



NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 46, Number 45

November 13, 2015

WHA Calendar:

HFMA Meeting Laramie	11/18- 11/19
WHA Board Meeting Lander	11/23

Other Events:

Joint Labor, Health & Social Services Committee Cheyenne	1/7-1/8

Editorial Makes Sense for Wyoming Hospitals

The Casper Star Tribune editorial of November 8, 2015 is one of the best we have read so far this year.

The editorial relates our story on the opportunities to improve health care in Wyoming if the expansion of Medicaid does not go through.

Please take the time to read the following as viewpoints are concise, and well written.

**Written by the Casper Star-Tribune Editorial Staff
November 8, 2015**

Health care in Wyoming isn't working.

Hospitals are providing hundreds of millions of dollars in uncompensated care each year. We have also so far failed to expand Medicaid, which makes medical care harder to obtain for 17,600 low-income adults.

We are looking at two real opportunities to improve the situation. One potential state law would allow private hospitals to receive up to \$4.5 million each year from the federal government to help with the uncompensated care dilemma. The state has not reached its maximum allowance through the Medicaid program, which is a health care program for low-income people. The hospitals would be permitted to pay \$4.5 million into an account in order for the federal

government to provide that amount in matching funds. Medicaid is a partnership between the federal government and each state; in this case, the hospitals would be paying Wyoming's share of the costs.

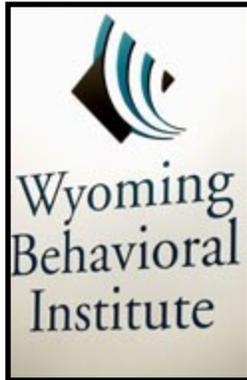
This represents a needed boost. Because the state has so far taken the wrong tack on Medicaid expansion, Wyoming's hospitals need all the help they can get. Because so many adults don't have access to preventive care, these facilities are too often the first point of contact. Such emergency visits are expensive, and that increases the charity care costs.

About seven hospitals, mostly private, would stand to benefit from the change. Wyoming Medical Center in Casper, which is a nonprofit, leases county-owned land but would still qualify.

We hope legislators take this opportunity seriously. A committee is examining the bill now and will decide whether to advance it for consideration in next year's legislative session. It's a much more valuable initiative than the flimsy fix the Legislature lobbied at the problem in the last session. Money from that fund is disappearing quickly, a testament to just how much charity care these facilities are providing.

Another opportunity to improve the hospital system comes in the form of legislation that would allow clinics in the Sublette County Rural Health District to become a small hospital and therefore receive more money from Medicare and Medicaid. (Billing practices are different for hospitals than clinics.) This could be a \$3 million difference for the system, but it would also benefit patients. Right now, the clinics can't keep people overnight. People who need treatment are sent to hospitals in Jackson, Rock Springs or Kemmerer. This change would also let patients receive care close to home. If the bill passes, similar clinics across the state would have the opportunity to make the same transformation.

These hospitals treat everyone, whether they can pay or not. We must do everything we can to make sure they have as much support as possible. Neither of these things will fix the problem of uncompensated care in the state the way Medicaid expansion would, and we certainly hope lawmakers follow Gov. Matt Mead's lead and choose to take care of low-income Wyomingites. But they can be part of a multifaceted solution, and that's the kind of fix health care in Wyoming so desperately needs.



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

Wyoming Hospital Association

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WBI Casper Outpatient Center Offers Adult IOP

Wyoming Behavioral Institute (WBI) offers adult outpatient mental health services at 2546 E. 2nd St., Suite 600.

For individual therapy or medication management appointments, call (307) 337-4560. Group therapy is also available.

Group therapy is for adults transitioning out of inpatient treatment, or in need of more than individual therapy.

Group options include

- Anger Management

- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
- Relapse Prevention
- Illness Management and Recovery
- Gender Specific Groups
- Process Group
- Family Education Group

Individual and group therapy, and medication management are available.

Monthly groups will be offered open to family, friends, and significant others of those with mental

health and substance use issues. These groups will feature an educational topic and also will allow for a question and answer session.

Questions can be answered about diagnoses, medications, treatment options, and what loved ones are learning in treatment.

For more information or to get group admission information, call (307) 337-4560.

CMS Two-Midnight Policy Rule

The American Hospital Association has been instrumental in helping to finalize the two-midnight policy rule.

The CMS finalized a modified two-midnight policy last week, despite arguments that the modified rule could lead to fraud.

The two-midnight rule calls for Medicare's payment and audit contractors to assume a hospital admission was legitimate if it

spans two midnights.

The agency will allow doctors to exercise judgment in admitting patients for short stays.

The CMS is removing auditing oversight from its administrative contractors and instead letting quality improvement organizations (QIOs) enforce the policy.

Recovery audit contractors (RACs) would be directed to focus only on hospitals with unusually high

rates of denied claims.

The American Hospital Association said hospitals "look forward" to working with QIOs rather than RACs, and anticipate a fairer auditing process.

The CMS denied a request to delay enforcement, saying the January 1, 2016 start date was enough time for hospitals to understand the final rule.

Health Care Law Boot Camp

West Park Hospital has scheduled the health care law boot camp with Dan Mulholland, Horthy Springer Law Firm, Pittsburg, PA

Horthy Springer is a national recognized law firm that works with hospitals and physicians throughout the country and Dan is one of the more recognized health care attorneys in the

firm.

WPH has scheduled the health care law boot camp on December 10-11, 2015 for hospital attorneys, CEO's, CMO's, and any other hospital Senior Leadership Staff, physician, or trustees in Cody to be held in the WPH Education Center.

The boot camp will begin

on Thursday morning, December 10th at 8:00 am and end at 12:00 on Friday, December 11th.

Registration fee is \$550 person.

For more information on the program or to register, contact Kim Jacobs, phone: 307/578-2488, or e-mail, kjacobs@wphcody.org.