

# NRHA Rural Health Clinic & Critical Access Hospital Conferences 2025 • Sept. 23-26, Kansas City, Mo.

All general sessions take place in the Chicago Ballroom unless otherwise indicated • Subject to change • Updated 9-18-25

Rural Health Clinic Conference			
Tuesday, September 23			
1 – 1:15 pm	Welcome (15 m)		
1:15 – 2:30 pm	♦ <b>Plenary 1 – Keynote Session - The RHC Landscape Post H.R.1</b> (75 min) – AARP sponsored session <i>Sarah Hohman, National Association of Rural Health Clinics, Government affairs director</i>		
2:30 – 3:30 pm	<b>Plenary 2 - Mastering RHC Reimbursement: Updates, Cost Reporting &amp; Strategic Compliance</b> (60 m) <i>Julie Quinn, Health Services Associates, Principal, compliance and cost reporting vice president</i>		
3:30 – 3:45 pm	Break		
3:45 – 5 pm	<b>1A - From Burnout to Buy in: Resuscitating the Rural Healthcare Workforce</b> Pamela Buchanan, MD	<b>+ *1B - Identifying Quality Measures for Hospital-Based Rural Health Clinics</b> John Gale, Rebecca Stearns	<b>1C - Top Ten Revenue Cycle Take Aways</b> Susan Rohde
Room	Empire A	Empire B	Empire C
Wednesday, Sept 24			
7 – 8 am	Continental Breakfast, Registration		
8 – 9:15 am	<b>2A - A Playbook for Physician Alignment, Engagement and Retention</b> Scott Polenz	<b>2B - Strengthening Board Support through Financial Transparency</b> Wes Garrison, Stuart Moore, Sally Othmer	<b>*2C - Rural OB Simulation: Protocols, Partnerships, and Preparedness</b> Jacquelyn Alvarado
Room	Empire A	Empire B	Empire C
9:15 – 9:30 am	Break		
9:30 – 10:45 am	<b>3A - Engaging Providers through Individualized Practice Dashboards</b> Ellen Thompson	<b>3B - Innovative Strategies for Enhancing Rural Health Care</b> Jacinda Bunch, PhD, Jennifer Jones Nicole Weathers, DNP	<b>3C - Reducing Denials to Strengthen Rural Health Revenue</b> Steve Smith
Room	Empire A	Empire B	Empire C
10:45 – 11 am	Break		
11 – 11:45 am	<b>Plenary 3 - Preventing Survey Failures and Strategies for Success in RHCs in 2025</b> (45 min) <i>Kate Hill, The Compliance Team, Rural health vice president</i>		
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	<b>Plenary 4 - Keynote Address</b> (75 m) <b>From Crisis to Renewal: Navigating Burnout in Health Care Leadership</b> <i>Todd Linden, Linden Consulting, Partner; Coco Janzen, Crossover Communications, Owner</i>
2:30 – 3 pm	Break

3 – 4 pm	<b>Plenary 5 - National Legislative Update (60 m)</b> <i>Alexa McKinley Abel, JD, National Rural Health Association, Government affairs and policy director</i> <i>Carrie Cochran-McClain, DrPH, National Rural Health Association, Chief policy officer</i>					
4 – 5 pm	<b>Plenary 6 - Innovation Strategies for Rural Health (60 min)</b> <i>Janice Walters, Rural Health Redesign Center , CEO</i>					
5 – 7 pm	<b>RHC-CAH Networking Reception - Atlanta/New York</b>					
<b>Thursday, September 25</b>						
7 – 8 am	Breakfast With Partners					
8 – 9 am	<b>Plenary Session 7 - RHC/CAH: Current Regulatory Trends and Updates (60 min)</b> <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	<b>Partner Featured Session A – NRHA &amp; Rural Health Leadership</b> <i>Bill Auxier, PhD, Center for Rural Health Leadership, President and CEO</i> <i>Sydney Grant, Center for Rural Health Leadership, Chief learning officer</i>				
	10 – 10:30 am	<b>20 Questions with Platinum Partners – Exhibit Hall</b>				
10:50 – 11 am	<b>Break</b>					
11 am – 12:15 pm	<b>4A</b>	<b>4B</b>	<b>4C</b>	<b>4D</b>	<b>4E</b>	<b>4F</b>
	<b>*The Changing Landscape of Quality Measurement and Recording</b> Sarah Brinkman Karla Weng	<b>Rural Emergency Teams: Improving Outcomes Through Simulation</b> Jacinda Bunch, PhD Brian Rechkemmer	<b>Utilizing the Medicare Cost Report for Financial Agility</b> Chris Cole Eric Lopata	<b># Stroke &amp; Heart Innovation: Rural Hospitals Leading the Way</b> D. Coates M. Cook A. McClellan T. Taylor	<b>Achieving Spend Excellence: The Chief Financial Officer's Role</b> Joshua Sandler	<b>* Master the New HCAHPS for Essential 5 Star Recognition</b> Brian Lee Julie Russell
Room	Empire A	Empire B	Empire C	Chouteau A	Chouteau B	Chicago
12:15 – 1:50 pm	Networking Lunch					
	1 – 1:45 pm	<b>Partner Featured Session B – Spotting Rural Hospital Closure Risks Years in Advance</b> <i>Julie Georgoff, Stroudwater Associates, Consultant; Jeff Sommer, Stroudwater Associates, Managing director</i>				
	1:50 – 2 pm	<b>20 Questions with Gold Partners – Exhibit Hall</b>				
1:50 – 2 pm	<b>Break</b>					
2 – 3:15 pm	<b>5A</b>	<b>5B</b>	<b>5C</b>	<b>5D</b>	<b>5E</b>	<b>5F</b>
	<b>Growing Service Lines in Rural Communities</b> Brian Howells Jayna Kelly	<b>+ Rural Emergency Hospitals: Lessons, Challenges, and Innovations in Year Three</b> Kenneth Harman	<b>Developing an EMS Shortage Area Designation for Rural Michigan</b> John Gale Jill Oesterle	<b>*Embracing Quality Improvement as an Organizational Strategy</b> Lindsay Corcoran Cameron Smith	<b>^ Advancing Age-Friendly Care in Rural Hospitals &amp; Communities</b> Laura Howell Nelson	<b>+*Quality and Financial Implications for Maternity Care in CAHs</b> Megan Lahr Madeleine Pick Eric Shell
Room	Empire A	Empire B	Chouteau A	Empire C	Benton	Chouteau B

3:15 – 3:30 pm	Break				
3:30 – 4:30 pm	<b>Plenary 8 – Rural Health Transformation Program: An Overview (60 m)</b> <i>Kate Sapra, PhD, CMS Office of Rural Health Transformation, Deputy director</i>				
4:30 – 5:15 pm	<b>Plenary 9 - The Future of Rural Health: An Interactive Discussion (45 min)</b> <i>JT Douglas, West Health, Strategy director; John Gale, Maine Rural Health Research Center, Senior research associate</i>				
5:15 – 6:15 pm	<b>Rural Veterans Special Interest Group Meeting</b> <i>Jed Hansen, PhD, Nebraska Rural Health Association, Executive director</i>				
Friday, September 26					
8 – 8:30 am	Breakfast				
8:30 – 9:15 am	<b>Plenary 10 - Top 20 CAHs Awards Presentation (45 m)</b> <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	<b>6A</b>	<b>6B</b>	<b>6C</b>	<b>6D</b>	<b>6E</b>
	<b>Case Study: Cultural Transformation - North Dakota CAH</b> Bill Auxier, PhD Sydney Grant Lori Seim	<b>From Surviving to Thriving: Transforming a Rural Hospital</b> Tanya Kessinger Tracy Koster	<b>*Obstetrics Simulation Training for Non Birthing CAHs</b> Jill Bullock Erin McMahon, EdD	<b>Rural Ready: Emergency Preparedness Lessons from Louisiana</b> Eric Johnson	<b>+FORHP Creating Rural Doctors: Insights and Opportunities for Critical Access Hospitals</b> Mark Holmes, PhD
Room	Empire A	Empire B	Empire C	Chouteau A	Chouteau B
10:45 am	CAH Adjourns				

+ Sessions sponsored by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (RHC & CAH)

\* Quality & Clinical Sessions (8 between conferences)

^ 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 AARP