

# NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 38, Number 22

May 23, 2008

## WHA Calendar:

- Western Regional Trustee Symposium  
Boise, ID **6/4**
- Western Regional Flex Conference  
Albuquerque, NM **6/5**
- Consensus Meeting, **6/21**  
Cody

## Other Events:

- Legislative Labor Committee Meeting **6/2**
- Wyoming Healthcare Commission **6/2**
- DOH Association Planning Meeting **6/3**
- Wyoming Medical Society Annual Meeting **6/12**

## WHA Board, Nursing Leaders Seek Solutions to Shortage

If projections of nursing supply and demand from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) hold, Wyoming will have roughly half the nurses it needs by 2020. Nationally, the projections are not much better ó all 50 states are expected to experience a nursing shortage by 2015.

Faced with the operational and patient care impacts of the current and projected shortage, the Wyoming Hospital Association Board of Directors continued to seek solutions at its May board meeting in Casper.

The Board met with nursing leaders from the WONE, University of Wyoming and the Nurse Educators of Wyoming to identify short- and long-term approaches the groups can take to help educate, recruit, and retain more nurses in Wyoming.

Though the nursing programs at UW and the community colleges are working to increase the number of nursing graduates. Central Wyoming College continues to enroll about 40 nursing students each year because of space limitations. At the same time, UW continues to employ the same number of nursing faculty it has for the last decade due to funding issues.

### Nursing Shortage Facts

- U.S. nursing schools turned away more than 40,000 applicants in 2006 due to lack of faculty
- About 30,000 additional nurses need to graduate annually to meet the nation's healthcare needs
- The shortage of RNs is projected to reach as high as 500,000 by 2025

Outreach programs, online courses, and an accelerated program at UW for students who already have bachelor's degrees are all aimed at increasing the number of nursing graduates.

Additionally, however, the Board and nursing leaders considered a number of other possibilities, including:

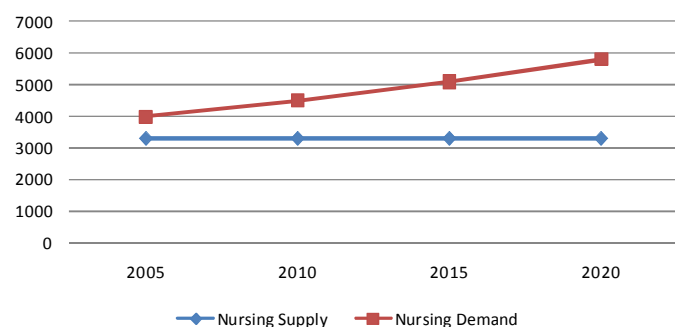
- Increasing the number of

nurse educators in Wyoming by developing employee sharing arrangements between community colleges and hospitals

- Providing financial assistance from hospitals for senior nursing students who often struggle to pay for housing during their practicum
- Building two-way outreach between the colleges and hospitals to ensure promotion and advocacy regarding nurse education and recruitment
- Focusing on the culture and environment in hospitals to improve nurse retention

Please contact the WHA with questions about these and other ideas discussed at the meeting.

**Projected Nursing Shortage Wyoming**





### CCMH Launches Unique Solution to Unique Challenge

Any major hospital construction project can be inconvenient for patients, medical staff and administrators. But construction in a 24x7 emergency department that treats about 25,000 patients a year poses unique problems.

Campbell County Memorial Hospital (CCMH) has developed a unique solution.

Utilizing the internet to reach out to the community, CCMH has launched a blog to provide information about its slate of construction projects, with

photos of the construction, daily postings and archives, and opportunities for public comment.

Hospital officials hope the CCMH Construction Blog, located at [www.ccmh.net](http://www.ccmh.net), will serve as a valuable communication

tool as the hospital embarks on an \$83 million expansion project over the next two to three years.

That project includes a \$3.4 million expansion of the CCMH emergency department, which will add 2,500 square feet and remodel another 6,000 square feet.

CCMH's emergency department project was scheduled to begin last week, and is planned to wrap up in 330 days, a timeline dictated by the need to keep the emergency department open.



### Newsroom and Media Kit Added to WHA Web Site

Recent additions to the Wyoming Hospital Association web site should make it easier to retrieve past editions of News Briefs and to find background information on Wyoming hospitals.

The WHA home page now includes a Newsroom link, which provides quick access to News Briefs dating back to 2001. Previously located in the members-only section of the site, all previous editions of the newsletter are now readily available

to anyone who visits the WHA site.

Additionally, all of the newsletters posted to the web site have been converted to PDF files, which will make them easier to view online, and easier to save, print, or email.

A Media Kit link has also been added to the home page, providing easy access to press releases and background information about Wyoming hospitals. The online media kit currently

includes a Wyoming Hospitals fact sheet, backgrounders on the patient care and economic impact of Wyoming hospitals on the state, and background information and a press release about National Hospital Week.

Future press releases and media information will be posted to this location and may be helpful to members in their community and media relations activities.



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### Effective Planning Generates Significant Telehealth Results

Simply housing telehealth equipment is not the same as developing effective telehealth programs, said Mary DeVany, of the Great Plains Telehealth Resource & Assistance Center.

DeVany presented at last week's telehealth brown bag session, hosted by the Southeast Wyoming Telehealth Network.

DeVany said Avera McKennan Hospital & Uni-

versity Health Center in South Dakota has conducted over 3,000 clinical consults via telehealth in 2008 and has saved more than \$100,000 by using its telehealth network.