

News Briefs

June 27, 2025

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Wyoming Hospital Association

In This Issue

- Porter Named to Becker's Rural Hospital CEO List
- Online TCAR Training
- HHS Initiative With Insurers to Streamline Prior Authorizations
- Sheridan Memorial Hospital Advisory Council
- Cody Regional Health Launches Online Birth Class
- Synergy Blog on Physician and Surgeon Shortages
- Obstetric Patient Safety Course
- Upcoming Events
- WHA PAC Goal



Banner Wyoming Medical Center CEO Named to Becker's Hospital Review's "Rural Hospital CEOs to Know" List

Lance Porter recognized among nation's top rural health care leaders

Banner Wyoming Medical Center Chief Executive Officer Lance Porter has been recognized as one of the "118 Rural Hospital CEOs to Know" by *Becker's Hospital Review*, a leading health care industry publication.

"I'm deeply honored by this recognition, but it truly belongs to our entire team at Banner Wyoming Medical Center," Porter said. "Providing quality health care in rural settings comes with unique challenges, but it also offers incredible opportunities to make a meaningful difference in people's lives. I'm proud of what we've accomplished together as we continue to enhance health care access and services for the communities we serve across Wyoming."

Porter leads Wyoming's largest hospital, a 249-bed regional referral center serving approximately 250,000 people across Wyoming's expansive rural landscape. The medical center provides critical health care services in a state that faces unique challenges including severe weather conditions, transportation difficulties and limited access to specialized health care services.

"This recognition reflects Lance's exceptional leadership and dedication to advancing health care in rural Wyoming," said Margo Karsten, Banner Health's Western Division senior vice president. "His ability to navigate complex challenges while improving patient care and staff satisfaction demonstrates the kind of leadership that makes a meaningful difference in rural health care."

Porter assumed the CEO role shortly after Banner Health acquired Wyoming Medical Center in

2020, guiding the formerly independent hospital through integration with Banner Health's multi-state system during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Under his leadership, the medical center has achieved significant milestones, including:

- Gaining American College of Surgeons Level II Trauma Center status
- Expanding telestroke access to nine sites across Wyoming
- Maintaining American Heart and Stroke Associations' "Gold Plus Stroke Award" and Joint Commission Primary Stroke Center status
- Leading more than \$70 million in capital improvements, including a comprehensive maintenance and upgrade plan
- Developing a new electrophysiology lab
- Successfully recruiting dozens of primary care providers and specialists to Casper
- Decreasing traveling staff and employee turnover
- Achieving a 13-point increase in employee satisfaction scores in 2024

Prior to his current role, Porter served as the CEO of Banner Payson Medical Center in Arizona, where he successfully guided that facility through its transition into the Banner Health system.

Porter holds a bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University, a master's in speech and language pathology from Arizona State University, and a master's in business administration from the University of Rochester in New York.

Online TCAR Training for Wyoming Healthcare Professionals

The Wyoming Healthcare Preparedness Program and Central Wyoming Healthcare Coalition have sponsored an online Trauma Care After Resuscitation Course (TCAR) for Wyoming Medical Professionals.

The online Trauma Care After Resuscitation (TCAR) course was explicitly designed for bedside professionals who care for trauma patients in critical care, perioperative, acute care, and rehabilitation settings. TCAR gives inpatient staff members the essential knowledge and clinical reasoning skills to meet ACS and regulatory requirements and provide excellent care to this challenging patient population.

Please complete the form at <https://forms.gle/PZAaq6ksB8aaaAV5A> to register for TCAR Online Training. The program administrator will contact you with your online account access information. This course is sponsored by the Wyoming Healthcare Preparedness Program (HPP) and Central Wyoming Healthcare Coalition and is available free of charge to healthcare professionals in Wyoming.

To learn more about the online platform, visit the vendor website at <https://tcarprograms.visionem.org/>. However, HPP will manage all registration, so please sign up using the link above.



HHS Announces Initiative with Insurers to Streamline Prior Authorizations

The Department of Health and Human Services today **announced** an initiative coordinated with multiple health insurance companies to streamline prior authorization processes for patients covered by Medicare Advantage, Medicaid managed care plans, Health Insurance Marketplace plans and commercial plans. Under the initiative, electronic prior authorization requests would become standardized by 2027. HHS stated that these reforms complement ongoing regulatory efforts by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to improve prior authorization, including building upon the Interoperability and Prior Authorization final rule.

The plan is expected to make the prior authorization process faster, more efficient and more transparent, the agency said. Participating insurers pledged to expand real-time responses by 2027. HHS said that the insurers would also commit to reducing the volume of medical services subject to prior authorization by 2026, including those for common procedures such as colonoscopies and cataract surgeries.

During a news conference, HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. said unlike previous attempts by insurers, this initiative would succeed because the number of insurers participating represent 257 million Americans. “The other difference is we have standards this time,” he said. “We have ... deliverables. We have specificity on those deliverables, we have metrics, and we have deadlines, and we have oversight.”

Mehmet Oz, M.D., CMS administrator, said that the pledge “is an opportunity for industry to show itself.” Sen. Marshall, R-Kan., said that Congress could pursue codifying at least some portions of the initiative in the future. Additionally, participating insurers would honor existing prior authorizations during coverage transitions.

[Read the Press Release Here](#)



SHERIDAN
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Sheridan Memorial Hospital Launches Advisory Council to Amplify Patient, Family Voices in Local Healthcare

Sheridan Memorial Hospital is now recruiting members for its new patient and family advisory council, known as VOICE—Voicing Opportunities for Improvement, Collaboration and Engagement. This council will bring together patients, family members and hospital staff to enhance the quality of care, improve patient safety and enrich the overall experience for patients and their loved ones at Sheridan Memorial Hospital.

A patient and family advisory council is a partnership between those receiving care and those providing it. Through regular meetings and open dialogue among individuals with diverse perspectives, VOICE will ensure the opinions, needs and lived experiences of Sheridan Memorial Hospital’s patients and families are not only heard but actively integrated into the hospital’s planning and quality improvement efforts.

VOICE will include individuals who have had recent care experiences at Sheridan Memorial Hospital—whether as patients or family members—alongside hospital healthcare providers, administrators and staff. The hospital plans to host the first VOICE meeting in early September 2025 and is currently seeking applicants who are eager to help shape the future of local healthcare. Sheridan Memorial Hospital encourages community members who have received care or supported a loved one who had in any of its care settings to consider applying to join VOICE. Applicants should feel comfortable sharing personal experiences in a group setting and be passionate about improving healthcare in their community.



Cody Regional Health Launches Online Childbirth Class to Support Expectant Families

Cody Regional Health is proud to announce the launch of its new Online Childbirth Class, designed to provide expecting parents with flexible, convenient, and expert-led education to support them through pregnancy, childbirth, and early parenting.

This comprehensive virtual course allows families to learn at their own pace and on their own schedule. The program includes essential topics such as labor and delivery, postpartum care, breastfeeding, newborn care, C-section education, pain management options, and maternal mental health.

“We’re incredibly proud to offer this flexible and informative online childbirth class to our community,” said Vicki Sarver, Director of Women’s Health & Nursery at Cody Regional Health. “Our goal is to make sure that every expectant parent feels confident and supported as they prepare to welcome their baby into the world.” “Every birth journey is unique, and this new online platform gives our patients the tools they need to be empowered and informed,” said Andrea Chisholm, MD, OBGYN at Cody Regional Health. “It’s one more way we’re investing in the well-being of mothers and babies in our region.”

The online childbirth class is accessible from any device and includes multiple modules taught by experienced clinicians and educators. The program is open to all expecting parents and support partners.

Physician and Surgeon Shortages in Rural America Recruitment Challenges, Solutions, and Outlooks

Synergy Health, a WHA Resources endorsed vendor, has released a new blog on physician and surgeon shortages in rural America.

Rural communities across the United States are increasingly burdened by a persistent and growing shortage of both general physicians and specialized surgeons—a crisis that threatens the health and economic stability of nearly 60 million Americans. One of the most critical causes of this shortage is the challenge hospitals face when trying to recruit physicians to make careers in small town America.

While roughly 20% of Americans live in rural areas, only about 9% of the nation’s physicians practice in those regions. This disparity is even more pronounced for specialists, including general and orthopedic surgery where access is often unavailable without traveling hours to urban centers.

But how do hospitals in rural locations stem the tide and overcome the current challenges associated with recruiting physicians for services that are so desperately needed in rural locations?

[Read the Blog Here](#)





Obstetric Patient Safety Course

FREE hands-on learning opportunity open to **anyone in the community**, whether you're in **OB, ED, ICU, EMS, Cardiopulmonary, Primary Care, or a Physician/Provider**, this is for you!

AWHONN Obstetric Patient Safety (OPS) Course in **Jackson** this **August** and **October**, and it's all thanks to the support of **AWHONN Wyoming** and a **HRSA grant from Jen Davis**. The OPS course is designed to help prepare teams across the care spectrum for obstetrical emergencies, from the field to the ICU.

☐ The first class is in **Jackson on August 25th and 26th**. Please register [here](#) if you are interested.

For More Information, Contact:

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September 2, 2025

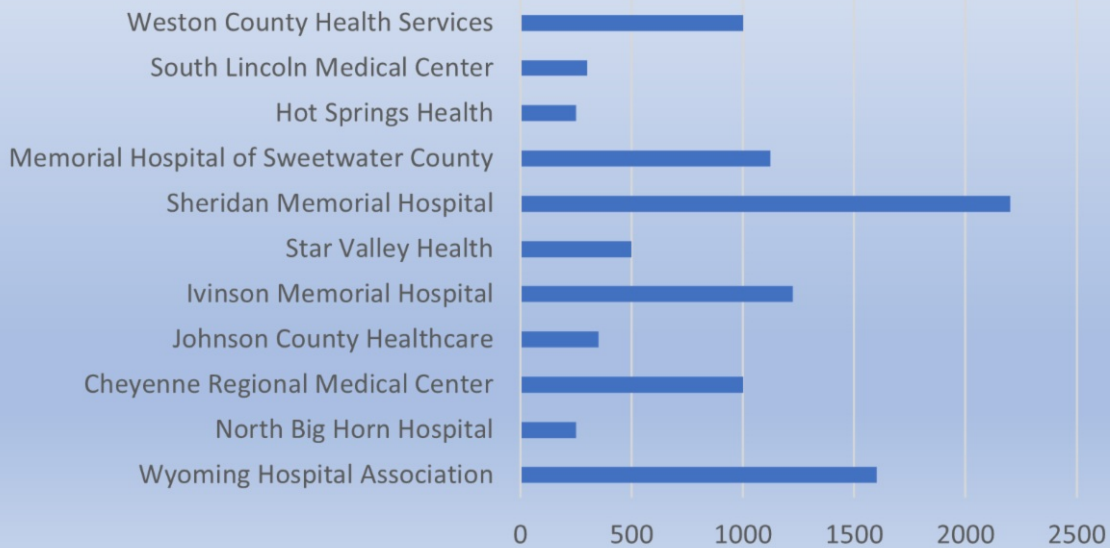
WHA Golf Tournament - Jacoby Golf Course, Laramie

September 3-4, 2025

WHA/LAW Annual Meeting - Laramie, Wyoming

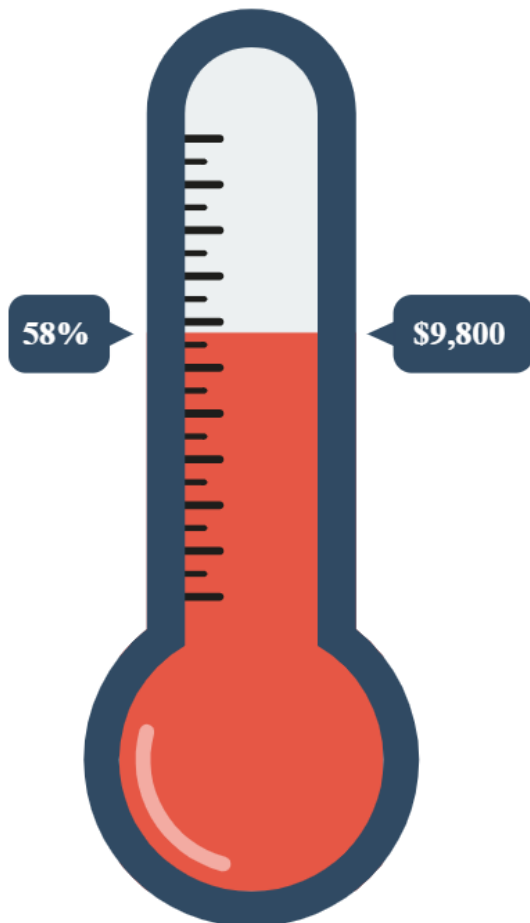
WHA PAC Goal for 2025
Contributors

PAC CONTRIBUTIONS



WHA PAC

GOAL: \$17,000



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