WHA Presents at Governor’s Conference on Economic Development in Madison

Economic development experts learn why Wisconsin health care is a state asset

As an invited speaker at the Governor’s Conference on Economic Development held February 13 in Madison, Borgerding said employers value good health care, and it factors in their decisions as to where they will expand or locate. A recent survey by Leede Research, sponsored by WHA, revealed that when 300 employers were asked to rank order the factors that mattered most to them during the site location process, health care was second only to education in terms of importance.

“Health care is just as important as utilities. It is as important as roads—that is what we learned from our employers,” Borgerding said. “We have received a lot of national press in site location magazines about

Medicaid In The Spotlight

WHA’s past “Spotlights” highlighted Medicaid program underfunding, which has led to unreimbursed costs for hospitals in the amount of an annual $960 million “hidden health care tax.” These facts, coupled with changes to Medicaid eligibility under the past state budget, necessitated re-establishing a program in Wisconsin known as the Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) program. While the Wisconsin Department of Health Services projected 93 percent of individuals moving off of Medicaid would sign up for coverage in the health insurance exchange, only 54 percent have done so. The DSH program was and is still necessary.

In this week’s edition of our “Spotlight,” we look at how DSH is intended to help those hospitals that treat higher populations of Medicaid or uninsured patients. So, looking at Wisconsin’s $960 million in unreimbursed Medicaid costs each year, one would think Wisconsin would utilize the DSH program more. However, a 2013 study revealed that Wisconsin’s DSH program is one of the smallest in the nation. We think that needs to change. Two things the Legislature can do to cut the hidden health care tax are to make the DSH program permanent and to target additional key funding to it.

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Five Hospitals Among New Project SEARCH Sites

Five hospitals were among the new Project SEARCH sites announced by Governor Scott Walker the week of February 22. The Project SEARCH program helps young adults with disabilities gain employment training and skills to enter the workforce.

Events took place at Riverview Hospital in Wisconsin Rapids and St. Vincent Hospital in Green Bay as they announced their new partnership with the Project SEARCH program. The phase of this Project SEARCH expansion, part of Gov. Walker’s Blueprint for Prosperity initiative, doubles the number of Wisconsin sites from the current 7 to 14.

“The businesses and organizations taking part in this expansion will provide opportunities for students with disabilities to learn skills that help them succeed in the workforce and move toward greater independence,” Walker said. “At the same time, the employers will see firsthand how hiring people with disabilities can improve their bottom line.”

The new Project SEARCH locations that will host students during the 2015-16 academic year include:

- River Falls Area Hospital, River Falls
- Sauk Prairie Healthcare, Sauk City
- Riverview Hospital, Wisconsin Rapids
- St. Vincent Hospital and Bellin Hospital, Green Bay

Wisconsin Project SEARCH combines classroom instruction with total immersion in a large business, giving young adults with disabilities an opportunity to explore careers and receive training in several internships during the year. DWD’s Office of Skills Development (OSD) is working with DWD’s Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and DHS on the Project SEARCH expansion.

Project SEARCH was developed at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC) in 1996 by nurse J. Erin Riehle, then the director of the emergency department there. Project SEARCH is now an internationally recognized model of employment training for young adults with disabilities. The Wisconsin expansion is part of the Governor’s A Better Bottom Line initiative to encourage employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

For more information on Wisconsin Project SEARCH, go to: http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/serviceProviders/projects/default.htm#project_search
Rep. Loudenbeck Meets with Area Hospital Leaders at Beloit Health System

Rep. Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton) met with hospital leaders from across her district February 23 at a roundtable discussion hosted by Beloit Health System. Leaders of area health care facilities located in Beloit, Janesville and Walworth counties participated in this roundtable discussion on priority hospital/system-related issues, including the Medicaid program.

Tim McKevett, president/CEO of Beloit Health System, shared concerns related to Medicaid reimbursements. Recent data released by the Wisconsin Hospital Association placed Wisconsin as the second worst for Medicaid reimbursements in the nation.

“This has a huge impact on state hospitals and employers,” said McKevett. “We don’t want to shift these costs to employers who end up paying the hidden health care tax as a result.”

Loudenbeck, one of 16 members of the state’s powerful Joint Finance Committee, provided an update on the Governor’s proposed budget and also asked what she could do to help hospitals in Wisconsin who are already providing high-quality care to the state’s residents.

“These meetings are important because I gain understanding of the needs of our region’s medical community,” stated Loudenbeck. “We’re aiming for affordable care for all, and we appreciate your efforts to look for solutions in the future of medicine.”

Members of the four area health care systems talked about the impact of Medicaid reimbursement on their hospitals, including the importance of reauthorizing the Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital program. Loudenbeck also heard from the group about their concerns and opposition to a previously proposed medical fee schedule in the state’s Worker’s Compensation program.
Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin’s Peggy Troy Honored

State Senator Leah Vukmir honored Peggy Troy, president/CEO of Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, on the floor of the State Senate February 3.

Vukmir’s remarks highlighted Troy’s appointment as chair of the national Children’s Hospital Association (CHA).

Troy was appointed chair of CHA January 1 and will serve in this capacity for the coming year. CHA represents more than 220 children’s hospitals across the country and is the voice of children’s hospitals nationally. Troy is also a 2015 member of the WHA Board of Directors.

Sen. Vukmir adjourned the Senate session on February 3 in honor of Troy and Troy’s dedication to children’s health care throughout her career. Vukmir also presented Troy with a copy of the official Senate floor remarks.


Rep. Edming Participates in WHA Vikingland Region Meeting

State representative James Edming (R-Glen Flora) participated in the WHA Vikingland region meeting February 20 at Hayward Area Memorial Hospital. In addition to being a new member of the State Assembly, Edming serves on the Board of Rusk County Memorial Hospital in Ladysmith.
WISHIN Surpasses 2 Million Patients

The development of a statewide community health record reached a new milestone in January.

The Wisconsin Statewide Health Information Network (WISHIN) reported there are now more than two million unique patients in the master patient index for WISHIN Pulse, the organization’s Community Health Record product.

This means that clinical data for nearly 40 percent of Wisconsin’s population can be accessed by WISHIN Pulse subscribers. The number of unique patients in WISHIN Pulse has increased 157 percent since August 2014.

“We expect these numbers to continue to rapidly increase in the coming months. They are growing quickly because data is accumulating from our existing customers while we are bringing on data from newly onboarded clients,” said Joe Kachelski, WISHIN’s CEO.

WISHIN, founded in part by WHA, exists to advance interoperability of electronic health records to support more informed clinical decision-making and reduce inefficiencies related to the sharing of clinical data among health care providers and others.

**WISHIN Pulse Dashboard**

*Data through January 31, 2015*

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Unique Patients in WISHIN Pulse
Master Patient Index
WONE Annual Convention for Nurse Leaders and Managers, April 22-24

The Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Executives (WONE) will host its annual convention for nurse leaders and managers April 22-24 in Green Bay. With a focus on its theme of “Leadership Imperatives for a New Tomorrow: Building Cultures of Ownership,” the convention will open with a keynote presentation from Joe Tye. Tye will focus on the essential characteristics needed to foster a culture of ownership and their importance to creating a more compassionate and productive health and staff.

The agenda also focuses on a variety of other topics including case management and care coordination, the transformation of health care delivery via ACOs in Wisconsin, the nurse-physician dyad leadership model, nurse staffing models and an update on the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Uniformity Act.

The convention includes opportunities to network with other nurse leaders and managers. A convention brochure, along with online registration, is available at http://events.SignUp4.net/15WONE.

The convention will be held at KI Convention Center / Hyatt on Main in Green Bay. Anyone who has responsibilities for leading and managing RNs will benefit from the educational agenda— you do not need to be a registered nurse or a member of WONE to attend. For registration questions, contact Jenna Hanson at 608-274-1820 or email jenna.hanson@wha.org.

WHA Foundation Supports Wisconsin Health Literacy Summit, April 14-15

Wisconsin Health Literacy, with support from the WHA Foundation, is sponsoring the “Wisconsin Health Literacy Summit: Better Health through Better Communication.” The Summit will take place April 14-15 at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison.

This bi-annual conference will focus on how improved health communication can lead to better outcomes. This is increasingly important in the changing health care environment in which reimbursement is more closely tied to results and population health must be better managed. Six general sessions, 25 different breakout workshops, three pre-Summit programs, and poster presentations will offer information to improve chronic disease management, patient engagement and satisfaction, clinical outcomes and systems health literacy through improved communication.

Among the plenary presenters are Laura Noonan, MD of Levine Children’s Hospital/Carolinas Health System; Michael Wolf, PhD/MPH of Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine; Rima Rudd, MSPH, ScD of Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; Brian Zikmund-Fisher, PhD, professor of health behavior, health education and internal medicine for the University of Michigan, and Jackie Taylor, president of the Commission on Adult Basic Education.

For more information about this summit, visit http://wisconsinliteracy.org/health-literacy/training-conferences/health-literacy-summit.html. Take advantage of an early bird discount by registering before March 17. Register at http://wisconsinliteracy.org/health-literacy/training-conferences/registration.html.

If you have questions about the Summit, contact Steve Sparks, health literacy director for Wisconsin Health Literacy, at 608-661-0207 or steve@wisconsinliteracy.org.

The WHA Foundation, Inc. was formed in 1968 to support educational, research and charitable programs of the Wisconsin Hospital Association and its members. Today, the Foundation focuses its grant making priorities on initiatives that have a statewide impact on health care in Wisconsin. The Foundation currently has three specific funding priorities: health care quality and safety initiatives; health care workforce development; and collaborative community health initiatives. For more information about the WHA Foundation, contact Jennifer Frank at jfrank@wha.org or 608-274-1820.
WHA and ACHE-WI Present: Impact of the Elections/Budget on WI Health Care

WHA President/CEO Eric Borgerding will present his perspectives on the impact the upcoming elections and state budget debate will have on Wisconsin health care at a presentation March 31 co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Hospital Association and the American College of Healthcare Executives-Wisconsin Chapter (ACHE-WI).

The purpose of the session is to:

- Prepare for challenges facing hospitals, health systems, and leaders post-election;
- Discuss the post-election political environment for health care delivery; and,
- Demonstrate how to help candidates and legislators understand, and become advocates for, health care by being active participants in legislative and political advocacy efforts.

The session will be held at UW Health Digestive Health Center in Madison. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m.; program begins at 8:00 a.m. For more information and to register, go to https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07eaia34lg8cfddfea&oseq=&c=&ch=. The cost is $15 for ACHE-WI members, and $25 for non-members. As an independent chartered chapter of ACHE, the WI Chapter is authorized to award 1.0 ACHE Qualified Education continuing education credit for this program toward advancement or recertification in the ACHE.

For questions, contact the ACHE-Wisconsin Chapter at 920-750-7722 or ache-wi@badgerbay.co.

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the economic development advantages of our health care. Until recently, other states were talking more about the quality of health care here than we were. But that is starting to change. We are very proud of our partnership with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. We are happy this message is getting picked up. Health care really does matter.”

One of the reasons Wisconsin is a national leader based on the quality of its health care can be attributed to the large degree of integration in Wisconsin.

“Many of the components of the health care delivery system are aligned, focused and moving in a common direction—and that is to improve patient care,” Borgerding said. “That alignment helps catalyze and sustain quality improvement not only in our hospitals, but extends that work to physician clinics and other care settings in the community.”

Partnerships between health care providers and employers are becoming more common, even in some of Wisconsin’s smallest communities. Borgerding said employers and providers have a common goal of managing health care costs, and health care providers want to find innovative and effective ways to reduce costs for purchasers.

“Wisconsin providers are also among the leaders in the country in embracing payment reform, which is driving efficiency and better quality while it is also creating a more efficient delivery system,” Borgerding added. “We realize we are not where we want to be, but are making great progress.”

To watch the WisconsinEye videotaped presentation, go to: http://youtu.be/Gf7WJUBfCF4. For more information about Wisconsin’s high-value health care visit: www.WIhealthcarevalue.org.