



NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

WHA Calendar:

- WHA Nominating Committee Meeting Teleconference **9/16**
- WHA/PAC Golf Tournament Cheyenne **9/30**
- WHA Annual Meeting and Convention Cheyenne **10/1**

Other Events:

- Joint Labor, Health, and Social Services Committee Casper **9/15**
- Department of Health Title 25 Meeting Riverton **9/24**
- AHA Region 8 Meeting Denver, CO **9/25**
- National Rural Health Association Critical Access Hospital Conference Savannah, GA **10/15**

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Commission Questions Readiness of Healthcare Reform

The fate of a proposed healthcare reform bill is in question after last week's Wyoming Healthcare Commission meeting in Casper.

The measure, proposed as an improved version of last year's Senate File 85, would provide insurance for working people who are not eligible for Medicaid, but who do not have health insurance through their employers.

In collaboration with the Governor's office, the Commission has been working on refining that proposal during the interim, with the goal of introducing the Healthy Frontiers project during the 2009 General Session.

At last week's meeting, however, commissioners questioned whether the proposal is ready to be presented to the Legislature. Commission co-chairman Dr. Larry Kirven suggested scaling back the proposal and asking legislators for less money to help further develop the program.

In that case, the program

would be presented to legislators for funding in 2010.

What we should say to them is, What do you think you could give us to take this to the next step? Kirven said, according to the Casper Star-Tribune.

Commissioners reviewed the latest revisions to the proposal at their meeting, but some worried that the proposal does not include enough detail about target populations, cost, and administration.

According to an overview of the proposal, the Healthy Frontiers program would focus on market solutions for Wyoming residents, rather than government entitlements. In so doing, it would aim to improve health, and increase healthcare access with better value and lower costs.

The proposal also suggests that adults working at least 20 hours per week, but who are not Medicaid-

WYOMING HEALTHCARE COMMISSION

eligible and who do not have access to health insurance, would be a key target population.

Components of the health plan for this population would include preventive care benefits, health management support services, personal health accounts, and a high-deductible insurance plan with cost sharing based on income.

In other business, the Commission's Patient Safety Task Force continues to review the possibility of developing a Patient Safety Organization in Wyoming. Dr. William Minoque, executive director and president of the Maryland Patient Safety Center (MPSC), is scheduled to present to the WHA Annual Meeting and Convention in October.

Current efforts to establish a Patient Safety Organization in Wyoming are largely modeled after the MPSC.

Community Hospital CEO Mike Walsh Passes Away

Mike Walsh, chief executive officer of Community Hospital and Nursing Home in Torrington, died Wednesday, Sept. 10. He was 47.

Mr. Walsh had joined

Community Hospital as its CEO in June.

Hospital, nursing home, and clinic staff held a candlelight vigil Wednesday evening to share memories and

to recognize Walsh's contributions to the facilities and the community.

Mr. Walsh is survived by his wife Julie, son Chris, 12, and daughter Taylor, 8.



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

Technology Transforming Patient Care at JCHC

Technology is transforming the future of patient care at Johnson County Healthcare Center (JCHC). And in some cases, it is enabling patients in Johnson County to stay home for their healthcare.

In 2008, JCHC has purchased a state-of-the-art CT scanner, and a new 3D and 4D ultrasound machine. Both will improve disease detection and reduce the time spent in the exam room.

The CT scanner supports vascular studies, an-

giograms, and biopsies, as well as non-invasive heart scorings. The 3D ultrasound is used in a number of studies and it offers expectant mothers the opportunity to see clear, three-dimensional photographs of their babies before they are born. And JCHC can now perform virtual colonoscopies as well.

JCHC surgeons are also using the new technologies to conduct laparoscopic procedures, among others

A new electronic

health record (HER) system will also directly impact patient care in the outpatient clinic. The EHR system puts complete patient records at the fingertips of doctors and nurses who need them to provide rapid, preventive care and reduce medical errors.



Session to Focus on Improving Quality, Patient Safety

Quality and safety have long been the top priorities of the nation's healthcare providers. A featured session at the 63rd Annual Wyoming Hospital Association Meeting and Convention supports those priorities by focusing on the development and management of effective safety programs.

Joe McCannon, a Vice

President at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), will review the history of national efforts aimed at improving patient safety, and he'll highlight the IHI's 5 Million Lives Campaign as a component of those efforts. The 5 Million Lives Campaign is a major national initiative that seeks to

help hospitals across the country improve the reliability of the care they provide. McCannon will discuss key strategies for success from some of the nation's most successful facilities and systems.

Register for the WHA convention online at www.wyohospitals.com.

Committed to
PATIENT SAFETY

Wyoming Hospitals Join Network to Improve Quality

Four Wyoming hospitals have joined a nationwide program to focus on improving clinical quality and patient safety by making it possible for nurses to spend more time in direct patient care.

A survey conducted by Irving, TX, based VHA, Inc., showed that many nurses spend less than 30 percent of their time in di-

rect contact with patients. Other studies indicate that increasing nursing involvement in direct patient care improves the quality and safety of the care that is delivered.

To that end, Campbell County Memorial Hospital in Gillette, Cheyenne Regional Medical Center, St. John's Medical Center in Jackson, and Wyoming

Medical Center in Casper have joined the Rapid Adoption Network (RAN). RAN is a virtual network that will allow them to share information about their clinical practices to accelerate the pace of clinical improvement, cutting improvement time to less than one year.

The RAN is sponsored by VHA, the national health-care alliance.

**Wyoming Hospital
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