

News Briefs

November 7, 2025

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Wyoming Hospital Association

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Wyoming Submits Application to CMS for Rural Health Transformation Program

Governor Gordon Press Release

The State of Wyoming has announced the submission of its application to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for the \$50 billion Rural Health Transformation Program, a federal initiative to strengthen healthcare access and outcomes in rural communities across the country.

“Wyoming is taking full advantage of the Rural Health Transformation Program championed under President Trump,” Governor Mark Gordon said. “Our application reflects a clear vision for Wyoming’s healthcare future. Just as we have done with other transitory federal programs, we recognize this money is not forever and it is taxpayer money. So the investments we make must stand the test of time and not further burden our grandchildren. Rural states like Wyoming need the tools to build solutions that work here at home. These funds will help us transform care for Wyoming families and keep critical services local, where they belong.”

The application outlines Wyoming’s plan to use the funding to address the State’s biggest health challenges identified by rural Wyoming communities through 11 local town hall meetings and prioritized through an online survey with over 1,300 responses. The top five priorities from the public were:

- Improve the financial viability of small, rural hospitals to provide basic services to their communities.
- Expand affordable health insurance options.
- Recruit and retain primary care physicians, in order to improve access and build longer relationships with patients.
- Train and recruit more nurses and related direct care workforce (e.g. nursing assistants) in order to improve staffing at hospitals and long-term care facilities.
- Strengthen obstetric/gynecological, labor/delivery and related services so women can deliver babies safely.

To address these priorities, the application details four key initiatives, including:

- Improving access to basic medical care. By getting the state’s rural hospitals and EMS systems in Wyoming to focus on the basics and consolidating them around stable funding, Wyoming can improve their sustainability for rural communities. One of

Wyoming's main goals is to improve access to maternity care so mothers can deliver babies safely and closer to home.

- Building up our health workforce. Wyoming's proposal will expand educational opportunities for nurses, paramedics and other health workers, with the goal of laying out clear career pathways so people starting in entry-level jobs can see a real future for themselves in the state.
- Improving people's health. By improving people's diets and promoting exercise and physical activity, Wyoming hopes to make a dent in diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
- Using technology to improve chronic disease management and bring care closer to home. By giving health providers the right tools and the right incentives, Wyoming can improve how medical care is delivered to rural residents.

"This application reflects Wyoming's dedication to building a sustainable and innovative rural health system that addresses our communities' needs," Stefan Johansson, director of the Department of Health said. "We look forward to a favorable response from CMS to help us achieve these objectives."

The Rural Health Transformation Program is established by Section 71401 of H.R. 1 and will distribute \$10 billion annually for five years. Fifty percent of the funds will be distributed equally among all states with approved applications, while the other half will be allocated by CMS based on a variety of factors.

Wyoming's application was developed with input from key stakeholders, including community members, rural hospitals, community health centers, and other providers, to ensure a comprehensive and collaborative approach.

CMS is expected to announce the awardees by December 31, 2025.

Wyoming's Rural Health
Transformation Application

Wyoming Hospital Association
Letter of Endorsement for
Wyoming's RHTF Application

Governor Gordon Delivers Hopeful Mental Health Assistance Message, Issues Call to Action

Governor Mark Gordon (R-WY) delivered his message **Leading with Hope: Mental Health and Suicide Awareness**, on the One Minute Can Save a Life podcast hosted by **Psychologist-Suicidologist Kent A. Corso**. The Governor expressed the importance of reaching out for assistance via the **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** and discussed figures that depict the suicide rate declining in the Cowboy state.

According to the WY Department of Health's Injury & Violence Prevention Program, suicide trends began flattening from 2021-2024 compared to the previous three-year period of 2018-2021. While this is a welcome shift, counties such as Lincoln have experienced more dramatic decreases in suicide rates. While these rates are promising, outreach and training efforts remain a top priority.

The holiday season podcast release is intentional.

"While many of us are celebrating this time of year, it can be a very painful time for others. Maybe they've lost a loved one, or they are all alone," Dr. Kent Corso said. "The more connected we are to each other, the more we are reducing all sorts of risks."

Governor Gordon is an advocate of the Wyoming culture shift from extreme self-reliance to a personal and community mindset "it's ok to reach-out for help." Through the Governor's **Wy We Care Initiative** and collaborative professional and community efforts — including outreach and **trainings** — the state continues to move toward lowered suicide rates and improved mental health.

During the podcast, the Governor emphasized value of local, trained voices staffing the state's 988 Crisis and Suicide Awareness Line and also gave kudos to Wyoming Health Fairs co-founder and

board member Bob Price for heading up a radio awareness campaign in coordination with Natrona Collective Trust.

“Mayor Max Mickelson in Rock Springs has offered for all employees he has in the city to take a suicide prevention and intervention training program, and so far over two-thirds have volunteered to take it,” Dr. Corso said, noting Department of Corrections leadership reports over 40 employees have also volunteered to take the training program.

REGISTER HERE for a free Online 90-Minute Suicide Prevention Training (Nov 20): Open to educators, faith leaders, mental and medical healthcare providers, peer support, first responders, and others interested in suicide prevention.

Newsweek Names Wyoming’s Top 5 Hospitals

Newsweek and data intelligence firm Statista have highlighted 800 leading hospitals in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Wyoming's hospitals include Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County, St. John's Health, Sheridan Memorial Hospital, Cheyenne Regional Medical Center and Powell Valley Health. Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County also received the patient experience award.

“We are very humbled to be chosen as one of the top five hospitals in Wyoming,” said CEO Irene Richardson. “Ensuring that our hospital provides accessible, high-quality, affordable care is what we strive for, and we are honored to be able to provide that to our community. This recognition speaks to our staff’s commitment to our patients and community.”

In explaining the rankings, Newsweek said the American Hospital Association points out that a hospital’s capabilities, resources and performance can vary widely. “Knowing which facilities provide exceptional quality care and in close proximity can help patients and families make more informed decisions,” according to Newsweek. To simplify that process, Newsweek and Statista have compiled America’s Best-in-State Hospitals for 2026.

This year’s methodology incorporates significant updates: expanded hospital quality metrics, broader accreditation coverage, integration of prior-year expert recommendations and a stronger emphasis on care quality and Patient-Reported Outcome Measures, the Newsweek article said. The result is a state-by-state guide to hospitals that stand out for clinical excellence, patient experience and innovation in outcomes reporting.

Data is based on four pillars:

- Hospital quality metrics: Quality metrics data from the from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS), performance benchmark data from Medicare fee-for-service claims sourced from Arcadia, data from the American Hospital Association Annual Survey of Hospital Database, and Accreditation data from various sources are considered. (50 percent of the total score)
- Hospital reputation: From July to August 2025, a nationwide online survey among medical professionals (doctors, hospital managers and healthcare workers) was conducted in cooperation with Newsweek. (30 percent)
- Patient experience: Data from The Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey: a standardized survey of hospital patients in the U.S. regarding their experiences during a recent procedure or surgery. (15 percent)
- Statista PROMs implementation survey: To account for the increasing importance of Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs), hospitals which participated in the Statista PROMs implementation survey received a PROMs implementation score. (5 percent)





Virtual Nursing Webinar

Thursday, November 13, 2025

Medical Solutions, a WHA Resources endorsed vendor, will be hosting a timely webinar on virtual nursing.

Virtual Nursing Unpacked: Models, Metrics, and Retention Outcomes

Details

Virtual nursing is transforming the way care is delivered. Artley and guests will share how OSF HealthCare has successfully piloted, scaled, and refined virtual nursing programs that are improving patient care, boosting nurse satisfaction, and delivering measurable ROI. Join the conversation to explore how innovative virtual models are shaping the future of the nursing workforce.

Objectives:

- Learn how OSF HealthCare designed and scaled its virtual nursing programs across care settings.
- Discover the impact of virtual nursing on retention, satisfaction, and overall nurse experience.
- Gain practical insights into what OSF would repeat—and what they'd do differently—when implementing virtual care models.

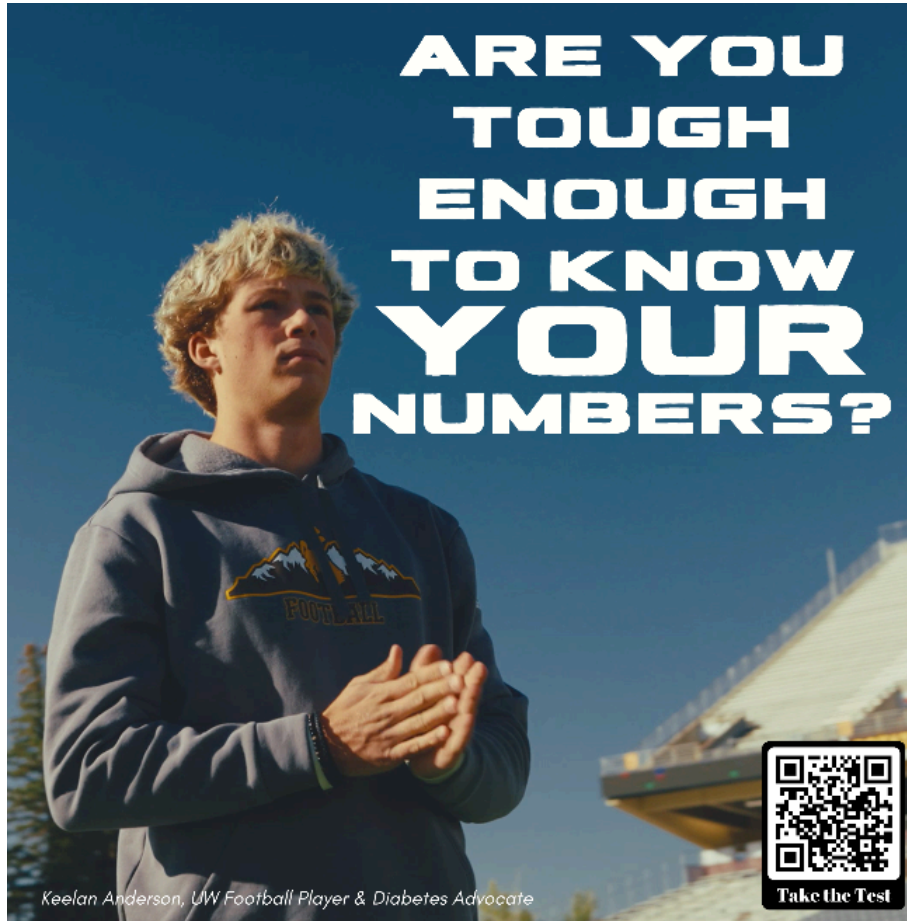
[Reserve Your Spot Here](#)



AHA Forever Grateful Toolkit

Dedication of health care workers recognized in American Hospital Association's Forever Grateful toolkit.

The AHA's latest Forever Grateful social media toolkit includes posts and graphics expressing support and appreciation for all health care workers. Hospitals and health systems are encouraged to use and customize these resources during the holiday season for posting on their social media platforms.



DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

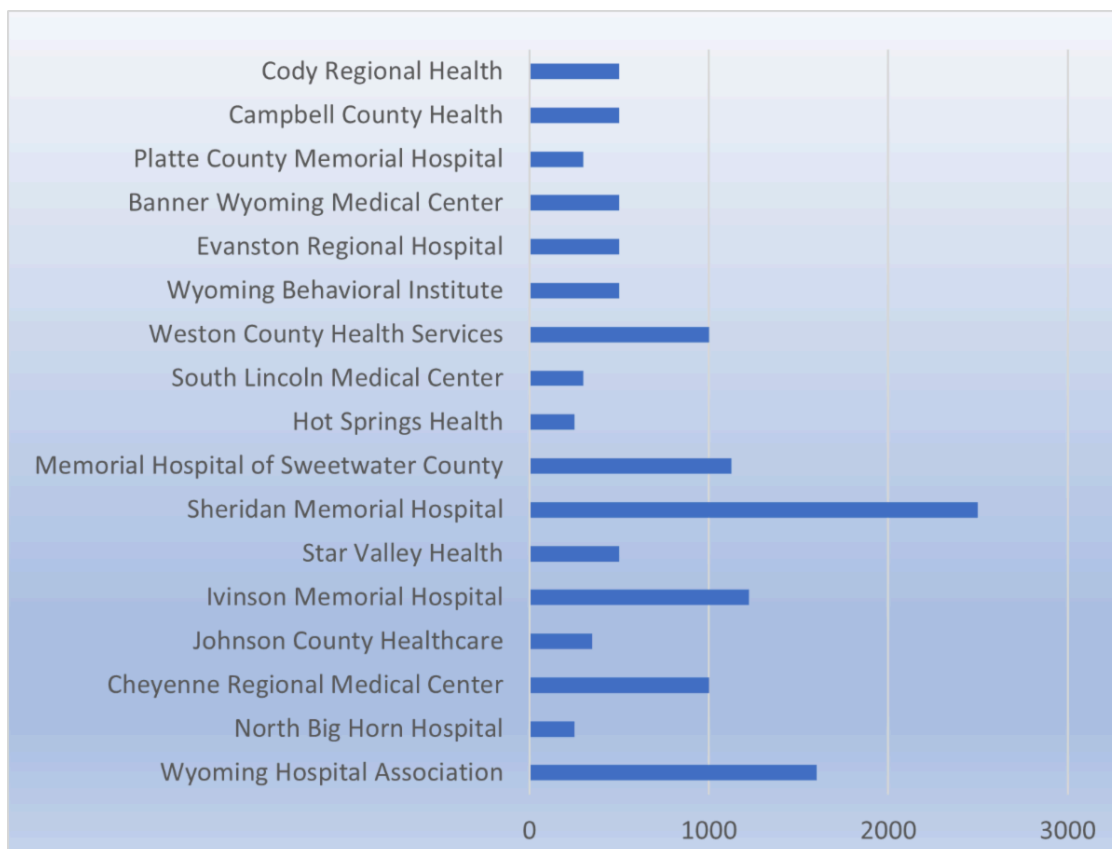
Did you know 1 in 3 Wyoming adults has **prediabetes**, and most don't even realize it? Be tough enough to know your numbers and take the quiz at **findoutWY.org**



2026 Wyoming Budget Session
February 9, 2026

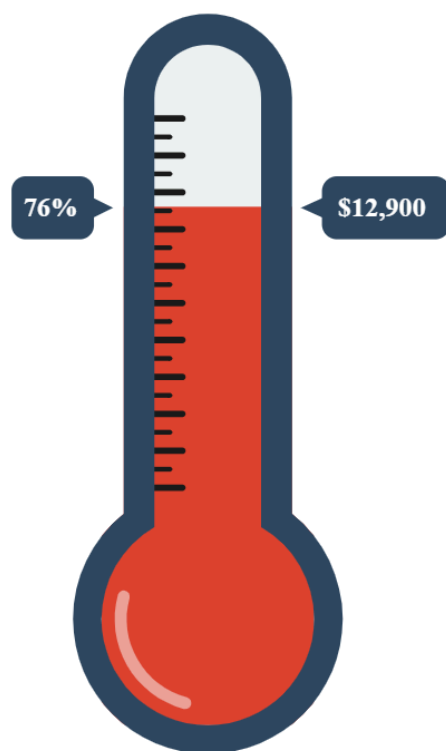
WHA Annual Meeting
September 9-10, 2026
Little America, Cheyenne

WHA PAC Goal for 2025
Contributors



WHA PAC

GOAL: \$17,000



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