

## **Board of Pharmacy Meeting To Be Held in Cheyenne**

The Wyoming Board of Pharmacy has announced that the USP 797 changes regarding sterile compounding has been approved/published at the national level. USP Chapter 797 establishes a practice standard for compounding sterile preparation in pharmacies and, as a result, renovations to hospital pharmacies may be required under this new rule. The Board of Pharmacy has held previous public discussions on this issue and will once again bring this up at their January 30 & 31 meeting in Cheyenne, although they probably won't take final action on adopting the rule. A letter was sent to all hospitals last month asking for comments to be submitted to the Board. If you haven't already done so, please submit your comments to the Board and provide WHA with a copy. Questions should be directed to Jim Carder, Executive Director, Wyoming Board of Pharmacy, 307-234-0294.

## **Grant Applications To Be Mailed For Nursing Bill Passed in 2005**

In a bill passed in 2005, a total of \$1,700,000 was made available to hospitals seeking help in improving their nursing services. Wyoming hospitals that are interested in seeking Magnet Hospital Certification may apply for \$250,000 to help them obtain certification within five years. Any healthcare organization regardless of size, setting or location may be Magnet Certified; however, the legislators in Wyoming recognized that to achieve this level of excellence might be overwhelming to healthcare agencies in Wyoming.

Therefore, they set aside \$850,000 for hospitals under 100 beds to apply for grants that will support their efforts to promote quality nursing practices, quality working environments, increased retention of nursing staff and demonstrate improved outcomes for patients. Rules and Regulations are being written by the Wyoming Department of Health which will include award criteria and application procedures. Magnet-seeking hospitals will have a 40% matching requirement of the grant award with in-kind services or in-cash funds and small hospitals will have a 20% matching requirement.

The goal of the Office of Rural Health Wyoming Department of Health is to have the grant applications sent to all Wyoming hospitals by the first of February. For further information contact the Office of Rural Health, Sharla Allen, at 307-777-7293.

## **Therapy Assistant Program To Begin In 2009**

Laramie County Community College in Cheyenne is set to offer Wyoming's first-ever program to train people for careers as physical therapy assistants. It is expected to start in the spring semester of 2009. Physical therapist assistants work under the direction of physical therapists. They can't evaluate or diagnose patients, but they can help patients learn to move better and work to decrease pain. The assistants help through a variety of treatments, including prescribed exercises or ultrasound. Students who finish the program will get associates of applied science degrees and will be eligible to take the national licensing exam.

## **Preview Your HCAHPS Data - Public Release Set For March**

Through February 15, hospital leaders can preview their initial HCAHPS survey data through the QualityNet Exchange Web site at [www.qualitynet.org](http://www.qualitynet.org). Adopted by the Hospital Quality Alliance, of which the AHA is a partner, HCAHPS is the new national standard for collecting and publicly reporting information on patients' experience with inpatient care, and reporting is required for receiving a full payment update under the Medicare inpatient prospective payment system. HCAHPS data will be made available to the public for the first time in late March, on the Hospital Compare Web site ([www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov](http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov)).

Hospitals have until February 15 to review their data and report errors to their quality improvement organization. For this initial release of HCAHPS data, hospitals may elect to keep their results private, with no penalty to their annual payment update. However, we encourage all hospitals to allow their data to be made public.

The late March release of HCAHPS data will attract consumer, media, insurer and employer attention, and put the spotlight on how patients perceive the care they received in hospitals. As a result, you are urged to pull together an internal team – including individuals who oversee patient surveys, communications and marketing staff, and medical and nursing staff – to carefully review the data and be able to discuss it with the community you serve. The AHA in early March will provide you additional guidance that can help you and your team discuss your scores and what they mean for patients and your organization. AHA will post these and other resources on the AHA Quality Center Web site ([www.ahaqualitycenter.org](http://www.ahaqualitycenter.org)). More information about HCAHPS is available at [www.HCAHPSonline.org](http://www.HCAHPSonline.org). Questions about the public reporting of the survey results should be directed to [hospitalcahps@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:hospitalcahps@cms.hhs.gov).

## **AHRQ Releases Toolkits To Reduce Medical Errors**

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has released an array of toolkits designed to help doctors, nurses, hospital managers, patients and others reduce medical errors. The 17 toolkits, developed by AHRQ-funded experts who specialize in patient safety research, are free, publicly available, and can be adapted to most health care settings. The toolkits range from checklists to help reconcile medications when patients are discharged from the hospital to processes to enhance effective communication among caregivers and with patients. For more information and a complete listing of the 17 toolkits, visit <http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/>.

## **Save The Date - 12<sup>th</sup> Western Regional Trustee Symposium**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Western Regional Trustee Symposium will be held June 4-6, 2008 at the Boise Centre on the Grove in Boise, Idaho. This year's meeting theme is "A Framework for Accountable Healthcare Governance" and featured speakers include Jamie Orlikoff, Clint Maun and Kathryn McDonagh. More information is available online at [www.trusteesymposium.org](http://www.trusteesymposium.org).

## **Revisit User Fee Program Discontinued**

The user fees for Medicare survey revisits were discontinued Dec. 26, because the fiscal year 2008 omnibus appropriations bill signed by the president did not reauthorize the revisit user fee program. Thus, any revisit surveys conducted on or after Dec. 26 will not be subject to a fee, unless Congress chooses to reauthorize the program in the future. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services established the fee in September for health care facilities that require a revisit to confirm that identified deficiencies have been corrected.