

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 39, Number 09

March 6, 2009

WHA Calendar:

Region 5 Meeting Worland	3/17
Region 1 Meeting Sundance	3/18
WHA Board Meeting Casper	3/27
WCAHN— Maximizing Revenue/Reimbursement Opportunity Casper	4/15
WHA Trustee Educational Meeting Lander	5/8

Other Events:

AHA Annual Meeting Washington DC	4/26
HFMA Spring Meeting Casper	4/30

Health Bills Suffer Late Defeat, Governor Signs EMS Bill

The final Friday of the 60th Wyoming Legislature was a difficult one for health-care issues: two of the bigger reform ideas died and a review of the Medical Practice Act was resuscitated only after receiving some rare help in the Senate.

Despite that difficulty, a key first step in the development of a cohesive statewide trauma system passed the Senate overwhelmingly and was signed by the Governor on Thursday.

The Wyoming Hospital Association tracked more than 40 healthcare-related bills throughout the session, and a number of them were successful.

But the big ideas of a healthcare reform pilot project and an expansion of the KidCare program were both defeated.

Senate File 24, the health-care reform demonstration project, died on a 28-29 vote in the House after sailing through the Senate.

After more than an hour of debate, opponents had raised sufficient questions about the funding and impact of the program to defeat it. Rep. Tim Hallinan, R-Gillette, described the outcome as "death by a thousand cuts."

Senate File 39, which

would have expanded eligibility for the KidCare program by increasing the maximum family income levels, also failed in the House.

Meanwhile, a bill that updated the Medical Practice Act died on General File in the Senate because representatives did not hear the bill by the session's final deadline.

Senators agreed to revisit the General File list to hear only that bill. It ultimately passed the Senate and was signed by the Speaker of the House on Wednesday.

An additional important win for healthcare was passage of House Bill 146, sponsored by Rep. Jeb Steward, R-Encampment, a measure that creates an EMS Sustainability Trust Fund in order to assist rural EMS services and that takes an initial step toward a more effective statewide trauma system.

The bill puts \$500,000 into a trust, and sets aside \$50,000 to begin targeted needs assessments and then follows-up with implementation grants to help rural EMS services create and implement a master plan to guide their efforts.

Nurse For The Day Volunteers

The Wyoming Hospital Association would like to thank the nurses who volunteered for the Nurse for The Day program during the 2009 Legislative Session and the hospitals and organizations that support them.

Campbell County Memorial Hospital

- Sue Howard, RN
- Anna Raga, RN

Cheyenne Regional Medical Center

- Mary Calkins, RN
- Norma Randall, RN
- Jan Kruse, RN

South Lincoln Medical Center

- Parry Davison, RN

Wyoming Medical Center

- Leona Streitz, RN
- Kay Petsch, RN

Wyoming State Hospital

- Tonya Lazaro, RN
- Dorothy Sizenbach, RN
- Beverly Jensen, RN
- Peggy Bezanson, RN

State Board of Nursing

- Mary Kay Goetter, RN
- Brenda Burnett, RN
- Penny Iekel, RN, Sheridan VA
- Connie Johns, RN, Cheyenne
- Cathy Vasko, RN, Guernsey
- Betsy Hartman, RN, Cheyenne
- Donna Hays, RN, Riverton



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

Elkhorn Valley Earns JCAHO Accreditation

JCAHO accreditation is widely considered the gold standard in healthcare.

Elkhorn Valley Rehabilitation Hospital (EVRH) has recently met that high standard, earning its own JCAHO accreditation.

To earn accreditation, an outpatient facility volunteers to undergo a challenging, comprehensive evaluation.

The evaluation signals that EVRH has made a significant extra effort to review and improve the key factors that can affect the

quality and safety of care.

As part of that evaluation, doctors and nurses from JCAHO personally visit the hospital to conduct a review and determine how well EVRH:

- Provides a safe environment for care
- Educates patients about the risks and options for diagnosis and treatment
- Protects patients' rights, including their right to confidentiality
- Evaluates patients' conditions before, during,

and after diagnosis and treatment

- Protects patients against infection
- Plans for emergency situations

Only a small percentage of outpatient facilities have gone through the rigorous evaluation process.

Completion of the evaluation shows a commitment on the part of EVRH to provide safe, high quality care and a willingness to be measured against the highest standards of performance.

Sen. Enzi Selected for White House Summit on Healthcare



U.S. Sen. Mike Enzi, Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, accepted the President's invitation to the White House for a summit on healthcare.

Sen. Enzi said he hoped the summit would be a turning point for true bipartisanship.

The President has pledged to work on health-care reform in a bipartisan way, Enzi said. Working together on a plan means agreeing where we want to go at the beginning, and then finding a path to get there, not just buying some votes at the end.

Sen. Enzi will join other members of Congress, ad-

ministration officials, and outside experts and stakeholders to discuss health-care reform. The White House has not released a full program of events, but participants will break into small groups to discuss health-care costs and coverage.

AHA Seeks Help With Survey on Economic Downturn

The AHA and the Wyoming Hospital Association are partnering to encourage hospitals to participate in the AHA's rapid response survey, which examines the impact of the economic downturn on hospitals.

This survey, originally fielded in November, garnered nationwide attention and was a key component in advocacy efforts for the passage of the economic stimu-

lus bill. As the annual appropriations process nears and the likelihood of health-care reform legislation increases, the AHA is turning to hospitals for their help once again.

The latest survey was sent via email and fax to all member and non-member community hospital CEOs on March 4. To obtain a copy of the survey, or to retrieve your username and

password to complete the survey online, contact AHA member relations at 800-424-4301.

The survey deadline is March 25.

Completing this brief survey will help demonstrate clearly to the new Congress and Administration how the current crisis continues to threaten the financial health of hospitals.

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