

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 43, Number 34

August 30, 2013

WHA Calendar:

WHA PAC Golf Tournament Sheridan	9/17
WHA Annual Meeting & Convention Sheridan	9/18- 9/19

Other Events:

LeadingAge Wyoming Jackson	9/11- 9/13
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Joint Labor Committee Meets

For the second straight year, Lovell was the site for the late summer meeting of the Joint Labor, Health and Social Services Interim Committee, August 26 & 27.

The Committee had a full two-day agenda and heard from various state agencies, as well as the Wyoming Hospital Association.

WHA President Dan Perdue and the Wyoming Business Coalition on Health's CEO Anne Ladd updated the committee on the progress between the two organizations regarding quality reporting and transparency.

A subcommittee from each organization is jointly examining the numerous reporting sources currently used by hospitals. The Committee is very interested in the progress of this joint effort and may consider drafting a bill mandating hospital quality reporting should it be necessary.

The Wyoming Department of Health released their report to the Committee entitled, "The Wyoming Approach for Medicaid Expansion", which identified five different options that were offered up for consideration to state policy-makers.

The options prepared were in response to a request from Governor Matt Mead for the Department to re-

search and present choices for an approach for coverage that best fits Wyoming. Of the five options, the Department recommended a model that would reduce its uninsured population and save millions of dollars by developing an alternative form of Medicaid that would share some of the same characteristics as private insurance.



Dubbed "Medicaid Fit", the option would require recipients to contribute to the cost of their care through deductibles and co-payments.

The option is being viewed as possibly being more palatable to the majority of Legislators who are skeptical of a full blown expansion of a government healthcare program.

The option could be implemented without a waiver within existing Medicaid regulations and would be fairly adaptable within feder-

al and state Medicaid constraints.

Last year's failed attempt at convincing lawmakers to accept the additional federal funds would have saved the state around \$47 million over six years.

This preferred option has the potential to save the state even more money, while offering a richer set of benefits in certain categories, such as mental health, to maximize General Fund offsets made possible through the Medicaid expansion.

The Committee reviewed a draft of a bill patterned after Arkansas' Medicaid Expansion bill that is awaiting a Section 1115 waiver approval from the federal government.

Under the Arkansas plan, federal funds would be used to purchase private insurance for an estimated 250,000 low-income residents.

The Committee agreed to use a sizeable portion of their November meeting to work this draft bill. They also agreed to consider the WDH's Medicaid Fit option, as well.

The next meeting of the Committee will be November 4 & 5 at a location to be determined.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



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



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Hospital Expansion to Provide More Health Services

The ongoing expansion at Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County (MHSC) is scheduled to be completed in two phases. The first phase is to be the doctor offices and the second is the cancer center.

The need for the medical center arose as the hospital employed more and more doctors and wanted to get

them offices but were limited by space.

When the medical center opens later this year, medical providers will be moving in new offices at the hospital. Patients also will see benefits of having their physicians and medical services in the same building.

The cancer center was needed to allow residents to

get the treatment they needed rather than being forced to drive to other providers.

The new facility will include the expansion of dialysis center chairs from four to eight, new areas for cardiopulmonary and physical therapy and expanded sleep lab and psychiatry areas.

Dinneen to Lead WHRN

Wyoming Health Resources Network (WHRN) would like to announce Eileen Dinneen as their new Executive Director.

Eileen has actively been involved recruiting health care providers for a wide range of practice and hospital positions for the last eight years.

Originally from Nebraska, her grandmothers were both from Wyoming (Rock Springs and Douglas) and

she is graduate of Chadron State College. Between Cowboy games she hopes to travel around the state to familiarize herself with facilities and health care leaders.

WHRN serves as a state clearinghouse for information on primary healthcare services in the rural & frontier communities of Wyoming. They maintain an extensive and current database on Wyoming

healthcare facilities and their need for professionals. This database provides a vital tool for healthcare professional looking for opportunities in Wyoming.

The goal of WHRN is to match healthcare professionals with hospitals, clinics and facilities that need to fill a professional healthcare position.

Eileen can be reached at edinneen@whrn.org or 307-630-2112.

MPQH Holds Annual Wyoming Quality Conference

Mountain-Pacific Quality Health, as a key endeavor in its diligent work as the designated Quality Improvement Organization for the state – hosted their annual Wyoming Quality Conference last week.

Donna Hartley opened by providing insight into preventative measures to improve cardiac health, increase patient engagement and promote genuine patient-centered care.

Teresa Marshall followed with a focused presentation of hospital readmissions, providing an in-depth look at the high

risk older adult and the practices that can identify and reduce the incidents of unnecessary readmissions.

Breakout sessions by Marion Smith, MD, serving as Medical Director of MPQH, staff specialist Nickola Bratton, and clinical pharmacist Kim Van Wyk delivered a session on medication management and reconciliation between the acute & post-acute settings.

Laura Hudspeth & staff from the State's office of Licensure and Survey wrapped the day with an update regarding new CMS survey guidelines.

A special session on Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment opened day two.

Wyoming-based organizational updates were also delivered by Laura Toppenberg, representing the Wyo-Rural Care Transitions Program, Neil Hilton with WHA, and Bruce McGirr, as RPh lead with the Medication Therapy Management Program.

Across-the-board, the conference was very well received. MPQH leadership & staff are clearly to be commended for their excellent efforts in providing education of this caliber.