



# NEWSBRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

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## Election 2018: Key Takeaways for Health Care

The American Hospital Association held a webcast to discuss the 2018 election. Below are the highlights.

The dust has begun to settle on the 2018 mid-term elections and a clearer picture is emerging of what the results may mean for health care in the 116th Congress.

AHA President and CEO Rick Pollack and Executive Vice President of Government Relations and Public Policy Tom Nickels broke down the returns and their implications in an AHA member-exclusive webcast held on Nov. 7

Key take-aways are as follow.

- **Repeal of the Affordable Care Act is Highly Unlikely.** With the House of Representatives controlled by Democrats, any effort to repeal the ACA is unlikely, at least for the next two years, despite Republican gains in the Senate. However, the Administration will likely continue to make changes to how the law is implemented through regulation and executive orders
- **The Conversation about Medicare for All will Continue.** Regardless of how it's defined, Medicare for All will be a priority in the House.

- More than 125 current members of the House have co-sponsored some form of legislation on the issue. However, expect the Senate and the Administration to reject any bill that may make it through the House.
- **Drug Pricing Could be an Area of Agreement between the House and the Administration.** The Administration has made lowering drug prices a priority and taken a number of initial steps. These efforts could get a boost from a Democratic House.
- **There May be Pressure on Both Parties to Reduce the Deficit.** The federal deficit has continued to climb, which may put pressure on leaders in the House and Senate to find savings. This could include reductions to entitlement programs such as Medicare. But it remains to be seen if any kind of grand deal, or even a small deal, is possible given the parties' differing priorities.
- **Health Care Matters to Voters.** Health care was the top issue among voters in both parties in numerous pre- and exit-polls.
- Among their top concerns: protections for pre-existing conditions, lowering drug prices and repealing the ACA.
- **The Regulatory Cycle Rolls On.** Regardless of the election, the rule-making cycle from the Department of Health and Human Services and its agencies, as well as others, continues. The Administration has been using the regulatory process to reshape the Medicare and Medicaid programs, as well as the future of the ACA, to fit its vision. And this work will continue.

Here in Wyoming, the General session of the Wyoming Legislature will begin on January 8, 2019. As always, WHA will keep you updated on the bills and what they mean to our Wyoming hospitals.



### PAC CONTRIBUTORS 2018

Irene Richardson  
 Heidi Baskfield  
 Barry Burkart  
 Wyo Behavioral Institute  
 Eric Boley  
 Doug Faus  
 Shelby Olind  
 Doug McMillan  
 Andy Fitzgerald  
 Margie Molitor  
 Ryan Smith  
 Mike McCafferty  
 Maureen Cadwell  
 Cheyenne Regional Medical Center  
 Patrick Madigan  
 Bren Lowe  
 Carol Solie, MD  
 Michele Chulick  
 Paul Beaupre, MD

Total to Date \$7,050

Annual Goal \$8,500

## Food Fight Between Powell and Cody Hospitals



Powell Valley Healthcare and Cody Regional Health recently staged an inaugural Food Fight, in which both hospitals completed throughout the month of October to see who could collect the most food.

Together, the two healthcare organizations gathered up more than 2 tons of food. When the contest ended, Powell Val-

ley Healthcare collected 3,340 pounds and Cody Regional Health brought in 762 pounds.

The contest started as a brainstorm between Jennifer Tippetts, executive director of the Powell Medical Foundation and Ashley Trudo, the marketing director at Cody Regional Health.

While Powell may have earned some bragging

rights, the real winners of the contest were two local food banks. Powells' collections were donated to Powell Valley Loaves and Fishes and Cody's were donated to the Cody Cupboard.

The two hospitals are already planning to stage another Food Fight next year.



## HSCMH Updating and Expanding

Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital (HSCMH) held a groundbreaking ceremony to highlight the start of bringing the hospital up-to-date and ready for future medical needs.

"It's taking 1958 and bringing it up to 2018," Hot Spring County Memorial Hospital marketing Director John Gibbel said. He added that the target date

for completion is December 2020.

The \$16.4 million project, will officially begin in December, starting with creating a new emergency room entrance and should not affect the services already provided by the hospital.

Along with the emergency department, there will be two brand new emergency rooms, brand new obstetrics suites and brand new patient rooms.

Gibbel said, "We are going to be a completely modernized, modern standard-of-care facility where all the rooms will have bathrooms with showers, the OB suites will have the showers and additional facilities also," he added.



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

## CMS Releases Quarterly QIO Progress Reports

Every year, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) releases its annual Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) Program Progress Report. This report provides details about the accomplishments of both the Beneficiary and Family Centered Care QIOs (BFCC-QIOs) and the Quality Innovation Network QIOs (QIN-QIOs).

During 2017, the BFCC-QIOs completed

more than 747,029 reviews and saved the Medicare program \$48 million processing Higher Weighted Diagnosis-Related Group (HWDRG) reviews.

More than 494,443 discharge appeal reviews were completed, resulting in 99,000 beneficiaries not being discharged when they needed continued care. Appeal types include skilled nursing facilities, acute rehabilitation, hospital, and hospice discharges as well as

admission denials. BFCC-QIOs performed more than 40,000 Quality of Care reviews, which identified opportunities for quality improvement in various settings.

The BFCC-QIOs implemented the Healthcare Navigation Program in September 2017, which helps beneficiaries with complex health care needs make their way through difficult medical systems and treatments.

