

## Foreword

We are pleased to present WHA's 2007-2010 strategic plan. The plan incorporates a continuous five-year set of strategic objectives that provide guidance for WHA's overall program activities and efforts.

Key strategic areas of focus are:

- Promoting health care system reform.
- Pursuing adequate health care funding.
- Supporting and promoting initiatives that assure an adequate supply of health professionals.
- Leading, encouraging and publicly reporting patient performance measures.
- Developing and sustaining strategic relationships.
- Helping build and sustain a relationship of trust between our members and their communities.

The health care environment is dynamic. That fact requires WHA leadership on these important strategies in order to accomplish our mission of advocating for an environment that allows our members to lead in the provision of high quality, affordable and accessible health care services, resulting in healthier Wisconsin communities.



Robert Fale  
2007 Chair



Kenneth Buser  
2007 Chair-Elect



Stephen F. Brenton  
WHA President

This strategic plan was approved by the WHA Board of Directors on October 19, 2006.

## **Introduction**

Strategic planning involves long- and short-term goals and objectives. National and state public policy decisions and ongoing evolutionary events influence health care's dynamic environment. This document outlines WHA's priorities for a five-year period, with the understanding that it will be reviewed and updated regularly.

## **The Health Care Environment**

Factors that shape the Association's strategic plan include:

- WHA's highest priority as identified by members is influencing state and federal legislation and regulation.
- WHA is viewed as a primary source of reliable information about the health care field.
- Quality and patient safety have emerged as major priorities for hospitals and the public.
- Inadequate provider payments from public programs will continue to be a challenge as state and federal policymakers struggle with spending priorities and deficits.
- Health care providers need to become more accountable and willing to provide quantitative information (cost/quality/safety outcomes) on which individual hospital performance can be judged.
- The evolving health care delivery environment and the increasing demand for physician services requires a closer alignment of physician and hospital agendas.
- Wisconsin demographics point to a growing aging population and pervasive shortages of workers in general, and health care workers in particular.
- Union activity among health care workers is a growing national phenomenon that could have profound implications for WHA and WHA's public policy agenda.
- WHA members are increasingly involved in providing a broad-based continuum of care.
- Health care cost inflation is a major concern that if not addressed will limit the ability of business in general, and small business in particular, to offer comprehensive coverage to their employees.
- The public's concern about the cost of health care has increased, while its understanding of cost drivers and the health care system remains murky.
- The public believes health care providers must focus more on promoting individual and community health rather than on their organization's bottom line financial performance.
- WHA must support initiatives that improve the health of Wisconsin communities.

- WHA members desire proactive Association initiatives that will favorably address these environmental issues.

## **WHA's Mission and Vision**

### **Mission**

*The Wisconsin Hospital Association's mission is advocating for the ability of its members to lead in the provision of high quality, affordable, and accessible health care services, resulting in healthier Wisconsin communities.*

### **Vision**

The Association's vision is based on actively pursuing the following objectives:

1. Making advocacy and representation WHA's highest priority.
2. Advocating for the identification and implementation of initiatives that improve the health of Wisconsin communities.
3. Serving as a forum to discuss diverse points of view and seek consensus on how best to meet evolving societal and member needs.
4. Providing education and training on issues relating to matters that enable members to achieve their missions.
5. Taking a leadership role in fostering a climate of collaboration, respect, and interdependency between the various stakeholders that can affect health care.
6. Offering value added services that meet membership needs through the Association and its subsidiaries.

## **Key Principles and Strategic Initiatives**

In 2002, the WHA Board adopted three key principles for health care reform and WHA advocacy initiatives. Those principles suggest that WHA must work to:

- 1) Foster consumerism and improve health care literacy;
- 2) Improve coverage, access and the health of our communities; and
- 3) Promote member accountability to the communities they serve.

Utilizing these principles to frame ongoing strategic initiatives, WHA activity will focus on the following areas.

## **Structural Reform**

- Actively support initiatives that provide affordable opportunities for business and individuals to access health care coverage.
- Maintain a balanced level of government regulation that offers appropriate patient protection, community accountability and adequate flexibility for providers to deliver care in an efficient, cost-effective manner.
- Support policies that further the commitment of WHA and its members to be accountable to the public for the cost and quality of services provided.
- Assume a position of leadership in collaborating with the business community and others to develop solutions that stabilize health insurance costs while promoting a competitive marketplace.

## **Funding**

Adequate funding of health care services is a key factor that enables WHA members to achieve their goal of improving their communities' health. Adequate funding of public programs also has a direct impact on health insurance premiums due to resulting cost shifting. This requires concerted WHA involvement to:

- Aggressively seek adequate and fair funding for Medicaid/BadgerCare services with particular emphasis on outpatient payment, improving Wisconsin's Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) program and teaching hospital funding through Medicaid, and maintaining a viable GAMP program in Milwaukee County.
- Maintain financial viability of community hospitals in order to facilitate missions that include serving the poor and indigent as safety net providers and improving the health of Wisconsin communities.
- Pursue equitable and adequate Medicare funding for Wisconsin and focusing on provider payment issues relating to equity, adequacy and value in WHA's federal advocacy programming.
- Maintain availability of tax-exempt financing for non-profit members.
- Understand the growing consolidation of payer clout in Wisconsin and ensure that health plans are fair to health care providers.
- Position WHA as the major source for comprehensive health care financial and trend data.
- Strive for regulatory simplification of payment systems affecting both private and public payers.

## **Workforce Development**

The current and future health care environment provide significant challenges to the health care system as it struggles to meet growing patient needs brought about by an aging population, new technologies and a workforce that is projected to shrink—or at best remain constant—in the foreseeable future. This requires that WHA:

- Take a leadership role in quantifying both existing and expected future shortages of health care personnel and measuring progress toward addressing these shortages.
- Aggressively engage the technical college system, the University of Wisconsin system, and private colleges to expand the capacity of health career programs.
- Work with the above schools to ease movement within and between agencies, allowing students to move into or resume work in the educational environment without loss of time, effort or money.
- Identify, catalogue and disseminate best practice recruitment and retention strategies.
- Within the overall structure of the state’s licensure/health care personnel regulatory structure, strive to increase flexibility, allowing individuals to perform within as broad a capacity as quality patient care will allow.
- Pursue employment laws and regulations that are appropriate and fair for health care providers, including expansion of practice capabilities for nurses, pharmacists, therapists and other licensed health care professionals.

## **Physician Relationships**

The evolving health care delivery model, as well as increasing demand for physician services, will require closer alignment of physician and hospital agendas. The WHA will contribute to this alignment by:

- Continuously evaluating the physician supply issue and providing leadership in developing strategies to adequately meet future needs and geographical balance;
- Providing educational opportunities for the identification, recruitment and development of physician leadership within member organizations;
- Identifying and developing solutions to common issues facing hospitals and their organized medical staffs; and
- Providing forums for members’ senior leadership to explore state-of-the-art strategies for creating and managing business relationships with physicians, both as partners and as competitors.

## **Quality and Patient Safety**

Nothing is more important to the patients we serve than a safe delivery environment that provides high quality care. The Association will take a leadership role in advancing quality and patient safety as a priority. This will be accomplished by:

- Using recommendations and goals found within the report, *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* as the framework for Association initiatives.
- Facilitating comprehensive and collaborative quality improvement strategies.
- Evolving WHA's Quality Initiative (CheckPoint) as the primary strategy for facilitating hospital reporting of quality and safety performance.
- Partnering with the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality (WCHQ) to identify and implement measurement and reporting initiatives, especially measures designed to improve quality and efficiency in ambulatory care settings.
- Working collaboratively with members and other organizations to advance a meaningful quality and safety agenda.

### **The Importance of Strategic Relationships**

Health care's delivery evolution has featured a movement toward services being provided on a full continuum of care. To position WHA to represent this continuum effectively and through the most efficient use of resources, it is critical that strategic alliances be established with organizations that share common purposes and agendas.

Organizations with which WHA must strive to ally with include:

- Wisconsin State Government
- Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative
- American Hospital Association
- National Rural Health Association
- Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality
- Wisconsin Health Information Organization
- Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians
- Wisconsin Medical Society
- Wisconsin Nurses Association
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- Wisconsin Office of Rural Health
- Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association
- Wisconsin Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
- Wisconsin Health Care Association
- Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Executives
- MetaStar
- Leadership organizations representing key members of the health care management team (e.g., Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Executives, Health Care Financial Management Association, Wisconsin Healthcare Public Relations and Marketing Society, Wisconsin Society of Healthcare Human Resources Administration, etc.);
- Key elements of the Wisconsin educational system, including the technical college system and its 16 regions, the University of Wisconsin system and its multiple campuses, private colleges, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development.

WHA must also continue its commitment to develop strategic partnerships with organizations to advance public policy priorities. These strategic partnerships often occur around a specific issue or legislative proposal and may bring together organizations that otherwise have very different goals and agendas. Nevertheless, they are critical to WHA's success as an advocacy organization and must be maximized to the extent possible.

Such organizations include:

- Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce
- Wisconsin Association of Health Plans
- Competitive Wisconsin

## **Association Membership**

WHA's membership continues to evolve. It currently includes regional integrated systems, local integrated systems and organizations that remain primarily traditional acute care hospitals. Three constituencies have been identified where special resources need to be devoted.

### **Small and Rural Members**

- WHA must maintain its leadership in aggressively supporting the Critical Access Hospital Program.
- WHA must advocate for rural health care organizations' financial needs.
- WHA must provide dedicated educational programming focusing on the needs of small and rural members.
- WHA must recognize that workforce shortage issues can be particularly acute in rural areas where fewer options exist to solve shortage problems in particular disciplines.

### **Metro Milwaukee County**

- WHA must provide community-based leadership necessary to address the unique problems of metropolitan Milwaukee.
- WHA must acknowledge and support steps to address financial problems associated with serving a low-income population in the state's major metropolitan/inner city area.
- WHA must provide specialized support to activities involving metro Milwaukee County local units of government and their unique approaches to meeting community health needs.

### **Integrated Organizations**

- WHA must recognize and through meaningful programming relate to the evolution of integrated delivery systems, including systems that provide a broad continuum of health care services, systems that employ physicians, and systems that have health plans.
- WHA must actively identify and invite the involvement of physician leaders.

### **Academic Medical Centers**

- WHA must work with medical schools to identify and advocate for funding to expand medical education programs.
- WHA must provide leadership to identify and/or expand funding for graduate medical education recognizing that teaching hospitals are training the next generation of physicians for Wisconsin.

## Related Corporations

### **WHA Financial Solutions, Inc.**

WHA Financial Solutions, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of WHA that provides responsive and innovative business products, services and solutions to health and hospital organizations.

WHA Financial Solutions was created in 1981 to offer fee-for-service programs to both members and non-members, with an emphasis on service. In 2000, its mission was modified to ensure that the organization will become more focused on sales and revenue growth. In addition, it will be expected to increase financial support to WHA via allocations (based on utilization of services), funding of WHA events, and cash dividends.

### **Mission**

The mission of WHA Financial Solutions, Inc., is to provide financial support and added member value to help advance the mission of our parent, the Wisconsin Hospital Association. This shall be accomplished by providing WHA members with a trusted resource for employee benefit, retirement services, corporate insurance planning, and other business solutions.

### **Vision**

Our vision of being the leader in insurance and financial products and services in our target market shall be realized through our commitment to:

- Provide value – as defined by our clients;
- Design programs that accomplish our clients' objectives; and
- Develop innovative and leading edge solutions that add value for our clients.

### **Guiding Principles**

The following principles will guide us so that we may achieve our mission and vision:

**Integrity.** We adhere to the highest ethical and professional standards. Our recommendations and product developments are driven to benefit our clients and are based on sound research.

**Clients.** We strive to build solid, long-term partnerships by listening to and understanding the needs of our clients-then exceeding those needs.

**Staff.** We value our staff-they are WHA Financial Solutions. We will provide a challenging and rewarding environment, with generous opportunities for growth and professional development.

**Shareholder.** We will ensure our results align with the mission, vision and values of the Wisconsin Hospital Association and its members.

The menu of products, services and solutions includes:

- Retirement Services – plan design, plan compliance, and employee education and service.

- Employee Benefits – Executive, group and voluntary benefits products and services.
- Corporate Insurance – Property/casualty, workers’ compensation, hospital professional liability (medical malpractice), general liability, directors & officers liability insurance.
- Technology Solutions – Benchmark reports, employee benefit surveys, MyBenefitsView Web site, online enrollment, WorkSecure, computer purchase program, MyHRView, and WisIQ.

**WHA Foundation, Inc.**

WHA Foundation assets stand at approximately \$1.2 million. The WHA Foundation Board of Directors supports workforce development and quality and patient safety initiatives as key funding priorities for the Foundation. The Board grant-making process will be proactive, seeking out projects that align with WHA’s strategic initiatives and demonstrate statewide impacts or outcomes, rather than local projects. The Board also supports the annual Global Vision Community Partnership Award, positioned to recognize and support local outreach efforts of WHA members.

The Foundation will continue to identify grant-making opportunities consistent with WHA’s priorities. The Foundation will continue an annual fund development program, soliciting past supporters and expanding solicitations to corporate members and health care vendors who may have an interest in supporting WHA Foundation priorities. .

**WHA Information Center, LLC**

WHA Information Center, LLC, is a wholly owned subsidiary of WHA that collects and disseminates hospital discharge data, survey data and hospital rate-increase information under a contract with the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA).

WHA Information Center was incorporated on October 1, 2003, to carry out the requirements of 2003 Wisconsin Act 33, which privatized the hospital data collection responsibilities formerly performed by the Bureau of Healthcare Information (BHI) within the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS).

WHA Information Center establishes fees that will allow it to recover its expenses. It is expected that WHA Information Center’s expenses (and therefore the cost of its data products) will, for the foreseeable future, remain below those in effect during BHI’s final year of operation.

**Mission**

The mission of WHA Information Center is to excel in the role of a private sector, customer-focused data organization by disseminating accurate, complete, and timely data that provides information for health care decision-making and enables consumerism.

**Vision**

Our vision is to be the preeminent source of Wisconsin hospital information for customers, government agencies, policymakers, health care consumers, journalists and others.

## **Guiding Principles**

The following principles will guide us so that we may achieve our mission and vision:

- **Strict compliance with legal and contractual requirements.** We must retain our contract with DOA in order to achieve any of our other goals.
- **A sense of partnership with Wisconsin hospitals,** our main suppliers and customers.
- **An alignment with the mission and vision of our shareholder, the Wisconsin Hospital Association.**
- **A strong customer-service ethic permeating all operations.**
- **A commitment to attracting and retaining excellent personnel** who understand our mission, share our vision, and advance the interests of WHA Information Center in the performance of their duties.

WHA Information Center's products include:

- Quarterly statewide data sets for inpatient discharges, outpatient surgeries, and other outpatient services.
- Survey data sets from the Annual Survey of Hospitals and the Fiscal Survey.
- Custom data reporting and analysis services.
- Contracted services provided to other state hospital associations.

## **Staff Development**

Accomplishing this strategic plan will require a motivated and committed membership working closely with a motivated and committed staff. The Association must strive to attract and retain a staff of professionals having the range of expertise necessary to represent major interests in a broad array of areas and advance the strategic agenda. This requires that staff:

- Receive the training and education necessary to carry out their responsibilities.
- Perform in a collaborative environment based on respect and mutual support.
- Are rewarded through compensation strategies that reflect the values of this plan and are competitive within the Wisconsin and national trade association environment.