

NRHA Rural Health Clinic & Critical Access Hospital Conferences 2026 • Sept. 15-18, Kansas City, Mo.

All general sessions take place in the Chicago Ballroom unless otherwise indicated • Subject to change • Updated 7-8-26

Rural Health Clinic Conference			
Tuesday, September 15			
1 – 1:15 pm	Welcome (15 m)		
1:15 – 2:30 pm	Plenary 1 – Keynote Session What If We’re Wrong? (75 min) <i>Blake Kramer, Franklin Medical Center, Administrator</i>		
2:30 – 3:30 pm	Plenary 2 - Regulatory and Legislative Updates for Rural Health Clinics (60 min) <i>Sarah Hohman, National Association of Rural Health Clinics, Government affairs director</i>		
3:30 – 3:45 pm	Break		
3:45 – 5 pm	1A – Organized Compliance: Building Practical Systems That Work Julie Quinn	1B - FORHP+	1C – Winning the Denials Battle Through Prevention and Resolution Amy Graham, Ryan Breneman
Room	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
Wednesday, Sept 16			
7 – 8 am	Continental Breakfast, Registration		
8 – 9:15 am	2A – Don't Outsource the Relationship: Keeping CCM In-House in Rural Health Jill Hewett	2B – 15 Best Practices for Rural Health Clinic Leaders Sydney Grant, Selena Gurley Kate Hill, Joanie Perkins	2C – The Illusion of Accuracy: AI vs. Expertise Cassie Beasley, Amanda Dennison Patty Harper
Room	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
9:15 – 9:30 am	Break		
9:30 – 10:45 am	3A – State Flex Program Support for Rural Health Clinics John Gale, Rebecca Stearns	3B – Putting Compliance into Action: From Regulations to Results Kate Hill	3C – Reimagining Rural Behavioral Health Staffing for Scale and Sustainability+ Susan Kramer, Lauren Miller Anna Swanson
Room	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
10:45 – 11 am	Break		
11 – 11:45 am	Plenary 3 – Clinic Flow Excellence – Enhancing the Financial Health of Your Health Care System <i>Loree Tamayo, Loree Tamayo Consulting, CEO and owner</i> (45 min)		
11:45 am – 1 pm	Rural Health Clinic Conference lunch on your own		

Rural Health Clinic Conference continues and Critical Access Hospital Conference begins	
1 – 1:15 pm	Welcome & Announcements (15m)
1:15 – 2:30 pm	Plenary 4 - Keynote Address (75 m) A Road Map for Integrating the Tools Of AI into a Rural Hospital Strategic Plan <i>Andrew M. Ibrahim, MD, MSc, University of Michigan, George D. Zuidema professor of surgery</i>
2:30 – 3 pm	Break

3 – 4 pm	Plenary 5 - National Legislative Update (60 m) <i>Carrie Cochran-McClain, DrPH, National Rural Health Association, Chief policy officer</i>					
4 – 5 pm	Plenary 6 - Rural Hospital Replacement: 25 Years of Evidence (60 min) Brian Haapala, Stroudwater Capital Partners, CEO; Arlene Harms, Rio Grande Hospital, CEO					
5 – 7 pm	RHC-CAH Networking Reception - Atlanta/New York					
Thursday, September 17						
7 – 8 am	Breakfast With Partners					
8 – 9 am	Plenary Session 7 - The Federal Regulatory Impact on CAHs (60 min) <i>Brian Bertsch, Eide Bailly LLP, Principal; Joseph Watt, Forvis Mazars, Partner</i>					
9 – 10:50 am	Networking break – Exhibit Hall					
	9:10 – 9:55 am	Partner Featured Session A – XXXXX				
10:50 – 11 am	Break					
11 am – 12:15 pm	4A	4B	4C	4D	4E	4F
	Collaboration Turns One Turnover Cost Into Four Placements Theresa Braudt Kim Herrmann Cynde Larsen	Denial Prevention AI: Two Colorado CAHs Share ROI Beth Bell Katherine Mulready Kevin Stansbury	What Drug Inflation Is Hiding From You Justin Comeau Marianne Nichols	USDA Technical Assistance Eric Shell Brock Slabach	John A. Hartford Foundation Session[^] XXXXX	Fellowship to Frontline: Strengthening Rural Health Nursing Workforce Joachim Voss
Room	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
12:15 – 1:50 pm	Networking Lunch					
	1 – 1:45 p.m.	Partner Featured Session B – – XXXXX				
1:50 – 2 pm	Break					
2 – 3:15 pm	5A	5B	5C	5D	5E	5F
	What High-Performing Rural CFOs Do Differently Bryant Blay Diane Moore, Tyler Moss Theresa Tabor	FORHP⁺	Delivering Sustainable Workforce Efficiency Without Technology Investment Charlene Boyer Jessica Drummond	Strategic Risk Stratification: What Analysis and Case Studies Reveal Kevin DeRonde Jeffrey Sommer	Centene^{>} Partnering to Improving Maternal–Infant Access and Outcomes Sina Haeri Dawn Steiner, MD	American Heart Association Session[#] XXXXX
Room	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
3:15 – 3:30 pm	Break					
3:30 – 4:30 pm	Plenary 8 – Plumas Model: Midwifery Integration Restoring Rural Maternity Care (60 m) <i>Lisette Brown, Population health director; JoDee Johnson, CEO, Tiffany Leonhardt, Business development director; Lori Link, Midwifery director, Plumas District Hospital</i>					
4:30 – 5:15 pm	Plenary 9 - Understanding the Needs of Frontier Critical Access Hospitals (45 min) <i>John Gale, Cutler Institute and Maine Rural Health Research Center, Senior research associate; Jack King, Montana Hospital Association, Program specialist</i>					
Friday, September 18						
8 – 8:30 am	Breakfast					

8:30 – 9:15 am	Plenary 10 - Top 20 CAHs Awards Presentation (45 m) <i>Brock Slabach, NRHA, Chief operations officer</i> <i>Michael Topchik, Chartis Center for Rural Health, National leader</i>				
9:15 – 9:30 am	Break				
9:30 – 10:45 am	6A	6B	6C	6D	6E
	Operationalizing Apprenticeship in Rural Health Care Alyssa Burgess Shelly Contreras	Advancing Rural Clinical Readiness Through Simulation Michelle Hansen Clint Pridgen Melissa Onion	When No One Speaks Up, Rural Patients Suffer Stephen Williams	Sustaining Rural Hospitals Through Payment and Care Innovation Janice Walters	FORHP+
Room	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	
10:45 am	CAH Adjourns				

+ Sessions sponsored by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (RHC – 1, CAH – 2, and 3 more created by FORHP)

^ Session sponsored by The John A. Hartford Foundation/NRHA National Rural Age Friendly Initiative (CAH – 1)

Session sponsored by The American Heart Association (RHC or CAH – 1)

> Session sponsored by Centene (CAH-1)