

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

WHA Calendar:

WHA Trustee Education Casper	5/10
WHA Board Meeting Casper	5/10
WSHE Spring Meeting Casper	5/7-5/10

Other Events

AHA Annual Meeting Washington, DC	4/25-4/28
Western Regional Trustee Symposium Denver, CO	6/9-6/11

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States Begin to Sort Out the Impact of Healthcare Reform Law

Healthcare leaders in Wyoming and across the country are continuing their efforts to sort out the impact of the healthcare reform bill that President Obama signed into law last Tuesday.

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the bill Sunday night ó the same bill that had passed the Senate in December. The House also passed another measure, the so-called reconciliation package of fixes that House members sought in the Senate bill, and that bill was sent to the Senate.

Any changes to the reconciliation package in the Senate would mean another round of debate in the House. Democratic leaders in the Senate had hoped to bring the bill to a vote by Sunday.

And while political leaders in Washington worked through the parliamentary minutiae to complete their work on healthcare reform, leaders in the states began to sort out the effect of that reform on the delivery of healthcare.

For example, the Frontier States amendment, which applies to Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming, would result in

increased Medicare reimbursements for physician services and inpatient and outpatient hospital services.



The measure could mean tens of

millions of dollars in increased reimbursements, which some states have argued simply addresses the unfair geographic disparity in Medicare reimbursements. The real impact in Wyoming is not yet clear.

State officials are also working to understand how the bill's Medicaid expansion will impact an already strapped Medicaid program in Wyoming.

Expanding coverage to an estimated 32 million currently uninsured people will likely increase demand on the healthcare system, at a time when Wyoming is struggling with provider shortages.

Wyoming cut Medicaid reimbursements last year, primarily by trimming reimbursements to out-of-state hospitals. However, reimbursements remain a critical element of the coming supply and demand imbalance.

Maintaining satisfactory provider reimbursement rates will be critical to maintaining provider levels and meeting the increased demand, health department officials say.

Still other states responded to the President's signature by filing lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of the reform legislation. Some 13 state attorneys general filed suit just minutes after the President signed the bill.

The lawsuits generally challenge the government's authority to require most people to buy insurance or pay a fine.

The suits also attempt to roll back the expansion of Medicaid by arguing that states will not be able to afford their share of the Medicaid expansion, nor can they back out of Medicaid or millions will be left without a safety net.





Carol Dozier

Dozier Named Businessperson of the Year

The Laramie Area Chamber of Commerce has recognized Ivinson Memorial Hospital (IMH) with the Community Service Award and IMH CEO Carol Dozier as the Businessperson of the Year.

For IMH, Dozier said that receiving the Community Service Award speaks volumes to her about how good partnerships and bonds between local businesses are so very important to the Laramie community.

As the Laramie Area Chamber of Commerce's Businessperson of the Year, Dozier said that she felt such an appreciative feeling to be honored by the chamber for an award that had so many other strong and deserving nominees.

"We're really striving to provide the very best hospital that we can for the community, so I hope that some of (the reason for the award)," Dozier said.

"On a personal level, it's such an appreciative feeling to be honored by the chamber. There are some many people who are great leaders in this community and very deserving of the award as well. It was personally very humbling."



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

WHA Trustee Education Program To Be Held May 10

Hospital boards that function well efficiently and with a clear sense of purpose do not do so by accident. There are, in fact, best practices and approaches that are critical to ensuring that your board functions effectively.

The Wyoming Hospital Association is proud to offer our members a unique opportunity to learn and discuss the Practices of Highly Effective Hospital Boards with noted consultant Pam Knecht. The session is set for May 10 at the Parkway Plaza in Casper.

Hospital administrators and trustees are encouraged to attend. The WHA will mail registration packets to each hospital, and registrations are due by April 30.

In this day-long session, you'll learn:

- The core responsibilities of a hospital board and its evolving role
- The keys to developing strong relationships and culture
- How to develop truly effective committees and policies, and much more

With healthcare reform continuing to swirl at the national level, and with hospitals facing growing demands here at home, effective hospital leadership has never been more essential for hospitals, and for their patients.



Pam Knecht

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Nurse Educator Summit Scheduled for May in Casper

Nurse educators, nurses, employers, and community leaders will gather in Casper next month to discuss and enhance nursing education in Wyoming.

The 2010 Nurse Educator Summit is scheduled for May 24 and 25 at the Hilton

Garden Inn in Casper.

The summit will feature Dr. Edward O'Neill from the Center for Health Professionals at the University of California San Francisco and Dr. Chris Tanner from the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education.

Discussion groups and other forums are designed to enable participants to help shape nursing and nursing education in Wyoming.

To register for the summit, email Matt Sholty at msholty@uwyo.edu or call 307-766-6715.