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Thursday, October 22, 2026

New Leaders Elected to the WHA Board of Directors

Luke Beirl named 2027 chair-elect

Tamarack Health President and CEO Luke Beirl was named 2027 WHA chair-elect at the Oct. 15 WHA Board of Directors meeting in Madison. Beirl joined the WHA Board in 2022 and will serve as board chair in 2028.

As president and CEO of Tamarack Health, Beirl leads a rural health system serving communities in northwestern Wisconsin. His background spans clinical pharmacy, process improvement and hospital leadership.

Beirl earned his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 2011 and a Master of Business Administration in rural health care from the College of St. Scholastica. He is also a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives.

An active participant in WHA's advocacy and policy work, Beirl serves on the Council on Public Policy and Council on Rural Health and previously chaired the Council on Public Policy from 2019 to 2023. He currently serves as a WHA Delegate on AHA's Regional Policy Board 5, a position he's held since 2025. His leadership also includes board service with the Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative and the Sawyer County/Lac Courte Oreilles Economic Development Corporation.



Luke Beirl

Election of At-Large Directors

The following individuals were elected as at-large directors:

Mark Thompson, MD, President and CEO, Upland Hills Health. Thompson returns to the WHA Board after previously serving from 2017 to 2023. He became president and CEO of Upland Hills Health in Dodgeville in September 2025. A family medicine physician, Thompson brings experience in rural health care, physician leadership, graduate medical education and value-based care, including previous executive roles with SSM Health and Essentia Health.



Mark Thompson

Eric Thornton, President, SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital–Madison. Thornton brings more than 25 years of health care experience and has led SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital–Madison since September 2023. He previously served as president of SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital–Janesville and held leadership positions in hospital operations and human resources. A Janesville native, Thornton earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater.



Eric Thornton

- New Leaders Elected to the WHA Board of Directors
- Leadership Development for Today's Clinical Leaders – Registration Open for New WHA 2027 Clinical Leadership Retreat
- Tomah Health's Derek Daly Receives 2026 AHA Grassroots Champion Award
- Public Private Partnerships Help Grow Wisconsin's Physician Workforce
- Celebrating Healthcare Quality Week: Supporting Quality Excellence Across Wisconsin
- Wisconsin Hospitals Recognized as CheckPoint Top Performers
- Applications Now Open for the 2027 Excellence in Quality and Patient Safety Awards
- Relationship Management: Communication & Influence Across a Matrix - 2027 WHA Health Care Leadership Academy – Register Today!

EDUCATION EVENTS

Oct. 26, 2026

Surgical and Anesthesia Service Conditions of Participation

Oct. 29, 2026

Wlpop Virtual Training: Session 3

Nov. 12, 2026

WHA 2026 Wisconsin Health Care Workforce Webinar Series - Part 4: Beyond Contract Labor - Modern Blueprint for a Flexible, Sustainable Workforce