

News Briefs

October 17, 2025

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**Wyoming
Hospital
Association**

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Wyoming Hospitals Unite for Historic Rural Health Funding Opportunity

Wyoming's hospitals are gearing up for a potentially transformative funding opportunity that could bring between \$500-700 million to the state over five years through the federal Rural Health Transformation Program.

The Wyoming Department of Health, led by Director Johansson, scheduled a critical meeting on October 8 in Casper, where hospital representatives collaborated on developing the state's application strategy. All but one Wyoming hospital were represented, along with the Wyoming EMS Association and other partners. Franz Fuchs facilitated the session, which focused on gathering comprehensive information and innovative ideas from across Wyoming's healthcare community.

A Collaborative Approach

The meeting reflects an unprecedented spirit of cooperation among Wyoming's healthcare providers. The Wyoming Hospital Association has stepped forward to consolidate and coordinate proposals from multiple hospitals, aiming to create stronger, more unified submissions. The Department of Health has emphasized that this is not a competitive process at the provider level—all strong ideas will strengthen Wyoming's overall application.

"There's no competition at this stage," officials noted, encouraging both collective and individual submissions from healthcare organizations across the state.

The Opportunity

Created through HR1 legislation passed on July 4, 2025, the Rural Health Transformation Program represents a significant federal investment in rural healthcare infrastructure. Wyoming stands to receive funding through two tranches: a baseline equitable distribution and a competitive portion based on application quality.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the final Notice of Funding Opportunity and application guidance on September 15, setting the stage for states to submit comprehensive proposals.

Critical Timeline

The window for action is tight:

- Early October 2025: Stakeholders must submit ideas and proposal concepts to the Department of Health
- November 5, 2025: Wyoming's state application due to CMS
- Late December 2025/Early January 2026: First awards expected to be announced

This collaborative effort, supported by ongoing public meetings, stakeholder sessions, and legislative engagement, represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform rural healthcare delivery across Wyoming.



WCHS Offering Hybrid CNA Classes

Kim Scharf, director of quality at Weston County Health Services (WCHS), is taking new steps to help students succeed in the hospital's certified nursing assistant program, which she has led since 2023. Scharf coordinates the CNA program and views the program's success as a collective effort supported by leadership and staff.

The hospital has introduced aptitude tests, which are entry-level tests that assess whether program candidates will be able to pass the CNA test on their first attempt, Scharf said. She said that she has told students that the program has had difficulties with their skills and knowledge tests, so they need to study and come to her if they're having trouble, so she's aware. To reinforce communication, students sign an expectations form agreeing to maintain regular contact with Scharf.

The program also now uses an obligation form requiring students to schedule the test within 30 days of applying for their license to reduce the risk of forgetting what they learned.

Scharf said the program's students are adapting well to remote-proctored knowledge tests, which make tests more accessible and convenient for rural students. She said at the meeting that the knowledge test can be taken at home or at a testing site. The test covers basic nursing skills, mental health issues, infection control and "anything they might see at the nursing home," Scharf said. "While technology always comes with a learning curve, we've found that with preparation and support, such as having user names, passwords and the Zoom app ready ahead of time, students are navigating the process smoothly," she said.

Scharf said the hospital has added additional practice, direct feedback and structured reflection to help students pass the first time. Earlier this summer, the class introduced an aptitude test and reflection form, and early feedback has been positive, she explained. "Students tell us the integrated forms help them understand expectations up front, while the reflection form encourages growth," Scharf said.

The reflection form asks students who fail the knowledge exam to explain why they think they did not pass, whether they believe they were prepared for it, how they prepared, what other test preparation might have been helpful, whether they were anxious during the test, whether there were skills or questions they found especially difficult and what they plan to do to prepare to retake the exam.

WCHS offers both in-person and hybrid options for the CNA program. The hybrid program is very popular because it offers students ample flexibility, according to Scharf. "They complete the

didactic portion on their own time, then come in for in-person skills checks and clinicals,” she told the NLJ. “This structure allows us to meet students where they’re at while still ensuring they get the hands-on experience that’s so essential in healthcare.”

HSCC Launches Toolkit to Strengthen Essential Health Care Services and Prevent Cyberattacks

The Health Sector Coordinating Council released its **Sector Mapping and Risk Toolkit**, created to help health care providers and other organizations visualize key services that support essential health care workflows and determine which of them present critical risk of cyberattack disruption capable of impacting care delivery, operations and liquidity. The toolkit consists of 17 health care workflow maps and usage guidelines and encourages organizations to prioritize their risks, mitigate them where possible and develop recovery and continuity plans.

The SMART initiative was created in April 2024 as a response to the cyberattack on Change Healthcare two months earlier. The AHA contributed the development of this project, which has helped identify these systemically important, mission-critical services for health care.

For more information on this or other cyber and risk issues, contact John Riggi at jriggi@aha.org. For the latest cyber and risk resources and threat intelligence, [visit aha.org/cybersecurity](https://aha.org/cybersecurity).

Sector Mapping and Risk Toolkit

SunRx 340B Webinar Series: A 340B Regulatory Brief

Tuesday, 11/4/2025

11:00 AM PDT / 2:00 PM EDT

**THIS WEBINAR REQUIRES REGISTRATION
PLEASE REGISTER USING LINK BELOW**

Join us for an informative webinar hosted by SunRx featuring special guest speakers: Bharath Krishnamurthy, Health Policy & Analytics at American Hospital Association

The regulatory environment for 340B pharmacy is in a constant state of change, requiring eligible entities to be nimble and disciplined in the management of their program. The 340B program has undergone substantial transformation driven by restrictive policy updates from participating manufacturers, evolving and ever-changing government interpretations, and a surge of legal challenges.

In this session, we will share valuable insights for consideration in the management of your 340B pharmacy strategy.

- Contract Pharmacy dispute.
- Emerging Rebate Model activity
- Preparing for the Future

***NOTE:** This event is intended exclusively for 340B Entities

SPEAKERS

Bharath Krishnamurthy

Health Policy

American Hospital Association

John Bretz

Contact SunRx for more information. If you'd like to learn more, have questions, or need resources on 340B program management, please reach out to: John Bretz | Director of Strategic Relations, SunRx | jbretz@sunrx.com

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Powell Valley Healthcare



Powell Hospital District Donates Ambulance to Northwest College

The Powell Hospital District Board of Trustees approved the disposal of the district's 2000 Ford ambulance. PVHC's ambulance coordinator, Joshua Campbell, recommended donating the vehicle to Northwest College's EMT/paramedic training program. The Board approved the donation at its August 25th meeting. "I'm grateful for the Board's decision to donate the ambulance to NWC. The vehicle will make a great training tool for the instructors and students in the program," said Joshua Campbell. "Having a solid education program to prepare our future EMS force here in rural Wyoming is

essential, and I think it's great that we can support NWC with the contribution of the ambulance," said Campbell.

Northwest College staff and board members were joined by Powell Hospital District board members and PVHC staff on Wednesday, September 10 to celebrate the donation of the ambulance. "With this ambulance, it's going to give our students valuable experience and hands-on opportunities to try different things," said Lisa Watson, Northwest College President. "We all appreciate this, and the ambulance will get used quite a bit," said Steven Haggard, instructor for emergency medical services. "It's going to alter our students' perception of the field as we do our scenarios and put them in an environment that's similar to what they will see in the field. It really matters to us!"



Use the AHA's United Against the Flu Toolkit to Highlight Vaccine Availability for Vulnerable Populations

The American Hospital Association's social media toolkit for spreading awareness of the flu

focuses on the beginning of fall and the availability of the flu vaccine for at-risk, vulnerable populations. The toolkit includes messages and social media assets for hospitals and health systems to use on their own channels. **DOWNLOAD NOW**

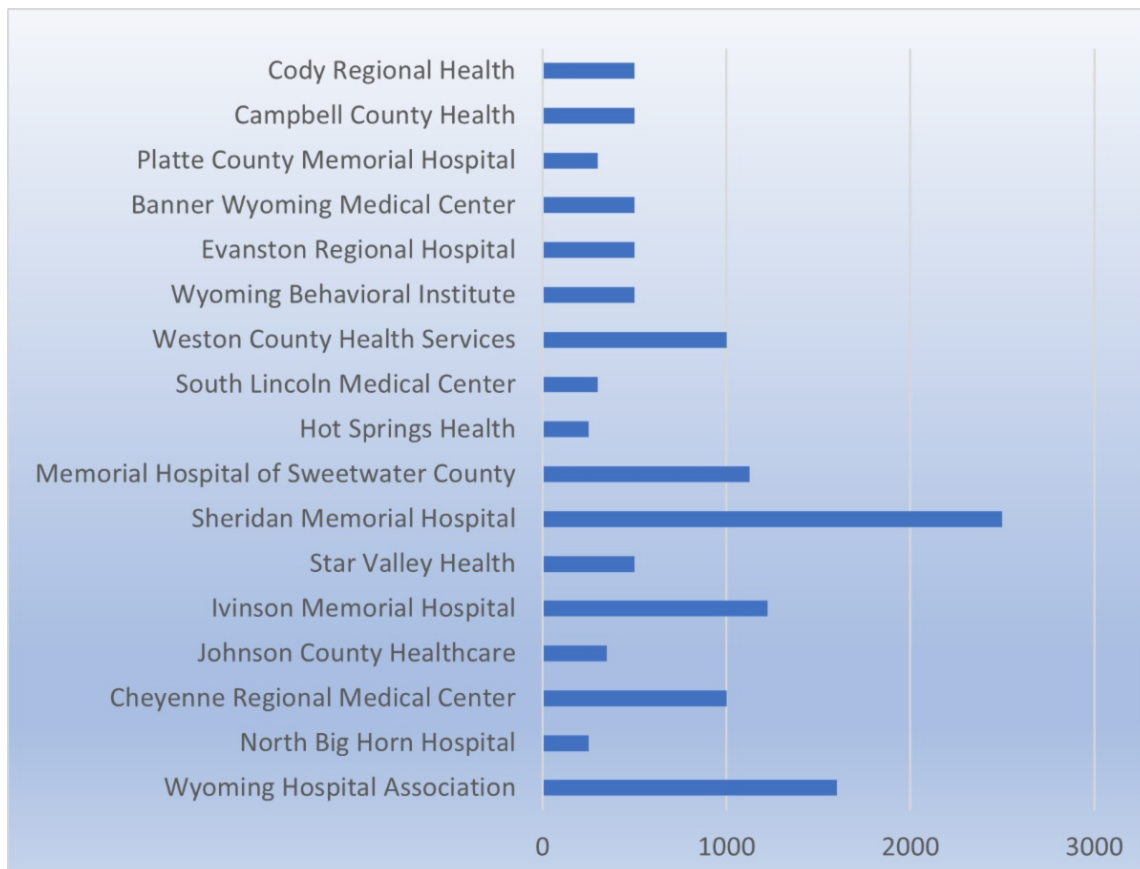


2026 Wyoming Budget Session
February 9, 2026

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

WHA PAC Goal for 2025

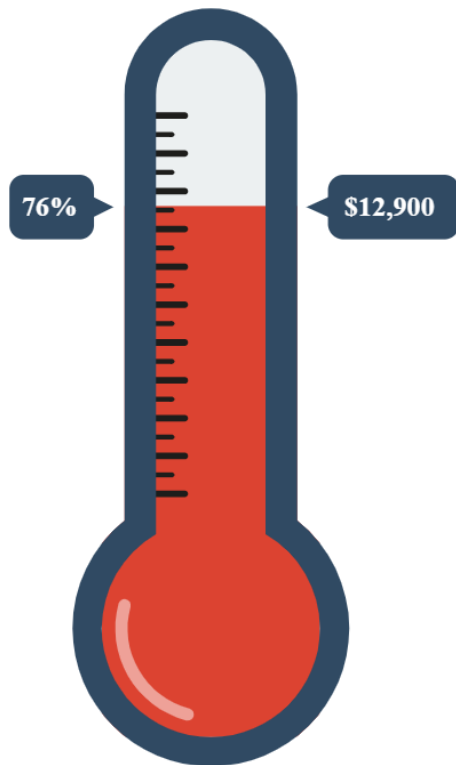
Contributors



WHA PAC

Barry Burkart
Eric Boley
Eric Connell
Tim Thornell
Shelli Shelton

GOAL: \$17,000



Doug Faus
Mike Hunsaker
Ron Mischke
Darcy Robertson
Barbara Sowada
Scott Alwin
Luke Senden
Dave Ryerse
Shirley Coulter
Gary Crum
Joseph Steiner
Kelly Lieb
Terry Moss
Irene Richardson
Joe Wright
Jenifer Shassetz
Cathy Harshbarger
Mike McCafferty
Dan Ordyna
Mike Phillips
Bryan Opitz
Ada Kirven
Bob Moore
Sandy Dugger
Lance Porter
Matt Shahan
Hannah McRae



Wyoming Hospital Association | 2005 Warren Ave | Cheyenne, WY 82001-3725 US

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