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WHA and Post-Acute Partners Welcome More Than 200 to Appleton Conference



L to R: WHA President Eric Borgerding;
Eric Coleman, MD, MPH; Laura Rose,
WHA VP, Policy Development

On June 6, WHA sponsored its first-ever post-acute care conference in Appleton. Thanks to a partnership with LeadingAge Wisconsin,

Leading Choice Network and the Wisconsin Association for Home Health Care, the conference attracted over 200 participants representing the entire continuum of care.

"WHA has made a concerted and strategic effort to broaden our public policy agenda to reach beyond the walls of the hospital, across the health care system, and along and within the continuum of care," said WHA President Eric Borgerding in opening conference remarks. "Working with key partners, like LeadingAge, Leading Choice Network and the Wisconsin Association of Home Health Care, we want to start collaborating to get our arms around the challenges presented in post-acute care, and then translate this knowledge into solutions. The audience today reflects an excellent balance of providers from both the acute and post-acute provider communities, and we could not be more pleased with the interest in this issue so in need of cohesive definition and attention."

The conference was recommended by WHA's Post-Acute Work Group and highlighted best practices for care transition planning and readmission reduction. Keynote speaker Eric Coleman, MD, MPH, kicked off the day.

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Wisconsin Hospitals State PAC & Conduit Presents: Special 2018 Election Polling Briefing

Tuesday, June 26, 2018
10:30 - 11:30 a.m. CST
Via Webinar

[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

The Wisconsin Hospitals State PAC and Conduit is pleased to host a special invite-only webinar with Charles Franklin, nationally recognized pollster and director of the Marquette Law School Poll, the largest and most respected independent polling project in state history.



Charles Franklin

This *invite-only* opportunity on June 26 is exclusively for those who have contributed in 2018 to the Wisconsin Hospitals State PAC & Conduit. If you haven't already, contribute [here](#).

2018 will prove to be, once again, an election year for the record books with many big races on the ticket. Wisconsin always presents a unique political landscape, and this year will be no different. Franklin will provide election year insights and the latest poll numbers in this dynamic election year, exclusively for WHA, followed by an opportunity for Q&A.

You won't want to miss this special presentation!

Next contributor list June 29

Thank you to the more than 140 of you who have contributed this year so far to the Wisconsin Hospitals State PAC & Conduit. More than 50 percent of our \$312,500 goal has been raised. Your early support is greatly appreciated.

Didn't make the first list? The next contributor list of the year will be released June 29 in WHA's *Valued Voice* Newsletter. To be included, make your contribution today! *(continued on page 2)*

Upcoming WHA Webinar Focuses on Improving Wage Index Reporting and DSH Data Submissions

WHA again this year is working with RC Healthcare on our wage index improvement project. This is a major WHA commitment and member benefit aimed at helping hospitals accurately report data in their cost reports, which is used to calculate the hospital wage index, a key component of Medicare payment for PPS hospitals.

As the kickoff to this year's wage index improvement project, **WHA and RC Healthcare will offer a wage index education webinar June 20 at 10 a.m.** This program will provide important information on the wage index correction process. Over the years, this engagement, which is provided as a member service, has resulted in substantial corrections of various hospital data errors or FI adjustment errors and has been critically important to maintaining the integrity and accuracy of the wage index for hospitals located in Wisconsin.

PPS hospital members are encouraged to participate. Detailed information about the upcoming webinar was recently emailed to hospital CFOs and wage index contacts.

While the education component of the wage index improvement project is important, it is only one piece of the overall effort. RC Healthcare also identifies a wage index contact at each hospital and then either visits or makes individual phone calls to each facility as they work on wage index reporting issues. These additional proactive efforts have led to more accurate reporting of the S-3 worksheet of the cost report and increased reimbursement to Wisconsin hospitals.

This project has evolved over the years and now also covers the S-10 worksheet of the Medicare cost report. This data submission has elevated in importance as the Medicare DSH program is now using this information for DSH payment calculations.

If you have questions about WHA's Wage Index Improvement Project, contact Brian Potter at WHA at bpotter@wha.org.

WHA Submits Comment on OCI 1332 Waiver Proposal

On April 18, the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) submitted a federal waiver to establish a reinsurance program to assist with claims costs for individuals covered through the insurance exchange (see previous *Valued Voice* article at www.wha.org/wha-newsletter-3-9-2018.aspx#s3). The goal of the reinsurance program is to keep premium cost increases reasonable for exchange policies and to stabilize the individual insurance market. OCI anticipates premiums will decrease five percent for 2019 with the assistance of the reinsurance program.

WHA was a leading [supporter](#) of the legislative proposal to authorize the waiver. WHA recently submitted comment in support of the waiver to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The public comment period closed June 8. OCI is hopeful for a decision on HHS approval by September.

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L to R: Maria Brenny-Fitzpatrick, DPN, RN, FNP-C, GNP-DC, Director of Transitional Care and Post-Acute Services, UW Health; Diane Schuh, RN, BSN, Manager of Case Management/Social Services, Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center; Thomas Zoch, MD, VP-Clinical Care Management, Ascension Wisconsin & member of WHA's Post-Acute Care Work Group

Dr. Coleman, professor of geriatric medicine and head of the Division of Health Care Policy and Research at the University of Colorado Denver, is a national expert on care transitions. His talk focused on the

importance of feedback loops: those between the hospital and post-acute providers; between patients and health care providers; and between family caregivers and health care providers.

Three panels representing the care continuum followed Coleman's presentation:

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- **Hospital-Community Partnerships in Post-Acute Care:** Maria Brenny-Fitzpatrick, UW Health, and Diane Schuh, Aurora Sheboygan Memorial Medical Center focused on hospital initiatives to improve care transitions, which



L to R: Linda Joel, FACHE, CHPCA, President & CEO, LindenGrove Communities; Nellie Johnson, MSW, Nellie Johnson & Associates; Ryan Shear, VP Senior Services, Reedsburg Area Medical Center

include forming successful transitions of care coalitions in local communities. Other ideas included streamlining the exchange of vital information on a patient who is moving between care settings, and partnering with

community programs like Meals on Wheels to ensure patients with congestive heart failure have access to a healthy diet after they leave the hospital.

- **Improving Care Transitions in Partnerships with Senior Care Organizations:** Nellie Johnson, Nellie Johnson and Associates, and Linda Joel, LindenGrove Communities talked about the need for providers to understand how patients and caregivers feel overwhelmed when they leave the hospital. They discussed how Medicare payment policies drive choices



L to R: Cheryl Meyer, BSN, Director, Home Health Administrator, Marquardt Village; Coleen Schmidt, BSN, MSN, Sr. VP of Clinical Services and COO, Horizon Home Care & Hospice; Lisa Kirker, RN, MSN, MBA, Director of Home Care, Hospice and Palliative Care, SSM Health-St. Agnes Hospital Home Care and Hospice Hope; Jan Hastreiter, Director of Home Health, Aspirus

about post-acute care settings. They also commented on housing trends for senior citizens, who are increasingly choosing assisted living arrangements and how post-acute care is provided and managed in those settings.

- **Partnering with Home Care to Improve Patient Outcomes:** Coleen Schmidt, Horizon Home Care & Hospice; Lisa Kirker, SSM Health; and Cheryl Meyer, Marquardt Village, provided foundational information on the regulatory landscape for home health care. They followed with information on best practices to improve transitions of hospital patients to home, including visiting the patient before discharge and ensuring the patient has sufficient support soon after the patient arrives home.

The diversity of providers represented both on the panels and in the audience provided an opportunity for exchanging ideas and increasing understanding of the role that each type of provider plays in ensuring quality care for patients across the continuum.