

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

All general sessions take place in Exhibit Hall B unless otherwise indicated • Subject to change • Updated 8-5-26

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 - Exhibit Hall Foyer		
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 Ryan Breneman, Amy Graham
Room	Chicago A	Chicago B	Chicago C
Wednesday, Sept 16			
7 – 8 am	Continental Breakfast, Registration – Exhibit Hall		
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, Kate Hill, Joanie Perkins	2C – The Illusion of Accuracy: AI vs. Expertise Cassie Beesley, Amanda Dennison Patty Harper
Room	Chicago A	Chicago B	Chicago C
9:15 – 9:30 am	Break - Exhibit Hall Foyer		
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	Chicago A	Chicago B	Chicago C
10:45 – 11 am	Break - Exhibit Hall Foyer		
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 - Exhibit Hall Foyer

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 – Exhibit Hall A					
Thursday, September 17						
7 – 8 am	Breakfast With Partners – Exhibit Hall Foyer					
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 – Exhibit Hall B				
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 Cynde Larsen, PhD Hannah Shirkey	Denial Prevention AI: Two Colorado CAHs Share ROI Beth Bell Katherine Mulready, JD Kevin Stansbury, JD	What Drug Inflation Is Hiding From You Justin Comeau, PharmD Marianne Nichols, PharmD	Making the Business Case for Rural Networks: The What, Why, and How Tom Morris, Eric Shell Brock Slabach	John A. Hartford Foundation Session^ XXXXX	Fellowship to Frontline: Strengthening Rural Health Nursing Workforce Joachim Voss
Room	Atlanta	New York A	New York B	Chicago A	Chicago B	Chicago C
12:15 – 1:50 pm	Networking Lunch – Exhibit Hall Foyer					
	1 – 1:45 p.m.	Partner Featured Session B – Exhibit Hall B				
1:50 – 2 pm	Break					
2 – 3:15 pm	5A	5B	5C	5D	5E	5F
	What High-Performing Rural CFOs Do Differently Bryant Blay Connie Costigan Diane Moore, Tyler Moss Theresa Tabor	FORHP+	Delivering Sustainable Workforce Efficiency Without Technology Investment Charlene Boyer Jessica Drummond, DHA	Strategic Risk Stratification: What Analysis and Case Studies Reveal Matthew Gritters, MD Jeffrey Sommer Joe Theine	Centene> Partnering to Improve Maternal–Infant Access and Outcomes Sina Haeri, MD Dawn Steiner, MD	Transforming Rural Care—Maximizing Outcomes & Community Impact # Steve Dentel Shaina Madrid
Room	Atlanta	New York A	New York B	Chicago A	Chicago B	Chicago C
3:15 – 3:30 pm	Break - Exhibit Hall Foyer					
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 - Exhibit Hall Foyer					

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 Angela Bennett Alyssa Burgess	Advancing Rural Clinical Readiness Through Simulation Michelle Hansen Melissa Onion Clint Pridgen	When No One Speaks Up, Rural Patients Suffer Stephen Williams, MD	Sustaining Rural Hospitals Through Payment and Care Innovation Anna Anna	FORHP⁺
Room	Atlanta	New York A	New York B	Chicago A	Chicago B
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) (Laura & Becky)

[#] Session sponsored by The American Heart Association (RHC or CAH – 1) (Gaby)

[>] Session sponsored by Centene (CAH-1) (Amy)