

# NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 47, Number 8

March 4, 2016

## WHA Calendar:

**WHA Board of Directors Meeting**  
Cody, WY

5/18

**WHA CEO/Trustee Educational Program**  
Cody, WY

5/19

## Other Events:

**LeadingAge Wyoming Spring Meeting**  
Cody, WY

5/17-5/18

## President's Message

In a sprint to the finish, the 63rd Wyoming State Legislative Session has come to an end and we were involved up until the last minute. This was a very interesting, stressful, disappointing and very satisfying session. With the budget taking center stage and over 200 bills to be introduced in the short 20 day session, it was hard to predict at the outset where things would finish.

Medicaid expansion took center stage this session, at least early on, since it was included in the Governor's budget. Joint Appropriations took a hard look at the impact of expansion, but we knew going into the session that it would be a huge uphill battle to expand Medicaid. The JAC decided to strip expansion out of the budget, even with strong promptings from the Governor to accept the federal funds and help the state.

A strong grassroots effort that we were very involved in brought new support from associations and groups all over the state but even with a very eloquent and thought provoking amendment in the Senate to put expansion back in to the budget, the efforts were not enough and expansion

was defeated again.

There is no plan at this point within the legislature for how they will help our hospitals with the growing amount of uncompensated or charity care.



Nor is there a plan on how the 20,000 individuals within the state that would receive healthcare under expansion are going to receive that coverage while ensuring payment to their providers. It'll be interesting to see what emerges during the interim this year.

On a bright note, even with severe opposition from the Liberty Group and several ultra conservative legislators in the House, we were able to pass the private hospital UPL bill and the nursing home GAP payment bill.

If both of these programs are fully utilized by our members and the private nursing homes within our state, we will bring an additional \$25

million annually into the state to help us compensate for the uninsured and underinsured for which we provide healthcare.

We were also successful in passing a Free Standing ER bill that will require licensure of all free standing ERs under the supervision of the Department of Health. There is no way we can close the borders of the state to competition but this bill levels the playing field while still leaving options open for our small, rural communities.

We also successfully passed the Rural Healthcare District bill that allows rural healthcare districts the same borrowing authority as hospitals districts. This bill may be instrumental in the construction of the first new critical access hospital to be constructed in the Wyoming in many years.

We are also supportive of the efforts made by the Joint Title 25 Task force during the interim and are hopeful they will continue to work on a sustainable and workable solution to the mental and behavioral health problems our state is facing.



A bill was passed during the session to create more options for treatment of these patients and to also try to insert gatekeepers to assess the patients and recommend proper placement for the involuntary hospitalizations. While we believe this is the first step in the right direction, there is still a long way to go and we will be involved this year as solu-

tions are sought and decisions are made.

I'm grateful to the Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Committee. We had great support and help this year with our bills from the legislators that serve on the committee and a great deal of our bills successes this year are because of them.

Your help as members,

reaching out to all the legislators across the state was invaluable. Thank you for your support and for creating relationships with your representatives. Those relationships work and they listen to you.

Please reach out in your communities and thank them for supporting you and the other facilities in the state.

**AHAPAC membership has its benefits.** When you join AHAPAC, you will receive invitations to appreciation events throughout the year respective of your annual donation level. We are proud to include the events above as part of our benefits for 2016. These events are great opportunities to network with other politically engaged leaders while helping to elect federal candidates of both political parties who support the hospital policy agenda.

AHAPAC provides the opportunity for leaders of hospitals and health systems to join with peers who share their concerns — maximizing the collective impact of their financial contributions to political campaigns. AHAPAC partners with the state hospital associations to make our political action committee one of the most influential in health care in the country. We encourage you to contact your state hospital association and ask how you can donate to AHAPAC today.

For more information about AHAPAC, please contact **Shari Dexter** at **202.626.2338** or **sdexter@aha.org**.

**AHAPAC Club Levels** (minimum donation \$350 annually)  
**Capitol Club \$350 and Chairman's Circle \$500**

The Capitol Club and Chairman's Circle members receive special pins and invitations to the AHAPAC appreciation luncheon held during the AHA Annual Membership Meeting and special reception at the Health Forum/AHA Leadership Summit.

**Ben Franklin Club \$1,000**

Contributors at the \$1,000 level receive a special pin as well as invitations to the AHAPAC appreciation luncheon and private Ben Franklin reception held during the AHA Annual Membership Meeting and special reception at the Health Forum/AHA Leadership Summit.

Contributions or gifts to the AHAPAC are not deductible as the AHAPAC is not a 501(c)(3) organization. Your contribution is important to us, but we want to emphasize that all contributions are voluntary and have no impact on your job status, performance review, compensation or employment. Any financial gain or other benefits will be shared equally and fairly. Federal law requires us to obtain your consent and report the name, mailing address, city, state and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year (annually described). Contributions to AHAPAC will never be for a political purpose.

## Thank You to our Nurses for the Day

We would like to thank the nurses for volunteered for the Nurse-For-The-Day during this year's Legislative Session.

**Sherrie Rubio-Wallace, FNP**  
 University of Wyoming

**Anne Raga, MSN, RN**  
 Campbell County Memorial Hospital, Gillette

**Kristen Kohlbrand, RN**  
 Weston County Health Services, Newcastle

**Cynthia LaBonde, MN, RN**, Executive Director  
 Wyoming State Board of Nursing

**Cynthia Woods, RN**  
 Platte County Memorial Hospital, Wheatland



**Wyoming Hospital Association**

**2005 Warren Ave.  
 Cheyenne, WY  
 82001**

**www.wyohospitals.com**

**307.632.9344**