

Where is the hospital getting all the money it's spending so foolishly?

CRMC paid a few million bucks to confiscate properties at Nob Hill and \$650,000 to pay a fired CEO not to work for them anymore. And, offered a million dollars for land beneath six houses south of the parking garage - to no avail on that one.

As Everett Dirksen might have said, pretty soon you're talking about real money.

There aren't many sources of CRMC money. Public money, profits or donors. They could sell off some assets but their pattern is to buy them, not sell them, so that's probably not a source of revenue. Any way you slice it, spending - or proposing to spend - that kind of money raises some real concerns.

My God, pretty soon patients are going to begin to question the need to charge \$12 for a Tylenol or \$8 for a 4 oz. can of Shasta. If the hospital is turning that kind of profit - the kind that would allow them to spend millions with no return or benefit likely or possible - maybe charges for hospital procedures and incidentals at the hospital are a tad bit too high.

It has been amazing to hear that some people thought Charlie Harms actually resigned his position at CRMC. When a CEO goes into a board meeting with no announced plans to resign and comes out saying he's resigned - he's been fired. The Cheyenne Herald didn't feel it necessary to report that reality. It was kind of like reporting that the sun rises in the east or that a lot of Cheyenne residents travel to Colorado for medical care. It just wasn't necessary.

The WT-E is like the dog that chases a car. If he catches it, he doesn't know what

to do with it. The WT-E has no problem with the hospital spending well over a half million dollars so a guy won't work there anymore, yet they worry about the manner in which it was done. They make a big deal out of unimportant matters, while allowing big ones to go unchallenged.

The real challenge to that decision should be the use of money. Donors can decide where they want to bequeath their money or make contributions while they're alive. Interestingly, when the State thought they weren't getting the right bang from their buck at Frontier Correctional, they did something about it. There is much public money that goes to a general hospital such as CRMC. State and federal.

If \$3.5 - \$4.5 million dollars were just spent unwisely by this hospital (to a fired CEO and for land they cannot use), will the State or Federal (Medicaid, Medicare, etc.) governments ask questions?

Probably not. A hospital is a sacred cow and not to be questioned. If a patient asks why a Tylenol costs \$12 when they can buy a bottle of the same pills for \$6.00 (they may have to take in multiple to reach the same dosage), there is no legitimate reason except the cost of delivering a pill. If a procedure takes less than a half hour and is billed \$12,000, there is no appeal.

Forgetting how public money is being used, it is not unreasonable for patients to question why the charges at CRMC are so high if the hospital has so much excess money to spend frivolously. If there were any oversight, perhaps charges could be moved downward. There isn't oversight and patients will continue to pay for excessive and unnecessary spending.

CRMC *is* giving up on the Wellington Clinic

The local hospital has not provided Cheyenne media with an announcement that they would be closing the clinic in northern Colorado, but it was provided to media in Wellington. On the off-chance there are Laramie County residents who travel to Wellington to visit that clinic, the Cheyenne Herald is publishing the press release here. (This release was provided to the Herald by CRMC upon our request.)

"Cheyenne Regional to Close Wellington Medical Center in January

Cheyenne Regional Medical Center will close the Wellington Medical Center in Wellington, Colo., on Friday, January 30. The last day that the medical center will treat patients is Friday, January 23.

In recent months, as the national and regional economy has worsened, the Wellington Medical Center has also faced financial challenges. In the face of these challenges, Cheyenne Regional's Board of Trustees has made the difficult decision to close the medical center after trying unsuccessfully to find another healthcare provider to purchase it. Several providers were approached. The Board has also decided that, as an organization, Cheyenne Regional will focus its resources on its core service region of Wyoming and western Nebraska.

Wellington Medical Center employees were notified several weeks ago that the medical center would either be closing or transferring to another provider. They were given notice last week that the center is closing.

The center will continue to provide patients with needed medical care through January 23 while also ensuring that patients have time to establish a relationship with other healthcare providers in the area. Patients will be able to pick up records or have them transferred to another provider through January 30."

At a time when health care costs continue to escalate, it is unusual for a medical clinic to close. It happens but, thankfully, it is rare. Combined with the spending outlined at the left of this page, it is imperative that CRMC hunker down and operate the hospital in Cheyenne. Payouts to terminated CEO's, acquisition of land without a use, and experimenting with expansion into a state that doesn't want us, must end. If the money lost in these adventures has to come from profits, it is going to take a long time to replace that money. Someone has to get a handle on this operation. Someone.

Billboards

Why is so much public money being spent on a message that the vast majority of its readers already agree with? With so many needy and homeless, why are tens of thousands of dollars being spent on billboards - even double-width billboards - with phrasing so bizarre that some may miss the message?

The billboard companies surely appreciate this needless use of public funds. If it weren't for this silliness, more of the political campaign advertising would still be in place, two months after the election. As it is, there are billboards all around town with campaign messages for John Barrasso, Mike Enzi, Rick Kaysen, Drew Hill and Amy Edmonds, among others.

Somewhere, someone is chortling to themselves about their cleverness - substituting "secondhand smoke" or similar for every phrase that uses "dead," "deadly," "dying," and every other quietest word they could conjure.

Had they used "secondhand smoke calm" instead of "dead calm," they would have defeated their purpose.

Less than 20% of Americans smoke. A smaller percentage hold to the belief that secondhand smoke is not dangerous to others health. To spend huge amounts of money to convey a message already accepted by most in society is wasteful. In this economy, public funds should not be squandered. And this is a waste.

Herald

pick-up locations

- City News - Downtown
 - BLM Building Entryway
 - Safeway - South Cheyenne
 - Wonder Bread Outlet - Ridge Rd.
 - Oroweat Bakery Outlet - SW Dr.
 - Borderline - Colorado Lottery
 - Laramie County Library
 - Laramie County Gov't Center - North
 - Herschler Building - North
 - VA Hospital - South Entrance
 - Town & County Liquors
 - Burger Inn
 - Luxury Diner
 - American Storage
 - Avenues Pet Clinic
 - Los Amigos
 - Diamond Horseshoe
 - Daylight Donuts (both)
 - Quick Draw Optical
 - Village Inn-Downtown
 - T-Joe's Steakhouse & Saloon
- Many, many other locations in the City and Laramie County*

In the county ...

- Fred's Place, the A & W, and Wild Horse Restaurant - all in Pine Bluffs
- Panhandle Co-Op, Burns
- Antelope Truck Stop
- Albin Diner & General Store

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