



## Wyoming Hospital Association

# NEWSBRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 49, Number 48

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### Year in Review—Value of WHA

Your Wyoming Hospital Association continues its dedication to providing trusted, respected and influential leadership in health policy and advocacy, as well as a valued resource for information and education.

During the 2018 Legislative Budget Session we were able to successfully advocate on your behalf and influence legislation of critical interest to your facilities.

Included here are a few highlights of the 2018 session and we look forward to an equally productive session when the state legislature reconvenes in January of 2019.

However, our advocacy does not stop once the session is adjourned. The WHA continues to serve the interests of Wyoming hospitals throughout the year and works closely with both state legislators and our delegation in Washington D.C. to ensure healthcare in Wyoming is not just protected but thriving.

In addition to policy and advocacy efforts the WHA adds value through a number of other services including, WHA Resources, Trustee Education and Training, administration of the HRET-HIIN project, and hospital data resources including Price Point, Check Point, HIDI and Datagen.

Below are some of the successes from 2018:

- Successfully passed Volunteer Healthcare bill and an extension of the Drug Dona-

tion Program Act

- We were successful in passing other bills including:
- Opioid Addiction Task Force
- Controlled Substance Prescription Tracking
- Biological Products – Pharmacies
- Helped to defeat Physician Noncompete Clause bill and the Healthcare Transparency Act

Over the past year we have worked closely with our delegation in Washington to address issues such as:

- 96-hour rule
- CNA Loss of Certification
- VA Choice and VA parity payment for long-term care
- Civil Monetary Penalties (CMP) and;
- Protecting Critical Access Hospital (CHA) designation for our rural hospitals

Our Trustee Education was held this past May in Lander. The day consisted of robust discussion and training on issues including poverty and uncompensated care, physician and CEO burnout, new board member recruitment, orientation and on-boarding, and finally a panel of board chairs discussing successes in recruiting and on-boarding new trustees. Additionally, we facilitated a legislative panel consisting of Senate Chairman Charlie Scott, House Chairman Eric Barlow, Senator

Cale Case and Representative Lloyd Larsen.

This was a good year for the two new UPL programs the WHA successfully passed through legislation in 2016. Millions of additional dollars have begun to flow in to the state for both hospitals and nursing homes. This money is being used to strengthen those facilities and allowing them to reinvest in their staff and buildings to deliver the highest level of care in those communities.

Another exciting development comes from the universal service fund. The universal service fund is money collected from telecommunications companies and dedicated to fulfilling the goals of universal service. Telecommunications companies are required to make universal service contributions based on earned revenue. Under the authority of the 1996 Telecom Act, the FCC put USAC in charge of administering the collection and disbursement of universal service funds. USAC funds coming into the state of Wyoming totaled \$300,000 in 2017, and it is estimated an additional \$400,000 will be received for 2018.

These are just a few examples of the work being done by the WHA staff on behalf of our members.

#### 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**  
**Yvonne Wigington**  
**Dalton Huber**  
**Rick Schroeder**  
**Karl Sundberg**  
**Zach Zaslow**  
**SageWest Health Care**  
**Alan Daugherty**

**Total to Date**  
**\$8,500**

**Annual Goal**  
**\$8,500**

## SMH Celebrates 15 Years of Employee Contributions



Sheridan Memorial Hospital employees recently celebrated their contributions to the hospital's Foundation.

Currently over 475 staff members participate in this unique philanthropic program and donate through biweekly payroll deductions.

In 2004 the idea for Partner giving program began with a few faithful employees. It has steadily

increased year over year.

Over the past 15 years, Partners have contributed \$410,000 toward patient care improvement projects at the community hospital.

Each December The Foundation hosts a holiday breakfast to honor and celebrate the Employee Partners.

During the event, Partners vote to fund a strategic hospital project with the monies accumulated over the past year.

According to the hospital's Chief Development Officer Cody Sinclair, "Our employee support is impressive on so many levels.

They provide excellent care for our patients and their families every day, and on top of their work they continue to make donations which support the mission and vision of healthcare for our community. It's an honor to work with the entire team."

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

## Two Hospitals Receive Construction Grants from USDA

Two Wyoming hospitals will receive major renovations thanks to a \$25.5 million loan paid by the Department of Agriculture as part of a goal to improve rural health care.

Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital, Thermopolis and Westward Heights Care Center in

Lander are the recipients.

Hot Springs will receive a loan totaling \$21,346,000 from the department for major renovations, which are expected to cost an estimated \$26.9 million.

Westward Heights will receive \$4,284,000 for renovations meant to expand facilities.

The loan paid to Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital is the USDA's biggest direct facilities community project in Wyoming. The hospital is scheduled to add two new operating rooms, a new obstetrics room and a new emergency room, among other new services.

## Groups Urge Supreme Court to Affirm Medicare DSH

The AHA, Federation of American Hospitals, and Association of American Medical Colleges have urged the U.S. Supreme Court to affirm a D.C. Circuit Court decision that the Department of Health and Human Services violated the Medicare Act when it changed Medicare's reimbursement adjustment formula for disproportionate share hospitals without providing notice and opportunity to comment.

"The question presented here is of tremendous importance to Amici's members," the Amicus brief states. "The federal Medicare program enables amici's members to provide the wide range of critical health care services on which their patients and communities rely. And the patients and communities for whom this issue of Medicare administration matters most are among the country's most vulnerable." By evading the notice-and-comment process, the Department of Health and

Human Services and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services "were allowed to impose their own substantive policy views without understanding their direct impact on health care providers and those they serve," the associations said. "That procedural shortcut leads to policies that harm those affected by them, as well as inconsistency and uncertainty in how providers' Medicare reimbursements may be determined from year to year."

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