

New, Improved Look For Newsbriefs Coming Soon

In the coming weeks, look for changes to the Wyoming Hospital Association Newsbriefs – changes that will update the look of the association’s weekly newsletter, and that will work to continue delivering valuable, relevant content to the newsletter’s broad audience. Beginning next week, News Briefs will get a face lift that includes a new design, and new features that include a calendar of WHA-sponsored events and a calendar of other relevant events around the state. The calendars are intended to help you plan for upcoming events that are of interest to you, and to keep you apprised of the broad set of legislative, healthcare, and association-related organizations and meetings the WHA participates in on behalf of our members. A second set of updates will focus on providing valuable content about the outcomes of the work the WHA does to represent hospitals around the state and how those outcomes affect our members. Additional features will provide a forum for member hospitals to share their successes, challenges, and best practices with colleagues around the state, as well as the 250 other newsletter recipients.

News Briefs is intended to be a digest of information that is relevant to our members. We look forward your feedback on these updates, and we encourage your suggestions.

Wyoming Hospital Becomes 5 Million Lives Mentor

Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital in Thermopolis has been selected by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) to be a 5 Million Lives Campaign mentor. As a mentor, Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital will provide support, advice, expertise and tips on implementing the Boards on board intervention. Some items the hospital will educate hospitals about include making sure boards and medical staff look at quality data at every meeting, showing the importance of educating the board and getting boards involved in the process. More information is available by contacting Belenda Willson at 307-864-3121.

National Hospital Week

Wyoming hospitals admitted more than 52,000 people in 2007, delivered more than 7,200 babies, and treated more than 225,000 patients in their emergency rooms. In that spirit of caring for the people of Wyoming, the state’s 26 acute care hospitals will celebrate National Hospital Week, May 11 – 17.

Sponsored by the American Hospital Association, National Hospital Week serves as a reminder that hospitals are cornerstones of the communities that built and nurture them, and that hospitals serve people in every community from all walks of life. Hospitals across the state will celebrate National Hospital week with events that are planned locally based on this year’s theme, “Where Healing Happens Every Day.”

The first National Hospital Day was held on Florence Nightingale's birthday, on May 12, 1921. That event was conceived by a Chicago magazine editor as a public healthcare event that encouraged trust in the city's hospitals in the wake of the Spanish Flu outbreak of 1918, which killed more than 600,000 Americans. The event expanded to an entire week in 1953, and today, every state celebrates National Hospital Week.

EqualityCare Clients Should Be Alert For Phone Scams

As reports of recent Medicaid phone scams have surfaced around the state, the Wyoming Department of Health is alerting clients of its EqualityCare (Medicaid) program to protect themselves from being victims of fraud. Recently reported scams include promising clients they will receive "lifetime Medicaid benefits" for a fee, or they need to give out their bank account information to receive a new Medicaid card. While EqualityCare (Medicaid) is a Wyoming Department of Health program, local representatives of the Department of Family Services work with clients on eligibility and related issues. Replacement EqualityCare cards are provided free of charge. To replace an EqualityCare card, call toll-free at 1-800-251-1269. EqualityCare clients should report any questionable activity to the Consumer Protection Office at 1-800-438-5799 or to their local police department.

Cherokee Inspired Comfort Awards

Six years have passed since Cherokee Uniforms first began recognizing healthcare professionals through its Inspired Comfort Awards program. Since that time, the leading designer and manufacturer of healthcare apparel has awarded nearly 60 healthcare professionals from across the country for their exceptional service, sacrifice and innovation. Although winners have had diverse backgrounds, all of them have one thing in common—a sincere passion for bettering the lives of others. Nominations are being accepted March 1 – May 31, 2008, for this year's awards program. The program provides a meaningful way for peers, friends and colleagues to acknowledge healthcare professionals for their significant contributions to patients and medical care. To nominate a healthcare professional, visit www.CherokeeUniforms.com. Cherokee Uniforms will make a donation for every healthcare professional who is nominated for the award through May 31, 2008, to Nurses House, a national fund that provides short-term financial assistance to registered nurses facing serious hardship. The grand prize winner in each category will receive an all-expense-paid Caribbean cruise for two. Additional winners in each category will receive all-expense-paid trips to a 2009 U.S. medical conference of each winner's choice, an annual membership to their preferred clinical association and a donation of \$500 to the nonprofit organization of their choice. Every award winner will receive a trophy, a medical wardrobe of Cherokee scrubs and Rockers footwear worth more than \$1,000, and a profile in the nationally distributed Cherokee Inspired Comfort Award 2009 calendar. Additionally, those who nominated the grand prize winner in each category will each receive a Cherokee medical wardrobe and a

donation of \$500 to the nonprofit organization of their choice. Nominations are due by May 31, 2008. Winners will be announced in September 2008.

Joint Commission Approves Grace Period For New Standard

Failure to comply with The Joint Commission's new emergency management standards will not affect its 2008 accreditation decisions, according to an April 17 decision by its accreditation committee. While non-compliance with these requirements will continue to be cited in an organization's report and will be required to be addressed in an Evidence of Standards Compliance, they will not be included in the count of the Requirements for Improvement contributing towards a conditional accreditation or a preliminary denial of accreditation decision, according to Gail Weinberger, the Joint Commission's director of accreditation and certification policy and administration. The AHA-affiliated American Society for Healthcare Engineering said it "encourages organizations to use this opportunity to continue to assess and develop their Emergency Management program, and build the relationships with community resources to assist with meeting the health care organization's mission when responding to an emergency or unusual event."