



# NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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## WHA Calendar:

WHA PAC Golf 9/23  
Tournament

WHA Annual 9/24-  
Meeting & 9/25  
Convention  
Cheyenne

## Other Events:

Wyoming Safety 6/25-  
and Workforce 6/26  
Summit  
Cheyenne



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## HHS Data and Tools Hope to Increase Transparency

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is releasing its first annual update to the Medicare hospital charge data, or information comparing the average amount a hospital bills for services that may be provided in connection with a similar inpatient stay or outpatient visit.

CMS is also releasing a suite of other data products and tools aimed to increase transparency about Medicare payments.

The data trove on CMS's website now includes inpatient and outpatient hospital charge data for 2012, and new interactive dashboards for the CMS Chronic Conditions Data Warehouse and geographic variation data.

"The release of these data sets furthers the administration's efforts to increase transparency and support data-driven decision making which is essential for health care transformation," said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius.

"These public data resources provide a better understanding of Medicare utilization, the burden of chronic conditions among beneficiaries and the implications for our health care system and how this varies by where beneficiaries are located," said Bryan Sivak, HHS chief

technology officer. "This information can be used to improve care coordination and health outcomes for Medicare beneficiaries nationwide, and we are looking forward to seeing what the community will do with these releases.

Additionally, the open FDA initiative being launched will for the first time enable a new generation of consumer facing and research applications to embed relevant and timely data in machine-readable, API-based formats."

The data posted on the CMS website provide the first annual update of the hospital inpatient and outpatient data released by the agency last spring. The data include information comparing the average charges for services that may be provided in connection with the 100 most common Medicare inpatient stays at over 3,000 hospitals in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. Hospitals determine what they will charge for items and services provided to patients and these "charges" are the amount the hospital generally bills for those items or services.

With two years of data now available, researchers can begin to look at trends in hospital charges. For exam-

ple, average charges for medical back problems increased nine percent from \$23,000 to \$25,000, but the total number of discharges decreased by nearly 7,000 from 2011 to 2012.

The Geographic Variation Dashboards present Medicare fee-for-service per-capita spending at the state and county levels in interactive formats. CMS calculated the spending figures in these dashboards using standardized dollars that remove the effects of the geographic adjustments that Medicare makes for many of its payment rates.

The dashboards include total standardized per capita spending, as well as standardized per capita spending by type of service. Users can select the indicator and year they want to display. Users can also compare data for a given state or county to the national average. All of the information presented in the dashboards is also available for download from the Geographic Variation Public Use File.

For more information about CMS data products, please visit [http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems.html](http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems.html).



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



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

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## Cody Hospital Keeps Involved With the Community

West Park Hospital is offering a variety of community health events every other month.

Topics covered this year include: Heart Conditions and Prevention, Stroke Warning Signs and Symptoms, Mindful Parenting, Mental Health and Addictions, Auto Immune Diseases, & Holiday Health Hearts.

Free lunch is included at every West Park Hospital community health event along with giveaways and

more information on the topic.

The events are held at different locations in the community to support local vendors such as the public library, the local museum, hotels, etc.

The events are recorded and uploaded to West Park Hospital's local TV channel and posted to their Facebook and YouTube accounts.

The Hospital is also involved with the Middle School REACH Program/

WPH has partnered with Cody, Meeteetse and Powell Middle Schools in Wyoming to offer opportunities in healthcare.

Middle school students interested in healthcare professions are now able to apply to West Park Hospital's REACH Healthcare program. WPH's main goal for their camp is to create awareness and interest about the diverse healthcare careers available in a small rural hospital.

## Wyoming Hospitals Named Great Community Hospitals

Cheyenne Regional Medical Center in Cheyenne and Wyoming Medical Center in Casper were recently selected as "great community hospitals" by Becker's Hospital Review.

For 2014, 100 hospitals were selected from around the country that have fewer than 550 beds.

The list was selected based on rankings and awards from analytical firms and the American Hospital Association.

Cheyenne Regional

Medical Center's 222 beds support 170 clinicians and 2,000 employees, according to Becker's. It's the home to the state's first Level II trauma center and comprehensive weight loss surgery program.

Meanwhile, Wyoming Medical Center was called out by the publication for earning the Gold Plus Award for stroke care from the American Heart Association as well as the Vascular Surgery Excellence Award from Healthgrades.

The 191-bed nonprofit hospital has 150 physicians on staff.

"Our vascular program is being recognized for being five stars, that's really our medical staff and the care we provide for those patients," said CEO Vickie Diamond in a statement. "The same thing with our stroke care. It really reflects the teamwork that goes on in this organization to provide the most optimal care to our patients."

## Lovell to Host Medicare Boot Camp

North Big Horn Hospital will be sponsoring the Medicare Boot Camp®—Critical Access Hospital Version.

This three-day intensive course will be held September 29 – October 1, 2014.

This one-of-a-kind class will show you which rules apply to your setting so you can suc-

cessfully submit claims and get paid appropriately. It will also teach you how to prepare for and respond to Recovery Auditor and other government audits.

This is the place to find the answers to all of your coding, billing, and reimbursement questions pertaining to your unique position in the healthcare

industry—the critical access hospital (CAH).

This custom class will show you which rules do apply to you so you can successfully process claims and get paid.

For questions call Peg Wacker at 307-548-5206 or e-mail [pwacker@nbhh.com](mailto:pwacker@nbhh.com).