

2025 Forum on Rural Population Health Full Agenda

Forum location:

Seaside Civic & Convention Center
415 1st Ave, Seaside, OR 97138

The Forum on Rural Population Health, previously the Forum on Aging in Rural Oregon, has prioritized a track dedicated to rural aging. Sessions marked with an asterisk focus on topics related to supporting rural older adults.*

Monday, May 19

Pre-Forum Session

Monday, May 19
10:00 am – 11:30 a.m.
Necanicum East

Pre-Forum Connection Space

Prior to the official Forum start time, ORH is offering space for attendees to gather and connect. We recognize that we're living in challenging political times that have direct impact on our communities, and we want to offer time before the Forum where we can come together and share experiences about how we're navigating these changes in our work and daily lives.

This will be a loosely structured space, so we invite you to come with a willingness to share and connect with peers from across the state.

Introduction + Plenary Session

Monday, May 19
1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Pacific Room

Welcome Remarks & Video

Stepha Dragoon, LMSW, MPAff (she/they) | Oregon Office of Rural Health
Representative Andrea Salinas (video message) (she/her) | U.S. House of Representatives
Annie Valtierra-Sanchez (she/her) | SO Health-E

Monday, May 19
1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Pacific Room

Building Health Equity Together: What Role Do You Play?

Angel Harris, MSN, RN | Angel Harris Consulting, Bushnell University

Building health equity is a collective endeavor, where every individual and community plays a crucial role in creating a more just and inclusive health care system. Health equity isn't just the responsibility of policymakers or health care providers, it is something we all must actively contribute to. Whether you're a health care professional, community leader, educator or even a family member, each of us has a piece to give, a role to fulfill and a part to play in breaking down the barriers that prevent everyone from accessing the care they deserve.

Concurrent Sessions

Monday, May 19

Equitable Community Partnerships: A Reflection Tool



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2:40 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.
Necanicum East

Lisa Parks, BA | Willamette Health Council

In 2024, George Washington University and the Center for Community Resilience conducted a national research project and developed a tool kit aimed to help communities engage in partnership practices that are more equitable. This presentation will highlight the five components that contribute to equitable community partnerships: 1) shared understanding; 2) collaborative decision-making; 3) meaningful representation of essential perspectives; 4) reciprocal partnership; and 5) respectful relationships. During this interactive session, participants will learn how to utilize the reflection tool through role-play conversation and explore each dimension in depth.

Monday, May 19
2:40 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.
Necanicum West

Shared Outlook on Aging: Building Age-Positive Organizations and Communities*

Julia Brown (she/her) | AGE+

Olivia Robinson (she/her) | AGE+

As Oregon's population continues to age, it is essential to confront the often invisible, deeply ingrained biases that negatively impact older adults' health outcomes. This interactive session will explore how ageism, including internalized bias, manifests in personal attitudes and systemic practices. We will engage in guided exercises and paired conversations to reflect on our own perspectives and examine biases embedded in our institutions. Participants will leave with actionable steps, practical tools and strategies to drive meaningful change, improving physical, emotional and economic health outcomes for individuals, organizations and communities.

Monday, May 19
2:40 p.m. - 3:40 p.m.
Riverside AB

Rooted in Community: Advancing Health Equity Through Trust, Collaboration and Action

Jayden Ruff (she/her) | South Coast Health Equity Coalition (SCHEC)

This presentation explores how SCHEC prioritizes health equity in Coos and Curry counties by centering the voices of Black, Indigenous, communities of color, 2SLGBTQIA and rural residents. Attendees will learn about SCHEC's intentional strategies, including community collaboration, allyship, accountability and capacity building. Highlighting programs like Comunidad Curry, Soul Food Sunday, health equity trainings and listening sessions, this session offers actionable insights into co-creating culturally responsive solutions with communities to drive systemic change in rural areas.

Concurrent Sessions

Monday, May 19
3:50 p.m. - 4:50 p.m.
Necanicum West

Advancing Rural LGBTQIA2S+ Health Equity through Community Collaboration: Resilience and Lessons from Wyoming

Elliott Orrin Hinkle, BS, PSS (they/them) | Unicorn Solutions LLC

This session delves into the unique health equity challenges faced by LGBTQIA2S+ individuals in rural communities, focusing on how lessons learned from Wyoming's queer and trans health equity initiatives can inform similar efforts in rural Oregon and beyond. Participants will explore strategies for navigating anti-LGBTQ environments, fostering inclusive community engagement and overcoming systemic



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barriers to health equity. This session will highlight practical, adaptable approaches for promoting collaboration and resilience in rural settings, offering attendees actionable tools to create meaningful change.

Monday, May 19
3:50 p.m. - 4:50 p.m.
Riverside AB

Building a Statewide Social Needs Screening and Referral System in Oregon **Mari Tasche, MPH (she/her) | Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network (ORPRN)**

Claire Londagin, MPH (she/her) | ORPRN

Driven by the widespread recognition that good health is tied to basic social needs, organizations across Oregon are working collaboratively to ensure that every Medicaid member is screened for social needs and referred to appropriate services. Oregon has been leading efforts among states to build a universal social needs screening system by leveraging state and federal policies, incentives and funding mechanisms. This presentation will highlight recent efforts to build this system, including successes and challenges, with an emphasis on rural community efforts. Presenters will help participants understand the role they can play in statewide efforts.

Monday, May 19
3:50 p.m. - 4:50 p.m.
Necanicum East

Improving Care and Outcomes for Perinatal SUD Patients: A Statewide Quality Initiative

Ami Hanna, MPH (she/her) | Comagine Health

Gina Myers | Reconnections Counseling

Substance use disorder is a significant driver of maternal morbidity and mortality in Oregon, particularly for disproportionately impacted populations. This session will focus on a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)-funded maternal health initiative focused on engaging clinical and community partners to design and implement a quality improvement program tailored to meet the needs of individuals impacted by perinatal substance use disorder in Oregon.

Monday, May 19
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Lobby

Happy Hour and Snacks

Tuesday, May 20

Breakfast + Plenary

Tuesday, May 20
8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Pacific Room

Breakfast

Tuesday, May 20
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Pacific Room

Health Equity Community of Practice: Finding Solidarity in Rural Spaces

Kennedi Fields, MGH (she/her) | Klamath County Public Health

Caitlin Nemeth, MPA (they/them) | Yamhill County Public Health



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In an environment where equity work has become polarized and isolating, the need for community is ever-growing. We identified gaps in regional and state support networks which led to us creating a statewide health equity community of practice. In this presentation, we will explore the power of solidarity and learn about the successes and challenges of real-life examples within two rural counties in Oregon by demonstrating how communities of practice can increase collaboration, information exchange, resource sharing, innovative brainstorming and rapid problem-solving.

Concurrent Sessions

Tuesday, May 20
10:10 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.
Riverside AB

Building Community Partnerships for Health Equity: Integrated Clinical Experiences in Rural Settings*

Anne Davenport, PT, DPT (she/her) | Oregon Institute for Technology, OHSU Doctor of Physical Therapy Program & Klamath Basin Senior Citizens' Center
Ellen Radcliffe, MPH, CHES(R) (she/her) | Oregon State University (OSU) Extension Service

Physical activity is essential, especially for rural older adults, who experience a disproportionate chronic disease burden and may be overlooked in health equity efforts.

This session highlights a successful initiative between partner organizations in delivering Better Bones and Balance. Attendees will gain actionable insights on designing and implementing similar programs and partnerships to promote health equity in rural settings and their own communities.

Tuesday, May 20
10:10 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.
Necanicum East

Increasing Access to Reproductive Health Care in Rural Communities by Reducing Stigma

Ann Krier, MPH | Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette

Helen Urbano Neilson (she/her) | Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette

Reducing stigma in sexual and reproductive health care benefits and strengthens our communities. This session will introduce a framework of reproductive justice within rural communities, recognizing the unique challenges and opportunities present in these often-underserved areas. We will engage in dialogue, share practices and discuss actionable strategies to improve access to reproductive health care and outcomes.

Tuesday, May 20
10:10 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.
Necanicum West

Launching a Health-Focused Spanish Language Radio Station in Rural Oregon

Jennifer Little, MPH (she/her) | Klamath County Public Health

Amid the pandemic and historic wildfires, the need for timely, language-appropriate mass media became a pressing need. Klamath County Public Health partnered with the Hispanic Health Committee and Wynne Broadcasting to launch La Patrona, Klamath's only Spanish-language radio station. This presentation outlines the process of identifying the need for mass communication for Spanish speakers, financing the program and sustaining it through partnerships.

Exhibits + Lunch



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Tuesday, May 20
11:20 a.m. - 11:40 a.m.
Lobby

Exhibit Browsing + Networking

Tuesday, May 20
11:50 a.m. - 12:50 p.m.
Pacific Room

Lunch & “Open Mic”

During lunch, attendees and partners can sign up to share 5-10 minute about their programs.

Concurrent Sessions

Tuesday, May 20
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Riverside AB

Driving Change: Community-Led Solutions to Rural Transportation Barriers

Christine Gleason, Ed.D (she/her) | AmeriCorps/Rogue Community Health

Kim Handloser, MPH (she/her) | Rogue Community Health

Christine Winters, MPH (she/her) | Rogue Community Health

Transportation is a persistent barrier to equity in rural communities, impacting access to health care, education and essential services, thus contributing to health disparities. This session will explore developed solutions for Southern Oregon that addressed rural transportation challenges. Attendees will learn how the project engaged NEMT services, volunteer driver networking, automotive repair assistance, as well as partnerships with health care providers and transit agencies. Real-world examples will highlight strategies for overcoming systemic barriers, community capacity, securing funding and fostering trust.

Tuesday, May 20
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Necanicum West

Increasing Access to Grant Funding for Rural Communities Through Collaboration

Paul Lindberg, JD | Hat Creek Consulting, Healthy Gorge Initiative

Madeline Brandt, MPH | The Camassia Group

Securing grant funding in rural communities can be challenging for a variety of reasons. This session will introduce the Collaborative Grantwriting model which focuses on developing community-identified solutions to community-identified needs through collaboration. This model has been very effective in several communities in Oregon. We will share principles, tactics and tips needed to effectively develop collaborations and collaborative grant applications in particular.

Tuesday, May 20
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Necanicum East

Revolutionizing Maternal Care in Rural Oregon: The Power of Traditional Health Worker Doulas

Hannah Briggs, MPH, CHW, Doula, PWS (she/her) | Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization (EOCCO)

This presentation will explore how bolstering traditional health worker (THW) doula work is transforming health care access in rural Oregon. EOCCO integrated doulas into the health care system, offering CCO-level support and funding training cohorts to build a sustainable workforce. We will highlight how this innovative model enhances workforce sustainability, supports certification and creates pathways for doulas to serve as vital providers and liaisons, improving access and continuity of care



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in remote areas. Attendees will learn how they can build inclusive, accessible and sustainable maternal health systems.

Concurrent Sessions

Tuesday, May 20
2:10 p.m. - 3:10 p.m.
Necanicum West

Creating a Collaborative Approach to Emergency Preparedness: Roles, Responsibilities and Actions for Serving Rural Communities*

Philip Warnock (he/him) | Oregon Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities

Bandana Shrestha (she/her) | AARP Oregon

Kayla Thompson (she/her) | Oregon Department of Emergency Management

Oregon wildfires prompted a call to action and partnership by federal, state and NGOs to address disaster preparation and response for older adults and persons with disabilities. The multi-year collaboration resulted in an Emergency Prep Handbook along with numerous training opportunities. This panel session will present on the process used to develop tools critical for preparation and outreach before, during and after a disaster, including evacuation, and the roles, responsibilities and key partnerships necessary during an active emergency response. We will provide resources and a partnership model for local emergency planning.

Tuesday, May 20
2:10 p.m. - 3:10 p.m.
Necanicum East

Expanding Access to Affordable Health Coverage Through Community Partnerships

Carolyn Bane (she/her) | Oregon Health Insurance Marketplace

Amy Coven (she/her) | Oregon Health Insurance Marketplace, Oregon Health Authority (OHA)

The state of Oregon has achieved a remarkable milestone with 97% of the state's population now insured. This presentation will delve into the innovative outreach strategies and collaborative community partnerships that have been instrumental in expanding access to affordable health coverage. Designed for practitioners, this session will explore actionable ways to bridge gaps in health care access, emphasizing the critical role of local partnerships and targeted initiatives. Attendees will gain insights into replicable models that foster inclusive health systems.

Tuesday, May 20
2:10 p.m. - 3:10 p.m.
Riverside AB

De-Siloing Maternal Health Care: A "Better Together" Approach Where Everyone Wins.

Rebeckah Orton, BS, RN, SANE (she/her) | Astoria Birth Center & Family Medicine

The U.S. is in last place among developed nations for maternal health outcomes while ranking first in spending. Out-of-hospital systems boast boutique-like service with superior outcomes and lower overhead, while hospitals provide much-needed technology and emergency surgical services. Both are needed, and there is a way forward where communities can benefit from both models without having to choose one over the other. Success in this model comes with matching patients with risk-appropriate care and providing continuity during transfers. This presentation will address the siloes of maternal health care and what can be done to provide a more continuous, robust service, especially to rural and underserved populations.



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Break

Tuesday, May 20
3:15 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.
Lobby

Snack break

Concurrent Sessions

Tuesday, May 20
3:50 p.m. - 4:50 p.m.
Necanicum East

From Incarceration to Integration: Bridging Health Care Gaps for Justice-Involved Individuals in Rural Oregon

Julia Yoshimoto, MSW, JD (she/her) | Oregon Justice Resource Center

Angela Kim (she/her) | Oregon Justice Resource Center

Kyle Hedquist (he/him) | Oregon Justice Resource Center

Justice-involved individuals face significant health disparities, with high rates of addiction, mental illness, trauma and chronic disease. The prison environment exacerbates these conditions, while systemic barriers such as care discontinuity, geographic isolation and stigma create additional challenges upon release, particularly in rural communities. This session explores data on Oregon's incarcerated population, the impact of prison health services and obstacles to medical reintegration. We will highlight innovative models and reach-in programs, offering actionable steps to support formerly incarcerated individuals in achieving better health outcomes and successful reintegration.

Tuesday, May 20
3:50 p.m. - 4:50 p.m.
Necanicum West

Nurturing Generations Together: A Collaborative Vision for Maternal and Child Health in Douglas County

Nicky Ulrich, MA, MNM (she/her) | OHSU Moore Institute for Nutrition and Wellness

Jessica Hand, MPH (she/her) | Thrive Umpqua

Alyson Pinkelman, THW-YPSS (she/they) | Aviva Health

The Nutrition Oregon Campaign (NOC), Thrive Umpqua and Aviva Health have partnered to improve maternal and child health in Douglas County. Rooted in the developmental origins of health and disease (DOHaD) science, the campaign uses nutrition to reduce chronic disease and health disparities. Supported by the OHSU Moore Institute, it empowers local leaders to drive initiatives for women, children and families, and uses a collective impact framework to coordinate efforts and achieve lasting health improvements. This presentation will focus on the power of collaboration within rural communities.

Tuesday, May 20
3:50 p.m. - 4:50 p.m.
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Promoting Social Connection Through Innovative Programming & Community Collaboration*

Lacey Plasker, BSW (she/her) | Yamhill County HHS

Jerry Conklin | South Morrow County Seniors Matter

Misty Palmer | Grant County Senior Programs



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Loneliness can have a profound impact on our health, especially for older adults. The recent loneliness epidemic led Yamhill County to develop programming focused on older adults experiencing loneliness, depression and SUD. This presentation focuses on the Older Adult Peer Outreach for Depression and Substance Use (OPODs) Program and the Positive Intergenerational Pen Pals (PIPPs) Program. We will share data that shows improvement in depression and loneliness scores, how each program was funded and how low the barrier can be for community-focused programs.

Wednesday, May 21

Breakfast + Plenary

Wednesday, May 21
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Pacific Room

Breakfast

Wednesday, May 21
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Pacific Room

Leveraging Community Partnerships to Support SDOH Needs for Patients

Norma Mota (she/her) | Clatsop Community Action

Viviana Matthews (she/her) | Clatsop Community Action

Shelley Yoder, MSW (she/her) | Providence Health & Services

Providence's Community Resource Desk (CRD) program is a collaborative initiative with local non-profit organizations funded by community benefit grant dollars. The program assists people with social needs connect to resources available within their communities. This presentation will share best practices on how health care systems can partner with CBOs to implement interventions and address social determinants of health (SDOH) for patients and underserved communities as required by OHA.

Concurrent Sessions

Wednesday, May 21
10:10 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.
Riverside AB

Self-Care for Health Workers

Erika Wolfe, CHW, PHN (she/her) | Adventist Health Columbia Gorge

Jasmin Huila Flores, CHW (she/her) | Adventist Health Columbia Gorge

Health care workers often face distressing situations when helping people deal with complex life circumstances. The resulting secondary trauma can result in higher stress levels, reduced job satisfaction, mental health challenges and burnout. This presentation aims to provide tools and strategies that employers can adopt to implement a wellness program that supports the health and well-being of their staff members. Addressing these challenges through a self-compassion model not only helps health care workers to be more resilient and more effective, but also helps stabilize and grow the workforce.

Wednesday, May 21
10:10 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.
Necanicum West

Synergy Between Rural Residential Energy Improvements and Occupant Health

Karen Chase, MBA, MSPH (she/her) | Energy Trust of Oregon

Rural residents experience exacerbated exposure risks to environmental health hazards, including woodstoves, wildfires, older residences and manufactured homes.



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The energy sector's trajectory toward cleaner energy and energy efficient residential technologies, bring an array of benefits that can positively impact occupant health while leveraging the efforts of others. Community organizations can provide energy improvements by offering additional services to improve resident health and well-being. This presentation covers the strategies taken, and further opportunities available, to braid complementary services together.

Wednesday, May 21
10:10 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.
Necanicum East

A Collective Approach to Death and Dying: Advancing End of Life Literacy in Rural Communities*

Margo Lalich, MPH, BA, RN (she/her) | North Coast EOL Collective
Beverly Stein, JD (she/her) | Cape Meares Community Association

This session describes innovative, community-inspired strategies that create community by connecting people, resources and experiences to educate and support a holistic approach to end-of-life for individuals and families living on the North Coast. Conversations, connection and learning about death and dying can improve the quality of one's life and create a sense of community around a profound experience we all share. Drawing from this approach, we will offer examples of how community-focused and inspired initiatives can address systemic barriers, improve access to resources and create an equitable approach to death and dying in rural communities.

Concurrent Sessions

Wednesday, May 21
11:20 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.
Riverside AB

Rural Clinician Perspectives on Barriers to the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccine in Oregon

McGwire Smith, OMSII (she/her) | Western University of Health Sciences
Daisy Ward, OMSII (she/her) | Western University of Health Sciences

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the country with severe cases progressing into cancer. Despite widespread awareness of these risks and the high efficacy of the vaccine, rates of vaccination remain low, particularly in certain rural communities. We conducted a study to identify the challenges that rural health care clinicians in Oregon face when encouraging patients to receive the HPV vaccine. This presentation will provide valuable insights into successful communication strategies and barriers in rural health care settings, with the goal of improving statewide vaccination rates.

Wednesday, May 21
11:20 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.
Necanicum West

Advancing Health Equity for LGBTQ+ Veterans: Discharge Upgrades and Access to Care in Rural Communities*

Ian Michael (he/they) | Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA)

This session will focus on ODVA's LGBTQ+ Veteran Program, emphasizing advocacy, resources and support for LGBTQ+ veterans, particularly those impacted by trauma or military sexual trauma. Key topics will include discharge upgrades, the character of discharge pathways and how veterans can access VA health care and benefits. Attendees will learn actionable steps, with an emphasis on how rural communities and organizations can assist LGBTQ+ veterans in navigating these processes. Case

studies will showcase successful discharge upgrades and their impact on improving service access for underserved veterans in rural areas.

Wednesday, May 21
11:20 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.
Necanicum East

Advancing Health Equity in Rural Communities Through CINO and the Oregon Wellness Network

Lavinia Goto (she/her) | Oregon Wellness Network

Hailey Hernandez, MPH (she/her) | Comagine Health

The Community Integrated Network of Oregon (CINO) is a diverse network of partners strengthening the statewide infrastructure to sustain evidenced-based chronic disease self-management education (CDSME) and support programs. This session will demonstrate how CINO has leveraged resources to: 1) Raise awareness about CDSME and support programs as an equitable resource through innovative outreach, program eligibility and delivery; 2) Inform policies to support sustainability in rural areas; and 3) Integrate with the community information exchange to improve referrals and access to social services.

Forum Wrap-Up

Wednesday, May 21
12:20 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.
Pacific Room

Farewell and Drawing Winners

2024 Forum on Rural Population Health & Health Equity