

2014 Wisconsin Rural Health Conference - In Review

The Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake

June 18-20, 2014



The Transformation of Health Care



Rural Health Care Conference Challenges Leaders to Innovate, Transform Health Care

The rural conference is WHA's largest member gathering and most popular event. The 2014 Wisconsin Rural Health Conference was no exception with nearly 300 attendees and standing-room only crowds in many of the break-out sessions.

WHA Council on Rural Health Chair Bob Van Meeteren emceed the two-day event held June 19-20 in Elkhart Lake. The conference was sponsored by WHA, the Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative, the Wisconsin Office of Rural Health, the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association and MetaStar.



Bob Van Meeteren

Keynote speakers and breakout sessions covered a range of topics ranging from physician and patient engagement strategies to the future of health care in the broadest sense. For more detail, see WHA's conference coverage in *The Valued Voice* (www.wha.org/pubarchive/WHA-Newsletter-6-27-2014.pdf).

"e-Patient Dave" Urges Patients to be Engaged, Equipped, Empowered and Enabled



"e-patient Dave" deBronkart

"e-patient" Dave deBronkart's brush with death did not on its own cause him to be a more engaged patient. He said he was always an engaged patient. It did, however, empower him.

deBronkart's message is one that aligns perfectly with the goal of hospital teams across the state that are working to improve the patient and family experience: Patients should be engaged, equipped, empowered and enabled. And physicians and nurses can help make that happen.

"The patient of the future is expecting a new relationship—a rebalanced relationship—with their health care providers," according to deBronkart. "It starts by giving them the information they need about their own health."

deBronkart outlined several key factors that are driving change in the health care system, citing a 2012 Institute of Medicine report, "Best Care at Lower Cost."

"We need a continuously learning health care system," deBronkart said, quoting from the report. "As far as I can see, Wisconsin is already well-positioned to be way at the front of this pack."

A screenshot of a Facebook post from E-Patient Dave deBronkart. The post is dated June 21 and is marked as edited. The text of the post reads: "I spoke yesterday morning at the Wisconsin Hospital Association's rural health conference. Got a real education (in the best sense) about how terrific the performance of Wisconsin healthcare is, and met (and got friended by!) some terrific people who are making it happen." Below the main text, there is a quote: "All ye who say 'it's too hard to improve,' take a look at Wisconsin! -- via Mary Kay Grasmick, who I met there." The Facebook logo is visible in the top right corner of the post.

With permission, WHA videotaped deBronkart's presentation. View it here: www.wha.org/Data/Sites/1/education/2014Rural/deBronkart6-20-14.mp4.



2014 Wisconsin Rural Health Conference Breakout Sessions



A1: Utilizing Community EMTs to Lower Readmission Rates

Jon Petroskey, Fire Chief, Antigo Fire Department; John Eich, Director, Wisconsin Office of Rural Health; Susan McVey, RN, Emergency Dept. Mgr., Langlade Hospital-An Aspirus Partner, Antigo; Andrea Werner, VP, Heart, Lung & Vascular Services, Bellin Health; Melissa Spielman, EMS Division Chief, Green Bay Metro Fire Department; Jennifer Ullsvik, MS, JD, Section Chief, Emergency Care and Preparedness, Division of Public Health, Madison



A2: Expanding the Capacity for Quality Improvement in Rural Health Care Organizations

Beth Dibbert, Quality Consultant, Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative; Travis Dollak, Quality Coordinator, WHA; Stephanie Sobczak, Manager, Quality Improvement, WHA



A3: Fundamental Obligations of Health Care Organization Boards: What Every Board Member Needs to Know!

Sarah Coyne, Partner, Quarles & Brady LLP



B1: Using Lean in Rural Health Care Settings

Paul Frigoli, PhD(c), CPHQ, CSSBB, Qualitas Consulting; DeAnn Thurmer, COO, Waupun Memorial Hospital



B2: Measured Results in Operations, Experience and Innovation: A Case Study of Langlade Hospital, Critical Access Hospital of the Future

Steve Tyink, VP, Business Innovation, Miron Construction Co., Inc.; Betsy Kommers, Marketing & Fund Development Manager, Langlade Hospital; Janelle Markgraf, Director of Human Resources/CHRO & Off-Campus Services, Langlade Hospital-An Aspirus Partner, Antigo; Kristen Dufek, Managing Principal, Eppstein Uhen Architects



B3: Getting a Board on Board with Quality

Kelly Court, WHA Chief Quality Officer; Travis Dollak, WHA Quality Coordinator



C1. Meeting and Exceeding Patient Expectations: The Next Steps for Senior Leaders and Trustees
Kristin Baird, RN, BSN, MHA, President/CEO, Baird Group



The crowd at the 2014 Wisconsin Rural Health Conference



C2. Can a Certified Rural Health Clinic Benefit Your Hospital or Health System?
Jeff Bramschreiber, CPA, Health Care Partner, Wipfli LLP; Jeremy Levin, Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative

Speak Up! Being a Strong Advocate for Rural Health Care



Bob Van Meeteren, Jenny Boese

Jenny Boese, WHA vice president, external relations and member advocacy, provided attendees with an in-depth look at the role of advocacy in helping to keep rural hospitals strong. Her presentation provided the research and the hands-on experience of what works and what does not work when trying to impact legislators on public policy issues. Key action items for rural advocates include: become educated on hospital issues; join WHA's advocacy program, HEAT; understand what legislators find persuasive (and what they don't); and, build ongoing, credible relationships with legislators.

“Simple actions – emailing, meeting with and educating legislators – continuously implemented by hospital advocates statewide lead to strong legislative relationships and long-term legislative successes,” said Jenny Boese. “I strongly believe in the role each individual plays in this collective effort.”

WHA recognized Mike Karuschak on his retirement from Amery Regional Medical Center after 27 years of service to the hospital.

“Mike has served as a member of the WHA Board and has always provided an excellent rural perspective during his tenure as a health care leader in Wisconsin. He served not only in an executive capacity at the hospital, but he also has been an active supporter of his community. We are grateful for Mike's contributions to not only his hospital and community, but to our Association. We wish him only the best in the years ahead.”

- WHA President Steve Brenton



Mike Karuschak; Steve Brenton

2014 Wisconsin Rural Health Conference



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