



NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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WHA Calendar:

WHA PAC Golf Tournament	9/1
WHA/Leading Age Annual Meeting & Convention Casper	9/2-9/3

Other Events:

HIDI Meeting	7/27-7/29

President's Message

It has been a busy week of meetings with legislators this week. On Monday there was a hearing on Title 25 and then on Tuesday and Wednesday the Joint Appropriations Committee met.

The Title 25 hearing did a good job of re-identifying the fact that we have mental/behavioral health problems in our state and that the Title 25 program has many issues that need to be addressed.

There is an obvious access problem with shortages in both practitioners and facilities. I think it is pretty obvious that the answer is not in forcing hospitals to create space within their walls to care for those individuals needing help.

We do need to know how to help them and have resources to get them placed where they can be cared for and receive necessary treatment.

There were some great success stories shared by Sweetwater County Memorial Hospital and Cheyenne Regional Medical Center on innovative approaches they have taken in caring for involuntary hospitalizations, producing some incredible outcomes. Their successes will be a topic for study by the committee during the next couple of months.

Also being studied and considered is the state facilities and what they can do to create more beds and access to

those in need. There is also consideration of allowing more of the patients to be placed in out of state facilities that are located closer to the patients homes.

The one thing that is obvious is that this is a very complicated issue with no easy answers.

Behavioral/mental health is a growing problem nationally and with a lack of psychiatrists, it will continue to be a tough issue. There are a minimum of three more meetings anticipated for this year before the legislative session and some of the committee members feel that it may take a couple of years to come up with a solution and pass legislation, if necessary.

The Joint Appropriation Committee had their first interim committee meeting this week and the hospital survey was one of the topics. About 1 ½ hours were devoted to going through the hospital survey and then explaining the results to the committee.

They were all treated to a crash course in cost reports and accounting.

I'm not really sure what the committee came away with from the hearing but once again the fact that our facilities are delivering (at their cost) over \$100 million worth of uncompensated care annually. We'll have to see what, if anything, the committee will

do with the information as we proceed further in to the year.

Also of interest, during the committee hearing, was a presentation by Anne Ladd and the Wyoming Business Coalition on Health regarding a multi-payer claims database that they are utilizing in Montana.

They requested that the state pool all of their covered lives and join the business coalition in submitting data to Montana at a cost of about \$400,000 per year. I'm not sure there is much appetite by the appropriations committee to participate, especially as they are facing the declining revenues in the state budget.

I have been visiting with other state executives to find out how their all payer claims databases are working.

The results have varied but have not been super positive. I think it makes some sense to look at trying to have a database, but the Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Committee looked at this topic a couple of years ago and realized how expensive it will be.

I think we would need a concerted effort on the part of the insurance companies, the providers and the state if we are really interested in getting something that will work and provide valuable information.

We'll keep you posted as thing progress.



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

IMH Working For a Healthier Hospital

During the past nine months, the time between a patient entering the doors of Iverson Memorial Hospital (IMH) to seeing a physician in the triage dropped from 25 minutes to 14—largely thanks to a Rapid Improvement Event, a new process used to fix possible problems, hospital officials said.

Rapid Improvement Events are four-day programs focused on identifying a current problem in the hospital and finding a solution.

A team of employees and sometimes patients involved with the problem are brought together to brainstorm and find the best way to reach a solution.

Since the projects started in October, two departments, the Emergency Department and the Medical/Surgical Department have completed one event every two months, prompting improvements such as the decreased triage time or a system allowing patients to exit the hospital quicker.

The planning process plays out on a big piece of paper divided into lanes for each involved party. As the team discusses possible solutions, they place sticky notes on the lanes.

After a couple of days, one standout solution is found and put to test in the hospital.

Those that work are implemented and continually monitored to ensure updates are not worse than the problem the team set out to fix.

Peer Review Service

I know many of us struggle with peer review services and that there really isn't a viable solution for us within the state.

The Wyoming Hospital Association is working with other state associations to gather proposals to provide our members peer review.

Our intent is gather information and present a recom-

mendation to the WHA Board of Directors at the July 30 meeting.

We are also working with the FLEX program to try and get grant funding to pay for part or all of these services. We'll get the information out to you as soon as possible.

FYI, we are speaking with Washington State Hos-

pital Association, Montana Hospital Association, Colorado Hospital Association and Nebraska Hospital Association to get quotes and descriptions of the services they will be able to offer our members.

Please feel free to call the Association with any questions or concerns.

Wyoming Quality Conference – August 19-20 in Casper

Registration is now open for the 3rd Wyoming Quality Conference: Becoming a partner in Care – to be held August 19-20 at the Ramkota Hotel & Conference Center in Casper.

Mountain-Pacific Quality Health and the Wyoming Geriatric Education Center (WyGEC) have partnered to host this event – which is primarily focused toward all health care providers and caregivers, while also open to the public as well.

Conference participants will have the occasion to engage in Learning & Action Network groups that serve as “all-teach, all-learn” sessions that include sharing and analysis of best practices. National and local experts will be presenting, including Robert Thompson, director of education for MMIC, Jeri Lundgren, president of Senior Providers Resource and Cindy Works, MD, clinical assistant professor at the UWYO Family Practice Residency Program.

This two-day conference is free of charge, with continuing education credits available for health care professionals.

Registration is available online at www.uwyo.edu/geriatrics - space is indeed limited, so registrations by August 14 is required.

Questions and additional details can be directed to Pat Fritz pat.fritz@area-h.hcqs.org or phone 307 568-2797.

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