



# NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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## WHA Calendar:

LeadingAge Wyoming Board Meeting	1/19
WHA Board Meeting Cheyenne	2/11
Legislative Reception Cheyenne	2/11

## Other Events:

Joint Labor, Health & Social Services Committee Cheyenne	1/7-1/8
Legislature Convenes	2/8

## West Park Hospital Hosts Health Law Forum



Over 50 attendees from across the state participated in a highly engaging and educational “Health Law Boot Camp” held December 10-11 at West Park Hospital in Cody.

Doug McMillan, CEO at WPH had made commitment earlier in the fall to provide their hospital’s legal counsel with opportunity for fresh review and update of key health care legal areas of interest.

The timeliness of such an opportunity clearly struck a chord statewide and under McMillan’s leadership, WPH offered to structure and host the event as an open forum to be available to all hospitals statewide.

The law firm Horty, Springer & Mattern – based in Pittsburg, PA is a nationally recognized firm that works with hospitals and physician practices throughout the country.

Dan Mulholland, as a leading health care attorney with the firm, was engaged to serve as the key presenter for the forum. The experience and level of detailed review and

analysis provided by Mr. Mulholland was clearly of great value to all in attendance.

Those participating in the forum represented 16 Wyoming hospitals – with an excellent mix of attorneys, CEOs, trustees, and physician leaders. Just as designed, the wide range of legal review and update on a variety of topics provided understanding and clarity, including full coverage in the following medical staff areas of interest – Medical Staff bylaws, credentialing, privileging, peer review & employment contracts.

Mulholland also provided very appropriate and timely insight into all aspect of mergers, affiliations and joint venture activity. From a regulatory perspective, full review of fraud & abuse preventions, and compliance with all aspects of HIPAA and EMTALA also served as core content provided.

The hospitals’ role and responsibility in assuring quality of care and responsiveness to their defined community needs framed numerous issues throughout the forum.

Focus and detail regarding tax-exemption rules and the diligence necessary toward local governance effectiveness for county memorial and hospital district boards proved very timely

and allowed everyone to participate in discussion of best practices and organizational performance.

A number of Wyoming-based attorneys, including Nick Healey from Cheyenne and Jay Gilbertz from Sheridan, provided clarity from Wyoming reference and openly shared insight from their experience in having tended to health care law within their respective legal practices.

The Wyoming Hospital Association greatly appreciates the interest and commitment to ongoing education and on this specific occasion – the leadership of Doug McMillan and his staff at West Park Hospital for arranging and hosting this fine event.

All participants have gained knowledge and timely educational content from these efforts allowing them to move forward and to be at their best in serving those in their respective Wyoming communities.





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

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## Telestroke Program Provided at Community Hospital

Community Hospital in Torrington, Wyoming knows that every second matters when it comes to treating strokes.

Being able to identify the type of stroke quickly can help determine if the patient can be treated in our hospital or should be moved to a facility with more specialized services.

Community Hospital has partnered with Swedish Medical Center in Denver to bring the Telestroke Program to Torrington. This program will provide the

fastest and most advanced treatment for stroke patients by using robotic technology.

When staff suspects a person is having a stroke, they bring in a sophisticated robot equipped with two-way video and audio communication.

At Swedish Medical Center, a neurologist sits in front of a high-definition monitor, camera and microphone to assist the staff on scene in diagnosing the patient. With the camera and microphone, the neurologist can assess and interview the

patient and talk to the family members and other care providers just as if he or she were in the room.

Most importantly, the neurologist can provide the valuable consultation about the plan of care for the patient with the on-site emergency department physician.

This consultation between the Swedish Medical Center neurologist and the Community Hospital emergency physician may alleviate the need to transfer the patient.

## Legislature Hears Medicaid Expansion Plan

A legislative panel was briefed December 14th on the Wyoming Department of Health's plan to balance its budget by having the state accept the optional Medicaid expansion.

Tom Forslund, director of the state agency, told the Joint Appropriations Committee that accepting the expansion would more than cover rising state-funded healthcare costs in the upcoming two-year budget.

But if Wyoming once again elects to deny the expansion, he said, lawmakers will have to find another way to pay for the \$23.7 million in exception requests the department is seeking.

Thirty-one states have accepted the optional expansion since the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2012 that states can choose whether to expand their Medicaid programs for low-income adults.

Projections from the Department of Health show that accepting the expansion would bring in \$268.4 million in federal money for the 2017-18 biennium. Meanwhile, the state would have to pay \$16.5 million to cover its share of the costs.

Forslund said the expansion would free up state general funds that are currently being used to treat the expansion population.

## Panel Recommendations for Interoperable health IT

The Health Information Technology Policy Committee has sent Congress recommendations to overcome technical, operational and financial barriers to interoperable health IT, as mandated by legislation last year.

The report calls for developing and implementing health information ex-

change-sensitive measures for health outcomes, resource use and vendor performance and certification; and HIE-sensitive payment incentives that incorporate performance criteria and an implementation timeline for alternative payment models.

In addition, the panel calls for the federal government and private sector to

convene a summit of major stakeholders to create an action plan for building on the Office of the National Coordinator's Interoperability Roadmap.

The committee advises ONC on health IT policy.