



Wyoming Hospital Association

NEWSBRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 48, Number 46

December 29, 2017

Save The Date

**WHA Annual Meeting & Convention
September 5-6,
2018
Laramie, WY**

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Annual Goal—\$8400
Achieved -\$8400**

Message from the President—Year in Review

It is hard for me to believe another year has come and gone. As I have reflected on the past year I am proud of the things we have done and continued to be humbled to represent the great hospitals and incredible staffs of the hospitals from around our state.

During the regular legislative session this year we were successful in passing an EMT Licensure Compact bill. We were also successful in keeping hospitals from being caught up in new rules and regulations and giving county commissioners more power and authority over hospital districts. We defeated attempts to change the way we purchase equipment and helped delay a volunteer healthcare bill that needed major overhaul and changes.

Since the legislative session ended in early March I have logged more than 20,000 miles traveling the state. I have visited every hospital at least once this year. I have attended hospital board meetings all across the state. I have testified at and attended all three Joint Judiciary Committee interim meetings, continuing our work on the volunteer healthcare bill. I also attended all three Joint Labor Health and Social Services Committee hearings, closely monitoring proposed legislation that could affect hospitals

in the state. I have been working with legislators on ideas to strengthen the laws protecting healthcare workers as they perform their duties and serve patients.

I was able to travel to Washington DC 5 times this year and each time met with our congressional delegates, advocating for hospitals and working with them as they attempted to repeal the ACA. We have continued our advocacy work and are continuing our efforts to get a permanent fix to the 96 hour rule for CAHs. Reauthorization of the Medicare extenders which includes restoring the DSH payments as well as the low volume adjustment payments is a high priority. We have convened numerous calls with our congressional delegate's offices, allowing members to voice their concerns and tell their story. I continue to talk to the staff in DC and am on the phone with them at least once a week telling them how important it is that we get these programs reauthorized and extended. We have also continued our work to strengthen the 340b program and to oppose efforts to cut the program.

Our Trustee Education Training was a huge success this past spring. We brought in Bob Harris who provided great insight and training for

our hospital boards. He also provided great tools to take back and utilize within each organization. In addition, in September the WHA engaged Best on Boards and paid for access for every hospital board member and every hospital CEO to take the training and become certified with their on-line training program. To date we have 69 individuals that have signed up with 5 already completing the program and becoming certified.

This year was also a good year as the two new UPL programs that the WHA successful passed through legislation in 2016 took effect. Millions of additional dollars have begun to flow in to the state for both hospitals and nursing homes. This money is being used to help strengthen those facilities and allowing them to reinvest in their staff and their buildings to deliver the highest level of care in those communities.

I meet monthly with Director Tom Forslund and believe we have forged a strong working relationship. In addition, I serve on the Medical Advisory Group and meet with the folks from Medicaid quarterly, along with representatives from several of our hospitals around the state. We have been able to help set policy and become aware of changes to the program that

Message from the President—Continued

WHA Calendar

WHA Trustee Education Session Lander	5/17
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will affect hospitals, so that we can get out front on those changes and make members aware. We have also been able to make the Medicaid Department aware of problems and work on solutions so that the programs are administered properly.

I also meet quarterly with Laura Hudspeth, Director of the State License and Survey Department to talk about issues and to have open dialogue about changes to the survey process. We were able to work with them to simplify the license renewal application. During the legislative session, we were also successful in defeating a bill to increase the license renewal and new license fees. We are currently working with the department as they promulgate rules and regulations for Free Standing ERs.

This year we have been watching the budget closely and I have been very vocal that our hospitals and healthcare providers have been cut deep enough. I believe the Governor heard our voice and there are no proposed cuts in the Governor's budget that was presented to the legislature in early December. In addition, I have been working with the Wyoming Department of Health and with hospitals both in Wyoming and in surrounding states that serve the Indian Health Services population to put agreements in place to share data. By putting these agreements in place, we will save the state budget somewhere between \$5-7 million annually, as these services will now be paid 100% by the federal

government instead of on the regular 50/50 split. The state has recognized the efforts of the hospitals and that has been a big message we have delivered to Joint Appropriation Committee. Hospitals are doing all they can to help the state with their budget problems.

The WHA Board held a retreat this summer and spent a day coming up with a strategic plan that I am implementing and working on. The focus is continuing to add value for members, creating stronger member engagement and networking and getting members more involved locally on the advocacy efforts. We are continuing to improve and grow WHA Resources and bring more vendors to the table to offer discounts and services to our members.

We continue our efforts with the HRET HIIN project and have recently signed an agreement to work with Mountain-Pacific Quality Health to administer the program while continuing our work with Shanelle Van Dyke. We really need to celebrate the success of each hospital in the state as we reach milestones within the HIIN program. We were also major sponsors of the Quality Conference held last summer and have committed to continue our support and work with the conference this year. We are also still very involved in the FLEX program with the CAHs and the Office of Rural Health and are looking at ways to make the program even better for member hospitals.

Our annual meeting was a huge success this year with

the largest attendance ever. We were able to once again partner with the Wyoming Chapter of HFMA and have them begin attending our meeting. We hosted a HR Bootcamp that was well attended and have already received requests to do another breakout session in 2018. We have signed an agreement and will be having our 2018 Annual Meeting in Laramie this year at the University of Wyoming Rochelle Center.

We raised a great deal of money for both our state and federal PAC and for the second year in a row met our AHA PAC fundraising goal. We also added significantly to the state PAC through the success of the PAC auction and the fundraising golf tournament, as well as the generous contributions from members all across the state.

I feel honored and blessed to represent the incredible hospitals, nursing homes and the staffs that work in each of these facilities in every part of the state. The work you and your teams do is impressive and often overlooked and undervalued. Our industry faces major change and barriers but you all find ways to continue to serve your communities and protect the health of the citizens of Wyoming.

You should be proud of the work you do and celebrate your successes with your teams. Thanks for a wonderful year and I look forward to continuing the great work in 2018.

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

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