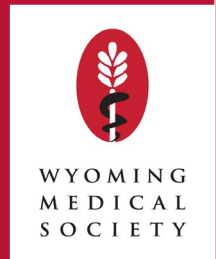


Collecting the Stories of County Health Officers

BY KELLY ETZEL DOUGLAS



The last few years have been hard for everyone, and especially hard for county health officers. As global leaders began issuing warnings and guidelines to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, local public health officials became the face of the new rules. This made them the target for scrutiny, and sometimes abuse, if members of their own community objected to the rules.


Now a coalition of doctors and historians are working to collect, preserve and share Wyoming's county health officers' stories.

"We're living through this historic time during the pandemic and we need to record this as we go along," said Robert Monger, MD.

Dr. Monger, who is editor-in-chief of Wyoming Medicine

magazine, and Michael Jording, MD, former public health officer for Weston County, are both past presidents of the Wyoming Medical Society. They are part of a cooperative effort with the Wyoming State Archives, Wyoming State Historical Society, American Heritage Center in Laramie, and Wyoming Medical Society. This group is collecting and archiving the stories now, with plans to publish them in the future.

Each of the 23 Wyoming counties has one health officer, and Drs. Monger and Jording have interviewed 17 doctors so far. They expect to finish interviewing doctors in the fall.

"It's been really interesting. Some got a lot of pushback from the public. Some got a lot of support from the public," Dr. Monger said. 



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