

Uncharted Waters: Surviving Unprecedented Change

Patty Harper, InQuiseek Consulting

Uncharted Waters:

SURVIVING UNPRECEDENTED CHANGE



**Rural
Health
Clinic**

**43rd Annual Oregon
Rural Health Conference**

The passing of H.R. 1 (OBBA) puts rural hospitals and clinics at risk with an increase in uninsured populations and decreases in reimbursement. Oregon, like other states, could be negatively affected.

What can we do to navigate the changes?

How can we change course?

Who will have a life preserver? Who will pilot the ship?

Where is the destination?






Strategy Discussions

Advocacy: Let Your Voice Be Heard

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

[Join](#) [Donate](#) [NRHA Connect](#) [Partners](#)


 [About Us](#) [Events](#) [Membership](#) [Advocacy](#) [Programs](#) [Publications](#) [Search](#)

Current Advocacy Campaigns

Our advocacy platform gives you the power to reach your elected officials with one click, while customizing content as needed, to allow you to maintain your unique rural voice.


[Review FY26 appropriations talking points](#) to reference while you urge Congress to invest in rural health.

[Campaigns](#) [Surveys](#)




Urge Congress to Invest in Rural Health

On May 30, 2025, President Trump released his FY 2026 President's Budget proposal which calls on Congress to eliminate bipartisan, fundamental, and longstanding rural health programs, such as the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility program, Small Hospital Improvement...



Urge Congress to authorize vital rural health programs

Several key rural health programs at the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) need to be authorized in statute or are up for reauthorization. "Authorization" and "reauthorization" mean that programs need language in a statute in order to be established...



Urge Congress to Extend Rural Healthcare Bills and Programs

On September 30, 2025, the Medicare-Dependent Hospital designation, Low-Volume Hospital payment adjustment, rural ground ambulance add-on payments, and Medicare telehealth flexibilities will expire. NRHA urges Congress to permanently extend or enact at least a 5-year...

View Your Election Center

Enter your address to view voting resources and your officials & candidates

[→](#)

Sign Up for Alerts

Enter your information below to sign up.

[→](#)

Find Legislation

View and search for legislation.

[→](#)

[View key legislation](#)



<https://www.ruralhealth.us/advocacy/advocacy-campaigns>



Urge Congress to Invest in Rural Health



On May 30, 2025, President Trump released his [FY 2026 President's Budget proposal](#) which calls on Congress to eliminate bipartisan, fundamental, and longstanding rural health programs, such as the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility program, Small Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP), and State Offices of Rural Health.

On July 31, the Senate Appropriations Committee marked up its Labor, Health and Human Services (LHHS) [FY 26 appropriations bill](#). **NRHA supports the Senate's bill and is pleased to see all core rural health programs funded at the same level as FY 2025 or higher.** NRHA urges Congress to pass this legislation to support the health of rural communities nationwide.

The Senate Appropriations Committee's FY26 LHHS bill includes the following:

- \$66.27 million for the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant Program (Flex) (FY 25: \$64.277 million)
- \$13.5 million for the State Offices of Rural Health (FY 25: \$12.5 million)
- Funding the Rural Residency Planning and Development Program at \$14 million (FY 25: \$12.7 million)
- Funding the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) at \$145 million (FY 25: \$145 million)
- \$6 million for the Rural Hospital Stabilization Pilot Program (FY 25: \$4 million)



Compose Your Message

- US Senators
- US Representative

Subject

Message Body

Please add your own story about this issue to personalize your message

In order to ensure rural provider stability and access to care for rural patients, I urge Congress to fully fund the rural health safety net and preserve core rural health programs.


Enter Your Info

Your Information

☐ Yes, sign me up to receive text alerts

By providing your mobile number, you agree to receive periodic call to action text messages from National Rural Health Association. Message and data rates may

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RURAL HEALTH CLINICS



[Advocacy](#)[Members Only](#)[EVENTS](#)

HOMEABOUT US >NEWS >RESOURCES >PARTNERS >DISCUSSION FORUMNARHC ACADEMY >Q


NARHC Policy and Advocacy

NARHC's policy and advocacy efforts advance the NARHC mission, enhancing the ability of RHCs to deliver cost-effective, quality health care to patients in rural, underserved communities. NARHC's government affairs team, based in Washington, D.C. serves as the primary resource to Congress, federal agencies, and the Administration on federal Rural Health Clinic issues.

Together with the [NARHC Policy Committee](#), we focus on both regulatory and legislative options to increase access to care, remove unnecessary regulatory burdens, protect the integrity of the RHC program, and enhance reimbursement policies that incentivize and support rural, outpatient health care services. Advocacy and comment letters sent to CMS, HHS, and Members of Congress can be found [here](#).

Our team develops policy priorities and strategies to accomplish these priorities. Additionally, we develop materials intended to engage RHCs in federal advocacy efforts. For more details on how to make your voice heard or with any questions, please email Sarah Hohman, NARHC Director of Government Affairs, at Sarah.Hohman@narhc.org.


Join the fight for rural health and
make your voice heard here!



NARHC 2025/2026 Policy Priorities

1. Fix and Extend Medicare [Telehealth](#)

[Advocacy](#)[Policy and Advocacy](#)[Advocacy Letters and Comments](#)[Make Your Voice Heard](#)

 Enter search string

 Login



[HOME](#)

[ABOUT US](#)

[BOARD OF DIRECTORS](#)

[JOIN US • ADVOCACY](#)

[RESOURCES](#)

[CONTACT](#)

OREGON RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION



Oregon Office of Rural Health

Hospital, Clinic, & EMS Programs

[CAH Programs](#)[RHC Programs](#)[EMS Programs](#)[SHIP Program](#)

Population Health

Provider Incentive Programs

Recruitment and Retention Services


Maps, Data, Publications & Resources

Facilities & Agencies

About ORH

Rural Health Clinic Programs



ORH provides guidance on becoming a certified Rural Health Clinic (RHC), assistance on compliance and operations and Practice Assessments that include: market share, supply & demand, productivity, coding, staffing levels, staff satisfaction, and clinic benchmarks. ORH also supports RHCs by providing regular updates on the changing regulations at the federal and state levels. ORH offers the bi-monthly RHC newsletter, which provides clinics with the latest information on topics from Medicare and Medicaid, billing and coding to education opportunities. Register for the newsletter [here](#) .

JUST TELL YOUR STORIES!

- About your clinic
- About you
- About your patients
- About your communities
- Daily Struggles
- Your fears
- Your successes

This is not your grandfather's RHC!

Change will require more change!

- We will not be able to do business the same way and expect to meet the challenges of restructured government programs.
- We will need to be forward-thinking.
- We will need to do things differently to survive
- We will need to think differently to thrive.
- There are internal organizational changes that only we can make.
- The transformation will need to start from within.

Paradigm Shift

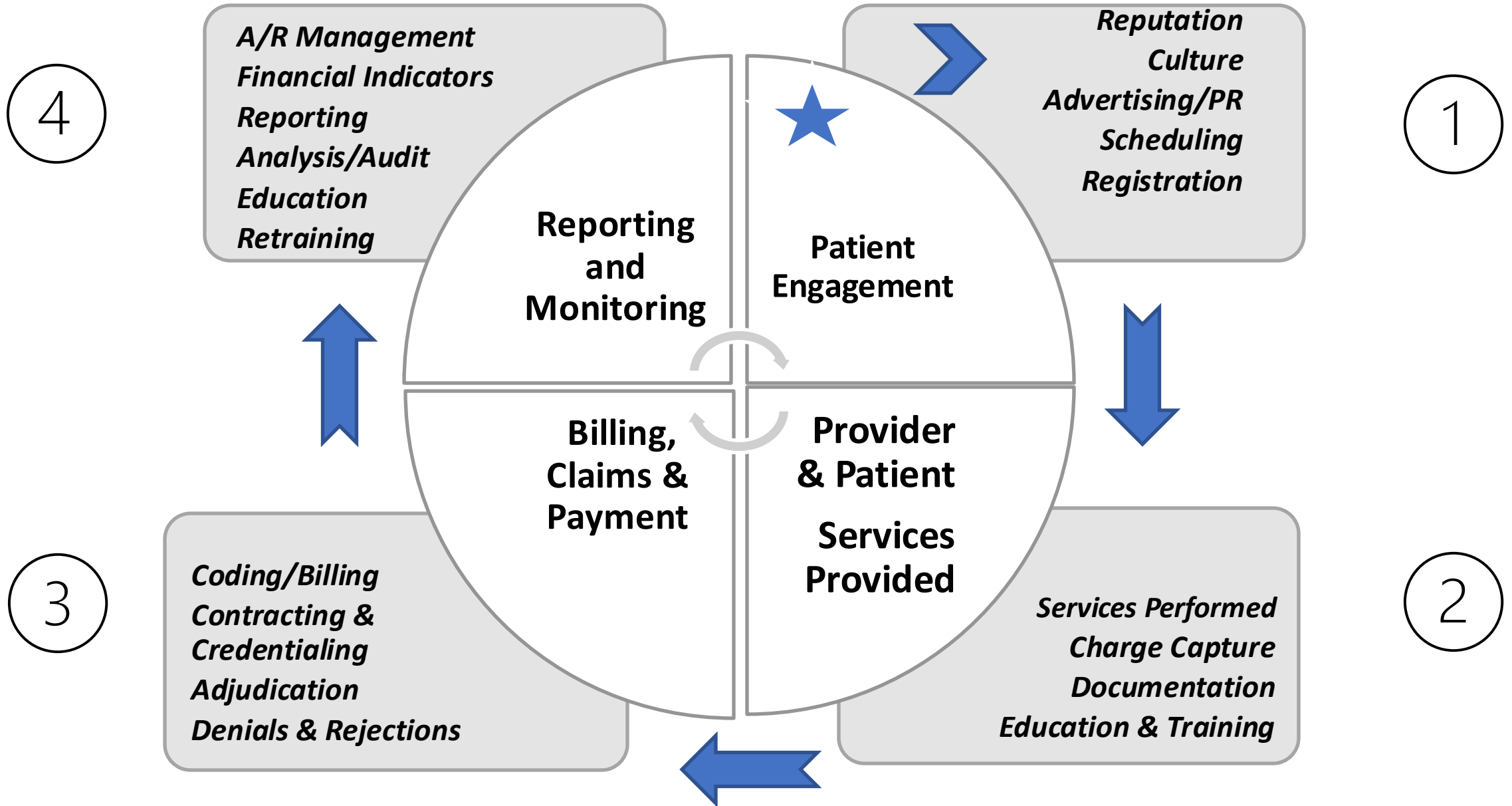
A **paradigm shift** is a fundamental change in the basic concepts and experimental practices of a scientific discipline. It is a concept in the philosophy of science that was introduced and brought into the common lexicon by the American physicist and philosopher Thomas Kuhn. Even though Kuhn restricted the use of the term to the natural sciences, **the concept of a paradigm shift has also been used in numerous non-scientific contexts to describe a profound change in a fundamental model or perception of events.**

Look at clinic differently

Questions to Ask

- What is our “special sauce”?
- Are we more patient-centered or provider-centered?
- Are we convenient?
- Have we gotten into a rut?
- Do we respect our patients? Our staff?
- Would I want to come here as a patient?
- What can we do to be more efficient?
- What can we do to retain our panels and even grow?
- Do I need an outside set of eyes on this?

Re-evaluate Your Revenue Cycle Processes



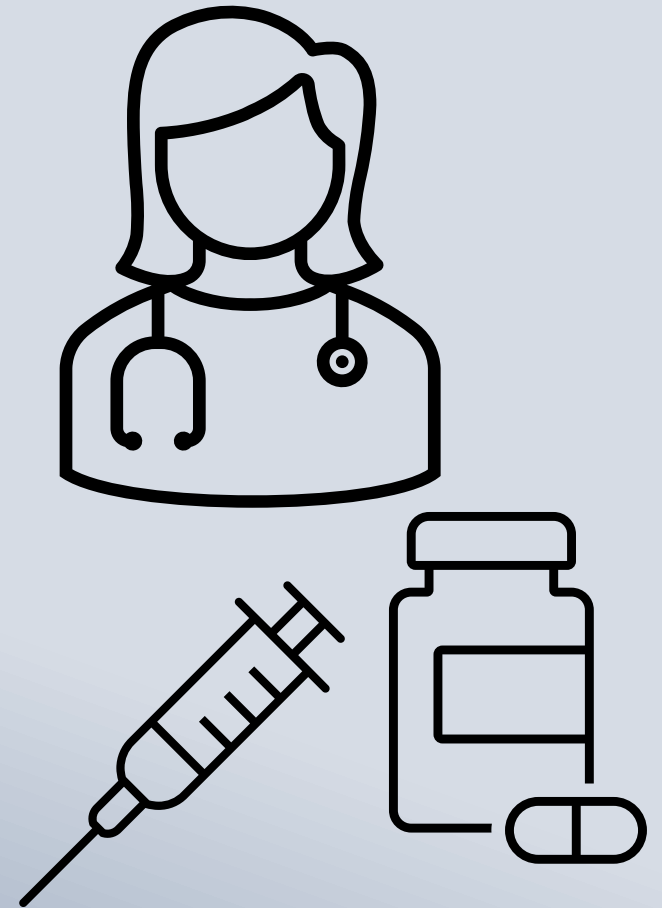
Patient Engagement

REPUTATION, PR, ADVERTISING, CULTURE
ENGAGEMENT
SCHEDULING
REGISTRATION
BACK TO SCHOOL EVENTS
COMMUNITY EVENTS
BE VISIBLE



Patient Care Models

**CLINICAL WORKFLOW
TEAM BASED CARE
ELIMINATE SILOS
PERFORMING SERVICES-GAIN EFFICIENCIES
CAPTURING CHARGES
DOCUMENTATION
EDUCATION**



Billing, Claims Submission & Payment



WORKING WITH RCM PARTNERS
INVEST IN TRAINING AND EDUCATION NOW
CONTRACTING AND CREDENTIALING
EDI AND CLEARINGHOUSE ISSUES
PAYMENT ERROR & POSTING ERRORS

Reporting & Monitoring

WHAT PAID?

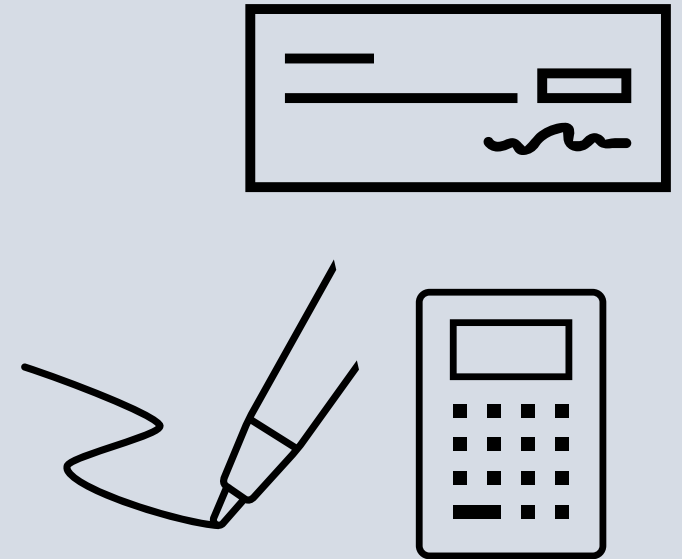
DID IT PAY CORRECTLY?

DO WE HAVE A PAYER PROBLEM?

DO I EVEN KNOW WHAT I AM GETTING PAID?

ANALYSIS—KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

EDUCATION AND TRAINING



Look at your numbers
Look at your data

Know where you stand NOW

- Get reports!
- Look at the reports!
- Know your benchmark KPIs
- Know your payer mix
- Know your strengths
- Know your weaknesses
- Set goals
- Monitor performance—financial and culturally

Make Your Next Program Evaluation Count!

Best Care RHC



Rural Health Clinic
Program Evaluation

- Use your program evaluation strategically
- Look at Census data
- Look at Community Partners
- What can we add
- What can we take away
- How can we meet the needs
- How can we fortify the “ship”
- Being proactive is better than being reactive when the cuts start coming.
- Get help before it is too late

Keep the main thing, the main thing


It is true that there is no mission where there is no margin.

However, it is even more true that mission will drive margins when organization can pivot while keeping their focus on patient care.

Remember why you have a rural health clinic.

Remind your staff how important they are.

Respect your patient



Patty Harper, RHIA, CHC
318-243-2687
pharper@inquireseek.com

inquireseek
Consulting