



Partners of Wisconsin Hospital Association  
Southeastern District Newsletter

Jane Henderson, Southeastern District Chair

March, 2021

Happy Spring! I find it hard to believe that almost 3 months of a new year have passed. I attended the virtual February board meeting and I want to thank all of you for submitting your annual reports in a timely manner so I was able to present the District report to the state officers. The following is a compilation of data from our 7 member organizations comparing 2020 to 2019:

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
Membership	976	1018
Volunteer Hours	25,434	103,198
\$ Donated to Hospital	\$183,891.00	\$472,350.00
# Scholarships Awarded	31	27
Scholarship Total \$	\$56,500.00	\$63,600.00
# Fundraising Projects	23	47
# Health Education Projects/Programs	2	23
# Health Education Newsletter Articles	13	20
# Contacts w/Legislators	63	70
# PPE Articles in Newsletter	3	6
#PPE Projects/Programs	0	0

The most striking difference is in volunteer hours and money donated to the hospitals. As a result of the volunteer programs being closed, fundraising was also stopped. The majority of the Volunteer gift shops still remain closed and only a few volunteers have returned. Please note, though, the number of scholarships awarded increased and the monetary value was only slightly less.

Closing the hospitals especially impacted Community & Public Policy Education Programs. With Advocacy Day canceled, no in-person contact was made with legislators in Madison. Any programs that volunteers would have held for community member were not possible due to the pandemic and with the directors of the Volunteer programs also asked to “work from home”, newsletters & projects were put on hold.

Other state news is that local officers will be receiving invitations to attend virtual informational meetings about the Best of the Best and WAVE awards. A practice session will be held April 19<sup>th</sup> using Microsoft Teams and the actual meeting will be April 21<sup>st</sup>. Leigh Ann Larson from WHA will initiate contact. If you haven’t received this invitation, let me know.

## Community Health Education

Please check the Partners of WHA website for updated information posted by Sue Schuelke, State Community Health Education Chair. Upcoming reminders include *The Drug Take Back Day* on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and May is *Mental Health Awareness Month*.

---

### Southeastern District of Partners of WHA Public Policy Education Report March 2021

Thank you all for sending in your Local PPE Annual Reports. The COVID Pandemic has severely limited Partners of WHA activities, including canceling the 2020 Advocacy Day. This year Advocacy Day will be held virtually on Wednesday, April 14 from 8:30 am to 11:30 am.

The WHA will have an outstanding legislative panel for 2021 Advocacy Day. Confirmed panelists include lawmakers from both parties who lead the powerful budget-writing Joint Committee on Finance: Co-Chairs Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green) and Rep. Mark Born (R-Beaver Dam) and ranking Democratic members Sen. Jon Erpenbach (D-West Point) and Rep. Evan Goyke (D-Milwaukee).

As always, the panel provides attendees in-depth insight into the state budget and issues facing health care in our state-and there is a lot to talk about in 2021.

Advocacy Day attendees will also hear from morning keynote speaker Frank Sesno as well as special guest Governor Tony Evers (invited).

You can register for Advocacy Day very easily. Go to [www.wha.org](http://www.wha.org). The Virtual Advocacy Day box will be displayed. Go to the box titled "Learn More and Register". I registered and received an email to confirm my registration. There are also virtual legislative visits on April 14, 15, and 16. If you choose to schedule a visit, the WHA staff will schedule your legislative visit jointly with your State Senator and State Representative based on your home address you provided.

WHA strongly believes the legislative visits are the most important aspect of Advocacy Day. When legislators hear from you, their constituents, they listen because you are their neighbors, their allies in the community. That is why WHA encourages all attendees to sign up for the Advocacy Day legislative visits.

There is also a Pre-Advocacy Day Webinar on April 7 at 1:00PM. This webinar will provide an overview of how legislative visits work, logistics of the virtual format, why these visits are important, and the topics WHA will ask you to discuss during your legislative appointments. This webinar will be recorded and available in the Leader Pass Platform for all registered attendees. Attend this live webinar to ask your questions.

I hope many of you will be able to attend Advocacy Day this year.

Now I would like to give you a summary of our Southeastern District PPE report for 2020.

We recorded 64 contacts with our State and Federal legislators in 2020, most made by email. The issues about which we contacted our legislators included many to support our hospitals regarding the following COVID related issues:

- Support for the Surprise Medical Bills Act of 2020. Bill #5826
- Support for the Free COVID 19 Testing Act to cover COVID funding
- Support for money to help hospitals care for COVID 19 patients while having to cancel elective surgeries.
- Support for emergency contingency funding from Congress to insure hospitals can pay personal for caring for COVID patients.

- HEAT Alert to Senators Baldwin and Johnson regarding relief actions and important provisions to give additional support to maintain health benefits for individuals and families and increasing coverage options for those uninsured.
- Support for Health Care in the next COVID Relief Package the HEALS Act which expanded Medicare, Telehealth, and government reimbursements for Behavioral Health Care.

Thank you for communicating with our legislators to express your opinions on how they can support legislation that will help our hospitals with this unprecedented health care crisis. The number of COVID cases has decreased as well as hospitalizations. But there will still be financial and operational strains on our hospitals that have been stretched thinly during this pandemic.

We have 32 members of HEAT in our district. Five of our seven organization leaders or PPE Chairs receive the WHA Valued Voice and pass it on to others in their organizations. A good goal would be to have all of our organizations receive and share the Valued Voice and add one more HEAT member to each organization.

Now for 2021. An excerpt from the March 11, 2021 Valued Voice.

“During a meeting of the Assembly Health Committee on March 3, WHA President and CEO Eric Borgerding and other senior members of the WHA team testified in favor of Assembly Bill 148. The legislation ...would adopt five provisions intended to both support hospitals and providers while they continue the fight against COVID-19 and permanently remove regulations that have been barriers for care providers.”

It goes on to say that these provisions in Assembly Bill 148 have received support by both Republicans and Democrats in the Legislature and Governor Evers. These proactive ideas were born out of the pandemic and enable better utilization of resources by improving care.

The new legislation includes the following provisions:

- Permanently adopts, even beyond the public health emergency, temporary licensure processes established during COVID-19 for out-of-state providers with a valid, unrestricted license in another state;
- Provides payments to hospitals for Medicaid patients who are ready to be discharged from the hospital but await a post-acute care placement through January 1, 2021;
- Provides payments to hospitals for certain outpatient care delivered to Medicaid patients outside the inpatient facility through January, 2022;
- Clarifies the ability for hospitals to deliver hospital services in a patient’s home consistent with a Medicare-covered service, like those approved under the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ Acute Hospital Care at Home program; and
- Provides the WHA Information Center with Medicaid claims data, helping hospitals better understand how care delivered outside the walls of a hospital is impacting care outcomes inside hospitals to reduce unnecessary utilization and Medicaid losses for hospitals.

This legislation was scheduled to be voted on by the full Assembly on March 16. By the time you see this report it hopefully will have been passed. I wanted you to know what was all included in this Bill to support our hospitals.

I hope to be able to see many of you this year if circumstances permit. May you all be safe and healthy. If you have any questions about this report please contact me.

Cindy Finger

Southeastern District PPE Chair

[tfinger1@wi.rr.com](mailto:tfinger1@wi.rr.com)

414-481-5623

---

## Ascension SE WI Hospital- Elmbrook Campus Auxiliary

It will a full year on March 16th that Elmbrook closed its doors to all Volunteer Services and all Volunteer Services remained closed as of this writing. We are able to have limited Gift Shop hours weekly, solely staffed by our DVS as her calendar allows. The Gift Shop remains the primary source of funding for our Annual Healthcare Career Scholarship Funding. Behind the scenes we have been able to provide Essential Worker Gift Baskets to our primary departments involved in COVID Patient care. We have had Pre-order sales for Nothing Bundt Cakes for our Hospital Staff. We provide Bottled water at our Gift Shop entrance for Community Members for a donation to our Auxiliary Scholarship Fund, as they come into our facilities for Hospital Services and COVID Vaccine Clinics. We of course follow all CDC Guidelines and Social Distancing Gridlines in our Gift Shop Space with proper signage and Hand Sanitizing dispensers. All Volunteers were included in the Staff Vaccinations of the Pfizer Vaccine. We are still hopeful to participate in more “normal” activities once the State Guidlines open up for Volunteer Services in our Hospitals. Dawn M Hansen, Elmbrook Campus Auxiliary President.



---

**Aurora West Allis Medical Center-Jane Henderson, President**



**Partners of WHA Southeastern District  
VIRTUAL Spring Meeting**

Hosted by Aurora West Allis Medical Center Service Club  
via Microsoft Teams

Date: Wednesday, April 28, 2021

Time: 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Invitation to join our meeting will come via e-mail from your local organization President and/or  
DVS

If you have any questions and/or concerns, please contact Jane Henderson @(414)327-4217 or  
hendersj48@aol.com

We are looking forward to seeing everyone after the 2020 spring meeting we had planned was canceled and no meeting was held in the fall. The State officers will be in attendance and we will be installing the officers whose terms began in 2020. The chair-elect position is still open. Please let me know if you are interested OR know of someone in your organization that would be willing to accept the position.

Other local news is that volunteers will now be returning to staff our Gift Shop and lengthen hours of operation! With so many people being vaccinated, visitor and volunteer restrictions are being relaxed and more and more activities are returning to pre-pandemic.

---

**Froedtert West Bend Hospital Partner Volunteers-Ann Johnson, DVS**

FINALLY, our volunteers are returning! After one full year--to the exact day--when volunteer service was suspended in 2020 I am ECSTATIC to share we have volunteers back on our campus. We will be returning volunteers in a phased approach in order to ensure their safety and that of our patients and staff. There will be four phases in all and will follow according to the volunteer role and their movement through hospital/health centers. Phase I includes non-patient facing volunteers with no movement throughout hospital. Phase II includes visitor/public facing volunteers with limited movement. Phase III includes patient facing volunteers with regular movement and Phase IV is when we will begin accepting new volunteer applications. Phase I volunteers began returning to campus on March 16 and our very first volunteer, Alice, very happily resumed her role with patient



folders. Hip, hip hooray! I am also THRILLED to report that Rhoda, our comfort dog, and her handler Ray have also returned to campus. While they are not able to move through the hospital yet and provide visit to the inpatient floors, they are coming in once a week to our respite area where staff can stop by to say hello and welcome them both back. March has been a GREAT month for us and we look forward to things “springing” forward!

