

## **Patient Safety Symposium**

Healthcare and legal professionals from across Wyoming met in Laramie last week for a two-day symposium hosted by the Wyoming Law Review. “Health Care Reform & Patient Safety: Challenges & Opportunities for Medicine and the Law” was designed to foster dialogue among a number of related fields to generate ideas and solutions to some of the nation’s most pressing healthcare problems. Prominent national and regional authorities in medicine, healthcare delivery, administration and law attended the symposium to speak on such topics as Hospitals & the Culture of Safety, Ethical Perspectives & the Changing Face of Healthcare, State Healthcare Reform, Rural Healthcare Delivery, and Litigation, Patient Safety and the Tort Environment. Presenters at the symposium included U.S. Sens. John Barrasso and Mike Enzi, Wyoming Department of Health Director Dr. Brent Sherard, and Dr. Dennis O’Leary, president emeritus of the Joint Commission.

## **State Preparedness Program**

Wyoming hospitals can apply for \$15,000 each in funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP), but applications for funding are due by April 18. The program is intended to enhance emergency preparedness statewide. HPP funding can be used to pay for emergency preparedness drills, exercises, consultants, training, community involvement, and costs incurred during the planning process. In order to receive funding, hospitals must submit completed applications to the Wyoming Hospital Association by April 18. Funding is expected to be available by May 1.

A conference call is scheduled for 10 a.m. on April 7 to answer questions regarding the application process or the program in general.

In addition to administering this program, the state Hospital Preparedness Program also provides a web-based hospital bed tracking system to each hospital, conducts on-site Hospital Incident Command System training at each hospital, provides VisualDx software to each hospital, and will conduct a statewide pandemic influenza exercise in June 2008, among other programs. For assistance in completing the application, or if you have any questions, contact Merit Thomas, HPP Coordinator, at (307) 777-6904 or [merit.thomas@health.wyo.gov](mailto:merit.thomas@health.wyo.gov), or contact Rose Fishback, Wyoming Hospital Association, at (307) 632-9344 or [rose@wyohospitals.com](mailto:rose@wyohospitals.com).

## **Wyoming Department of Health Structural Change**

The Wyoming Department of Health has announced a departmental structural change which went into effect on April 1, 2008, pertaining to the formation of a new division. The Rural and Frontier Health Division will include the current Rural Health programs, Office of Multicultural Health, Telehealth/Telemedicine, and Vital Records Services. These program managers will report to the newly hired administrator, Ron Pearson, M.H.A. Ron joins the Wyoming Department of Health after having completed a career in the U. S. Air Force Medical Service. He is a Vietnam War veteran and a former director of base medical services at Francis E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne and Buckley Air Force Base in Aurora, Colorado. Ron has twenty-five years of leadership experience in a variety of health care organizations. He earned a Master's Degree in Health Administration from Washington University in St. Louis and a Bachelor's Degree in Health Care Services from Southern Illinois University.

## **Patient Satisfaction Now on Quality Website**

The Hospital Quality Alliance has published the first data from the hospital patients' experience of care survey (HCAHPS). Posted on the Hospital Compare web site, data from the patient satisfaction survey provides a standardized look at hospital care in ten areas, including communication with doctors and nurses, responsiveness of staff, communication about medication, pain management, discharge information, the hospital's quietness and cleanliness, and the patient's willingness to recommend the hospital to others. The initial data was collected from patients at more than 2,500 hospitals and will be updated quarterly with most of the nation's hospitals providing data by year end. At the same time, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services moved some Medicare payment and volume data for a select group of patient diagnoses to the Hospital Compare site at <http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/>.

## **AHRMM Launches Web Site on Supply Chain Data Standards**

The Association for Healthcare Resource & Materials Management has launched a web site to provide a single source for information on supply chain data standards. The site features the GS1 standards used by 90% of companies and organizations around the world, and information on the United Nations Standard Products and Services Code and the Unique Device Identifier program. "Using GS1 standards will help support industry-wide adoption of data standards in the health care supply chain and AHRMM is pleased to support this effort," said AHRMM Executive Director Deborah Sprindzunas. AHRMM is an AHA personal membership group for executives in health care resource and materials management. The website can be found at <http://www.ahrmm.org>

## **EMS Office To Help Ambulance Services With Cost For Statewide Exercise**

The EMS Office's Hospital Preparedness Program is offering ambulance services \$2,500 to offset their costs associated with their participation in the Department of Health's Public Health Emergency Preparedness Programs' statewide pandemic influenza exercise scheduled for June 24-26, 2008. To register your ambulance service or for more information on the exercise contact Merit Thomas at the EMS Office at 307-777-6904 or visit <http://www.health.wyo.gov/sho/hazards/exercise.html>

## **National Volunteer Week**

National Volunteer Week will be held April 27 - May 3, 2008. Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup> has been designated National Healthcare Volunteer Day. This special distinction has been made to recognize healthcare volunteers who make daily contributions that vitally impact healthcare volunteerism. This year's official theme, *Volunteers: Color Our World* has been selected as a way to recognize a year of dedication and caring.

## **Report Published on Trustee Demographics**

In December 2007, the Health Research & Educational Trust and the Center for Healthcare Governance surveyed 249 hospital and health system CEOs about the demographic characteristics of their boards. The report examines age, level of tenure, and work status of board members. The survey results can be found at [www.hret.org/hret/programs/govdemog.html](http://www.hret.org/hret/programs/govdemog.html).