

# NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 39, Number 24

June 19, 2009

**WHA Calendar:**

WHA Region 2 Meeting  
Casper 6/30

Wyoming Critical Access Hospital Network Teleconference 7/7

WHA Board Meeting  
Lander 7/16

WHA PAC Golf Tournament  
Sheridan 9/29

WHA Annual Meeting & Convention  
Sheridan 9/30-10/1

**Other Events:**

AHA Regional Policy Board Meeting  
Idaho 6/25

Colorado Hospital Association Data Bank User Meeting  
Denver, CO 7/21

## Details of State Medicaid Cuts Beginning to Emerge

Details have begun to emerge regarding the impact to Wyoming hospitals of cuts to the state Medicaid budget.

According to figures provided by Navigant Consulting, Inc., a firm hired by the Wyoming Department of Health, hospitals can expect to see about \$5.8 million in cuts to their Medicaid reimbursements during the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

Gov. Dave Freudenthal has recommended nearly \$232 million in total budget cuts in anticipation of a significant decline in general fund revenues in the coming biennium. Of that \$232 million, about \$43 million was cut from the Department of Health.

The state's Medicaid budget is expected to be cut by a total of about \$25.6 million, including nearly \$11 million from adult and children's services. The majority of the \$25.6 million will come from decreases in provider reimbursement.

More specifically, the Department expects hospitals to see a \$5.8 million reduction in Medicaid reimbursements. That figure represents the combined cuts for in-state and out-of-state hospitals.

Department officials have said that the most significant decreases in hospital reimbursements will affect out-of-

state hospitals.

Because Medicaid is funded both by the state and federal governments through a matching program, the Governor's budget recommendations represent only a portion of the total dollars that are likely to be lost as a result state Medicaid cuts.

Wyoming funds 44 percent of the program, while the federal government funds 56 percent. As a result, Wyoming Medicaid stands to lose a total of about \$54 million.

The Wyoming Hospital Association met with the Hospital Advisory Group, a standing committee organized by the state Medicaid department, on Wednesday to discuss the details of the cuts.

Hospital CEOs on the committee offered their concerns regarding the impact of Medicaid cuts, including the potential demand on hospitals to treat Medicaid clients who may increasingly seek primary care in hospital emergency rooms, as well as the loss of federal matching dollars and the resulting

negative impact to the state's economy.

During a presentation to the Joint Appropriations Committee in Cheyenne on Thursday, the Governor said he is trying to use an FMAP increase from the federal stimulus bill to soften what he expects to be even tougher budget conditions in the next biennium.

Gov. Freudenthal also told the committee that he does not believe any state agency's core functions have been jeopardized by the cuts, nor have essential services to Wyoming citizens been compromised.

In his recommendations, the Governor also suggested reductions in provider reimbursements in substance abuse treatment services and adult and children's developmental disability programs to meet his targeted 10% budget cuts.

He did not recommend reductions in nursing home reimbursement rates.

In addition to trimming Medicaid, the Governor's budget cuts affect other programs currently offered by the Department of Health.

Among those impacts is the elimination of the state's Medical Safety Event Reporting program, which captured and aggregated hospital data based on the National Quality Forum's list of safety events.





**Elkhorn Valley Rehabilitation Hospital**

## Elkhorn Valley Ranked in Top 10 Percent Nationwide

Elkhorn Valley Rehabilitation Hospital (EVRH) has received national recognition as one of the top facilities of its kind in the United States.

Open only since January 2008, EVRH has 40 beds and focuses on patients who have had strokes, traumatic brain injuries, spinal cord injuries and amputations.

EVRH is Wyoming's only freestanding medical rehabilitation hospital.

Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation at the University of Buffalo, which evaluates medical rehabilitation facilities, recently ranked EVRH in the top 10 percent of 813 inpatient rehab facilities.

The data system cited EVRH for effective, efficient, timely, and patient-centered care, said Anne Thorpen, director of marketing at EVRH.

Hospitals were scored

based on how much their patients improve between entering and leaving.

“Many of course have not been walking,” Thorpen said of EVRH’s patients. “They leave here walking, some even running. There are just some marvelous success stories.”

EVRH is a joint venture between Ernest Health, Inc., of Albuquerque, N.M., and Wyoming Medical Center.

## North Big Horn Hospital Names New CEO

North Big Horn Hospital in Lovell has selected Rick Schroeder as its new chief executive officer.

Schroeder made his way to Lovell from Evanston Regional Hospital via Sunbury Community Hospital in Sunbury, Penn. While in Evanston, Schroeder was responsible for Human Resources, Marketing, physician recruitment, and the

management of five clinics with 10 providers.

During his tenure at Sunbury Community Hospital, Schroeder served as the Administrator of Ancillary Services, always with the goal of returning to Wyoming as a hospital CEO.

Although he enjoyed his three years in Pennsylvania, Schroeder said he is excited to be back in Wyoming at a

small rural hospital. He has a passion for helping others and is eager to become involved in the community.

Schroeder has a B.S. in Business Administration, a B.A. in Management, and is completing his MBA. His wife and two school-aged children will make their home in Lovell. He also has four older children and two grandchildren.



**Rick Schroeder**

## Workforce Development Funding Available to Hospitals

A statewide workforce development training program could provide hospitals with funding to help employees develop their professional skills, including at the Wyoming Hospital Association annual convention.

The Workforce Development Training Fund, a program of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, closed in November 2007 because the fund was depleted well ahead of schedule. During the period

when the fund was solvent, it had helped pay to train 4,012 Wyoming workers in 493 businesses.

Sheridan Memorial Hospital used funding from the program first in 2007 to pay for more than a dozen employees to attend sessions at the WHA annual convention. At least two other hospitals utilized the funding in 2008. Hospitals could use the funding in similar ways this year, when training and travel budgets are tight.

The Department is ac-

cepting applications for funding.

For more information about the fund, please visit [wyomingworkforce.org/wdtf](http://wyomingworkforce.org/wdtf), or call 307-777-8650.



**Wyoming Hospital Association**

**2005 Warren Ave.  
Cheyenne, WY  
82003**

[www.wyohospitals.com](http://www.wyohospitals.com)

**307.632.9344**