

# NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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## WHA Calendar:

WHA Board Meeting  
Cheyenne 1/13

## Other Events:

Wyoming Legislature Begins 2/13/12

## WHA Closes Out Busy Year of Advocacy, Education Programs

If 2011 is any sort of guide, 2012 looks to be another busy year for the Wyoming Hospital Association in the delivery of its three primary services: advocacy, education, and communication.

As the Supreme Court prepares to hear arguments over the constitutionality of the federal healthcare reform law, the impact of that federal-level discussion on Wyoming remains unclear.

But neither lawmakers, Gov. Mead, nor the WHA took a wait-and-see posture. Anticipating increased Medicaid enrollments and costs, the Legislature authorized two studies in 2011 to identify opportunities to make the program more efficient.

Lawmakers also passed a resolution that will attempt to amend the Wyoming Constitution, adding a section specifying that no federal or state law can compel a person, employer, or healthcare provider to participate in any healthcare system.

Meanwhile, Gov. Mead joined the lawsuit filed by some 25 other states to challenge the fundamentals of the Affordable Care Act. At issue, among other things, is the law's individual mandate, or the requirement that citizens must buy insurance.

Amid that constantly

changing landscape, the WHA remained focused on advocating for Wyoming's hospitals, which continue to deliver high-quality care in an unpredictable environment.

The WHA pushed to lift the freeze on Medicaid rates – an effort that was not successful, but that will continue as providers struggle with less-than-adequate reimbursement rates and impending reductions in Medicare rates.

However, the WHA helped defeat a bill that would have extended hospital admitting privileges to advance practice nurses, and the WHA supported a successful effort to extend the Healthy Frontiers Program – a state-based health reform project that was first approved during the 2010 legislative session.

At the federal level, the WHA worked with a coalition of states and organizations to protect the so-called Frontier Amendment, which would boost Medicare reimbursement rates for some doctors and hospitals in Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

Additionally, the WHA fought to protect the critical access hospital program, an important program for rural hospitals that was the target

of much spending-reduction discussion in 2011. The WHA met with Wyoming's Congressional delegation in Washington and took to the papers with a guest editorial that made the case for protecting Wyoming's rural hospitals.

The WHA's commitment to providing valuable educational opportunities for hospital leaders moved forward in 2011, with a day-long series of sessions that focused on building market share, improving cost and quality, and exploring the changing role of hospital boards.

The development of the next phase of trustee education is already underway. The WHA has developed the framework for a Trustee Certification program that will continue to develop in 2012.

The goal of the program will be to help hospital trustees develop a core set of governance skills, and to provide consistent ongoing training that helps achieve that goal.

For the fourth time, the Wyoming Critical Access Hospital Network offered its Healthcare Leadership Training Program.

Featuring a new format and new instructors, leadership courses were attended by a variety of healthcare professionals from Wyoming hospitals, and all of them attended exclusively via video conference.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



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



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## MHCC Patients to Benefit From New Sleep Labs

One out of every six people suffers from some type of sleep disorder, and more than 60 different sleep disorders have been documented.

To help patients deal with such disorders, Memorial Hospital of Converse County in Douglas has added Sleep Studies to its list of services.

Until now, patients had to drive a minimum of an hour to find a sleep lab, but not anymore.

Memorial Hospital of

Converse County recently completed construction of two study bedrooms located on the third floor of the hospital. The rooms provide a quiet, private setting for patients, and according to Respiratory Therapist Kathy Summers, sleep studies are very simple tests.

"Aside from the diagnostic equipment, participating in a sleep study can be similar to spending the night in a hotel room," Summers said. "Patients normally check in

around 8 p.m. and leave by 6 a.m. the following morning."

The noninvasive test records a variety of body functions during sleep. Electrical activity of the brain, breathing patterns, oxygen levels, heart rate, and muscle tone are all monitored.

The results are read by Sleep Specialist, Dr. Norman Imes, who is triple boarded in Internal Medicine, Pulmonology, and Sleep Medicine.

## Hot Springs County Hospital Names New CEO

The Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital Board of Directors has named Robin A. Roling as the hospital's new Chief Executive Officer.

Ms. Roling will assume her new role in March. She replaces Gary Kendrick, who has served as interim CEO since October 2011.

"We are pleased to have someone with Robin's combination of mission-driven leadership and understanding of healthcare operations leading our hos-

pital," said board chairman Bill Williams.

"The board was very impressed with her track record of strong communication, accountability, and commitment to quality."

Ms. Roling moves to Thermopolis from Powell Valley Healthcare, a 25-bed critical access hospital with a 100-bed nursing home.

Currently serving as the facility's Chief Nursing Officer, Ms. Roling has served in several leadership roles, including interim CEO, during her nearly 14-year tenure

in Powell.

Ms. Roling holds an M.S. Degree in Nursing and Healthcare Informatics from the University of Colorado, and a BSN from the University of Wyoming. She is a member of the Wyoming Nurses Association, serving as a national delegate for the past four years.

She is also a board member of the Wyoming Organization of Nurse Executives, and is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

## Star Valley Medical Center Names Interim CEO

The North Lincoln County Hospital District Board of Trustees has named Ken Brough as the interim Chief Executive Officer of Star Valley Medical Center (SVMC).

Mr. Brough takes over in his interim role on Jan. 1, 2012. He is currently the hospital's Chief Financial Officer, and has been with

SVMC since January of 2000.

"With his experience in the healthcare industry, institutional memory and commitment to the success of our hospital, Ken has the board's confidence that he will keep Star Valley Medical Center moving forward until a permanent CEO is hired," said Marti Halver-

son, chair of the SVMC board.

The hospital board continues to meet to narrow the field of applicants for the CEO position, which was vacated by the departure of former CEO Steve Perry.

Perry is now the CEO of the Wyoming Integrated Healthcare Network.