

# NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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## WHA Calendar:

2015 General Session of the Wyoming Legislature  
Cheyenne **1/13**

## Other Events:

Leading Age Wyoming **1/21-1/23**

## Lawmakers Press Ahead on Medicaid Expansion

A plan to extend health coverage to thousands of low-income Wyoming residents cleared a major hurdle Tuesday.

The Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Interim Committee voted to endorse a bill that allows the state to expand its Medicaid program.

The proposal will now advance to the full Legislature for its consideration during the general session that begins next month.

But the plan is not the one that is backed by Gov. Matt Mead and the Wyoming Department of Health.

Instead, it is modeled after a Medicaid program in Indiana that requires newly eligible Medicaid recipients to pay a small portion of their income into a fund that works similarly to a health savings account.

Like the traditional Medicaid expansion that many other states have accepted, the plan would allow residents who are under 138 percent of the federal poverty level to receive Medicaid benefits.

This would cover an individual making \$16,104 a year or a family of four that makes \$32,197, for example.

But it would require a waiver from the federal government in order to make

recipients pay for a portion of their health care.

Depending on how much an individual earns, the plan requires them to contribute an amount - likely to be set somewhere between \$3 and \$25 a month - into a personal health and wellness account.

Federal or state Medicaid dollars would make up the rest of the account, which would be funded to a level of \$2,500.

Individuals with incomes between 100 and 138 percent of the poverty level would lose their coverage if they fail to make their required contributions.

And those with incomes up to 100 percent of the poverty level would be required to make co-payments if they don't make their contributions.

Sen. Charles Scott, R-Casper, the committee's co-chairman, said this method would help control costs by making residents more responsible for their health care.

"The problem I have with the traditional Medicaid expansion is I don't see in it any incentives to control utilizations, and thus costs," he said. "And health savings accounts are well-proven mechanisms for doing just that sort of thing."

Rep. Sue Wilson, R-

Cheyenne, also supported it because she said it's time for Wyoming to accept the expansion.

"We are already spending general fund money on these people's health needs," she said. "Using the federal match program while it exists, we can leverage federal money for the short time that I think it will be around."

But Wilson and several other lawmakers said they would have liked to see the committee also advance the Mead-backed plan, which is called SHARE, or Wyoming's Strategy for Health, Access, Responsibility and Employment.

The committee rejected that plan when it failed on a 7-7 vote.

This option would have also required a federal waiver to place cost-sharing requirements on the recipients.

Instead of using health savings accounts, though, it would make the new enrollees pay small co-payments for certain health services.

The alternative Medicaid expansion plan will be a legislative committee-sponsored bill when the 2015 legislative session begins next month.

## 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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## CRMC Named Top Performer by Joint Commission

The Joint Commission announced on November 13, 2014, that Cheyenne Regional Medical Center (CRMC) has been selected as a 2013 Top Performer on Key Quality Measures®.

CRMC was recognized in the Joint Commission's 2014 annual report "America's Hospitals: Improving Quality and Safety" for attaining and sustaining excellence in accountability measure performance for treatment of heart attacks,

heart failure, pneumonia and for surgical care.

CRMC is among 36.9 percent of Joint Commission -accredited hospitals to be recognized as a 2013 Top Performer.

"Cheyenne Regional Medical Center is proud to be named a Top Performer as it recognizes the knowledge, teamwork and dedication of our employees and medical staff," said Margo Karsten, Cheyenne Regional's chief executive

officer.

"We understand what matters most to patients at Cheyenne Regional is the quality and safety of the care they receive. That is why we have made it a top priority to improve positive patient outcomes through evidence-based care processes," Karsten said. "This recognition shows that we are doing the right things for our patients."

## Hospitals May Have Outdated Info on Kid Care CHIP

Kid Care CHIP has received several outdated applications from hospitals and providers and would like to ensure that all hospitals in Wyoming have the most up-to-date qualification information, promotional materials, and applications.

Uninsured Wyoming kids and teens may be eligible for low or no cost health insurance through Kid Care CHIP.

Kid Care CHIP covers preventative care services, emergency room visits, im-

munizations, prescription medications, dental care, vision screening, glasses and more.

To qualify children and teens must be 19 years old or younger, a Wyoming resident, meet the specified income guidelines and be uninsured for at least 30 days. In addition, the applicant must be a United States citizen, lawful permanent resident or legally living in the United States for 5 years or longer.

A family may be eligible

if the household income is 200% over the federal poverty level or less. Children in a family of four earning \$47,700 per year may be eligible for Kid Care CHIP. Please visit [health.wyo.gov/kidcarechip](http://health.wyo.gov/kidcarechip) for more information on the income guidelines for this program.

Contact Sara at Kid Care CHIP for updated promotional materials or paper applications for your patients at [kidcare-chip@wyo.gov](mailto:kidcare-chip@wyo.gov) or call 307-777-7574.

## Cody Receives Trauma Hospital Designation

West Park Hospital was visited for a focused trauma site review this past year by the state of Wyoming to determine if the facility qualifies as a Wyoming Area Trauma Hospital.

Based on the recommendations of the site survey team and the "Rules and Regulations of Wyoming Trauma Program,"

the Wyoming Trauma Program granted West Park Hospital with full designation as an Area Trauma Hospital.

Assignment of this designation level is for a period of three years, and will be up for full review in 2016.

Kelli Perrotti, Wyoming Trauma Program Manager said, "West Park Hospital's obvious commitment to the

development of their trauma program is to be commended. This designation demonstrates your institution's dedication to providing quality patient care for your community and the residents of Wyoming."

