



Wyoming Hospital Association

NEWS BRIEFS

Informational Newsletter for Wyoming Hospitals

Volume 51, Number 07

February 28, 2020



Surprise Billing Editorial

By Eric Boley, WHA President

Here in Wyoming, we enjoy our wide-open spaces. The extra elbowroom is great when it comes to hunting, fishing, hiking and our ag economy. But nobody wants to travel far in search of high quality health care. Whether it's a trip to the emergency room or a routine visit, we want the care we need, as close as possible. And whenever there is a policy decision that comes along impacting rural hospitals, we take it seriously.

In Washington, there is growing debate around how to solve the problem of surprise medical bills which are those charges patients get stuck with when medical insurance refuses to pay an out-of-network doctor or hospital for care. With the growth in high deductible health plans, restrictions on what insurance companies will cover, and the limiting

of insurance networks, surprise medical bills have unfortunately become more common, leaving patients and doctors to bear more of the costs associated with their medical treatment. Some of the recent proposals to solve the surprise medical billing issue are nothing more than giveaways to the insurance industry, which has been spending millions lobbying Congress on the issue.

The best opportunity for a solution to these surprise bills must include the Independent Dispute Resolution (IDR), a proven, fair solution that is already working at the state level. IDR removes patients from billing disputes between doctors and insurers and protects them from receiving a surprise medical bill. Patients win because they are no longer in the middle of this game of tug-of-war. It also maintains a balance between doctors and insurers and does not give the insurance industry the ability to set its own prices.

This kind of price setting would be disastrous for doctors and hospitals, especially rural hospitals in Wyoming. Insurers aren't acting as

an honest broker on behalf of patients and wouldn't provide fair reimbursements to doctors and hospitals.

The costs of operating a 24-hour emergency department and treating all patients regardless of insurance status are high. This whole problem is magnified even more in rural areas where there are fewer health care providers and fewer patients but still many of the same operating costs.

Without adequate reimbursements, we could see our rural hospitals and clinics shut their doors. A rural hospital closure could impact patients for miles in every direction who would then be forced to travel farther for quality care. We're working hard every day to make care more accessible through innovations in technology and other means, the last thing we need is for Washington to make it harder to provide quality health care to rural patients. Congress can, and must, address the surprise medical billing issue and the solution must put patients first, especially those in rural Wyoming.

2020 PAC Contributions

Eric Boley
Barry Burkart
Carol Solie
Doug Faus
Heidi Baskfield

CEO/Trustee Educational Program

April 30, 2020

8:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Plains Hotel, Cheyenne, Wyoming

307-638-3311

\$80/\$90 per night (mention Wyoming Hospital Association)

Program is free of charge to all Wyoming Hospital Association Members

Read News Briefs online at www.wyohospitals.com

CCH Named Blue Distinction Center

Member Spotlight

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming has selected Campbell County Health (CCH) in Gillette as a Blue Distinction Specialty Center+ for Knee and Hip Replacement.

The Blue Cross Blue Shield national association establishes uniform criteria to evaluate quality, patient safety and cost based on objective measures that were developed with input from the medical community and leading accreditation and quality organizations. Only those facilities that first meet nationally established quality and cost measures for Blue Distinction Centers are considered for designation as Blue Distinction Specialty Centers+.

“The Blue Cross Blue Shield Association evaluates thousands of hospitals across the United States and selects those that meet rigorous cost and quality criteria,”

said Diane Gore, President and CEO of BCBSWY. “Campbell County Health is the first hospital in Wyoming to earn this level of recognition and we congratulate them for their designation as a Blue Distinction Center Plus for Hip and Knee Replacement.”

“We are thankful for their commitment to helping ensure that Wyoming patients have access to high quality care at a reasonable price for these procedures,” Gore said. Knee and hip replacement procedures remain some of the most commonly performed elective surgical procedures in the U.S., according to a 2018 study released by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons.

“We are thrilled to have achieved the Blue Cross Distinction Center Plus designation”, said Chief Operating Officer Colleen Heeter at Campbell County Health. “Everyone in the organization is committed to providing Excellence Every Day, and this designation shows that we focus on quality care, great patient outcomes and cost efficiency in our total joint program. I am so proud of all our providers and staff for the work that they do every day for our patients.”

For more information about the program and for a complete listing of designated facilities, visit BCBS.com/bluedistinction.



Thermopolis Trustees First in State to Complete Best on Board

Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital has the distinction of having the entire board of trustees complete the Best on Boards program offered through the Wyoming Hospital Association.

CEO Margie Molitor has said “I am very fortunate to work with such a proactive and engaged board!”

Best on Board provides governance education, testing and certification for healthcare board members. It enables trustees and healthcare leaders to gain the confidence and competence needed to

make better, more informed decisions and govern more effectively on behalf of the communities they serve.

The hospital will be establishing a policy that any new board members complete the series within 1 year of becoming a board member.

“Having an engaged board that takes training and education seriously is extremely important. I congratulate the board in Hot Springs for their commitment,” said Eric Boley, President of the WHA.



Left to Right: Dan Herdt, Melissa Johnson, Dave Koerwitz, Dr. Bill Williams, Health Overfield

Thermopolis Trustees

HFMA Spring Meeting

HFMA Spring Meeting

The Healthcare Financial Management Association Wyoming Chapter will be hosting their spring meeting March 18-20, 2020 in Casper, Wyoming.

The Keynote will be Walt Stasinski presenting “The Power of Fun at Work.”

Other topics include

- How to Pass the Dreaded 501r Audit
- Campbell County Health “Lessons Learned from a Hospital Cyber Attack “
- HFMA 101
- Pricing of Services
- Medicare Updates, Transparency and Occupational Mix
- Legislative updates
- Blue Cross Blue Shield Fee Schedule

For more information or to register visit: www.hfmawy.org