

# Most hospitals in Nevada losing money

By Frank X. Mullen, Reno Gazette-Journal

Despite rounds of cost-cutting measures over the last few years, about two-thirds of Nevada general hospitals lost money in the third quarter of 2011, according to the latest report on the financial condition of state's health care systems.

The report shows that 20 of the state's 33 hospitals – not including specialty hospitals such as rehabilitation or psychiatric centers – lost money in a single quarter.

“That would be a disaster in any industry and it's a bit of a disaster here,” said Dwight Hansen, financial director for the Nevada Hospital Association.

Washoe County/Carson City hospitals reported losses of \$29.3 million and Clark County hospitals posted a \$45.7 million combined loss in the third quarter of 2011, according to data from University of Nevada, Las Vegas-based the Center for Health Care Information Analysis.

Rural hospitals had a combined \$52.7 million profit, but that total is largely driven by Elko, which is in the middle of a gold-mining boom, analysts said.

Northeastern Nevada Regional Hospital in Elko, for example, made about \$58 million in the first nine months of last year from paying patients.

Even as health care costs continue to soar and patients shoulder a greater percentage of their medical charges, some hospitals are sinking beneath multiple burdens, including fewer patients, more uninsured patients and ever-dwindling Medicare reimbursements.

Nationally, about half of all general hospitals have been losing money for the last four years, according to federal health care statistics.

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