

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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December 17, 2010

WHA Calendar:

Hospital Advisory Group Meeting
Cheyenne 1/7

WHA Board Meeting 1/10

Other Events:

Legislative Session Begins
Cheyenne 1/11

LHSS Committee Holds Final Session of 2010

The Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Interim Committee met December 9-10 for a final time prior to the opening of the 2011 legislative session.

The two-day agenda provided for extensive discussion of a roster of bills that have been drafted and refined from the Interim Committee's previous meetings held in May and September.

Co-Chaired by Sen. Charlie Scott, R-Casper, and Rep. Jack Landon, R-Sheridan, the session was attended by many respective agencies and organizations in providing definition and clarity to many of the issues being given consideration.

Meredith Asay, Gov. Freudenthal's health policy advisor, and insurance commissioner Ken Vines presented recent activity with the task force that has been established to analyze the state's position regarding development of a Health Insurance Exchange.

Two members of the committee also serve on the task force, so this provided for very productive discussion regarding this issue. Health Information Exchange legislation has been drafted – LSO 157, and was voted to carry forward as a committee bill, with the recommendations of the task force to be

given consideration as becomes appropriate through the 2011 session.

As had become a primary focus through the committee's 2010 meetings, several pieces of draft legislation pertaining to the state's Medicaid budget and preparations for expanded coverage were discussed. Dr. Brent Sherard and Lee Clabots from WDH presented alongside representatives from the Lewin Group, consultants to Medicaid department staff, in review of current and future budgetary demands of the Medicaid program.

Pending increases to the total number of enrollees, the demographics of the population, and anticipated utilization patterns makes this a very difficult process to model.

Two draft bills, Medicaid Cost Study, and Medicaid Options Study, were both approved as committee bills to frame the parameters in which the state will meet the new demands.

Legislation defined in LSO bill 259 was approved in establishing a "Primary care support program,"

which includes a variety of fiscal and operational incentives for the development and support of Community Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics.

The committee clearly understands the importance of having ample coverage of primary care providers in communities across the state, expressing significant support for this legislation.

Sen. Scott reviewed a slate of amendments regarding the Healthy Frontiers demonstration project, primarily focused upon benefit design and member eligibility.

This bill is deemed an important linkage and supportive piece to the effective fiscal management of Medicaid and other related agency commitments.

In closing, Sen. Scott acknowledged the excellent contributions and working relationship enjoyed with Rep. Landon, as he concludes his tenure in the House and as co-chair of the LHSS committee.

In addition to Rep. Landon, many other members of the committee have been assigned to other committees beginning in 2011, and they were recognized with great appreciation for their diligent efforts.





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



Vincent DiFranco

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SJMC Purchases New Hospitals Beds

St. John's Medical Center (SJMC) and St. John's Medical Center Foundation have together provided 42 new state-of-the-art beds for the hospital's Intensive Care Unit and Primary Care Unit.

The new beds automatically turn patients to promote circulation. In addition, a special percussion feature helps maintain or improve lung function.

Other advanced features include a lower height for easier access and reducing falls, built-in alarms, built-in scale, built-in stand assist program, and a specialized mattress material to dramatically decrease pressure ulcers.

"Our community's generosity makes it possible for SJMC Foundation to help

provide for the purchase of important equipment and technology, such as these new beds," notes Liz Finegan, St. John's Foundation Executive Director.



New CEO Named for Community Hospital

Jim Ferando, Banner Health Western Region president, has named Vincent B. DiFranco as chief executive officer for Community Hospital in Torrington. DiFranco will assume the role at the end of December.

"We are pleased to have Vince join our Community Hospital and Banner Health team," Ferando said. "He is a seasoned professional with many years of senior leadership experience in small and mid-sized hospitals through-

out the southeast United States. During his career Vince has demonstrated his ability to lead hospital teams to high performance and exceptional patient care."

"I am extremely impressed with the support Banner Health has provided to Community Hospital and the investment in the facilities and equipment," DiFranco said. "The quality of the local physicians and staff was very apparent during my visits to the community, and I look forward to

continuing to develop programs and services to best make Community Hospital and Goshen Care Center outstanding providers of healthcare services."

DiFranco comes to Torrington from Monroeville, Ala., where he has worked for Quorum Health Resources (QHR), a healthcare management/consulting company, for more than a decade.

He and his wife, Brandy have three children: Sarah, 14; Zane, 6; and Violet, 2 months.

WHA Nurse for a Day Program

The Wyoming Hospital Association is seeking nurses for the WHA's Nurse-For-A-Day program during the upcoming Wyoming Legislative Session, and we hope your nurses will volunteer.

The session convenes on January 11, 2011 and is scheduled to end March 3, 2011.

For more than 30 years, the Nurse-For-A-Day pro-

gram has provided basic medical care – such as taking blood pressures and treating complaints of cold and flu, headaches, and upset stomachs – to Wyoming's lawmakers at the State Capitol.

In addition to delivering that care, the program has enhanced the image of hospitals and caregivers, and it has provided a terrific op-

portunity for nurses to spend time with legislators from their home counties.

Nurses who would like to volunteer can simply email rose@wyohospitals.com, or call 307-632-9344.

Participating nurses will report to the Medical Aid Station on the 3rd floor of the Capitol by 9 a.m. on their scheduled day.