic, which owns Saint Francis Healthcare, announced in April it will furlough some employees and reduce executives' salaries, the [Philadelphia Business Journal reported](#).

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It's unclear how many Saint Francis employees have been furloughed, and for how long. A hospital spokesman was not available to comment.

The three behavioral health facilities in the Delaware Healthcare Association are reporting losses of \$85,000 a day, or \$2.5 million a month, according to the association's estimates.

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Some of these organizations have seen a decline in patient volume by 50%.

BACKGROUND: [Gov. Carney extends state of emergency to May 31, as testing ramps up](#)

As Delaware dramatically ramps up its testing capacity, Smith said hospitals are hoping to come to a financial agreement with the state, since the health systems are performing a majority of the community testing.

Right now, hospitals are covering most of the expenses related to coronavirus testing, he said.

Patrick Harker, president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, said Tuesday that the Federal Reserve is "thinking carefully about setting up facilities that can provide direct lending to colleges, universities, and nonprofit medical institutions."

SUSSEX SURGE: [Why Sussex County has seen a drastic increase in coronavirus cases](#)

Harker said this is "crucial" for Delaware because of how essential educational institutions and hospitals are to the state's economy, making up about 17.4% of the workforce.

ChristianaCare, the most prominent health system in Delaware, is the state's largest private employer.

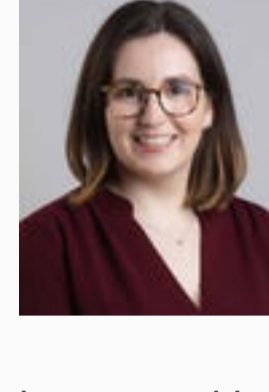
Despite seeing low patient volume because of coronavirus, Beebe Healthcare CEO Dr. David Tam told Delaware Online in an April interview that the hospital did not have plans to furlough employees.

But the hospital is monitoring its finances closely, Tam said.

"Financially, yes it is a challenge," he said. "We continue to do well in terms of staying above water. And we intend to be here for the next 100 years."

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Meredith Newman, health reporter




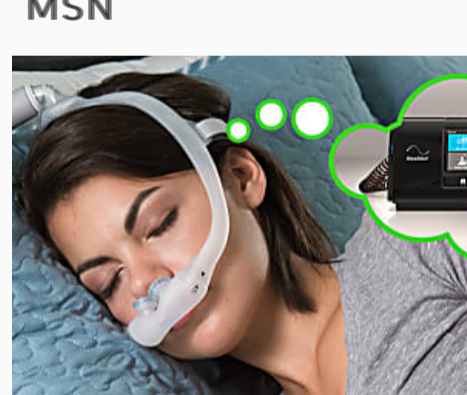




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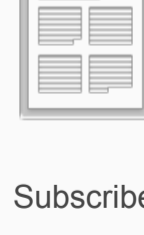









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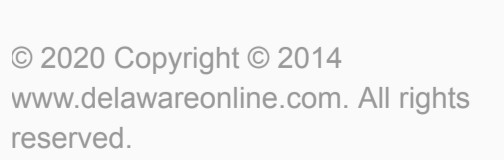
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