



Rural Wisconsin Hospital Cooperative

Executive Director's Report

as of November 2, 2010

Discussing Reform and Rural Health

The holidays and frigid weather significantly reduced the number of talking opportunities. However next week is back on the road time with presentations for Stoughton Hospital and before family physicians at the Pfister Hotel for the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Primary Care Report To Legislature

Enclosed is the Executive Summary of the mandated report submitted to the Legislature by the two medical schools at the end of December. Also enclosed is a series of questions that I have submitted via the Rural Health Development Council for our upcoming meeting with both schools. I believe that this type of additional information is needed before any conclusions can be drawn about the utility of the schools' intentions. Copies of these questions have been shared with the WHA Rural Council and elsewhere. See Attachment #1.

WI Primary Care Consortium Update

I have spoken with some members of the legislature to ask for their help in allocating General Purpose Revenue dollars to the Consortium (via the budget of the Department of Health and Social Services) to act as match for the \$800,000 grant being requested of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. I found

the initial reception encouraging but as always dollars are tight in the budget repair bill.

RWJ Foundation Spotlights RWHC

In case you missed it, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has been promoting a resource manual for rural hospitals. *Rural Health Care Challenges in the 1990s: Strategies From the Hospital-Based Rural Health Program* features the Cooperative and several other grantees. The free reference manual and tapes or reference manual only can be obtained by writing RWJF, College Road, P.O. Box 2316, Princeton, NJ 08543-2316.

ProPAC Struggles With Wage Index

You can see from Attachment #2 that the Prospective Payment Assessment Commis-

sion continues to actively pursue a new methodology for determining and making more equitable the Medicare wage index but has not yet settled on a specific direction. Given the potential for such a wage index being used as part of health reform, it is doubly important for us to stay on top of this development.

HCFA Asks For RWHC Consultation

Maybe a new administration does on occasion make a difference. The Health Care Financing Administration has asked me to do something, to be part of a review team for their State Rural Health Network Reform Initiative. (Basically reading and analyzing about 15 state proposals and spending three days in WDC to advise regarding who should be funded.) HCFA will grant funds to States to encourage innovations in rural health financing and delivery systems within the context of comprehensive statewide health reform. Wisconsin was thought to be eligible as long as the Partnership Plan was still alive, but as noted earlier in a board agenda enclosure, its current health is in some doubt.

Opportunity To Cut Energy Costs

In a letter thanking me for a talk given to the Wisconsin Power and Light Company's Farm Advisory Council, you all were offered the opportunity to have a free WP&L energy analysis to identify energy efficiency opportunities. Attachment #3 is a copy of *Tips for Health Care Facilities* that was sent to me; contact Paul Proctor at 608-252-3397 if you are interested in obtaining their assistance.

WI Offers To Write-Off 42% Of Loan

The offer anticipated from the Department of Health and Social Services to forgive part but not all of the \$50,000 development loan (used for the Benchmarking Project) was finally received today, over-turning the verbal communication in December of 1992 that all

of the loan would be forgiven. As agreed at last months board meeting, I will write an appeal to the DHSS Secretary. Attachment #4 is the Department's staff "analysis".

