



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:

Wyoming Quality Conference Casper	8/19-8/20
Labor Health & Social Services Lovell	8/24-8/25

Lawmakers Meet to Study Title 25

Laura Hancock—Casper Star Tribune

Nearly a third of Wyoming's involuntary psychiatric hospitalizations originated in Natrona County in the 2015 fiscal year, new data shows. Wyoming judges issued 357 involuntary hospital orders during the 2014-15 fiscal year, which ended June 30. Of those, 112 came from Natrona County.

The figures were presented Wednesday as lawmakers and executive branch employees met at Casper College to study Title 25, the state statute on involuntary hospitalization.

People are involuntarily committed if they are a danger to themselves or others, or are unable to care for themselves. The commitment occurs after a series of hearings and evaluations. Most are already in the hospital when they are committed, said Stefan Johansson, a Wyoming Department of Health policy analyst.

The group is studying the issue due to rising costs, increased numbers of involuntary commitments and the process's variation by county. Committee members on Wednesday formed a subcommittee that will discuss drafting bills for consideration by the Legislature in 2016.

Natrona County led the state with 112 involuntary hospitalization orders. Sweetwater County had 76 and

Laramie County had 35, Johansson said.

Lawmakers wanted to know why Natrona County had so many more involuntary hospitalizations than the rest of the state. Johansson said there wasn't a clear reason, except possibly the county's large population compared with other parts of the state and higher awareness of mental health conditions due to a large medical community in Casper.

Philip Willoughby, a Casper attorney who represents people at commitment hearings, said he keeps meticulous records and about 30 percent of the people who have hearings in Natrona County live outside the county and state. Some of the potential patients are transients, he said.

The involuntary hospitalization process usually begins in the emergency room or with police, said the Health Department's Johansson.

An officer or doctor signs a form saying a person is mentally ill and must be detained, usually at a hospital. The person has to be medically evaluated in 24 hours and must have a hearing within 72 business hours, in which a judge will decide whether the patient should stay in the hospital for another 10 days.

By the end of the 10 days, there is a hearing where a judge determines whether the person should be involuntarily committed.

Not everyone who gets detained ends up involuntarily committed. Many people get better. Others agree to voluntary hospitalization, which prevents the need for the Title 25 process, said Martorano, of WBI.

The subcommittee that is drafting bills might look at adding to state law court-ordered outpatient care, which currently doesn't exist in Wyoming, on the recommendation of Dr. Jason Collison, president of Wyoming Association of Psychiatric Physicians. Collison said court-ordered outpatient care could help some people if they're not an eminent risk of harming themselves or others but who are at risk of re-entering the Title 25 system.

A study found outpatient treatment costs about half as much as inpatient care, he said.

Without a court-ordered outpatient option, people can be released 72 hours after arriving at a hospital. It's up to them to see doctors and take medications. If they don't, they may end up in the ER again, Collison said.



West Park Hospital would like to formally welcome animal teammate Mack to our pet therapy program! Mack interacts with a wide variety of clients including, seniors living with Alzheimer's, patients in recovery, and or those approaching end of life.

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

Mack the Cat Finds a Permanent Home at WPH

For Mack, a Pet Partners therapy cat, meeting with the residents of West Park Hospital (WPH) is one of his favorite pastimes, besides napping in owner Kat Vuletich's office.

"I got him as kitten and I thought, well, I might as well have him be a therapy cat," Vuletich, an EMT and life support education coordinator for West Park, said.

"Well, the hospital only did dogs ... I researched a little bit and found Pet Part-

ners, which registered cats, was a national program."

Vuletich adopted Mack from the Powell Animal Shelter in July 2013 and said she had the goal to register Mack through Pet Partners so he would be a top notch therapy cat for West Park.

Mack, who has his very own hospital ID badge, is the only registered therapy cat in Wyoming.

Vuletich said she receives phone calls to her office a couple of times a

week to see if Mack is there.

"There's about three or four residents that come by on a regular basis," Vuletich said. "Mack is on a request basis. I don't really take him out and about through the hospital.

According to a flyer provided by Vuletich, some of the benefits for humans include: fewer strokes, reduced stress, a calming effect and faster healing.

Coverage to Care Targets New Insurance Consumers

During the past year, more than 21,000 Wyomingites enrolled in an insurance plan on the Health Insurance Marketplace. For many, this is their first time to ever have health insurance.

For that reason, Enroll Wyoming is now offering Coverage to Care workshops designed to help consumers better understand and navigate the use of their new health insurance benefit.

The workshop is based on From Coverage to Care, a Roadmap to Better Care and

a Healthier You, a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) program focused on improving consumers' health insurance literacy.

In 2012 the Health Insurance Literacy Expert Roundtable defined health insurance literacy as "the degree to which individuals have the knowledge, ability, and confidence to find and evaluate information about health plans, select the best plan for their own (or their family's) financial and

health circumstances, and use the plan once enrolled."

Enroll Wyoming health insurance navigators are partnering with hospitals, libraries and other community organizations to reach the public with the Coverage to Care workshops.

Hospitals interested in learning more or in hosting a Coverage to Care workshop can contact Enroll Wyoming at 307-432-3640 or marketplace.navigators@gmail.com.

9th Annual WHA PAC Golf Tournament

The 9th Annual WHA PAC Golf Tournament, will be held September 1 at the Casper Country Club.

The format is a 4-person per team scramble at a cost of \$125 per player, or \$500 per team.

Proceeds from the tournament will support the WHA's political advocacy efforts.

This will be an event you do not want to miss.

A gorgeous golf course and the opportunity to help solidify one of the key benefits the WHA delivers to its members: effective political advocacy.

We hope to see you at Casper Country Club to enjoy a great game of golf, and to support our efforts.

The Wyoming Hospital Association/LeadingAge Wyoming Annual Meeting & Convention will be held September 2-3 in Casper.

To register for either the golf tournament or the Convention, please call Rose at 307-632-9344 or visit our website at www.wyohospitals.com

Wyoming Hospital Association

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