

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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WHA Calendar:

WHA Board Meeting Cheyenne	1/13
Wyoming Critical Access Hospital Network Videoconference	1/24

Other Events:

State Issues Forum Washington, DC	1/18
Wyoming Legislature Begins	2/13

WHA To Launch Trustee Certification Program in 2012

Hospital trustees have always known that they play a critical role in ensuring the delivery of high-quality healthcare in their local communities and regions.

But in the post-Enron era of increased scrutiny and accountability, hospital governing boards have an even more profound responsibility to their hospitals and communities to be knowledgeable, and to have a full range of skills that prepare them to make effective decisions for the future of their organizations.

Effective boards, however, don't just happen. And that's why the Wyoming Hospital Association is developing its Hospital Trustee Certification Program for launch in 2012.

The program represents a major strategic commitment on behalf of the WHA and its members to developing well-prepared, well-trained hospital leaders, and it will move the WHA's traditional trustee education programs to a new level.

Hospitals not only require traditional governance skills, but they also demand a special awareness of the complex and ever-changing healthcare industry – an awareness that is difficult to develop from outside a healthcare environment.

The WHA's voluntary Trustee Certification Program is designed to make good trustees into exceptional trustees and crucial assets for their hospitals.

It will include a process for verifying an individual trustee's efforts to improve personal healthcare knowledge, leadership effectiveness, and compliance with a variety of governance best practices.

Ultimately, certification will be a method of assuring various stakeholders that Wyoming's hospitals hold themselves to high standards and are accountable for their governance performance.

And it will provide trustees with an opportunity to move beyond the basics of governance to a more forward-thinking, strategic understanding of the healthcare environment and how to help elevate their hospitals' mission and vision.

Modeled after the Minnesota Hospital Association's board certification approach, the program will include a Trustee Council composed of hospital trustees from around the state to help design and oversee the program, which will include such key components as:

- Principles of effective governance

- Strategic planning and positioning
- The board's role in quality and patient safety
- Fiduciary duties
- Board development and self-assessment

In previous years, the WHA has hosted nationally recognized healthcare governance experts to discuss critical governance issues during trustee education seminars and at its annual convention.

The Trustee Certification Program, however, will offer a long-term, systematic approach for ensuring the ongoing training of trustees in many of those same areas.

Throughout the program, trustees will discuss the basic functions of the board, compliance and legal issues, conflict of interest policies, development of policies for overall hospital operations, physician relations, community relations, quality assessment and improvement, healthcare finance and budgeting, and much more.

By moving hospital governance from good to great, all hospitals will be able to ensure the highest quality leadership while simultaneously earning and reinforcing employee and community trust.

Look for more information about the WHA's Trustee Certification program in future editions of News Briefs, or call the WHA at (307) 632-9344.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



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

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Hot Springs Employee Gets Dietary Certification

After completing a 12-month course at the University of North Dakota, a Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital employee has become the hospital's official certified dietary manager and certified food protection professional.

T.J. Schoenewald has been employed at HSCMH in various capacities since 1995, primarily in food services and marketing.

Following the course and several months of study to prepare for the certification exam, Schoenewald has

added professional credentials to that work experience.

He likens the certification to being a pharmacist of sorts. Doctors prescribe nutrients for their patients to help with recovery, and his role is to fill that prescription to the letter.

He is also responsible for ensuring that state laws are met regarding the nutrition each patient receives while in the hospital.

Though critical access hospitals in Wyoming are not required to have a certified dietary manager, senior

officials at the hospitals wanted him to become certified.

"I'm a big believer in professional organizations and education, so when administration asked me to do this, I had absolutely no qualms about doing this," he said.

He will be required to continue his education each year to maintain his certification, needing to accumulate 15 additional credits each year.

Nurse-For-A-Day Volunteers Needed for Legislature

The Wyoming Hospital Association is accepting volunteers for its annual Nurse-For-A-Day Program during the 2012 Budget Session of the legislature.

Volunteers are stationed in the Medical Aid Station on the third floor of the State Capitol building in Cheyenne during the session. Typically, they handle routine procedures such

as taking blood pressures, or treating minor cold and flu complaints, headaches, and upset stomachs.

Nurses work in tandem with the Doctor-For-The-Day, a program sponsored by the Wyoming Medical Society.

Each morning, the nurse is introduced in both the Senate and House chambers. And throughout the day, the

nurse is encouraged to spend time with legislators from their home counties. The WHA is happy to help facilitate those introductions.

The session begins February 13 and is scheduled to end March 9. To volunteer for the program, contact Rose Fishback at (307) 632-9344, or via email at rose@wyohospitals.com.

HRET/WHA Awarded Contract

As we turn our attention to new initiatives for 2012, WHA is pleased to announce our participation with AHA's Health Research & Education Trust (HRET) in expanded quality improvement efforts.

CMS recently awarded "Hospital Engagement Network" contracts to 26 organizations, including HRET as the leading sponsorship entity with its linkage with state

hospital associations across the country.

Through this effort, hospitals nationwide will have new resources and support in patient safety and cost reduction by targeting and reducing preventable injuries, avoidable complications, and infection prevention.

Each state association will have the flexibility to work with member hospitals

to focus upon the specific areas and quality measures that they identify with priority.

The process will begin with a needs assessment survey that will in turn formulate a work plan specific to each state.

WHA will be intent to engage the assistance of Mountain Pacific Quality Health for practical and efficient implementation.