

# what's up?

NEWS FOR WESTERN HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE



## Medicaid Expansion Helps Consumers with Medical Debt

A recent article from ACA International highlights a study from the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) stating expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act has actually lowered the burden of medical debt for some low-income consumers.

The study, "The Effect of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansions on Financial Well-Being," delved into the volume of debt sent to third-party collection agencies in areas saturated with low-income consumers.

"Our estimates imply a reduction in collection balances of around \$600 to \$1,000 among those who gain Medicaid coverage due to the [Affordable Care Act,]" according to the report's authors, Luoija Hu, Ashley Wong and Bhashkar Mazumder from the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago; Sarah Miller from the University of Michigan and Robert Kaestner from the University of Illinois.

Based on data from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York Consumer Credit Panel/Equifax, the study's results build on studies about Medicaid expansion by looking at its impact on low-income adults in the U.S. Twenty-nine states, including Colorado, adopted Medicaid expansion coverage in some form by the end of 2015. On the flip side, 21 states opted to not expand coverage.

"Our main finding is the Medicaid expansions that began in 2014 significantly reduced the number of unpaid non-medical bills and the amount of non-medical debt sent to third-party collection agencies among people living in zip codes that are most likely affected by the expansions," it states.

View full NBER study <http://www.nber.org/papers/w22170.pdf>.

**“**Our estimates imply a reduction in collection balances of around \$600 to \$1,000 among those who gain Medicaid coverage due to the [Affordable Care Act].**”**

– From NBER report

If you have any questions about your charity care policy, please contact Pilar Mank, Facilitator for the WHA Patient Financial Services Peer Network at 866.986.3590 or pilar.mank@wha1.org.

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Upcoming Events



Western  
Healthcare  
Alliance



## Pilar Mank Elected Secretary of Colorado Chapter of HFMA

We are pleased to announce that Pilar Mank has been elected secretary of the Colorado chapter of HFMA (Healthcare Financial Management Association). Over the past several years Pilar has been very active in HFMA and serves on many of their committees. She regularly attends HFMA member events and meetings, worked with their marketing department to develop a refreshed chapter newsletter, and actively promotes attendance at HFMA events.

WHA is very proud of Pilar for her contributions to the Colorado HFMA chapter, and we look forward to supporting her in her new role as secretary. Last month she participated in the HFMA Leadership Training Conference where she joined 400 fellow leaders from healthcare finance who volunteer their time running state chapters.

Pilar was granted HFMA Colorado President's Legacy Award, Volunteer of the Year, and earned the Muncie Gold Merit Award for outstanding services to HFMA on both state and national levels.

*Congratulations Pilar!*

*“HFMA provides education, analysis and guidance in the Healthcare Revenue Cycle industry. This benefits WHA and HCM as well as individuals who are looking to further their knowledge and to share best practices in the healthcare industry. I'm honored to represent WHA in Colorado and Nationally with HFMA.”*

– Pilar Mank



## Nicholas Lemarr Promoted to AR Services Manager

Congratulations to Nicholas Lemarr on his promotion to AR Services Manager. Before assuming his new role in AR Services, Nick worked as Healthcare Management's Training and Compliance Manager. In addition, he was a team lead for A-1 Collection Agency and in-house trainer for financial counselors for a number of years. Nick has earned the American Collectors Association's highest honor: ACA Fellow.

*Congratulations Nick!*

*“I am very honored and excited to be chosen for this position. I look forward to providing our patients and clients with the best quality customer service.”*

– Nicholas Lemarr

## Aspen Valley Hospital Receives Outstanding Patient Experience Award



Aspen Valley Hospital (AVH) is one of 448 hospitals representing the top 15 percent in the nation for outstanding patient experience. The award is based on patient survey responses to the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems surveys. Healthgrades decided on the winners after evaluating 3,858 hospitals that submitted patient surveys to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The survey questions focus on patients' perspectives of their care during their hospital stay. AVH is one of only five Colorado Hospitals that made the grade. Yet another validation of all the great work being done at AVH!

*Congratulations Aspen Valley Hospital!*

## Delta County Memorial Hospital Named Top 20 Rural Community Hospitals



Delta County Memorial Hospital has been named as one of the 2016 top 20 rural community hospitals out of 525 rural community hospitals in the nation by the National Rural Health Association (NRHA), in a recent announcement.

"DCMH is honored to receive this national recognition as a rural hospital providing quality medical care at the highest level to Delta County families. It is gratifying to receive an award and the recognition on behalf of our hard working and committed medical staff and hospital employees," CEO Jason Cleckler said.

NRHA determined the top rural community hospitals based on a hospital strength index compiled by iVantage Health Analytics and nine pillars of excellence. Rural community hospitals with the highest aggregate scores from the nine pillars were identified as one of the top 20 rural community hospitals in the nation. The pillars of excellence included: inpatient market share, outpatient market share, population risk, cost, risk, quality, outcomes, patient outcomes, and financial stability.

"Thank you to the medical staff, hospital administration and all hospital employees for their commitment and contributions to the hospital, that allowed DCMH to achieve this national recognition in helping to provide superior medical services to the community," commented David Lane, chair of the DCMH board of directors.

It is the first rating system to incorporate market position, competitive intensity and growing healthcare demand, according to sources at iVantage. This system is modeled on research-based financial ratios most determinant of long-term financial sustainability. The study is unique because it is founded on the belief that a strong hospital/system has the following characteristics in the new health care:

- Low Levels of population-related risk
- Dominant market position related to inpatient and outpatient services
- Outstanding quality and safety programs
- Loyal, satisfied patients
- Cost efficient and appropriately priced services
- Strong balance sheet with surplus capital

NRHA is a national non-profit membership organization with more than 20,000 members across the nation. The association's mission is to provide leadership on rural health issues.

*Congratulations Delta County Memorial Hospital!*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### PFS Peer Network Meeting

Thursday, May 12th, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm, WHA office

### MM Peer Network Meeting

Tuesday, May 17th, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, WHA office

### Communications & Marketing Peer Network Meeting

Wednesday, May 18th, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, WHA office

### WHA Board Meeting

Thursday, May 19th, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm,  
DoubleTree Hotel, Grand Junction

### CCA/RMACO combined Board Meeting

Thursday, May 19th, 2:30 – 4:00 pm after the WHA Board Meeting,  
DoubleTree Hotel, Grand Junction, and WebEx

### SJACO Board Meeting

Thursday, May 19th, 5:30 – 7:30 pm,  
Delta County Memorial Hospital, and WebEx

### CFO Peer Network Meeting

Thursday, May 26th, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, WHA office

### CCA Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 15th, 12:00 – 2:00 pm, WebEx

### RMACO Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 15th, 2:30 – 4:30 pm, WebEx

### SJACO Board Meeting

Thursday, June 16th, 5:30 – 7:30 pm,  
Montrose Memorial Hospital, and WebEx

### LSN Peer Network Meeting

Tuesday, June 28th, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, WHA office

### CCA Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 20th, 12:00 – 2:00 pm, WebEx

### RMACO Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 20th, 2:30 – 4:30 pm, WebEx

### SJACO Board Meeting

Thursday, July 21st, 5:30 – 7:30 pm,  
Delta County Memorial Hospital, and WebEx

#### For more information:

WHA Board meetings:

**Lindsay Holman** at **866.986.3591** or [lindsay.holman@wha1.org](mailto:lindsay.holman@wha1.org).

CCA and ACO Board meetings:

**Peggy Utesch** at **866.986.3676** or [peggy.utesch@CommunityCareAlliance.com](mailto:peggy.utesch@CommunityCareAlliance.com).

WHA Peer Network meetings:

**Keely Cuervo** at **866.986.3595** or [keely.cuervo@wha1.org](mailto:keely.cuervo@wha1.org).



Strategic Leadership



Revenue Cycle Management



Population Health Management



Information Technology



Supply Chain



Human Resources

## Staff Directory

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Upcoming Events

*Collaborating to Support and Sustain  
Quality Healthcare in All Our Communities*

888.828.0011

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