

## **Wyoming Miners' Hospital Board 014 Annual Report FY 2017**

### General Information:

1. Mary Ellen Young, Executive Director
2. Agency Contact, Mary Ellen Young  
Admin Assistants: Gillette-Helen Jerome Rock Springs-Ronda Strother
3. Agency contact phone numbers:  
Gillette office: 307-685-6827 – main office  
Rock Springs office: 307-352-2925  
1-866-808-3004,
4. Agency mailing address:  
2001 W. Lakeway Rd, Ste B  
Gillette, WY 82718
5. Agency Web Address, <http://mhb.state.wy.us>
6. Other locations: Rock Springs, WY
7. Statutory References:  
Sec. 30-6-101  
30-6-102  
30-6-104
8. The board serves Wyoming miners; active, retired and eligible contractors.
9. Expenditures for 2017 were \$3,167,312
10. The Board reports to the Legislature and the Governor. The board consists of the nine (9) members:  
Seven (7) members representing miners, including at least one member (1) from Sweetwater County and at least one (1) member from Campbell County all appointed by the governor;  
One (1) member of the Campbell County Memorial Hospital Board appointed by the county commissioners.  
One (1) member of the Memorial Hospital of Sweetwater County appointed by the county commissioners.  
The board by statute must meet twice a year. This year the board met in person three times in a centrally located city.

## **Quality of Life Result**

Wyoming residents are provided financial assistance towards health conditions experienced due to labor in the mining industry.  
(Healthcare)

## **Contribution to Wyoming Quality of Life**

This Board has contributed to the improvement of the quality of life in Wyoming by providing financial assistance for out-of-pocket expenses for the State's active, retired and contract miners when these health problems are due to labor in the mining industry. The Board's goal is to ensure that Wyoming miners are provided assistance to obtain services to address health issues from medical conditions disproportionately peculiar to the mining industry in the particular illness areas of pulmonary/respiratory, hearing loss, cardiac and musculoskeletal conditions.

## **Basic Facts**

The board had a biennium budget of \$7,753,779 for 2017-2018. These funds came from the miner's hospital account within the permanent land fund and the miner's hospital income account within the permanent land income fund. The board could utilize annually up to 5% of the balance of those two accounts. The current budget is within the limits of the available funding. This past year the board served over 8,157 miners through its two programs.

The two programs the Board offers to miners are:

*Hearing Aid Purchasing Assistance*

*Program*

*Miners' Medical Assistance Program*

### ***Program #1 – Hearing Aid Purchasing Assistance Program***

The board provides up to \$2,000 every five years to miners requiring hearing aids. The miner is free to shop at any hearing aid provider either online or in a bricks and mortar store.

FY 2017 Hearing Aid recipients: 239

The MHB is seeing more requests for a second and third hearing aid. At the board meeting on October 7<sup>th</sup> of 2016 the board voted to drop the Hearing Aid preferred provider program and instead provide the maximum of \$2,000 every five years towards the purchase of hearing aid/s. We have not experienced a strong increase in hearing aids dispensed since this change. Actually the number dispensed comparing FY2016 to FY2017 is down by 41 and dollars spent is down by \$53,507. We have received extremely positive feedback on this program. Miners that have significant hearing loss normally must wear hearing aids for their life time.

FY 2017 Hearing Aid expenses: \$365,904

Paying for two repairs per aid, for the life of the hearing aid after the initial warranty has expired has helped to extend the life of the hearing aid, thereby reducing our costs. Comparing FY2016 to FY2017 expenses are down by \$53,507. Out of the total paid for hearing aid expenses \$13,420 (3.3%) was for repairs.

### ***Program #2 – Miner’s Medical Assistance Program***

The MHB offers a subsidy to miners of \$5,000 maximum annually to help defray the costs of medical care and prescription drugs incurred for treatment from the four health conditions mentioned in the Statute, namely; Cardiac, Musculoskeletal, Hearing and Pulmonary. The MHB is always payer of last resort on these expenses.

Out of Pocket Prescription Expenses:

Prescriptions for medical conditions related to the four health problems are a covered expense for miner’s payable from the Miner’s Medical Assistance Program. When a miner has their prescription filled, they retain the information that contains miner’s name, insurance and drug information. The miner’s out of pocket expenses are paid directly to them after submitting a claim and providing the before mentioned information.

## Out of Pocket Medical Expenses:

Strong advertising efforts in getting the word of this program and eligibility out to the smaller mines, sand and gravel and the contractors have contributed to the growth.

In the spring of 2017 we began to audit every “first claim of the year”. We check the miner’s records to see if their driver’s license has expired and if we have current primary insurance information. If we need any of this information updated the miner is sent a renewal form and a request for a copy of their current Wyoming driver’s license and primary insurance card. We have found several miners have moved out of state and are continuing to use our program which is in contrast to our Rules. Those that do not respond are terminated from receiving benefits until the renewal is completed. We have been able to recoup several thousand dollars that were paid out to miners who had moved out of state. The MHB is working closely with our third party administrator, EBMS, to ensure our program is being administered as our Rules and Statute dictate.

FY 2017 Prescription drug expenses - \$233,374

FY 2017 Miners’ Medical Assistance expenses paid: \$2,345,962

FY 2017 # of Registered Miners: 8,157

FY 20167 # Claims Processed: 34,558

The Miner’s Hospital Board has made significant changes to rein in our expenses, yet provide valuable benefits to miners in need of assistance. The board is directed to be a good steward of the funds and to adhere to the State Statute that is further defined by the Rules and Regulations. The Board is aware that more changes may need to take place to ensure the funds are utilized in the best possible way to “Serve disabled or incapacitated miners in this state with emphasis on pulmonary/respiratory, hearing loss, cardiac and musculoskeletal conditions of miners due to labor in the mining industry.”