

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 45, Number 6

February 7, 2014

WHA Calendar:

Healthcare Effective Communication Webinar **2/12**

Wyoming Chapter HFMA Casper **3/19-3/21**

Other Events:

Wyoming Legislative Session Convenes **2/10**

ACHE Congress Chicago, IL **3/24-3/27**



Follow us on Twitter and Facebook



President's Corner

As we prepare for next Monday's start of the Budget Session of the Wyoming Legislature, the Legislative Service Office has listed just over 150 bills to their website.

None of the bills that are of critical interest to us which have received endorsement from the Joint Interim Labor, Health and Social Services Committee have been posted at the present time.

It is certain that while many other bills will be unveiled soon, it is a little surprising that most of the bills important to us don't even have a bill number assigned to them.

The WHA Legislative subcommittee met via telephone conference call a couple of weeks ago to review the issues critical to us in the twenty-day session.

The two Medicaid Expansion bills, Medicaid Fit and the modified Arkansas Insurance Pool, are scheduled to be assigned to the House and Senate, respectively. As I've

mentioned before, we have an uphill battle on our hands to advance either of these proposals, but I am confident that we are making significant strides in convincing some Legislators to support the state's willingness to accept the expansion money from the Federal government.

A recent report from the Jackson Hewitt Tax Services estimates that without Wyoming accepting the expansion, large businesses in the state could face a cumulative tax penalty of up to \$5 million a year starting in 2015.

The author of the study says this is because certain businesses in states that opted out of the Medicaid expansion are exposed to federal fines.

The ACA includes an employer mandate that requires businesses with more than 49 full-time workers to offer a certain level of coverage to their employees at a certain price. Employers in states that have accepted the expansion are not subject to the fines if their employees qualify for Medicaid, since they will not be buying subsidized coverage on the exchange.

I don't really know if this report will make an impact on our Legislators, but we will make sure they are aware of it.

Another critical issue for us is the attempt by Nueterra to build physician-owned hospitals in some Wyoming communities.

While two separate attempts to address this issue failed in last month's Labor Committee, Senators Scott and Craft are co-sponsoring two bills - a hospital construction moratorium bill and a licensure bill. We understand that the Company has broken ground in Casper and have requests for permits in Rock Springs. Jackson and Gillette have also been mentioned as possible other locations for their hospitals.

The Joint Interim Judiciary Committee has endorsed two bills pertaining to the Title 25 Involuntary Hospitalization process.

The first one gives county attorneys the ability to represent the state in proceedings in their county. The second one is much broader in scale and attempts to modify specific provisions for the Title 25 process.

Since we have been made aware that all hospitals will not be uniformly affected by the proposed changes, we welcome any input our members can provide us as we prepare to participate in hearings before the Legislature.



Torrington Hospital To Receive New Maternity Wing

Community Hospital in Torrington will be undergoing a \$1.9 million project, which will completely update and renovate the hospital's maternity ward, according to Hospital CEO Vincent DiFranco.

The hospital's goal is to not only provide comfort and a great experience for the mom, but also to recognize there's a lot of family support to having a baby and to make sure that space is

provided for visitors and family members to comfortably take part in the arrival of a new baby.

Space will be created for maternity outpatient services such as diagnostics and observation, and the nurse's station will be moved to where it is more accessible and nearer to the patient rooms.

The maternity wing is only one of three construction projects slated for the

year.

Other projects involve renovations to the medical-surgical nurses station and the medical office building.

Community Hospital handles between four and fifteen deliveries per month.

The project is slated to begin between the middle and end of March, with completion expected within six months.

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



Grant Writing and Management Courses Available

The Wyoming Department of Health's Office of Rural Health is hosting both a grant writing and grant management course through Grant Writing USA.

A limited number of seats are available at no charge for a limited number of Wyoming Department of Health and community based health and human services agency staff.

Both workshops will be held at the Ramada Plaza Riverside in Casper. A

block of rooms has been secured at \$83.00 per night.

You can contact the Ramada Plaza Riverside at 300 F Street, Casper WY 82601, (307) 235-2531 <http://www.casper-ramada.com/>

Grant Writing
March 13 – 14
\$425

Grant Management
May 22-23
\$595

Participants attending through the Office of Rural Health grant funds will be reimbursed after attending the workshop. You will need a code to register for a grant funded seat.

Please contact Sharla Allen at the Office of Rural Health to secure a seat and receive your registration code. She can be reached at Sharla.allen@wyo.gov, 307-777-7293.

Wyoming Hospital Association

2005 Warren Ave.
Cheyenne, WY
82001

www.wyohospitals.com

307.632.9344

Is Radon in Homes Raising Lung Cancer?

Mention radon to most patients, and you'll get a blank stare. But mention lung cancer, and you've got everyone's attention.

Most patients don't know that exposure to radon, a radioactive gas, is the leading risk factor for developing lung cancer among nonsmokers.

Wyoming is recognized as having a high potential of elevated levels of radon throughout the state.

The Wyoming Radon Program wants physicians or patients to know how to protect their families. A simple test can tell if you need to take steps to reduce the risk to yourself and your family.

Physicians and patients can use do-it-yourself radon testing kits. To order a short-term radon test kit, visit www.wyomingradon.org and select from either of two

laboratories – Alpha Energy or Air Chek and purchase a radon test kit for \$7.95 and receive a second test kit free.

For more information on radon and a list of properly-trained radon professionals serving Wyoming, visit www.wyomingradon.org and click on the fifth link in the left menu bar; or contact the Wyoming Radon Program at (307) 777-6015 or steve.melia@wyo.gov.