

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF
RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF TENNESSEE



THIRTY YEARS STRONG:
HONORING OUR PAST, SHAPING OUR FUTURE

NOVEMBER 20TH - 22ND, 2024

MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN KNOXVILLE 525 HENLEY ST, KNOXVILLE, TN 37902

RURAL
 **HEALTH**
ASSOCIATION OF TENNESSEE

Agenda At-a-Glance

**RHA of TN 30th Annual Conference
Pre-Conference November 20, 2024
Conference November 20-22, 2024**

30 Years Strong: Honoring Our Past, Shaping Our Future

Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Pre-Conference

More information to come on pre-conference sessions:

8:00-11:00 am **Coordinated School Health: Building Stronger Schools: A Hands-On Approach to Coordinated School Health (CSH) Implementation**

Presenters: Melisa Fuhrmeister, Tennessee Department of Education

Join us for an interactive, hands-on pre-conference session designed to empower school districts and their partners in rural communities through the Coordinated School Health (CSH) model. In this session, we'll begin with a brief overview of CSH, focusing on the essential role of planning and the importance of partnerships with community stakeholders.

Objectives:

- Attendees will rotate through the various CSH components— Health Education; Health Services; Healthy School Environment; Nutrition; Physical Education & Physical Activity; School Counseling, Psychological, & Social Services; Staff Wellness; and, Student, Family, & Community Involvement —led by experienced CSH coordinators and district representatives.
- Each station will provide practical, hands-on activities, showcasing real-world strategies districts use to improve health and wellness outcomes.
- This dynamic session is a unique opportunity to learn, collaborate, and walk away with actionable insights to enhance school district and community health initiatives.

8:00-11:00 am **Rural Health Clinics: Rural Health Clinics Compliance Readiness: RHC Survey Tips and Strategies**

Presenter: Kate Hill, The Compliance Team

Description: Join the Compliance Team as they teach Rural Health Clinics about compliance readiness. One of the hardest parts of being an RHC is the need to know the ins and outs of being ready for your clinic to be surveyed. We are here to help you learn and navigate the process.

Objectives:

- Learn about the most commonly seen deficiencies found in RHC surveys.
- Dive into tips to prevent the common deficiencies.
- Discover methods to stay compliant.

Topic: RHC Medicare Billing Basics with 2024-25 Updates

Presenter: **Patty Harper**, InQuiseek Consulting

This session will explore the basics of RHC reimbursement and billing basics in addition to giving a billing update based on recent rule-making and CMS guidance. The content will be applicable to RHC newbies and experienced billers alike. Topics will also include telehealth and care management topics. Participants can expect an interactive presentation with clinical scenarios and claim examples.

Objectives:

- Understanding the importance and procedure of data collection.
- Exploring the basics of RHC reimbursement and billing.
- Navigating telehealth and care management billing.

Topic: Emergency Preparedness (EP) for RHCs

Presenter: **Kate Hill**, The Compliance Team

Description: Join the Compliance Team in a conversation on Emergency Preparedness for Rural Health Clinics across the state of Tennessee. This session will provide a comprehensive guide on how to handle emergencies before they take place and the importance of after-action reporting while staying in compliance.

Objectives:

- Understanding Emergency Preparedness for Rural Health Clinics.
- Navigating CMS Core Elements of Emergency Preparedness.
- Risk assessment, planning, and testing components of after-action reports.

-

8:00-11:00 am

Substance Use Disorder and Behavioral Health

Mary Linden Salter, TAADAS; and **Tony Jackson**, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Description: This session will provide mental and behavioral providers with relevant updates in state prevention, treatment, and programs. Participants will receive policy updates, information on how to coordinate care between various provider types and provide opportunities for networking and peer learning.

Objectives:

- Teach providers about the current programmatic updates surrounding statewide prevention and treatment.
- Inform individuals about how to coordinate care between different provider types.
- Provide a space for learning and open dialogue through peer-to-peer conversations.

8:00-11:00 am

Public Health

Topic: Addressing Social Drivers of Health through Technology

Presenter: **Emily Keeton and Wendy Stewart**, Rural Health Association of

Tennessee

Description: Almost 1 in 5 Americans live in rural communities, but many face barriers to accessing care. More limited access to resources and greater distances required to travel to healthcare providers can make it difficult for patients to receive care. It's time to take action to advance health equity for rural communities.

Objectives:

- How organizations like Amerigroup and findhelp are addressing rural needs through targeted interventions in rural areas.
- How Community Organizations can build trusted community networks and partnerships. We will also review the role of community organizations as pillars within the social care ecosystem.
- The positive impact of bringing together healthcare and social care via digital, interoperable tools.

Topic: The Roaring Train: The Syndemic of HIV, HCV, SUD, and Workforce Development in Appalachia

Presenter: **A. Toni Young** Community Education Group

Description: The Community Education Group (CEG) is leading a promising model through the Community Health and Mobilization Prevention Services (CHAMPS) program. This program trains Community Health Workers (CHWs) to fill gaps in care and link rural residents, including those impacted by SUD or with lived experience, to essential HIV and HCV services. By partnering with Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) providers, CHWs also engage in prevention and testing initiatives, helping to break the cycle of untreated HIV and HCV that is prevalent in these regions. CEG's strategy promotes collaboration across sectors to integrate health services with economic solutions, addressing both the public health crisis and employment challenges in Appalachia.

Objectives:

- Be able to identify and explain the intertwined health and economic challenges in Appalachia, including the impacts of substance use disorder, HIV, and viral hepatitis on rural communities
- Will evaluate the Community Health and Mobilization Prevention Services (CHAMPS) program's model, assessing how the training of Community Health Workers (CHWs) facilitates the integration of healthcare services with workforce development to address substance use and infectious disease outbreak
- Will develop actionable strategies for fostering collaboration between healthcare providers, community organizations, and economic development initiatives, aimed at improving health outcomes and economic resilience in Appalachia

Topic: Maternal Health Lactation Panel

Presenter: **Megan Hill, APRN, WHNP-BC** Dayspring Health, LifeCircle Women's Health (RHC)

Description: This session will cover TennCare's Lactation Consultant benefit, training programs, and other best practices in offering lactation education in clinical and community settings. This lactation panel presentation will explore the latest evidence-based practices in breastfeeding support, address common challenges faced by nursing mothers, and highlight the importance of community resources. Experts in lactation consulting, pediatrics, and maternal health will share insights and strategies to enhance breastfeeding success and maternal well-being.

Learning Objectives:

- Recognize common breastfeeding challenges and barriers that nursing mothers may encounter during the early postpartum period.
- Apply evidence-based strategies to support breastfeeding initiation and maintenance, ensuring both mother and infant health.
- Explore available community resources and support systems that can assist breastfeeding mothers, enhancing their overall experience and confidence.

11:00 am **Break- Visit Exhibits**

11:30-12:30 pm **Opening Welcome and Luncheon- Barry Cooper, RHA Board President**

12:30 pm **Break- Visit Exhibits**

12:45-1:45 pm **Keynote:** Comparing the Health Status of Tennessee's Rural and Urban Counties
Presenter: Randy Wykoff, MD East Tennessee State University

This talk will present a framework for understanding and addressing the health challenges facing the people of Tennessee. It will identify the various factors that cause Tennesseans to be less healthy than people in other states, including factors related to behaviors, access to healthcare, poverty, education, and other factors. The talk will then compare these factors between Tennessee's most rural and most urban counties.

Objectives:

- What is the health status of Tennesseans compared to people in other states?
- How does the health status of Tennesseans differ between rural and urban counties?
- What steps should I take, and who can I collaborate with, to improve health and well-being in my district?

Location: Ballroom

1:45 pm Break- Visit Exhibits

2:00 – 3:00 pm **Topic:** From Clinic to Home: Enhancing Rx Access and Chronic Disease Management for Older Adults in Under-Resourced Communities

Presenter: Suzanne Bailey, PsyD & Stacy White, PharmD Cherokee Health Systems

Description: Consistent access to prescribed medications is essential for optimal management of chronic health conditions. Older adults living in low-resource communities experience disparities related to prescription medication access. This disparate access contributes to increased morbidity and health burdens for older adults, their families, and the health system. This presentation will outline the implementation of a prescription delivery program utilizing virtual clinical pharmacy and community health workers to identify and address unmet social needs that impact health, functioning, and quality of life.

Objectives:

- Describe the disparities impacting prescription medication access for older adults.
- Outline the core components of a prescription delivery program for older adults.
- Describe 3 lessons learned and 1 area for further development.

Track: Hospital/Clinic

Location: Hope

2:00 – 3:00 pm **Topic:** Maternal Morbidity and Mortality Disparities in Tennessee
Presenter: Kristyn Long, MPH & Issac Yi, MA Tennessee Department of Health

Description: The Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) is committed to advancing innovative solutions to decrease maternal mortality and morbidity and reduce disparities. Participants will receive an overview of severe maternal morbidity (SMM) and mortality among rural/urban populations in Tennessee. The overview will highlight the current state of SMM and mortality while showcasing TDH's maternal health initiatives. The session will delve deeper into recent trends and racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, and geographic disparities in SMM and maternal mortality.

Objectives:

- By the end of the session, participants will gain insights into the prevalence of SMM and mortality among both rural and urban populations in Tennessee, as well as understand geographic and demographic disparities in maternal health outcomes and access to care.
- By the end of the session, participants will identify potential interventions and strategies for reducing the incidence of maternal morbidity and mortality rates while improving overall maternal health outcomes.
- By the end of the session, participants will explore opportunities for collaboration to address or reduce maternal health disparities.

Track: Maternal Health

Location: Milani

2:00-3:00 pm **Topic:** Southern Health-spitality: Ways to Meaningfully Engage BIPOC Families in Rural Health

Presenter: Ashlie Bell-Siebers, MSW & Tonya Bowman, MS Family Voice of Tennessee

Description: This presentation will discuss barriers faced by BIPOC families in rural communities (including hospital closures, lack of transportation, and Medicaid expansion), strategies to meaningfully engage BIPOC families in rural health, and feature stories from people with lived experience navigating rural healthcare.

Objectives:

- Participants will be able to name common barriers faced by BIPOC families in rural areas.
- Participants will gain new strategies to use when interacting with BIPOC families in rural communities.
- Participants will learn through firsthand storytelling how being BIPOC impacts health in rural communities.

Track: Public Health

Location: Wiley

2:00-3:00 pm

Topic: Hidden in Plain Sight

Presenter: Rodney Satterfield, AS, EMT-P IC & Angie Bowen, MPS, RN, CPEN, NRP IC Jefferson County EMA/EMS

Description: Kids aren't just experimenting with vaping. Many use these products daily, a sign they're becoming addicted. Increasingly, these devices contain drugs & chemicals that are of public health concern. Many of these devices are disguised as everyday objects & can be difficult to spot by teachers, parents, and medical responders/providers. Come learn about the public health issues facing our children, see what these disguised devices look like, & discuss collaborative efforts occurring in our communities.

Objectives:

- Discuss the health risks associated with vaping & electronic delivery devices, including the pervasive public health crisis in the pediatric population.
- Identify the unique, and often disguised, delivery methods for various chemical substances being marketed to the public, with an emphasis on youthful consumers.
- Describe strategies that can be used to identify & mitigate the use of these agents.

Track: School Health

Location: Clark

2:00-3:00 pm
Tennessee

Topic: Integration of Mental and Medical Healthcare in Rural Areas of

Presenter: Robert Merritt, MSN, RN Myrtle Recovery Center

Description: In this session, we will discuss the feasibility of adding behavioral health services in critical access hospitals. The literature suggests an overwhelming need for proximity to rural communities in all behavioral health services. Distance is a major contributing factor to treatment hesitation. Adding these needed services will improve your community's access to appropriate treatments, while also enhancing overall revenue to the facility.

Objectives:

- Discuss disparities in access to behavioral health care in rural communities.
- Review requirements to utilize rural hospital space for those added services
- Strategies to develop and implement a rural coalition utilizing the critical access hospital as a hub for total community healthcare.

Track: Mental & Behavioral Health

Location: Royston

3:00 pm

Break - Visit Exhibits

3:15 – 4:15 pm

Topic: Utilizing opioid settlement funds in rural communities

Presenter: Courtney Collier, LADAC II, CADC I, MBA, CPRS

Sarah McCall, MPH, CHES, Trevor Henderson UT IPS SMART Initiative Statewide

Description: Rural communities with limited opioid settlement funds may easily feel overwhelmed by using these funds appropriately and effectively. In this workshop, we will discuss strategies that rural communities can apply to make the most out of their settlement dollars. These strategies outline actionable and collaborative steps among stakeholders to examine timely data, identify spending priorities, and fund projects to strengthen the substance use disorder system of care at the local level.

Objectives:

- Summarize opioid settlement fund spending guidelines, strategies, and resources to develop a foundation for decision-making
- Explain strategies to utilize relevant local and programmatic data to effectively set spending priorities and monitor project effectiveness
- Discuss considerations and actions that rural communities are pursuing to ensure that opioid funds are being spent effectively

Track: Mental & Behavioral Health

Location: Hope

3:15-4:15 pm

Topic: Value-Based Opportunities for Rural Providers and Communities

Presenter: Michael T. Sandwith, MBA & Carl Mueller Health

Management Associates

Description: For many, many years, the term "value-based" or "value-based programs" has been introduced as healthcare's "next big thing". The introduction has been all over the place in terms of payment models, risk, cost savings, and improved quality of care but now with the cost of care increasing, the impact of social determinants of health and health equity, and pressure to improve health outcomes, the growth of such initiatives has taken front stage. This presentation will walk you through the current models, and opportunities for designing, and understanding the potential financial incentives but will focus on its impact on rural providers and communities.

Objectives:

- Awareness of Value-Based Programs and Opportunity to Participate
- Ability to Design Value-Based Programs for Addressing Your Community Needs
- Understanding the Financial Provider Incentive Opportunities

Track: Hospital/Clinic

Location: Milani

3:15-4:15 pm

Topic: Improving Access to Maternal Healthcare in Rural Tennessee

Presenter: Rhonda Williams & Michael Smith East Tennessee State University

Description: Most complications that result in maternal death are preventable. This session summarizes from input women across the state about maternal health in rural Tennessee. Findings from focus groups with women aged 18 and older revealed gaps that contribute to limited access to maternal healthcare services; these gaps include but are not limited to knowledge about available services and the unavailability of nearby birth facilities. Discussion will also include ways to move toward closing these gaps.

Objectives:

- To identify barriers to accessing essential maternal healthcare services in rural Tennessee
- Discuss ways in which identified barriers might be addressed
- Identify and discuss resources for addressing identified barriers

Track: Maternal Health

Location: Wiley

3:15-4:15 pm

Topic: Variation of Syringe Service Programs by Community Characteristics

Presenter: **Nathan Dockery, BS** Center for Rural Health Research

Description: The purpose of this cross-section study was to examine the location of syringe service programs across the United States and estimate associations with community characteristics associated with the presence and number of programs. Urban counties have significantly higher odds of containing at least one Syringe Service Program when compared to rural counties, with 30% of urban counties and 12% of rural counties containing at least one such program.

Objectives:

- Layout the details of the cross-section study and its geographical importance
- Estimate the amount of syringe service programs in the United States and examine them by rurality
- Determine community characteristics that predict the odds of having a syringe service program in any given county

Track: Mental and Behavioral Health

Location: Milani

3:15-4:15 pm

Topic: Giving Center

Presenter: **Heather Ledbetter, Ed.D.** Maryville City Schools

Description: Through partnerships with Coordinated School Health, Family Resource Center, Adventure Club, and Second Harvest, Maryville City Schools offered food bags during the summer. This presentation shares our why, the logistics, and results of the program, Giving Center.

Objectives:

- Discuss ways to reduce food insecurities during non-school times.
- Discuss ways to expand current partnerships.
- Discuss ways to set up a Giving Center in your school district.

Track: School Health

Location: Royston

4:30-5:00 pm School Health Coalition Meeting

**November 21st
8:30 – 9:30 am
Health**

Topic: Therapy Dog Programs: “Howl” They Can Improve Mental and Physical

**Presenter: Leslie Brasfield, RN, Lou Paschall,
LAPSW, & Randall Robinson, NCSSW Manchester City Schools**

Description: Session attendees will learn about the impacts of animal-assisted activities on physical and mental health. Panel members will describe the process of beginning and maintaining the therapy dog program in the Manchester City Schools. Funding sources and partnerships essential to the success of the program will be discussed.

Objectives:

- Session attendees will learn about the benefits of animal-assisted activities in health and educational settings.
- Session attendees will evaluate an example of the implementation of animal-assisted activities in a public school setting.
- Session attendees will evaluate readiness to implement animal-assisted activities in their specific setting

Track: School Health

Location: Hope

8:30 – 9:30 am Topic: ETSU/NORC Rural Health Equity Research Center (RHERC)
**Presenter: Michael Meit, MA, MPH ETSU/NORC Rural Health Equity
Research Center**

Description: Evidence-based interventions are often developed and implemented in populated, urban centers and later adapted to fit rural communities. This session will present findings from a study examining the benefits and challenges of piloting and evaluating programs in rural communities. Findings will expand the evidence base for rural-specific programming as a critical step in reducing health disparities and improving health in rural communities.

Objectives:

- Describe the potential benefits of piloting and evaluating programs in rural communities.
- Describe potential challenges to piloting and evaluating programs in rural communities.
- Identify strategies to enhance the feasibility of piloting and evaluating programs in rural communities.

Track: Public Health

Location: Clark

8:30 – 9:30 am Topic: Cybersecurity Best Practices
Presenter: Mark Branstetter, BS Hall Render Advisory Services

Description: Healthcare data is valuable to criminals which is why there have been so many high-profile cybersecurity events in 2024. Arm yourself with practical knowledge and best practices to lower your hospital or clinic's profile for cybersecurity attacks.

Objectives:

- Healthcare cybersecurity attacks are on the rise.
- Practical advice to lower your risk profile.
- Prepare to recover quickly when bad things happen.

Track: Hospital/Clinic

Location: Wiley

8:30 – 9:30 am **Topic:** Partnering with the Community to Examine Rural Food Insecurity in Childbearing Families

Presenter: **Sarah Rhoads, PhD, DNP, APRN** University of Tennessee Health Science Center & **Liane Ventura, MPH** East Tennessee State University

Description: A University of Tennessee research team partnered with their Community Advisory Board to examine food accessibility and improving health outcomes for all Tennesseans. This partnership led to a convening meeting to develop innovative solutions surrounding food insecurity and to develop a roadmap of future research studies to compare these innovative solution's impact on maternal and child health. This presentation will discuss the results of the convening and best practices when partnering with rural stakeholders.

Objectives:

- Identify best practices for collaborating with rural communities to address food insecurity in maternal child health.
- Describe lessons learned when gathering stakeholders in rural communities to address food insecurity in maternal child health.
- Discuss ways to build trust when collaborating with the community to address food insecurity in maternal child health.

Track: Maternal Health

Location: Clark

8:30 – 9:30 am **Topic:** Dental – the Gateway to Improving Health Outcomes in Charitable Care in Rural Communities

Presenter: **Amy Mosely & Brea Burke, CCHW** Healing Hands Health

Description: 80% of patients accessing care at Healing Hands Health only request dental care. Dental pain often shows up earlier in the lifespan than a medical issue. Utilizing Community Health Workers, our dental patients are now screened for SDoHs, primary care needs, and mental health and SUDs. CHWs then walk with the patient to assist them in meeting health goals and prioritizing healthcare, which is improving the overall health of our community.

Objectives:

- Dental care is often the first healthcare many people with limited resources seek. The importance of screening dental patients for social determinants of health and connecting the patient to a Community Health Worker if the patient screens to have high unmet needs.
- The opportunity dental clinics have to bring comprehensive health care to their patients.
- The “magic” of improving health outcomes when a Community Health Worker is connected to a patient.

Track: Public Health

Location: Royston

9:30 am

Break - Visit Exhibits

9:45 – 10:40 am

Topic: Empowering Rural Health: Collaborative Strategies and SDOH Insights

Presenter: Commissioner of Health Ralph Alvarado, MD, FACP, Tennessee Department of Health

Description: This session will discuss ways in which the Department of Health is partnering with rural communities to expand opportunities in enhancing access to healthcare when and where it is needed. This session will provide updates on TDH’s efforts to improve population health and more about what resources are available, and how Social Drivers of Health (SDOH) significantly influence health results, especially in our rural areas.

Objectives:

- Participants should understand the social drivers of health (SDOH), such as housing, food security, and education access, which drive health outcomes - particularly those unique circumstances faced by rural populations when it comes to assessing and addressing the SDOH.
- Participants should better understand the resources available from the Tennessee Department of Health
- Participants should better understand the potential impact of local, cross-sector collaboration – such as County Health Councils – which can improve the social drivers of health in rural communities.

Location: Ballroom

10:40 am

Break- Visit Exhibits

10:55-11:50 am

Topic: Developing an Age-Friendly Ecosystem: Leveraging Academic and Public Health Collaboration

Presenter: Kristina Wick DNP, FNP-BC, GS-C University of Tennessee Chattanooga School of Nursing and Rochelle Roberts, MOL Tennessee Department of Health Remove Speaker

Description: Rural health providers, legislators, and community stakeholders must recognize the looming health crisis related to the care of older adults and caregivers in Tennessee, 88% of which report a desire to age in place. There is a critical need to develop a Cross-sectional, Age-Friendly Public Health Ecosystem. This presentation will cover the key aspects of academic and public health collaborative partnerships which improve older adult health outcomes and contribute to successful aging for all.

Objectives:

- Identify the 3 keys to cross-sector age-friendly collaborative care
- Analyze the opportunities academic partnerships present to support and enhance public health
- Demonstrate how age-friendly, rural, and public health collaboration will impact successful aging for older adults and caregivers in Tennessee

Track: Public Health

Location: Hope

10:55-11:50 am

Topic: Drums Alive! Cardio Drumming for the Mind, Body, and Soul

Presenter: Tracy Chandler University of Tennessee Extension- Unicoi County

Description: Cardio drumming is a whole-body approach to better health, physically and mentally. It is an evidence-based program that can benefit all ages and abilities. Cardio drumming uses the rhythm of music and movement to improve overall health. It is especially beneficial for those with cognitive issues, aggression issues, ADHD, and children with behavior problems.

Objectives:

- To provide an overview of the inception and history of Drums Alive
- To inform of the benefits of Drums Alive for all ages and abilities
- To offer the audience a chance to experience a Drums Alive routine

Track: School Health

Location: Milani

10:55-11:50 am

Topic: Fatal and Nonfatal Overdose Patterns in Rural Tennessee

Presenter: Jessica Korona, MPH and Edward Onyango, PhD, MPH

Tennessee Department of Health

Description: This presentation will focus on describing the drug overdose landscape in rural Tennessee. We will discuss sociodemographic and toxicological fatal and nonfatal trends from 2013-2022. Additionally, we will show prescription and drug-related incarceration trends among people who had an overdose event and determine which factors put rural Tennesseans at an elevated risk for an overdose event. We will also highlight how to access publicly available drug overdose data and how to request additional data.

Objectives:

- Understand trends in fatal and nonfatal overdoses in rural TN with a focus on geographic variation, demographic characteristics, and the circumstances surrounding the overdoses (such as bystander reactions, active prescriptions, and mental health history)
- Learn about publicly available drug overdose data, both from the Tennessee Department of Health and other sources
- Learn ways to utilize data sources in prevention efforts, and how the TN Department of Health can assist in finding, using, and translating data for action.

Track: Mental & Behavioral Health

Location: Wiley

10:55-11:50 am

Topic: A T.I.E.R. (Trauma-Informed, Equity-Centered, and Resiliency-Focused) Approach

Presenter: Rachel Stiltner and Maria Mitchell Ballad Health

Description: Ballad Health integrates trauma-informed, equity-centered, and resiliency-focused care, fostering a culture of compassion and equity. This approach improves patient engagement, treatment

adherence, health outcomes, and staff wellness, all while reducing avoidable care and costs. Our session will share insights and practical tools for implementing the T.I.E.R. approach, highlighting its impact on organizational culture and healthcare delivery.

Objectives:

- Incorporate evidence-based, best, and promising practices to meet the needs of healthcare professionals, colleagues, and patients
- Understand how a cultural shift from "What's wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?" supports long-term health outcomes.
- Address turnover, retention, compassion fatigue, and burnout through trauma-informed practices

Track: Hospital/Clinic

Location: Clark

10:55-11:50 am

Topic: The Intersection of Motherhood and Substance Use Disorder

Presenter: Savak Millis, LPC-MHSP Renewal House

Description: In 2021 SUD was the leading cause of pregnancy-related deaths in TN. In 2023 14,175 TN children were in DCS custody by adjudication and between 2011 and 2021 more than 320,000 children in the US lost a parent to overdose. Mothers need specialized care that supports them and their children TOGETHER. Here we will delve into the importance of removing barriers to treatment, treating mothers alongside their children, and the impact this has on ACES.

Objectives:

- Identify the benefits of providing treatment to mothers with substance use disorders alongside their children.
- Identify the impact of stigma and preconceived notions regarding pregnancy and parenting while using substances and how this impacts treatment enrollment.
- Describe ways in which the state economic system is affected by providing treatment to mothers with their children.

Track: Maternal Health

Location: Royston

11:50-12:05 pm

Break- Visit Exhibits

12:05m- 12:45 pm

Awards Luncheon

12:45 – 1:15 pm

Presentation of Awards and Poster Contest – Conference Committee

1:15 – 1:30 pm

Break- Visit Exhibits

1:30 – 2:30 pm

Topic: Lactation Consultation in Clinical Settings: Successes and Best Practices

Presenter: TBD

Description: This session will explore the vital role of lactation consultants in healthcare environments. Attendees will learn about proven strategies for supporting breastfeeding mothers, overcoming common challenges, and promoting optimal lactation outcomes. Participants will gain insights into best practices that enhance both patient satisfaction and clinical effectiveness.

Objectives:

- Identify the key components of successful lactation consultation in clinical settings

- Analyze case studies to understand common challenges and effective solutions in lactation support
- Implement best practices to improve breastfeeding outcomes and patient satisfaction in clinical environments

Track: Maternal Health
Location: Hope

1:30 – 2:30 pm **Topic:** Systems of Support (SOS) – Driving Equity, Delivering Value, Improving Lives
Presenter: Stacey Dixon, PhD, MHA & Michelle Baeza, LMSW Project Transition

Description: In Tennessee, Project Transition (PT) is partnered with TennCare, the three statewide MCOs, the TN Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD), and local provider agencies to deliver Systems of Support (SOS) services to children and adults with I/DD who also experience behavioral challenges that pose a risk to their safety and stability in the community statewide.

Objectives:

- Understand What SOS is.
- When an individual is identified to be at risk and/or in crisis, Project Transition steps in to bridge the gaps of care that may be contributing to the crisis events.
- Understand how SOS supports the Members to meet their life goals fully integrated in the community

Track: Public Health
Location: Milani

1:30 – 2:30 pm **Topic:** Addressing Nutrition Security through Interventions in Rural Grocery Stores
Presenter: Jennifer Ward, PhD & Cori Sweet, MPH, RDN The University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Description: Rural communities face distinct barriers to affordable, nutritious food including a reliance on small grocery stores. This creates food insecurity and health disparities in rural populations. This session will describe how the SNAP-Ed program at the University of Tennessee has implemented Shop Smart Tennessee in rural retail grocery stores resulting in an increase in the availability of health foods by stores and the purchase of those food items by consumers.

Objectives:

- Attendees will understand the unique barriers to healthy food access in rural communities for low-income families
- Attendees will understand how retail interventions both increase health food stocked at small grocery stores and the purchase of those foods by consumers
- Attendees will understand how the SNAP-Ed program for low-income families works to prevent chronic disease and reduce health disparities.

Track: School Health
Location: Wiley

1:30 – 2:30 pm **Topic:** Launching a Comprehensive Opioid Intervention in One Rural Tennessee County- Successes, Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Outcomes
Presenter: Cynthia Chafin, PhD Middle Tennessee State University and Kahler Stone, PhD Middle Tennessee State University

Description: The opioid crisis presents a significant challenge to rural communities in Tennessee which saw 3,826 overdose deaths in 2022 and once ranked #2 for opioid prescriptions per capita. The presentation outlines a university's collaboration with local partners to create a comprehensive opioid intervention plan for over 4 ½ years, from securing funding to demonstrating impact. It covers processes, successes, challenges, lessons learned, and outcomes, including stigma reduction and personal impact.

Objectives:

- State successes, challenges, and lessons learned throughout the project's lifecycle.
- Recognize the changes in community perception towards drug use and stigma over three consecutive years, highlighting the impact of public health efforts.
- Articulate an example of personal impact and its value as a project outcome.

Track: Mental & Behavioral Health

Location: Clark

1:30 – 2:30 pm **Topic:** Age-Friendly Health Systems in Rural Communities - Person-Centered Care for Older Adults

Presenter: Elizabeth Hall, MPH, Bs Alzheimer's Association

Description: Age-friendly health systems are essential for the best care for older people in rural communities, and they can also improve the lives of everyone. They can help older adults live better lives by addressing their unique needs and wants, such as what matters to them, their medications, their mental health, and their mobility. Age-friendly health systems can also support family caregivers, who are often the backbone of support for older adults in rural communities.

Objectives:

- Assess the need for older adult care in rural healthcare settings
- Learn about the Age-Friendly Health Systems movement and the 4Ms (What Matters, Mentation, Medication, and Mobility) framework
- Review challenges and successes in implementing age-friendly care and learn how to be involved

Track: Hospital/Clinic

Location: Royston

2:30 – 2:40 pm **Break- Visit Exhibits**

2:40 – 3:35 pm **Afternoon Plenary:** Care Labor in Appalachia

Presenter: Jessica Wilkerson PhD Author of *To Live Here, You Have to Fight: How Women Led Appalachian Movements for Social Justice*

Description This session uses the stories of prominent women organizers in the Appalachian South to consider the history of care labor in the twentieth century. Care labor refers to the many forms of work, paid and unpaid, that go into sustaining people, society, and the environment. In many Appalachian communities, women have long prompted conversations about how our society does and does not value care, and they have argued for the right to care and be cared for.

Objectives:

- Define care labor and consider how it has changed in the 20th century
- Discuss the various ways women have contributed to the care economy

- Analyze the connections between struggles around care in the past and present

Location: Ballroom

3:35 – 4:30 pm

Afternoon Plenary: Tackling Healthcare Challenges in Rural Communities: Workforce, Equity, Finance, & Operations

Panelists: **Paula Masters** Vice President of Health Programs Ballad Health, **Stacey Brawner** Macon Community Hospital, **Ruby Kirby** CEO of West Tennessee Healthcare Bolivar and Camden Hospitals

Moderator: **Jacy Warrell** Executive Director, Rural Health Association

Description: The Tennessee Rural Health Care Task Force recently released a report to provide recommendations on improving health access and outcomes for rural residents. The task force put forward several strategies, which center on workforce development, access to care, and social drivers of health. Find out what else can be done to improve access in rural areas during this informative panel.

Objectives:

- Explain the key elements of effective communication strategies that help reduce social stigma and enhance support for community treatment
- Comprehend the differences in stigma and community treatment support across various rural areas
- Recognize the variations in communication strategies needed for different settings

Location: Ballroom

4:35 pm

End of Silent Auction- Must be present to win.

November 22nd

8:30 – 10:00 am

Morning Plenary

Topic: The Art of Grant Writing: Strategies for Securing Funding

Presenter: **Jacy Warrell, MPA** Rural Health Association of Tennessee

Description: Unlock the secrets to successful grant writing in this comprehensive session. Whether you're new to grant writing or looking to refine your skills, we'll cover essential techniques for crafting compelling proposals. Learn how to effectively communicate your project's value, address funder requirements, and enhance your chances of securing funding.

Objectives:

- Learn the elements that make up a successful grant proposal, including problem statements, objectives, methods, and budgets
- Gain insights into how to create a compelling story that highlights the significance of your project and demonstrates its alignment with the funder's priorities
- Explore strategies for tailoring your proposal to meet specific requirements and preferences of different funders, increasing chances of approval.

Location: Ballroom

10:30 am

Adjourn Conference

Save the Date...

November 19-21, 2025

