

## In Brief

**Don't miss the 9th annual Y106.5 Radiothon --** broadcast LIVE from the Hospital's Conference Center on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, Sept 7-9 (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.). This three-day event gives CMN the opportunity to share with listeners throughout the area the wonderful services our staff provides to pediatric patients.

**Volunteers are needed** to help answer phones during the Radiothon. Please call the CMN office at ext. 7-9965 for open times. Join us for cake and punch as we celebrate the final total on Friday at 6 p.m.

**A Fall Prevention Resource Event** will be held on Saturday, October 1 at the Hospital Conference Center. This free event is open to the public and will include information, displays and screenings to increase independence and reduce falls in adults of all ages. For more information call 715-387-9566.

**Volunteer Website – Tell a Friend:** Do you have a friend that would like to volunteer and would like to find out what opportunities are available? Tell them to visit us online. We have updated our volunteer website and now have our applications available online:  
<http://ministryhealth.org/SJH/VolunteerOpportunities.nws>

## Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital

Partners with Saint Joseph's Hospital  
611 Saint Joseph Avenue  
Marshfield, Wisconsin 54449

## YOU ARE INVITED!

### PARTNERS FALL MEMBERSHIP

**DINNER/MEETING \*\***

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10**

**SOCIAL 5:15 P.M. • DINNER 5:30 P.M.**

**FOUR SEASONS DINNING ROOM**

**HOSPITAL GROUND FLOOR - NORTH**

Please RSVP by Wednesday, November 2 by calling the Partners reservation line at 387-7021 with the names of those attending.

#### THIS EVENT IS FOR PARTNER MEMBERS ONLY...

However, **all volunteers** are welcome to attend this dinner meeting, and all future membership meetings, by joining the Partners organization, for only a \$7 annual membership fee. When you call in to RSVP request that you would like to join Partners.

#### \*\*Partner members:

This is your official invitation to the Fall Meeting.  
No additional invitations will be mailed.

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Saint Joseph's Hospital

**MINISTRY**  
Saint Joseph's Hospital

# Volunteers

ON CALL

Marshfield, Wisconsin

Summer - Fall 2011



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## Volunteers record nearly 10,000 hours

Where has the summer gone.....It has been a busy but very exciting couple of months since my arrival.

Speaking of busy, during the months of June and July alone we had close to 10,000 total service hours recorded. Of that, 1,500 were volunteer hours.

I would like to thank all of you for picking up hours during vacations, helping in new service areas or serving extra hours to get specific projects done. We had many of our past teens who are now college students come back and help us this summer. "Thanks" to all of you - your time and dedication is much appreciated.

I continue to have the pleasure of meeting and seeing many of you on a weekly basis. (Please hold off on the name quiz yet.) My future goal is to continue spending time with several of you in your immediate service area. This will give me a better understanding of not only what you do, but it will allow me to provide you the additional resources you may need.

I feel communication is very important and I know many of you service in a variety of hours, days and areas so it is not always possible to speak to you in person or on a consistent basis. In addition to this quarterly newsletter, in May I started a two-page newsletter called "Volunteer Chat" that comes out every two weeks.

This communication not only provides



**Keresa Kilty**

changes or updates related to volunteer services, but also provides hospital updates and opportunities you can take part in.

There are printed copies available in the volunteer alcove, House of Dove, Child Care Center, Home Delivered Meal's area and also emailed to our current distribution listing. If you have not been getting this via email but would like to, please call or

email the volunteer office and provide your email address.

As you will read in this newsletter, I am congratulating our adult volunteers for their milestone service hours that we celebrated in April.

We also continue to get a variety of wonderful, much needed home project donations. You also will read about the latest of new technology developments here at Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital.

Last but not least, I would like to welcome all our new volunteers to our volunteer family. Since I started in March, we have had 91 new volunteers.

Thank you for your time and dedication it is very much appreciated!

*Keresa*

**Keresa Kilty**  
Volunteer Manager

## Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital honors its volunteers

In recognition of their time talents and resources Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital honored more than 130 volunteers at its annual appreciation brunch on April 30 in the Hospital's Four Seasons Dining Room. Following the brunch the group moved to the Mother Frances Streitel Conference Center, where entertainment was provided by Jerry Fraiser, a comic musician from Minneapolis, and Keresa Kilty, Volunteer Manager, presented the awards.

Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital volunteers include men and women, high school and college students, retirees, career professionals, homemakers, and former patients or their family members and friends.

"Our volunteers play a significant role in meeting the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs of our patients and their families," said Brian Kief, president and CEO of Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital. "They are a vital link between the Hospital and the community and play an integral role in helping to fulfill our mission and promise."

The Hospital's volunteers support patients, visitors, and staff. Last year, they donated more than 50,000 hours of service in 50 different areas including: Coffee Café, Plant Service, Laugh-mobile, Pet Therapy, Children's Miracle Network, Nursing Administration (admission packs), Family and ICU/CCU Waiting Rooms, Clown Service, Pediatric Orientation First Grade Tours, Home Delivered Meals, Neo-Natal Intensive Care, Spiritual Services, Escort Service, Home Projects, Child Care Center, Kiddie Kaboose, Learning Resource Center, Four Seasons Cafeteria, Outpatient Surgery, Patient Mail Delivery, Surgery (linen packs), Gift Shop, Pharmacy, Cardiac Rehab, Employee Health Office, Volunteer Services, Saint

Joseph's Children's Hospital Pediatrics Unit, Wellness, Human Resource Services, Marketing, Birth Center, Foundation of Saint Joseph's Hospital, Emergency Department Reception Desk and the Information Desk in the Main Lobby.

To learn how you can become a volunteer, contact the volunteer office at 715.387.7106. Students must be at least 14 to apply as a Volunteer.

### Award Presentations

Adult volunteers, including Partners with Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital members, receiving awards were:

**100-hour pin** - Nicole Austin, Bob Baer, Katherine Boehlen, Lorraine Breu, Sheila Davis, Patricia Denk, Connie Gauger, Ted Gripentrog, Lydia Haupt, Edward Heil, Kathleen Hutchinson, Rita Johnson, Carol Koepke, Julie Lang, Beth Langteau, Scott Lokken, Karen Masanz, Pete Multerer, Sharon Multerer, Paula Nesbitt, Kathy Puerner, Elizabeth Spencer, Shari Stangl, Jeff Verona and Shirley Wachholz

**300-hour pin** - Patricia Berkholtz, Kimberly Broeske, Kathleen Brost, Dagny Burke, Darrel Caspersen, Dianne David, Wendelin David, Judy Foemmel, Shirley Hendricks, Patricia Jirschele, Patricia Lippert, Cheryl Pischel, Darlene Plautz, Nancy Radlinger, Roddy Stoner, Aerick Valentinus and Joyce Wellhoefer

**500-hour pin** - Dorothy Adler, Mary Anne Arendt, Fritz Berger, Jr, Mary Lou Costello, Renee Danhof, Kathleen DeSmet, Dennis Dieringer, Nancy Dovenbarger, Marilyn



Hospital President, Brian Kief (center) opened the program by welcoming and thanking our volunteers for their tremendous service and contributions to Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital.



Volunteer Ken Leick helps Jerry Fraiser, comic magician, with one of the many entertaining acts he performed that morning for the audience.

Fehrenbach, Carolann Franke, JoAnn Gougeon, Robin Hales, Betty Heintz, Melvin Heintz, Linda Herrman, Sandra Holterman, Dennis Janz, Sara Kolb, Sally Larson, Linda Linzmeier, Judy Meyer, Mary Nienaber, Carol Philippe, Sharon Price, Mary Stanley, Janice Strey, Melita Teffany, Theresa Vlach and Roxanne Wetterau.

**1,000-hour pin** - Georgiane Bentzler, Mary Ann Burr, Jane Fait, Betsy Grassl, Louise Kobylinski, Maletta Lewis, Connie Meyers, Darleen Van Ryn and Jackie Zoellner

## Partners Awards 43 Scholarships

Forty-three area students pursuing degrees in medical-related fields received scholarships from Partners with Saint Joseph's Hospital at the annual Awards Reception held May 24 at the Mother Frances Streitel Conference Center of Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital.

Partner's scholarships are funded through proceeds from the Hospital's Gift Shop and Coffee Café, which are both owned and operated by Partners.

This year's scholarships totaled \$25,000, which also included donations from the Umhoefer Foundation and the Tremmel Endowment.

Eight scholarships were made possible

2011 Partners Scholarship winners and the schools they will be attending this fall include:

Dustin Thumann - UW-Eau Claire  
Elizabeth Meinders - Winona State  
Rebecca Boehning - UW-LaCrosse  
Michael Hunsberger - UW-Twin Cities  
Jennah Fulwiler - UW-Eau Claire  
Kyle Olson - Carleton College  
Rhianna Malovrh - Winona State  
Dylan Loertscher - UW-LaCrosse  
Sydnie Kraus - UW-LaCrosse  
Mollie Duginski - UW-LaCrosse  
Vanessa Loertscher - NCTC  
Jessica Dubruyne - UW-LaCrosse  
Mindy Kalmon - UM-St. Cloud  
Austin Cole, UM - Twin Cities  
Sasha Jascor - Marquette University

Kati Smith - Viterbo University  
Kristin Kniech - St Norbert  
Mary Finta - UM-Twin Cities  
Amy Schindler - UW-Oshkosh  
Amy Voight - UW LaCrosse  
Chelsey Mengel - UW-LaCrosse  
Megan Robeson - Carroll University  
Kelly Bender - UW-Marshfield/Wood Cty  
Lindsey Durerr - UW-Marshfield/Wood Cty  
Jodi Schmidt - Edgewood College  
Brandon Fryza - UM-Twin Cities  
Taylor Wilke - UW-LaCrosse  
Kayla Schultz - UW-Eau Claire  
Amy Lavin - UW-Eau Claire  
Kelly Opelt - UW-Madison

through the Umhoefer Foundation, and three through the Tremmel Endowment established in honor of the late Ken and Helen Tremmel. The recipients of the Tremmel scholarships do not need to be pursuing a medical related degree, but must have been a volunteer or volunteer at Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital or have worked in the Gift Shop.

Heather Durrstein - MSTC  
Olga Oney - UW Marshfield/Wood Cty  
Jenna Meyer - UW-Madison  
Amanda Kozik - UW-Eau Claire  
Kali Thompson - UW-Oshkosh  
Jessica Gustavson - UW-Stevens Point  
Sarah Pitts - UW Eau Claire  
Samantha Brown - Marian University  
Kortney Schmitz - UW-LaCrosse  
Tiffany Switlick - UW-LaCrosse  
Kyle Dorhorst - UW-Eau Claire  
Tara Schmitz - UW LaCrosse  
Susanne Stoltz - UW Eau Claire

## Radiology Hosts Open House



A new Hybrid Operating Room/Vascular Suite was recently installed at Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital. The suite, the first in the region, is designed to allow physicians to perform the most advanced surgical and minimally invasive vascular procedures in the same room. It also features a multi-axis angiography system called an "Artis Zeego." The robotic technology allows virtually unrestricted freedom of movement.

## Blankets Donated



In recognition of National Youth Service Month, the S.H.O.R.E. (Sharing Healthy Options for Respect and Esteem) group which is a program of Personal development Center donated three blankets to Ministry Saint Joseph's Children's Hospital. Holding up two of the blankets are (l-r) Natalie Kelley, youth advocate and Tina Steinkamp, PDC staff.

# Partners State Convention is just around the corner

Summer brings to mind one thing HEAT! And, I'm not referring to the temperature, but rather the Hospital's Education and Advocacy Team. I encourage all of you to join HEAT.



Roxie Wettreau

This advocacy program provides its members with information, insight, strategy, and assistance needed to bring "heat and light" to legislative issues that impact the hospitals and communities we serve. Please utilize the registration form on the right if you are interested in joining HEAT. If you still need more information or clarification on any of its goals, please contact Judy Gadke, Public Policy Education Chair, at [Judith.Gadke@ministryhealth.org](mailto:Judith.Gadke@ministryhealth.org). Let's continue to make our voices heard throughout 2011!

Not to rush our last few days of summer, but cooler months are ahead, and plans are progressing for the 2011 Partners of WHA Convention, set for October 4-6 at the Plaza Hotel & Suites in Eau Claire.

The theme "Driving to Success" will be experienced through the speakers, workshops, meals, and of course, fun times! Convention attendees are encouraged to wear golf attire or golf hats for Tuesday night's get together.

You'll also want to take part in the "President's Open" where you can win prizes for a hole in one. There also will be the terrific raffle, silent auction, and 50/50 tickets.

Each hospital group is encouraged to see how we can fit the theme to our hospital displays, auction items and any other creative ideas we have. Mark your calendar and plan to attend the Partners of WHA State Convention in October! If you would like to attend please call Kathy Stone in the Gift Shop for more details on travel and hotel.

**Join HEAT Today!** *We wouldn't ask you to join HEAT if it wasn't good for your hospital's health!*

Contact Information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position Title \_\_\_\_\_

HOME Address (very important for us to know) / City / State / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

HOSPITAL Name \_\_\_\_\_

HOSPITAL Address / City / State / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Email \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Judy Gadke

Referred By \_\_\_\_\_  
*(if someone referred you to the HEAT program, please let us know so we can thank him/her)*

Key Contacts:  
Having key contacts is a very important element of the HEAT grassroots program. HEAT Keys are individuals who already have well established relationships with their legislators and are willing to contact those legislators when needed on important issues. If you would be willing to serve as a HEAT Key Contact, please indicate this below and include the legislator's name and the type of relationship you have with him/her (e.g., friend, neighbor, professional relationship, went to school together, etc.).

Yes, I want to serve as a HEAT Key Contact

I have the following relationships with these legislators (please provide name(s) and describe relationship(s)).

Legislator Name	Relationship

Other Hospital Groups / Affiliations:

Are you a member of HFMA (health care finance)?  Yes  No

Are you a member of Partners of WHA (volunteer or auxilian)?  Yes  No

Are you a member of W-ONE (nurse executives)?  Yes  No

Are you a member of WADVS (director, volunteer services)?  Yes  No

Are you a member of WSHHRA (human resources)?  Yes  No

Are you a member of WHPRMS (public relations)?  Yes  No

*HEAT is free of charge to join. Its only requirement is that you care about your hospitals and your communities enough to do something about them!*

Return form to: HEAT, WHA/Attn: Jenny Boese, PO Box 259038, Madison, WI 53725-9038 Or fax it to 608-274-8554; Questions? 608-268-1816 or [jboese@wha.org](mailto:jboese@wha.org)

On a final note, I'd like to remind you that this newsletter is YOUR newsletter, so please feel free to offer suggestions or comments on the content. Better yet, you are welcome to submit articles that you'd like to see published in Volunteers On Call. The purpose of this publication is to encompass a variety of news, not only for Partners members, but for all MSJH volunteers.

For more information contact Partners Public Relations Chair, JoAnn Gougeon, at 715-389-5349 or email [rjgougeon@charter.net](mailto:rjgougeon@charter.net).

Enjoy.

*Roxie*

Roxie Wettreau  
Partners President

# Recognition Event - continued

**2,000-hour pin** - Charles Brinkman, Gwen Guralski, Lillan Heinze, Lesley Leonard and Virginia Volovsek

**3,000-hour pin** - Elizabeth Brehm, Margaret Kraus, Ann Moran, Debby Schalow, Floyd Stargardt, Irene Susa and Don Van Ryn

**4,000-hour pin** - Sr. Barbara Hollweck and Olive Sheets

**6,000-hour pin** - Sally Plank

**8,000-hour pin** - Mildred Marty and Judy Meyer

There are several Hospital and community groups whose members and/or employees take turns on an assigned route delivering Home Delivered Meals every week. Special "THANKS" goes to the following groups: Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital Nursing Administration,

Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital "Team Lewis", Marshfield Lion's Club, Marshfield Noon Rotary, Ministry Saint Joseph's Hospital Black Belts, and Marshfield Sunrise Rotary.

**Keresa Kilty**  
Volunteer Services Manager

## Welcome New Volunteers!

Please welcome several new individuals who have joined our "volunteer family" since May 1, 2011. If you see them in the halls, please say "hello".

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Larry Anderson</b><br>Home Delivered Meals   | <b>Ronald Hilgart</b><br>Family Waiting Room Escort         | <b>Kallie Mayer</b><br>Home Delivered Meals                     | <b>Peter Stamas</b><br>ER Escort               |
| <b>Carol Anderson</b><br>Home Delivered Meals   | <b>Macy Huettl</b><br>Pharmacy                              | <b>Kristine Meshak</b><br>Child Life                            | <b>Diane Susa</b><br>ICU Waiting Room          |
| <b>Authrene Ashton</b><br>Home Delivered Meals  | <b>Fay Kaczmarowski</b><br>Home Delivered Meals             | <b>Mary Miller</b><br>Home Projects                             | <b>Marie Temy</b><br>Home Projects             |
| <b>Mary Asplin</b><br>Home Projects             | <b>Matthew Korth</b><br>Escort                              | <b>Quinn Murray</b><br>Child Life                               | <b>Aurora Thorne</b><br>ER Escort              |
| <b>Janel Auman</b><br>Home Delivered Meals      | <b>LaReina Kulp</b><br>Pediatrics                           | <b>Sarah Moe</b><br>Child Life                                  | <b>Alexandra Totten</b><br>Pediatrics          |
| <b>Kaci Casey</b><br>Child Life                 | <b>Lindsey Lebrick</b><br>House of the Dove                 | <b>Minyon Page</b><br>House of the Dove and Family Waiting Room | <b>Jennifer Voight</b><br>Pediatrics           |
| <b>Mary Lou Eilers</b><br>Family Waiting Room   | <b>Jenny Leverson</b><br>Family Waiting Room and Pediatrics | <b>Ruth Pederson</b><br>Home Delivered Meals                    | <b>Linda Vruwink</b><br>Family Waiting Room    |
| <b>Alma Farooque</b><br>Direction Desk          | <b>Natasha Lindquist</b><br>Pediatrics                      | <b>Laura Peterson</b><br>Family Waiting Room                    | <b>Daniel Wall</b><br>Pediatrics               |
| <b>Tia Haffenbredl</b><br>Pediatrics and Escort | <b>Dennis Loughlin</b><br>Spiritual Services                | <b>Mary Pupp</b><br>Family Waiting Room and Direction Desk      | <b>Anne Weigel</b><br>Learning Resource Center |
| <b>Dustin Hauge</b><br>Escort                   | <b>Ryan Maciej</b><br>Home Delivered Meals                  | <b>Maura Schwaegel</b><br>Child Life                            | <b>Marcella Whaples</b><br>Spiritual Services  |
| <b>Olivia Heegeman</b><br>Home Delivered Meals  |   |   | <b>Taylor Wilke</b><br>Pediatrics              |

# Public Policy Report

Happy September!

Maintaining a healthy weight, eating a balanced diet, getting regular exercise, and not having first degree family members (parents) with type 2 diabetes are all key to not developing type 2 diabetes. Prevention of any disease is of course always the best...an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure I think the saying goes.

Since Wisconsin Partner's Association health education topic for 2011 is diabetes, I thought I would share some information on types 1 and 2 diabetes. (Note: I even put on my nursing hat for this article)

### Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes generally occurs in childhood or in young adults, though it may occur at any age. It is much less common than type 2 diabetes; only 5 to 10% of diagnosed cases of diabetes are type 1. Common symptoms of type 1 diabetes are: excessive thirst, frequent urination, blurred vision, weight loss, extreme hunger and fatigue.

Type 1 diabetes occurs when a body's immune system attacks insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. When these cells are destroyed, the pancreas is able to produce little or no insulin. Insulin is a hormone needed to transform sugar (glucose) into energy for the body's cells. When sugars are not transformed into energy, a dangerous rise in blood sugar (glucose) levels occurs and if left untreated is potentially life-threatening. There is not a cure for type 1 diabetes, but a treatment plan focused on maintaining normal glucose levels can prevent complications. Type 1 diabetics can maintain healthy blood sugar levels by:

daily multiple insulin injections, monitoring blood glucose levels, regular exercise and by following a healthy meal plan.

### Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes typically occurs in the middle-aged or older adult population, although with the rising rate of obesity in young people more cases are being diagnosed in adolescents and young adults. Many people who develop type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese. Family history also increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Approximately 23.6 million people in the United States are type 2 diabetics. Symptoms of type 2 diabetes are: excessive thirst, frequent urination, fatigue, blurred vision, and recurrent urinary and skin infections.

In type 2 diabetes, the body is resistant to utilizing insulin the pancreas produces (insulin resistance) and is also insulin deficient (the body produces insufficient amounts of insulin). In insulin resistance, the body does not allow insulin to transform sugar (glucose) into energy (insulin resistance), so blood glucose levels become elevated. There is not a cure for type 2 diabetes, but glucose levels can be controlled with a healthy diet, regular exercise, oral medications, and insulin (when necessary). Those with type 2 diabetes are at increased risk for heart disease and stroke, so blood pressure control and maintaining healthy cholesterol levels are essential.

Reference: American Diabetes Association Diabetes Forecast: The Healthy Living Magazine

Judy Gadke  
Public Policy Chair

*Judy*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All Board meetings are held in the Hospital Board Room at 3:30 p.m.

- September 7-9**.....CMN Radiothon Live from the Hospital Conference Center. Volunteers needed. (see story) ....
- September 13**.....Partners Board Meeting
- October 4-6**.....Partners State Convention, Eau Claire
- October 11**.....Partners Board Meeting
- October 26**.....North Central District Partners Fall Meeting
- October 20**.....Newsletter deadline (send articles to JoAnn at gougeon@charter.net)
- November 11**.....Partners Fall Membership Meeting (see invite on back page)
- November 11 & 12** .....Gift Shop Open House (8 a.m - 8 p.m. both days)
- November 11 & 12** .....Eric Andrews Jewelry Sale- Outside of Gift Shop

# How will legislation affect our health care?

Author's Note: Thought I would just share a part of an article from the 'Valued Voice' as it conveys a wealth of information about what lies ahead in our legislature that affects our health care community. Remember if you are not a member of HEAT (Health Education Advocacy Team)...a simple way to communicate with our legislators; please join today! See registration form on page 5 and sign up today!

Hope you are all enjoying our summer in Wisconsin. I have been spending a lot of time in the 'northwoods' at my cabin and other than too many mosquitos, it has been great! Hope to see many of you at our district and state conventions this fall!

Judy Gadke  
Public Policy Chair

Valued Voice - July 8, 2011  
Volume 55, Issue 26

Guest Column: The Peak is Never Passed  
By Eric Borgerding, WHA Executive Vice President

The Legislature is adjourned until September, a "summer recess" of sorts. But those who work the legislative process professionally, particularly association lobbyists, know there really is no such thing as down time in Madison, and laurels are short lived. Yes, it's been a good session so far, but easing into neutral has never been a strand in WHA's DNA. So, here are just a few of the matters currently defining WHA's post-state budget agenda:

**Medicaid Reform:** Pleased as we are with the initial outcome of the Medicaid budget, there is much work ahead. The budget signed by Governor Walker did a great deal to shore up the program's funding for the next two years, but the long-term spending trajectory remains unsustainable. To address that issue, the budget bill gives Secretary Smith and Medicaid Director Davis, with input and review by the Joint Finance Committee, the job they asked for-finding some \$500 million (state and federal funds combined) in Medicaid savings this biennium. Both are engaged in an effort to find those short-term savings, but their focus thus far has rightly been on downstream structural program changes-the kind that will eventually produce savings via affecting utilization, but the kind that have to be done right and that require buy-in from key stakeholders.

WHA is positioned to be one of those key stakeholders, as evidenced by the just-completed work of our member-driven Medicaid Reengineering Group (MRG). After six meetings spanning April through June and dozens of hours of staff work, next week we will finalize and deliver to the Department of Health Services the work product-a report containing 47 specific recommendations on how (and how not) to reform Medicaid. While the final report culminates the MRG's massive effort, it really is just the beginning-our seat (we hope) at the table of a Medicaid reform effort that will play out at both the state and federal level for the next 24 months.

**Federal Deficit Reduction/Medicare and Medicaid Cuts:** Under the misnomer "entitlement reform," Congress and the President appear to be aligning (a sign of how serious this is) around massive

cuts to hospital Medicare payments on top of the hundreds of billions already coming via the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) and the IPSS rule. There is nothing reform-related to this approach, which is a continuation of the usual fallback of maintaining the status quo on the beneficiary side, and paying for that by not paying for that (i.e. provider reimbursement cuts). Throw into that mix new threats to Medicaid funding, including the possibility of phase-downs or phase-outs of revenue capture mechanisms like provider assessments/taxes, and we are facing a double-barreled shotgun of cuts now solidifying in the typically gelatinous halls of Congress.

This is a very serious threat that WHA and our members are mobilizing to address on all fronts, pulling out every grassroots tool at our disposal to make our voice heard and concerns understood by our Congressional delegation. Wasn't health care supposed to become less complex? WHA recently submitted comments relating to a proposed rule mandating hospitals administer flu vaccinations on demand to any and all who walk through our doors (or risk losing Medicare certification), and another rule defining state methods for ensuring access (via provider payment policies) to covered Medicaid services.

There is a plateful of issues to be dealt with here, many of which emanate from increasingly obsolete, disconnected-from-reality statutes (specifically Ch. 51) that place Wisconsin hospitals in conflicting, or ambiguous at best, situations. It is a complex and daunting problem wrapped up in the tangle of state and county finances. Solutions will not be wholesale and will necessarily involve multiple levels of stakeholders, but that process of constructing those solutions must begin very soon during this legislative session.

**Tort Reform:** The passage of the QIA earlier this year was indeed notable, but certain obvious and needed changes to our tort statutes remain. The time has come to allow health care providers the ability to simply apologize to a patient or their family if an error has occurred, without fearing that apology will be used against them in court. The plaintiff's bar opposes this legislation because an apology might make the patient or family less likely to sue a doctor or hospital. There is perhaps no better example of how twisted the tort system can become. Passage this session of legislation that will fix this absurd situation is one of our top agenda items.

There are literally more than a dozen other issues not covered here, both inside and outside Madison and the State Capitol, in which WHA is playing an active, if not lead, role. The Valued Voice remains WHA's primary communication vehicle, but always feel free to contact one of the WHA staff for more of the latest developments.

Health care issues and advocacy are not cyclical. They are constant, in a state of motion that is here to stay. As noted above, while we are pleased with our progress so far, there are MASSIVE challenges ahead, and now is certainly not the time to pause, rewind or replay... nor, with the continuing help and support of our members, do we intend to.