

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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Health Committee Considers Medicaid Expansion, Managed Care

The Legislature's Joint Labor, Health, and Social Services Committee discussed variations of an expansion of Medicaid during an interim meeting in Casper this week.

The committee also considered other key healthcare topics, including elements of the recently passed Medicaid reform bill such as managed care and other medical reforms.

Sen. Charles Scott, R-Casper, initiated the Medicaid expansion discussion with a list of principles or key elements he believes such an expansion must include.

After acknowledging that there is a group of citizens in Wyoming who simply cannot afford the healthcare system that currently exists, Sen. Scott listed a set of elements he believes an expansion of Medicaid must include.

Among those elements is a system of incentives for both providers and patients to make the system more efficient. He said the approach should also include health savings accounts, or some similar mechanism to ensure that Medicaid recipients have "some skin in the game."

Additionally, Sen. Scott said the system should include a high-deductible insurance approach, a wellness

component with incentive to get people to use wellness benefits, a team to help enrollees navigate the system, and a work requirement for enrollees.

Rep. Mary Throne, D-Cheyenne, discounted a Wyoming-based approach to Medicaid expansion that is based on skepticism that the federal government will live up to its promise of enhanced federal payments. There is no evidence, she said, that the federal government will not keep its promise.

Rep. Elaine Harvey, R-Lovell, walked the committee through an overview of the expansion model that is being considered in Arkansas. That model is based on the goals of improving access to quality care, enhancing competition among insurance carriers, and promoting personal responsibility through cost sharing, among other principles.

Enrollees in the Arkansas plan would pay a small premium, and the plan would include a health savings account that could be used to pay that premium. Enrollees would also be eligible for insurance subsidies through the health insurance marketplace.

Finally, she said, the Arkansas plan includes a provision that would allow the

state to scrap the plan at any time if it is not effective.

She said Arkansas implemented Medicaid reforms as a package in conjunction with its expansion plan. If the plan had been offered on its own, it would not have been likely to work, she said.

Wyoming Hospital Association President Dan Perdue testified before the committee, urging the legislators to pursue the optional expansion of Medicaid during the 2014 Budget Session of the Legislature.

Perdue and the WHA led a coalition of healthcare interests in favor of the expansion during the 2013 session, and that leadership role continues as the coalition prepares for 2014.

In addition to the Medicaid expansion, the committee also heard an update from the Department of Health regarding its study of the feasibility of managed care in Wyoming.

The Department issued an RFP on May 15 to find a consultant to conduct the study. Responses to the RFP were due this week. The first phase of the study will then look at various models of managed care in frontier states.

The committee will continue its work at its next meeting in Lovell in August.

WHA Calendar:

Healthcare Leadership Training **6/14**

Other Events:

Wyoming Safety and Workforce Summit **6/25-6/26**
Rock Springs



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Lander Regional Hospital Names 2013 Mercy Award Winner

Paul Tramp was awarded the 2013 Mercy Awards at Lander Regional Hospital in recognition of his caring spirit and passion for serving others.

The annual award honors the life of Scott Mercy, founding Chairman and CEO of LifePoint Hospitals®, of which Lander Regional Hospital is a part.

Being named the local award recipient makes Tramp eligible for LifePoint's 2013 companywide Mercy Award, the highest

honor an employee can receive from LifePoint.

Paul Tramp serves as an imaging tech and radiation safety officer at Lander Regional Hospital. With a generous spirit and genuine compassion, Paul has spent many years supporting his patients, co-workers and the community.

"We are committed to delivering quality patient care, as well as investing time and resources to help make our community healthier. The only way we can

accomplish these goals is through the compassionate, hard-working employees who choose to work with us. We are extremely proud to recognize Paul for his work on behalf of our patients and our community," Steve Erixon, CEO said. "His compassion and commitment sets a high standard for healthcare professionals everywhere. Undoubtedly, our patients benefit from the kind of dedication to excellence and humanitarian efforts that he demonstrates each day."

WHRN to Reorganize

The Wyoming Health Resources Network, Inc. (WHRN) Board of Directors have unanimously approved a motion to eliminate the current assistance with recruiting providers for medical sites across the state of Wyoming.

Don Tardif, President, said "it is indeed unfortunate that changes in recruiting nationwide as well as Wyoming and the reduced funding capabilities of the have caused us to

take this action. The Board of Directors will be working on a reorganization plan over the next two weeks to determine the most efficient and effective method of assisting facilities in the future."

WHRN was started in 1995 by support from Wyoming Medical Society, Wyoming Hospital Association, the Wyoming Nurses Association and the Governor's office.

Through the years

WHRN has helped a number of organization find providers to serve their communities.

The organization has also worked on various other efforts to educate citizens on the need for quality healthcare including a major smoking cessation program.

Any questions regarding WHRN future activities can be directed to WHRN Interim Executive Director Larry Atwell at 635-2930 or 630-8140.

Wyoming Safety and Workforce Summit

The 2013 Wyoming Safety & Workforce Summit is set for June 25-26, 2013 at Western Wyoming Community College in Rock Springs, Wyoming.

The Wyoming Safety and Workforce Summit is a new effort between the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services and the following partners: the Wyoming Workforce Development Council, the Wyoming Re-

fining Safety Alliance, the Wyoming Contractors Association, the Wyoming Oil and Gas Industry Safety Alliance and the Petroleum Association of Wyoming.

The Summit is a new collaboration that streamlines several safety conferences held in Wyoming and the annual Summit on Workforce Solutions into one summit.

"The effort behind the

new Wyoming Safety and Workforce Summit speaks to what Wyoming is working toward together: safety as way of life and the strengthening of Wyoming's workforce," said Director of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services Joan Evans.

To see the agenda or to register, visit www.wyomingworkforce.org.