

News Briefs

September 12, 2025

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Wyoming
Hospital
Association

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Wyoming's Rural Health Transformation Program

On July 4, 2025, President Trump signed the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act* (OBBBA) into law. Part of that law creates the **Rural Health Transformation Program**. This new program offers Wyoming a significant opportunity to strengthen rural healthcare through sustainable, innovative, and transformative solutions.

Funding under this program is intended to support priorities such as:

- Chronic disease prevention and behavioral health;
- Sustaining access to care in rural communities;
- Innovative approaches to care delivery and payment models;
- Workforce development and training;
- Technological and consumer health solutions; and
- IT advances and technical assistance.

To ensure Wyoming's proposal reflects the needs of Wyoming's rural communities, the Department of Health is conducting a series of public meetings to gather input on rural healthcare challenges, strengths, and opportunities.

As this will be the biggest infusion of funds to improve rural healthcare that Wyoming has ever seen, possibly 500-800 million over 5 years. We highly encourage attendance of the town halls to make sure our communities are heard on where they want funding to go.

The Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) is soliciting feedback and proposals from health and human service provider groups and associations on our application for the newly-created **Rural Health Transformation Program**. This program -- created by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act -- offers Wyoming a significant opportunity to invest in and transform rural healthcare.

Rural Health Transformation Program

That's a Wrap! – Annual Meeting Recap

Our Annual Meeting has come and gone, and what a wonderful gathering it was! This year's event brought together so many familiar faces (and a few new ones) for a day of connection, conversation, and celebration of all we've accomplished together.

We shared updates on the past year, looked ahead to what's next, and most importantly, had a chance to listen to your ideas and feedback. The energy in the room reminded us just how strong and supportive our community is.

A big thank-you to everyone who took the time to join us—whether you came to catch up with friends, learn something new, or simply show your support, you made the day special. We're excited to carry the momentum forward into the year ahead!

Highlights of this year's Annual Meeting

Wyoming Legislative Panel featuring: Representative Chip Neiman, Speaker of the House; Representative Jeremy Haroldson, Speaker Pro Tempore; and Eric Boley, WHA President.

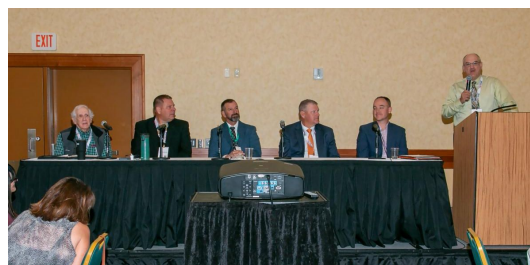
State law makers and policy experts gave an engaging discussion on current and emerging legislative issues impacting healthcare. Panelists shared their insights from the latest legislative session, upcoming priorities, and how public policy shapes the future of our industry.



The State of Healthcare: Wyoming Healthcare Leaders' Perspectives.

A panel of Wyoming healthcare leaders led a lively discussion on public policy and legislative issues affecting Wyoming hospitals.

The panel consisted of Senator Eric Barlow, Eric Connell, CEO, North Big Horn Hospital in Lovell, Doug Faus, CEO, Iverson Memorial Hospital, Joe Steiner representing Trustees, Eric Boley WHA, President and Moderator Terry Moss, COO, Iverson Memorial Hospital.



Sam Glenn Delivers Keynote

Sam's presentations are renowned for their energy and creativity. He often paints live on stage while delivering customized messages that resonate with audiences. His keynotes cover topics such as leadership, resilience, and teamwork, leaving attendees motivated and equipped with practical strategies for improvement. Sam painted this buffalo canvas on stage at the meeting.





Clevenger Receives Norman S. Holt Award for Nursing Excellence

Forward-thinking leadership, compassion, and calm authority has earned Ann Clevenger, Chief Nursing Officer at Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County, the Norman S. Holt Award for Nursing Excellence during the Wyoming Hospital Association Annual Meeting Sept. 3-4 in Laramie.

“I am deeply honored to receive the Wyoming Hospital Association’s Norman S. Holt Award for Nursing Excellence,” said Clevenger, who was among 10 nominees statewide for the award. “This recognition means a great deal to me, and I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who made it possible.

“Nursing is not just a profession – it’s a calling. Every day, I am inspired by the compassion, dedication, and resilience of my colleagues,” she said. “To be acknowledged among such an extraordinary group of professionals is truly humbling.

“Thank you to the leadership team for your continued support and for fostering an environment where excellence in patient care is both encouraged and celebrated. I am grateful for the opportunity to grow, serve, and make a difference in the lives of our patients and their families. “This award is a reflection of the incredible teamwork and collaboration that defines our nursing community,” Clevenger said. “I share this honor with all of you.”

Over the years, MHSC has fielded Norman S. Holt Award nominees and finalists, but since the award’s inception in 1983, this is the first time an MHSC nurse has been honored with the award. A senior healthcare executive with over 20 years of experience, Clevenger holds a Doctorate of Nursing Practice and national certification as a Nurse Executive Advanced (NEA-BC). She provides strategic oversight for nursing and allied health services across the healthcare system, encompassing inpatient and outpatient care, care management, cardiopulmonary services, infection prevention, employee health, and professional education. Her service as a 24/7 Administrator on Call has been instrumental in maintaining patient safety, managing staffing resources, and ensuring continuity of care.

Her co-workers, Director of Education and Employee Health Patty O’Lexey, RN, and Chief Clinical Officer Kari Quicken had this to say in their nomination letter:

“On Feb. 14, the community of Sweetwater County was shaken by a catastrophic multi-vehicle crash in the westbound Green River Tunnel on Interstate 80. The collision, involving 26 vehicles and claiming three lives, sent shockwaves throughout the region. Families were devastated, emergency resources stretched to their limits, and a profound sense of grief blanketed the town. In that moment of collective heartbreak and urgent need, the Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County rose as a pillar of strength and leadership.”

At the helm was Clevenger, “who assumed the role of Incident Commander with calm authority. She swiftly formed a team of 14 Incident Command staff, ensuring a structured and effective response. Under her guidance, MHSC's Hospital Command Center rapidly mobilized, transforming the hospital into a sanctuary of care and coordination. Ann's swift and strategic leadership ensured that each patient received timely, compassionate, and expert medical attention, offering reassurance to families and anchoring the community during a time of uncertainty. Her forwardthinking leadership strengthened system resilience, improved interdepartmental coordination, and elevated overall emergency readiness.”

“The significance of MHSC's response reverberated across the state. The day after the accident, Gov. Mark Gordon traveled to Green River for a community briefing on the incident, where he honored several individuals and organizations for their service, including Dr. Clevenger and the MHSC team with the Governor's Coin – a gesture that recognized not only the hospital's heroic efforts but also the profound emotional and operational impact their leadership had on the people of

Wyoming.”

Clevenger has served as a senior leader at MHSC for five years, leading with compassion, vision, humility and integrity.

One of her most transformative initiatives is the launch of a comprehensive telepsychiatry service line. By forging strategic academic partnerships and establishing rigorous quality assurance measures, she expanded access to mental health services for the community.

Clevenger also has:

- Championed the integration of the Planetree model of person-centered care. Through bedside rounding and shift-to-shift reporting, she has infused empathy into daily clinical operations.
- Introduced a nurse residency and preceptor training program, expanded cross-training opportunities, and initiated sponsorship pathways for clinical advancement.
- Through strategic negotiation of international nurse recruitment contracts, has reduced reliance on travel nurses by over 30% and brought nursing turnover down to 12%, well below the national average.
- Increased clinical rotation placements for nursing, respiratory therapy, and EMS students and serves as a trusted mentor to graduate-level nursing candidates.
- Established a Professional Nurse Peer Review process that promotes peer accountability, strengthens clinical competence, and supports a culture of continuous quality improvement.

We're excited to recognize these fantastic nurses who received nominations for the Norman S. Holt Award for Nursing Excellence

Ariel Allen, RN - Washakie Medical Center

David Black, RN - Three Rivers Health

Valerie Conyers, RN - Wyoming Behavioral Institute

Susan Hurd, RN - Cheyenne Regional Medical Center

Shelley Murphey, RN - North Big Horn Hospital District

Suzy Peter, RN - Iverson Memorial Hospital

Tori Probst, RN - Star Valley Health

Grace Stump, RN - Sheridan Memorial Hospital

Paula Witt, RN - Hot Springs Health



Vigil Receives Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year Award

Congratulations to Leroy Vigil – Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year!

Leroy has been a familiar and friendly face in the Ivinson Memorial Hospital. His roles have included IMH Auxiliary President, IMH Chaplain, and Guest Relations Volunteer.

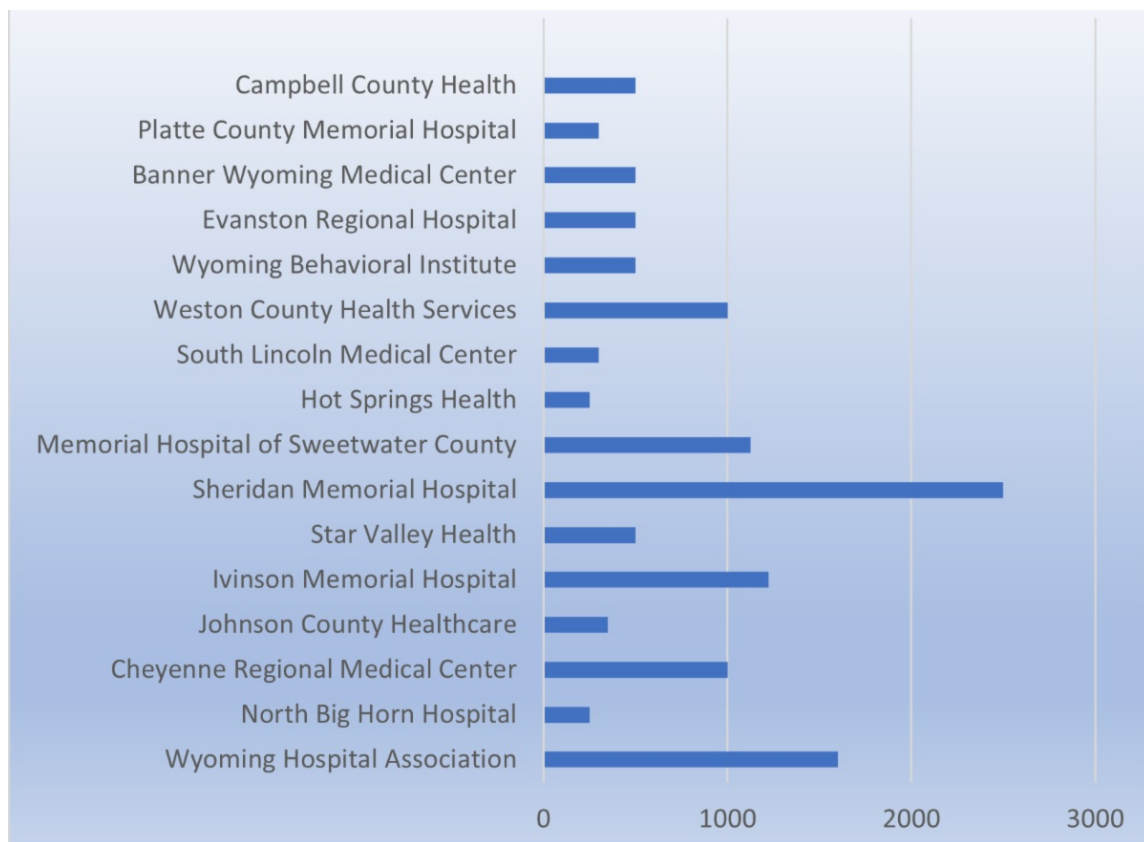
Leroy has said it best himself: "I enjoy being retired, volunteering and I enjoy being able to do something for others - I'm glad to be here. Not only that, but the people are so friendly and nice."

This award is a well-deserved recognition of Leroy's compassion, reliability, and generosity of spirit. He truly embodies what it means to make a difference, and his impact is felt throughout the hospital community.

Please join us in celebrating Leroy and thanking him for all the ways he makes Ivinson Memorial Hospital a better, more welcoming place for everyone!

WHA PAC Goal for 2025

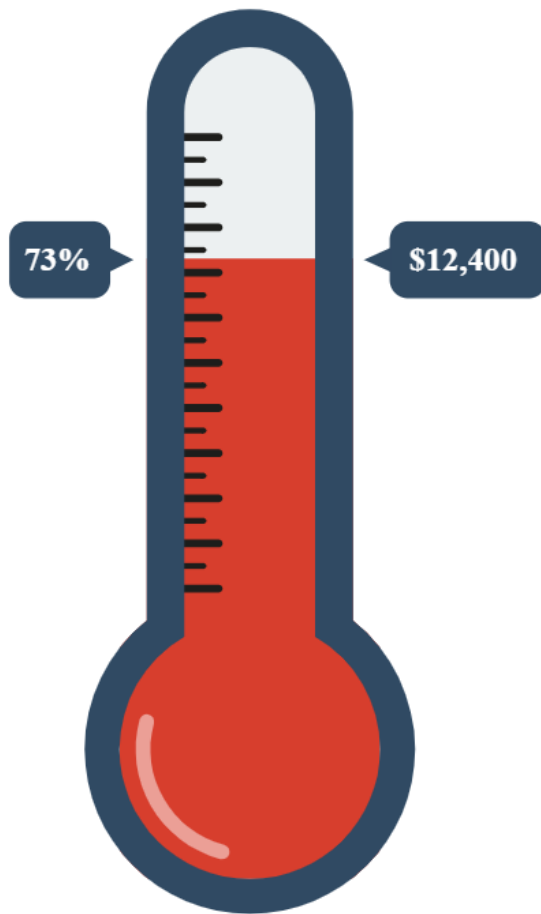
Contributors



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GOAL: \$17,000



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