

# NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 40, Number 29

July 23, 2010

## WHA Calendar:

WHA PAC Golf 9/28  
Tournament  
Cheyenne

WHA Annual 9/29-  
Meeting and 9/30  
Convention  
Cheyenne

## Other Events

Wyoming Trauma 8/19-  
Conference 8/22  
Cheyenne

## Delays in Rules Will Challenge Hospitals to Meet Meaningful Use

Late last month, the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) issued its final rule establishing a temporary certification program for health information technology.

Earlier in July, CMS released its final definitions of meaningful use and the threshold that hospitals and physicians must meet to be eligible for Medicare and Medicaid incentive payments.

The two sets of rules go hand in hand, because in order to achieve meaningful use, hospitals and physicians must use certified electronic health records.

And, taken together, the bottom line is that no products certified for meaningful use are available today.

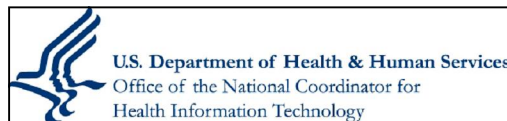
Nevertheless, the final rule establishes a temporary certification program that is effective immediately, and that will sunset on December 31, 2011, when ONC expects to have a permanent certification program in place.

Under the temporary program, the ONC will select ONC-approved testing and certification bodies (ONC-ATCB). Applications were expected to be available in July, and the ONC anticipates approving up to five

entities.

Once selected, those entities will be empowered to certify complete EHRs or EHR modules, indicating that they comply with federal requirements tied to meaningful use.

It is unclear how quickly these ONC-ATCB entities can be established, and whether they will be able to meet what will likely be high demand to certify vendor products and self-developed EHRs.



Delays in the release of the certification and meaningful use rules will make it very challenging, if not impossible, for hospitals and physicians to have certified EHRs in place when the incentive program for hospitals begins on January 1, 2011, according to the AHA.

Further, these challenging timelines are exacerbated by the ONC's rejection of an AHA recommendation to grandfather as certified the EHRs that hospitals and physicians already have installed and may successfully use to meet the meaningful use criteria.

The AHA suggested the grandfathering approach to

avoid unnecessary replacements and upgrades of existing systems and to reduce market pressures. But the ONC determined that grandfathering would be inconsistent with the statutory requirements of the HITECH Act.

As a result, all providers will need to upgrade existing systems to a certified version, or pursue and pay for certification of their installed system as self-developed.

ONC ultimately plans to make available on its web site a

master certified HIT products list, which will include all products with current certification, including vendor names and version numbers.

Still, it's important to note that the current certification program is only temporary, and it is expected to be replaced by a permanent program late next year.

The practical impact of that timing is that all complete EHRs and EHR modules certified under the temporary program will need to be certified again under the permanent program. While it isn't clear how this will play out, it will likely result in potentially unnecessary upgrades, particularly of EHR modules, according to the AHA.



## MHSC Creates Medical Staff Scholarship for Health Students

Delivering quality healthcare at a hospital requires a team effort ó from physicians and nurses to the business office and maintenance staff.

And students in Sweetwater County will have enhanced opportunities to learn about that collaboration, thanks to the creation of the Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County (MHSC) Medical Staff Scholarship, the result of a donation from the hospital and its medical staff.

The scholarship is available to 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students who are enrolled in the

Health Academy at Rock Springs High School, a project that MHSC has been intimately involved in.

“We are always looking for new ways to engage the community and create partnerships that we hope will show our community that our mission isn’t only to try and make a difference and assist individuals in the hospital, but we take that same mentality into the public,” said Gary Collins, PR and marketing director at MHSC.

“The Health Academy has also given us an opportunity to show the students

that quality healthcare can only be achieved when the whole team comes together,” he said.

One scholarship recipient will be selected, based on academic and behavioral goals established by the hospital and the Sweetwater One Public School Foundation, in the fall of 2010.

“We are very excited about this collaboration between MHSC and the foundation,” said Foundation Director Sara Bracken.

“This scholarship is a great way to get students excited about school while helping to increase enthusiasm.”

*Don't forget to send us a story about your hospital so we can feature you in our Member Spotlight section!*

## Scholarships Available to Support SANE Training

Scholarships are available through the Wyoming Attorney General’s Office to enhance and improve Wyoming’s response to sexual assault victims.

The AG’s Division of Victim Services has received a Violence Against Women Rural Grant, which provides funding and technical assistance to community-based programs in order to establish Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) programs.

Scholarships will also support participation in the 2010 Adult/Adolescent and 2001 Pediatric SANE training programs.

Trained SANEs enable hospitals to provide compassionate, patient-centered care, reduce trauma to the victim, and strengthen a hospital’s ability to work closely with law enforcement to hold perpetrators of sexual assault accountable, according to the AG’s office.

SANE training will be provided by Jamie Ferrell, a national expert and Forensic Nurse Consultant. She is a founding member and past president of the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN), and a founding member of IAFN’s Forensic Nursing Certification Board.

Contact the Division of Victim Services at (307) 777-7084 to receive a scholarship application and to learn more about the program.

*Wyoming Hospital Association*

*2005 Warren Ave.  
Cheyenne, WY  
82001*

*www.wyohospitals.com*

*307.632.9344*

## Healthy Mouth, Healthy Me Program to Benefit Newborns

A new partnership between the Wyoming Dental Association and the Wyoming Department of Health, Community and Public Health Division, Oral Health Section will directly benefit Wyoming newborns.

The Healthy Mouth,

Healthy Me program will provide informational packets through hospitals to new mothers across the state to help ensure improved oral health.

The packets contain a preventive dental health brochure, a cloth finger cot,

a baby toothbrush, and a vaccination record card.

All packets will be provided to new mothers free of charge.

More information is available by contacting Barb DiJohn at 307-777-2976 or [barb.dijohn@health.wyo.gov](mailto:barb.dijohn@health.wyo.gov).