



May 22, 2026

A Historic Win for Wyoming Healthcare: ***\$205 Million Federal Investment Approved for Our Rural Communities***

The Wyoming Hospital Association applauds the federal approval of Wyoming's **\$205 million Year 1 award** under the Trump administration's Rural Health Transformation Program. This landmark investment, the result of months of rigorous planning and collaboration between the Wyoming Department of Health, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders, represents the most significant infusion of rural healthcare funding our state has seen in a generation.

For WHA members working on the front lines of Wyoming's rural and frontier communities, this funding is more than a policy milestone. It is a direct response to the challenges you navigate every day: workforce shortages, geographic barriers to care, and the financial pressures facing small hospitals and clinics across our state.

What the Funding Will Support

Wyoming's approved application targets the priorities that emerged clearly from providers, patients, and community input: building a sustainable healthcare workforce, strengthening preventive and chronic disease care, and preserving access to essential services in the communities that need them most.

Key initiatives include the **regionalization of emergency medical services**, so that EMS agencies across Wyoming can collaborate and share resources more effectively. **Clinical workforce training grants** will fund educational pathways in nursing, EMS, behavioral health, and physician training, directly addressing the provider pipeline challenge that WHA members have long identified as critical. Additional residency slots will expand Wyoming's postgraduate medical education capacity, helping to grow and retain homegrown talent.

The plan also creates **financial incentives for Critical Access Hospitals** to focus on the core services their communities depend on: emergency departments, ambulance services, and obstetric care. For WHA member hospitals operating on thin margins in small communities, this kind of targeted support can be the difference between keeping doors open and closing them.

Technology grants will help providers deliver care closer to home, improving chronic disease management and reducing the burden on patients who must travel long distances for routine services.

A Strong Foundation, With Work Ahead

We acknowledge that the final approved application was revised from its original form. Two significant components, a state-operated emergency health insurance plan and a long-term perpetuity investment fund, were not included in the final approval. What remains is a strong, actionable plan focused on the fundamentals: basic care, workforce, and sustainability. That is something WHA members can build on.

The Clock Is Running

Wyoming must **obligate Year 1 funds by the end of October 2026**. That is an aggressive timeline. Contracts must be drafted, staff hired, proposals requested, and funds committed. WHA will be working closely with the Wyoming Department of Health and our member organizations to support swift and effective implementation. Future funding will depend on how well Wyoming executes in this first year.

We encourage all member hospitals, clinics, and healthcare organizations to stay engaged, respond promptly to contracting and proposal opportunities as they emerge, and reach out to WHA with questions or concerns as implementation begins.

The Wyoming Hospital Association has invited hospital CEOs and Nursing Home Administrators to a virtual meeting with Wyoming Department of Health Director Stefan Johansson next Thursday, May 28, to discuss the details of Wyoming's Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP).

Following the federal approval of Wyoming's \$205 million Year 1 award, this meeting will be an important opportunity to hear directly from Director Johansson on implementation plans, timelines, and what our member organizations can expect in the weeks ahead.

Connection, Policy, and a Path Forward

2026 Spring Conference Recap

The Wyoming Long Term Care Association's **2026 Spring Conference** brought together long-term care providers, state officials, and national experts for two days of learning, advocacy, and connection on **May 20-21, 2026**, at the Best Western in Sheridan. From a candid legislative breakfast to deep-dive policy sessions, the conference delivered timely information and practical tools for navigating an increasingly complex care environment.

Breakfast with the Legislators

Wednesday morning opened with Breakfast with the Legislators. Four Wyoming lawmakers joined attendees for a candid, wide-ranging conversation about the issues shaping long-term care across the state:

- **Senator Tara Nethercott**
- **Senator Gary Crum**
- **Representative Ken Clouston**

Providers used the forum to share their most pressing concerns, workforce challenges, reimbursement pressures, and the regulatory burdens facing Wyoming's nursing homes and care facilities. The legislators listened attentively and engaged openly, reinforcing the kind of direct, relationship-driven advocacy that WyLTC works to foster between providers and the Legislature.

Roll Out the Red Carpet: Keynote with Donna Cutting

The morning continued with an uplifting keynote from **Donna Cutting**, author and human connection expert. In a session that drew frequent laughter and reflection in equal measure, Cutting challenged long-term care professionals to rediscover the heart of their work. Drawing on her *52 Weeks of Connection* framework, she made a compelling case that the small, intentional moments of care and recognition for residents, families, and staff alike are what transform ordinary days into extraordinary ones. Attendees left the session energized and reminded of why the work of aging services matters so deeply.

National Policy Landscape: LeadingAge Update

Following the break, **Jodi Eyigor of LeadingAge** delivered a thorough nursing home policy update, walking attendees through the regulatory and legislative developments emerging from CMS, CDC, Congress, and the administration. The nursing home sector faces a perpetual state of change, and Eyigor's session helped attendees understand what to expect in the months ahead and how to position their organizations for what's coming.

State Licensure and Survey Updates

Wednesday afternoon featured an extended session from the Wyoming Department of Health's Aging Division, with presentations from **Laura Hudspeth, MSc, RD, LD** (State Survey Agency Director), **Tim Cozad, LPN** (Chief of Long-Term Care, Healthcare Surveillance Branch), and **Pat**

Davis, PE, LEED AP (Chief, Life Safety & Construction Branch). Together they provided the latest updates on state licensure and CMS certification data and regulation, practical, operational information that providers rely on to stay compliant and competitive.

Quality Improvement and Deficiency Prevention

Jill Hult of Mountain Pacific presented on the Office of Health Care Licensing & Survey's top 10 deficiencies, then outlined how Mountain Pacific's QIN-QIO resources help nursing homes prevent or mitigate those most common citations. The session was practical and directly applicable, giving attendees tools they could bring back to their teams immediately.

Association Value: AHCA and LeadingAge Membership

Wednesday wrapped up with **Nathan Schema of the American Health Care Association**, who presented on the benefits of AHCA membership and the resources available to long-term care providers nationwide. On Thursday, **Amanda Marr, Vice President of Member Recruitment & Retention at LeadingAge National**, highlighted key benefits and national resources designed to help members serving older adults navigate today's evolving aging services landscape, in both rural and urban Wyoming.

The conference closed Thursday morning with an open discussion among attendees, a fitting end to two days of candid conversation and shared commitment. WyLTC extends its sincere thanks to every speaker, legislator, and member who made the 2026 Spring Conference a success. The challenges facing Wyoming's long-term care community are real, but so is the collective resolve to meet them.



Wyoming Healthcare Leaders Gather for Policy Summit

Wyoming's healthcare community convenes June 12, 2026, in Laramie for the Wyoming Healthcare Policy Summit — bringing together hospital executives, educators, legislators, and health officials to address the state's most urgent health system challenges.

Co-hosted by the Wyoming Hospital Association, Wyoming Medical Society, Wyoming Nurses Association, Wyoming Primary Care Association, and other partners, the day opens with a keynote by Beth Worthen of the Natrona Collective Health Trust on the link between Wyoming's health and its economic future.

Healthcare Policy Summit

[Register for the Summit Here](#)

WHA Golf Tournament Returns September 8

The Wyoming Hospital Association will host its **19th Annual Golf Tournament** on **Tuesday, September 8, 2026**, at the **Cheyenne Country Club** (800 Stinner Road, Cheyenne). A complimentary lunch is served at 11:30 AM, with an 18-hole shotgun start at 1:00 PM and an Awards Banquet immediately following play.

Entry fees include green fees, golf cart, prizes, and dinner. Individual registration is **\$150 per player** or **\$600 per four-person team**. Hole sponsorships are available for \$300, and prize donations are welcome.

To register or for more information, contact **Rose Fishback** at rose@wyohospitals.com. The golf tournament is in conjunction with the 2026 Annual Meeting.

[More information and registration can be found here](#)



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