

june 24-25 pierre, sd

# RURAL HEALTH LEADERS CONFERENCE

*A CENTURY STRONG: CHARTING THE NEXT FRONTIER OF RURAL HEALTH*

This conference is intended for leaders of rural healthcare who are involved in strategic planning, operations, and leading teams. The sessions cover both federal and state-specific topics that are relevant to healthcare within our state. This intimate event facilitates in-depth discussions, idea sharing, and ample networking opportunities with colleagues from across the state.

### **Location**

All conference events will take place at the **Ramoka Hotel & Conference Center in Pierre, SD.**

SDAHO has a room block available at the Ramkota Hotel - [click here](#) to reserve your room.

### **Registration**

Register online at <https://tinyurl.com/2026rhl>

SDAHO member - \$200

Non-member - \$350

ACHE pre-conference session - \$50

**SDAHO Refund/Cancellation Policy:** Policies regarding the refunding of registration fees for SDAHO's Rural Health Leaders Conference are 1) Full Refund if cancellation is received 2 weeks (June 10 or earlier) prior to SDAHO's Rural Health Leaders Conference; 2) NO REFUND if cancellation is received less than 2 weeks prior to (June 11 or later) to the SDAHO Rural Health Leaders Conference; 3) NO REFUND for "No Shows." Exceptions to this policy may be made in unusual circumstances at the discretion of the SDAHO President

**Continuing education:** Attendees can earn up to 10.8 continuing education hours for nursing home administrators. \*3.0 ACHE in-person credits have been submitted for approval for this event.

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agenda

june 24

## 9:30 - 11:00AM PRE-CONFERENCE SESSION

### HEALTHCARE COMPLIANCE: EMERGING TRENDS & BEST PRACTICES FOR MANAGING RISKS

ACHE PANEL

Healthcare compliance affects every type of healthcare provider from the solo practitioner to the largest global healthcare conglomerate. It is an important area of the healthcare industry given the focus on different areas of compliance and compliance professionals' need to be aware of standards set forth by accrediting bodies and regulators. To understand where the area of compliance is heading, healthcare professionals stay current on topics of False Claims, Cybersecurity and Privacy Risks, Third-Party Risk, Regulatory Changes, and Ethics. This program will present strategies for successfully navigating these important areas of compliance, leadership challenges and insight into trends and best practices of managing risk. (CE: NHA, ACHE)

## 12:00 - 1:15PM

### THE ECLIPSE MINDSET: HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE MOMENTS THAT CHANGE EVERYTHING

JON CARMICHAEL

In this inspiring keynote, world-renowned astrophotographer Jon Carmichael shares the extraordinary story of how his childhood dream of capturing the perfect solar eclipse photo from 39,000 feet became a reality — thanks to bold vision, creative problem-solving, and the audacity to ask for the impossible. Through breathtaking visuals and powerful storytelling, Jon helps healthcare leaders and teams reimagine limitations, embrace curiosity as a catalyst for innovation, and build cultures of resilience and perseverance. His message empowers leaders to unite their teams around a shared purpose, navigate uncertainty with confidence, and uncover hidden opportunities even in times of rapid change. (CE: NHA)

## 1:30 - 2:30PM

### STRATEGY-EXECUTION GAP: WHY RURAL HEALTH NEEDS DIFFERENT APPROACHES

MARY SAND

Rural health leaders know what to do; the real challenge is doing it consistently in the face of workforce shortages, financial pressure, and competing priorities. This session explores why traditional strategic planning approaches break down in rural settings, and what to do instead. We will look at practical, right-sized tools for turning strategy into day-to-day action when your leaders wear multiple hats, your resources are thin, and your organization is operating in constant change. Participants will leave with concrete ideas to close the gap between "what's on the plan" and "what actually happens" in their hospitals. (CE: NHA)

## 2:45 - 3:15PM

### SDAHO STATE ADVOCACY UPDATE

TIM RAVE & JACOB PARSONS

SDAHO's advocacy team will deliver a timely recap of the 2026 legislative session, along with key updates on current advocacy efforts and emerging state policy priorities. Attendees will gain valuable insights into evolving reimbursement, funding, and policy developments—and what they mean for healthcare organizations across the continuum of care. (CE: NHA)

## 3:15 - 3:45PM

### PARTNERING FOR IMPACT: HOW SDAHO'S RURAL HEALTH INITIATIVES TEAM HELPS HEALTHCARE FACILITIES SUCCEED

BECKY HEISINGER, MICHELLE JURY, LORETTA BRYAN, LINDSAY STROMAN

This session highlights how SDAHO's Rural Health Initiatives (RHI) team partners with healthcare facilities across the state to support quality improvement, workforce development, opioid stigma reduction, and grant management success. The panel will provide hospital leaders with a clear understanding of how to leverage available programs and funding and engage more effectively with SDAHO RHI staff to strengthen their organizations. (CE: NHA)

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## june 24 continued

**4:00 - 5:00PM**

### RURAL HEALTH CARE DONE RIGHT-TOGETHER

DR. KEVIN POST AND DR. MARA HERMISTON

This presentation, "Rural Health Care Done Right-Together," outlines Avera's strategic approach to strengthening rural healthcare delivery through collaboration, innovation, and community engagement. It highlights the most pressing challenges facing rural systems, including workforce instability, access gaps, high-risk populations, technology barriers, and financial pressures, while showcasing practical care models and solutions already in motion. The session is designed to be interactive, inviting participants to contribute insights and co-develop actionable strategies to improve rural health outcomes across South Dakota. (CE: NHA)

**5:00 - 6:30PM**

### VENDOR SOCIAL

Refuel and connect during our networking reception. Join us to explore the next generation of industry solutions as our partners and sponsors showcase the pioneering technology and services driving our mission forward.

## june 25

**8:00 - 9:00AM**

### WORKING MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH YOUR BOARD

PAMELA R. KNECHT

Pressures on health care organizations continue to increase, so it is imperative that executive leaders and their boards partner effectively to ensure their organizations succeed in these difficult times. As a result, savvy CEOs and senior managers are exploring how to work with their boards in new ways. This session will explore proven practices for enhanced board-management functioning whether your board is fiduciary or advisory. Topics will include competency-based composition, targeted board member on-boarding and education, helpful meeting agendas and materials, and building healthy relationships. The emphasis will be on practical tools and techniques used by boards and their executive teams to ensure they spend more time in strategic discussions so they can accomplish their mission in a challenging health care environment. (CE: NHA)

**9:15 - 10:15AM**

### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN RURAL HEALTHCARE: BUILDING RESILIENT SYSTEMS FOR ANY CRISIS

MATT VAN VOORHIS

Rural healthcare organizations face unique challenges when preparing for and responding to disasters. Effective emergency management requires strong leadership, clear structure, and meaningful collaboration. This session will explore key components of a successful program, including the use of the Incident Command System, prioritizing plans for top threats, and developing scalable response structures. Attendees will also learn strategies to build and sustain critical partnerships with local first responders and regional healthcare organizations to enhance coordination and resilience. Participants will leave with practical, actionable approaches to strengthen preparedness and response in their own facilities. (CE: NHA)

**10:30AM - 12:00PM**

### PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS: PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE COLLABORATION

JOSHUA CLAYTON, PHD; DENYELLE BAETE KENYON, PHD; SHANTEL KREBS

The top three functions of public health are to assess and monitor populations, form public policies to address problems and priorities, and finally to make sure access to services is provided. Public health challenges that were once found only in certain countries are no longer limited to within those borders. Globalization has increased these challenges. Through globalization, the public health arena has a significant impact on health administration challenges in the US and on the path that healthcare will take in the foreseeable future. This program will help attendees strengthen collaboration with public health partners, adapt to evolving policies, and better anticipate emerging risks—equipping healthcare leaders to navigate a rapidly changing environment with greater confidence and insight. (CE: NHA & ACHE)