



# NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 44, Number 43

November 8, 2013

## WHA Calendar:

Healthcare Leadership Training	11/15
Wyoming Patient Safety Summit Casper	11/15

## Other Events:

HFMA Fall Meeting Sheridan	11/7-11/8
----------------------------	-----------



Follow us on Twitter and Facebook

## Health Committee Delays Decision on Medicaid Expansion Approach

State lawmakers are considering three approaches for potentially expanding Medicaid, but won't settle on an option before the new year.

One approach would create a Medicaid program that's more akin to private insurance. Two others would use public dollars to buy private coverage for people with low incomes. However, they differ on important details.

All three models would extend coverage to thousands of uninsured adults in Wyoming. Roughly 89,000 Wyoming residents now go without any insurance, and even more don't have enough coverage to prevent financial ruin should they become seriously ill.

The Legislature's Labor, Health and Social Services Committee discussed the three options Tuesday when it met in Lander. But instead of selecting one approach, the lawmakers chose to wait until they meet again in mid-January.

Waiting will give the committee more time to observe the Affordable Care Act in action before making a decision, said Sen. Charles Scott, R-Casper. The federal health reform law calls for states to make more residents eligible for Medicaid.

There was little consensus among lawmakers about how

to move forward. The Wyoming Department of Health recommended developing Medicaid Fit — a middle ground between private insurance and the traditional program. It would offer more limited benefits while making recipients share in the cost of their care.

Gov. Matt Mead has called Medicaid Fit the best option should Wyoming lawmakers choose to expand the program.

It's also earned the endorsement of Rep. Mary Throne, the Democratic House minority floor leader, who says it would save the state money while helping hospitals that care for patients who cannot afford to pay.

But Scott said that approach relies too heavily on a Medicaid program that encourages excessive use of health care services.

"I will tell you quite frankly, I don't like it," he said.

Rep. Throne was not in attendance at the meeting, and as a result, the committee delayed discussion of the Medicaid Fit option until its January meeting.

Scott and Rep. Elaine Harvey, R-Lovell, head the health committee. They've each promoted bills related to an expansion model devel-

oped by Arkansas.

Under the Arkansas model, the state would use Medicaid dollars to purchase private insurance for people with low incomes, via the federal insurance exchange.

That approach would provide better reimbursements for doctors and has already proved palatable to the federal government, Harvey said.

Harvey would prefer legislation that closely mirrors Arkansas'. Scott wants a somewhat similar approach, but with a handful of key differences — including requirements that recipients work and contribute to the cost of their care.

Those additions come from welfare reform, Scott said.

"It's worked there," he said. "It's sort of a standard way we want to do things."

Harvey questioned the viability of Scott's approach. She questioned whether federal authorities will sign off on some of her colleague's ideas — including potentially using the exchange as the vehicle to connect Medicaid recipients with private insurance.

Even if the lawmakers can settle on a model, there's no guarantee they can convince the full Legislature to enact it.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



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



### Wyoming Hospital Association

2005 Warren Ave.  
Cheyenne, WY  
82001

[www.wyohospitals.com](http://www.wyohospitals.com)

307.632.9344

## Hot Springs Employees Dress for Protection

Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital (HSCMH) employees showed their support for National Infection Prevention week.

Hospital staff as well as visitors had the opportunity to play three games: "Game of hands," "Ask me if I washed my hands today," and "Count the germs and bugs in a jar of jellybeans."

A fashion show was held in the hospital cafeteria with

three employees modeling the latest in infection prevention gear.

The runway show was MC'd by Sheila Lutz of the infection prevention department. One of the models was wearing a complete hazmat suit. The other employee was dressed in the proper gear when cleaning the oven.

According to a handout provided by the hospital,

clean hands are the key when it comes to preventing the spread of germs. Hands should be washed often with soap and water, especially after using the bathroom, after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose and before and after any contact with someone who is sick. If soap and water aren't readily available, use an alcohol based hand sanitizer.

## National Rural Health Day, November 21st

The National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health and various partners are hosting a series of FREE webinars highlighting the good work being done to address rural health concerns.

All webinars will be recorded and made available to the public at: <http://www.nosorh.org> and <http://celebratepowerofrural.org/>

**12PM EST: AgriSafe - Protecting the People Who Feed America**

Registration: <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/491563334>

register/491563334

**1PM EST: Rural 101 - The Basics of Rural Health**

Registration: <https://nosorh.webex.com/nosorh/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=660990830>

**2 PM EST: Population Based Health and Health Promotion in Rural**

Registration: <https://nosorh.webex.com/nosorh/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=666479151>

**3 PM EST: The Affordable Care Act in Rural America**  
**Tom Morris, Associate Administrator, Federal**

**Office of Rural Health Policy**

Registration: <https://nosorh.webex.com/nosorh/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=666426441>

**4 PM EST: Resources for Recruitment, Networking, and Telehealth**

Registration: <https://nosorh.webex.com/nosorh/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=664434416>

For additional information contact Matt Strycker (574) 855-4671  
[stryckerm@nosorh.org](mailto:stryckerm@nosorh.org)

## Wyoming Medical Reserve Corps Unit

Health professionals who would like to donate time and expertise to help prepare for and respond to emergencies and promote healthy living are asked by the Wyoming Department of Health to consider joining a local Medical Reserve Corps unit.

Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units are a specialized, health-related component of Citizen Corps, a

national network of hometown security volunteers.

The efforts of MRC volunteers supplement existing emergency and public health resources. MRC units help find local needs and support their communities throughout the year with various activities.

Wyoming currently has five (5) Medical Reserve Corps in Campbell, Natrona,

Sweetwater, Albany, and Cheyenne. We strongly encourage anyone interested in becoming part of the MRC to join today!

For more information visit: <https://medicalreservecorps.gov> or to register online go to: <https://vol.wyoming.gov> or contact Angelyn Mayes at 307-587-5366 or [angelyn.mayes@wyo.gov](mailto:angelyn.mayes@wyo.gov).