

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

WHA Calendar:

- Telehealth Consortium Meeting
Cheyenne 11/24
- HRSA Partner Meeting
Cheyenne 12/2

Other Events:

- ACHE Meeting 12/1
- Labor Committee Meeting
Cheyenne 12/7
- Joint Appropriations Committee Meeting
Cheyenne 12/7-11

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Debate Expected on Senate Bill By November 30

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-NV, was expected to release the Senate's healthcare reform bill late last week, kicking off a series of events that will likely push the reform debate into 2010.

The Senate is expected to begin debating the bill by November 30.

The House of Representatives has already passed a bill which combines the work of its three committees of jurisdiction. The Senate bill will represent the combination of ideas that passed the Senate Health Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and the Senate Finance Committee.

Wyoming Sen. Mike Enzi is a member of both Senate committees.

A number of hurdles remain before floor debate be-

gins in the Senate, and few are taking any of those interim steps for granted. For example, the Senate must vote to proceed with the bill, and though Democrats are likely to prevail, concerns emerging from moderate and liberal Democrats have created some doubt.

Further tactics are expected to delay floor debate, such as the anticipated insistence by Republicans that the bill be read in full, a move which will probably occupy at least two days of the Senate calendar.



And beyond all of the maneuvering, a number of questions about the bill remained as of late last week. It was unclear whether the bill would achieve the coverage thresholds that were part of the AHA's agreement with the White House and Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

Tax provisions, the nature of the so-called public option, how the bill will address the abortion question, and other delivery reforms were also up in the air.

From a strategic perspective, Republicans appear to want to delay a vote on the bill until after Christmas, which would push debate into the early months of an election year. Meanwhile, Democrats are hoping to pass the bill out of the Senate by December 22.

WHA Urges Reconsideration of Special Districts Bill

The Wyoming Hospital Association asked a legislative committee last week to reconsider a bill that would require special district hospitals to file copies of numerous public records with their county clerk's offices.

The Joint Corporations, Elections, and Political Subdivisions committee bill targets all special districts, and is intended to help tighten up

the management of small districts that have operated informally, said Sen. Charles Scott, R-Casper.

By casting a broad net, however, the bill also includes special hospital districts. But hospitals generate so much information that it would be impractical for them to deposit all documents outlined in the bill with the county clerk, WHA

President Dan Perdue told the committee.

The bill ultimately supported by the committee would require special districts to have office or document repositories available to the public 20 hours a week. If the district cannot do that, it would have to file records with the county clerk's office.



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

West Park Hospital Offers Free Introduction to Yoga

In the midst of all the talk about wellness and prevention that has surrounded the healthcare reform debate, West Park Hospital (WPH) in Cody has turned to wellness methods that are centuries old.

Yoga.

Beginning in October, WPH offered a free introduction to yoga as a way to promote health and wellness, and to complement clinical care with additional healing approaches.

The practice of yoga includes physical postures,

breathing and flexibility exercises, and meditation.

According to the Cody Enterprise, a 2007 National Health Interview Survey indicated that more than 13 million American adults had practiced yoga in the previous year.

In addition to general fitness and flexibility benefits, research suggests that yoga can improve mood and sense of well-being, can counteract stress, anxiety, insomnia, and depression, and can lower heart rate and

blood pressure, among other benefits.

Other complementary therapies at WPH include inpatient and outpatient massages, pet therapy, and Health Touch, a type of energy therapy which studies suggest can lessen anxiety and improve well-being.

The idea for a free introduction to yoga came from WPH's Healing Interventions Planetree Team.



Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County Names New CEO

The Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County board of directors and Brim Healthcare have selected Nancy Burton as the hospital's new chief executive officer.

Burton brings with her more than 20 years of experience as a healthcare executive. Recently, she was CEO at Sun Health Boswell Hospital in Sun City, Ariz., before that facility was purchased by Banner Health.

After the Banner Health acquisition, Burton served as CEO for a new site develop-

ment for Banner Ironwood Medical Center. In addition to her successful career in hospital operations, Burton has an extensive clinical background, which includes positions as Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nurse Executive at St. John Detroit Riverview Hospital in Detroit, Mich.

"I am excited to join Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County," said Burton. "I look forward to collaborating with the hospital's board of directors, medical

staff and employees to develop the hospital's rich tradition of delivering top-notch healthcare."

Burton holds a Master of Science degree in Health Services Administration from Central Michigan University. She also holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Eastern Michigan University. She is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and a Fellow of the J&J/Wharton Program in Management for Nurse Executives.



Nancy Burton

Wyoming Hospital Association

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Diamond Participates on Healthcare Panel at Forum

Wyoming hospitals were represented at a forum on the state's economy last week when Wyoming Medical Center CEO Vickie Diamond participated in a panel discussion entitled "Healthcare: Which Way Wyoming?"

The discussion was part of the Wyoming Heritage Foundation's 27th Annual Forum, "Stimulating Wyoming's Economic Vines."

The panel was moderated by Ron Galloway, a noted documentarian, investment advisor, and analyst whose

most recent documentary, "Rebooting Healthcare," focuses on the impacts, outputs, and processes involved in the healthcare system.

The panel dealt with uncompensated care, tort reform, and healthcare delivery in Wyoming.