

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 45, Number 45

December 5, 2014

WHA Calendar:

Labor Health and Social Services Interim Committee Cheyenne	12/15-12/16
2015 General Session of the Wyoming Legislature Cheyenne	1/13

Other Events:

“SHARE Plan” Proposed to Expand WY Medicaid Coverage

The Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) is describing its newly released recommendations for expanding healthcare coverage to thousands of uninsured residents as a fiscally responsible, Wyoming-centered approach.

The department is calling its recommended plan, “Wyoming’s Strategy for Health, Access, Responsibility and Employment,” or the “SHARE Plan.”

People with incomes below the federal poverty line are not eligible for federal subsidies to purchase private insurance or for coverage through Medicaid if they live in a state that has not expanded the program, due to the way the Affordable Care Act was written and related court decisions. “Unless Medicaid is expanded in Wyoming, individuals in this group are left out completely,” said Tom Forslund, WDH director.

“Thousands of uninsured Wyoming residents do not have healthcare coverage, which limits their access to preventive care, leads to increased use of hospital emergency departments, and results in large amounts of unpaid care,” Forslund said. “This is not good for these individuals and is a burden on Wyoming’s healthcare

system.”

“Key components of our plan include cost sharing, a work benefit and appropriate case management,” Forslund said.

If approved by the Wyoming Legislature and signed into law, the SHARE Plan for Wyoming Medicaid expansion would include two new programs based on participant income:

- Participants with higher incomes (101-138 percent of federal poverty level) would take part in a demonstration project, paying a small monthly premium to receive an alternative benefits package.
- Participants with lower incomes (less than 100 percent of the federal poverty level) would receive the alternative benefits package but would not participate in the demonstration project and would not have to pay a monthly premium.
- Both groups would be required to pay small copayments for certain services and have access to the Wyoming Medicaid provider network.
- Both groups would be connected with work assistance benefits available through the Depart-

ment of Workforce Services.

In addition, eligible “medically frail” adults would be enrolled in traditional Medicaid.

WDH expects that Medicaid expansion would inject \$100-120 million in new federal funds each year into Wyoming’s economy. An analysis conducted jointly between WDH and the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information’s Economic Analysis Division suggests this funding would create approximately 800 new jobs.

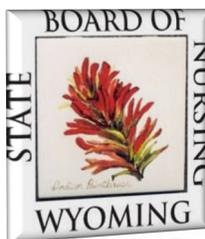
“Each year Wyoming does not expand Medicaid, we pass up these millions in federal funds that we could be putting to work in our state,” Forslund said. “In other words, Wyoming taxpayers are currently helping to pay for Medicaid expansion in other states without seeing any benefits closer to home.”

Forslund expects Wyoming will be able to expand coverage without increasing the amount of state general funds spent on healthcare. “We could eliminate or reduce a number of programs within WDH that currently provide needed healthcare services to individuals with no other pay source.”

The full report is available online at ww.health.wyo.gov.



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



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Evanston Regional Hospital Nationally Recognized

Evanston Regional Hospital (ERH) has been named a 2013 Top Performer on Key Quality Measures by the Joint Commission, the nation's leading accreditor of health care organizations.

The honor recognizes hospitals that excel at meeting the Commission's stringent measurements for exemplary patient care. This is the second time ERH has earned the designation.

"This honor means that our community can turn to Evanston Regional Hospital with confidence, knowing that we strive to provide excellent care every day," said George Winn, CEO.

"Following evidence-based clinical protocols close to 100 percent of the time is not an easy goal to reach, but one that has been achieved through the dedication of our physicians, nurs-

es and other caregivers."

Top performers are recognized each year for improving performance on evidence based interventions that increase the chances of healthy outcomes for patients with certain conditions.

ERH was recognized in 2011 and 2013 for its performance on accountability measure data for surgical care.

Medicaid Expansion—We Need Your Help

Now that Governor Mead and the Department of Health have come out with a recommendation to expand Medicaid, we are aware we will be facing stiff opposition from members of the legislature and especially members of the Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Committee.

As you can see from the "SHARE Plan" article on the previous page, coverage would be afforded 17,000 people if the Plan is adopted.

We encourage you to reach out to your local legislators and ask them to support Medicaid expansion

and provide health care coverage to our most vulnerable population.

Please call your Legislator directly or utilize VoterVoice at www.wyohospitals.com and enter your zip code to be given access to your local legislators.

We are fighting a difficult battle. Whether we believe in the Affordable Care Act or not, Medicaid expansion is the right thing for our state.

There has been \$105 million left on the table that would have been injected into the state and used to

treat uninsured patients had the Medicaid expansion taken place two years ago.

Please take a few minutes of your day and contact your legislators.

I appreciate your efforts on this very important item.

Please Contact Your Legislator

WSBN Nurse Licensure Rule Change

The Wyoming State Board of Nursing (WSBN) is doing away with the 60-day grace period that they have had historically for license renewals.

On November 17, 2014, the Governor approved the revisions to Chapter 2 - Licensure/Certification Requirements and Chapter 5 - Fees.

In summary, the revisions remove the grace period for renewals (January 1 to March 1) and its associated late fee.

As of January 1, 2015, all licensees and certificate holders, who did not renew by December 31, 2014, will be required to submit a completed Relicensure or Recertification application and the

associated fee.

These individuals may not work after January 1, 2015 until their relicensure/recertification is complete.

The Rules and Regulations at the WSBN website at: <https://nursing-online.state.wy.us/Default.aspx?page=24>