

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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March 7, 2014

WHA Calendar:

Healthcare Effective Communication Webinar 3/12

Wyoming Chapter HFMA Casper 3/19-3/21

Other Events:

Wyoming Legislative Session Convenes 2/10

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



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President's Corner Medicaid Expansion Watered Down

Prior to this Legislative session, I predicted little, if anything, would happen this year to advance Medicaid expansion in the state of Wyoming. And in the end, not much was accomplished to provide insurance for the 17,600 people projected to be covered under the expansion, leaving considerable work left for the 2015 General Session.

The Legislature debated and defeated all three bills worked in the interim by the Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Committee, as well as a handful of budget amendments on the same topic.

After the dust settled, a budget amendment survived that gave the governor and his executive branch team the ability to negotiate a waiver with the federal government for a Wyoming demonstration project. However, no formal action can be taken on the work of the executive branch until the Legislature reconvenes early in 2015.

Prior to that, a review of their work product will need to be presented to both the

Labor Committee and the Joint Appropriations Committee by November 1.

Even the verb describing how the executive branch was to approach the federal government was diminished by replacing "shall" to "may", essentially giving the governor a less-than-direct missive when negotiating with the feds.

A fairly contentious debate in the conference committee focused on the way in which the measure must be budget neutral. Language surviving in the amendment states that the cost of administering the program must be paid by "demonstrated cost savings from implementing the Medicaid expansion program".

While we were disappointed that the Legislature failed to definitively move closer to providing health insurance to this part of our population, strident opponents were similarly disappointed that this issue actually gained significant traction in the recently-completed session. In the end, this was a classic example of how the art of compromise evolved to produce a product that failed to please both sides.

At the end of each session, joint standing committees gather to discuss the

topics they want to tackle in the interim period. Such topics then are reviewed and ultimately approved by a committee of the most seasoned legislative leadership that comprises the Management Council.

The Labor Committee was given a number of issues that will directly impact hospitals and healthcare interests. Under the topic of Health Care Reform, the committee will examine (1) why Wyoming medical costs are higher than other states; (2) Medicaid waiver negotiations; (3) Medicaid reform efforts; and (4) the health information exchange effort.

Their second topic, Health Care Provider Access, directs them to look at (1) extending the Wyoming Investment in Nursing loan and grant program; (2) review of the status and effectiveness of UW's health education programs; and (3) licensure of allied and alternative health care professions, acupuncture licensure and the possible consolidation of smaller licensing boards.

The rest of their attention will be devoted to mental health and prevention management, review of reports from state agencies and changes to the State's Workers' Compensation program.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



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

Wyoming Hospital Association

2005 Warren Ave.
Cheyenne, WY
82001

www.wyohospitals.com

307.632.9344

WY Rural Care Transition Program Available Through Hospital

Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County has introduced a new program that has been implemented for Sweetwater County residents through their facility.

The Wyoming Rural Care Transition Program is a statewide patient-centered program designed to improve quality, reduce re-hospitalization and contain costs for patients who are 65 years of age and older with at least one of the 10 qualifying diagnoses.

The Wyoming Institute of Population Health (Institute) was awarded a \$14.2 million CMS Health Care Innovation Awarded (HCIA) to support hospitals and physicians across Wyoming transform care in their communities.

This program provides Care Transition Nurse Coaches to help guide patients as they transition across multiple health care settings. The program focuses on providing patients and

their family/caregiver with information necessary to manage their own care, improve their quality of life, and know where to go for assistance within the health care system.

Since the program began in mid-October 2013, 35 patients have signed up to participate in this program.

The service is free to the patient.

Healthcare Effective Communication Webinar

A free educational webinar entitled "Overview of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act" will be presented Wednesday, March 12 from Noon – 1:00 p.m.

The webinar will be presented by Danielle M. Archuleta, J.D., Equal Opportunity Specialist. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, Region VIII.

This session will provide an overview of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act which prohibit disability discrimination in programs and activities by recipients of HHS funding and public entities (e.g., state and local human service agencies).

The regulations have certain administrative requirements, which will be discussed (such as the re-

quirement that entities provide continuous notice of nondiscrimination, adoption of a designated individual to coordinate disability-related efforts, and adoption of Section 504/Title II Grievance Procedures). Further, we will provide available resources.

If you would like to participate in the webinar, please send your name and e-mail to rose@wyohospitals.com.

Pollution Prevention Assessments

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality is looking for interested parties to participate in free pollution prevention assessments.

The Pollution Prevention (P2) assessments will encompass all areas of becoming an environmental steward such as: electricity use and consumption; water use and consumption; replacement of toxic and hazardous chemicals; re-

duction in waste production; and, of course, an engaged leadership team that has a true passion for "Doing no Harm" to the environment and humans alike.

The assessments are minimally invasive, take less than a week to complete, and are done free of charge, with no obligations afterwards.

Supporting organizations such as Practice Green-Health and Healthier Hospi-

tals Initiative provide support and case studies to assist healthcare facilities implement changes needed to become a leader in environmental sustainability. Facilities that qualify may also be included in the Environmental Stewardship Program.

Interested facilities should contact Landon Brown, Pollution Prevention Program Coordinator at DEQ, at 307-777-7347 or Landon.Brown@wyo.gov