

42nd Annual Oregon Rural Health Conference

October 1- 3, 2025

Stronger Together: Building Community to Recruit and Retain Health Care Providers

Leona O'Keefe, MD, Jackson Care Connect Medical Director
Mona McArdle, MD, Valley Immediate Care Medical Director
SOAPP

Stronger together:

Building community to recruit & retain
health care providers

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Set the stage: Southern Oregon



Southern Oregon

Jackson and Josephine counties

- Area with a lot to offer
- Also, an area with a challenge: not enough primary care providers



Recruitment: Not a new problem

- No local medical school or residency to feed the community
- Systems were poaching off each other
- Very expensive to recruit from out of area
- **A new approach was needed**

MAG Provided the Framework

- Medical Advisory Group (MAG) formed in COVID
- Continued after public health emergency to address other community-wide issues
- Overall inadequate access to care
- Focus started on PCP recruitment

Key mindset
**Adding *any* new PCPs decreases
burden on whole system**

SOAPP is Formed in 2023



S.O.A.P.P.

Southern Oregon Alliance of Physicians & Providers

**Southern Oregon Alliance of Physicians & Providers
is a group of multiple medical organizations,
working together to bring more physicians and
providers to Southern Oregon.**

SOAPP Membership and Funding

- Members represent multiple medical settings
 - FQHCs, private practice, hospital, urgent care, public health, CCOs
- Each collaborating organization provided seed money and ongoing annual renewals
- Open conversations with non-signers
- City of Medford granted funds



S.O.A.P.P.

Southern Oregon Alliance of Physicians & Providers

Collaborating Members:



SOAPP Structure

Applicants can interview with several organizations during a single trip.

Win/Win

- Organizations split the recruiting and travel costs
- Applicants who like Southern Oregon have variety of options for work life

SOAPP Utilization of Funds

- Website
- Traditional recruiter
- Newer model of recruiting
- Sending physician representatives to conferences, schools and residencies
- HPSA assessment
- Lobbyist

**Now, how do we
keep them?**



Key mindset

A connected community retains its members

Test

- Litmus test of provider interest to gather in person
 - Gala 2024
 - Over 200 attendees
 - Very positive response to survey

SOMS is Formed in 2024

Southern Oregon Medical Society (SOMS)

Our vision is a collaborative community of physicians, nurse practitioners and physician associates who are unified in their desire to provide high quality care.

Learning and social opportunities bring us together to deepen knowledge, relationships, and positive impacts on patients and healthcare professionals in Southern Oregon.



**SOUTHERN OREGON
MEDICAL SOCIETY**

SOMS Structure

- Monthly meeting open to all MDs, DOs, PAs and NPs
 - Students and residents
- CME provided free
- Social time, including free dinner
 - Alcohol available for purchase
- Meeting in person maximizes community building
- Locations varies



SOMS Benefits

- Provider upskilling as a community
- Regularly building connections
- Community led, community responsive
- Addresses CHIP priorities
- Supports local businesses



SOUTHERN OREGON
MEDICAL SOCIETY

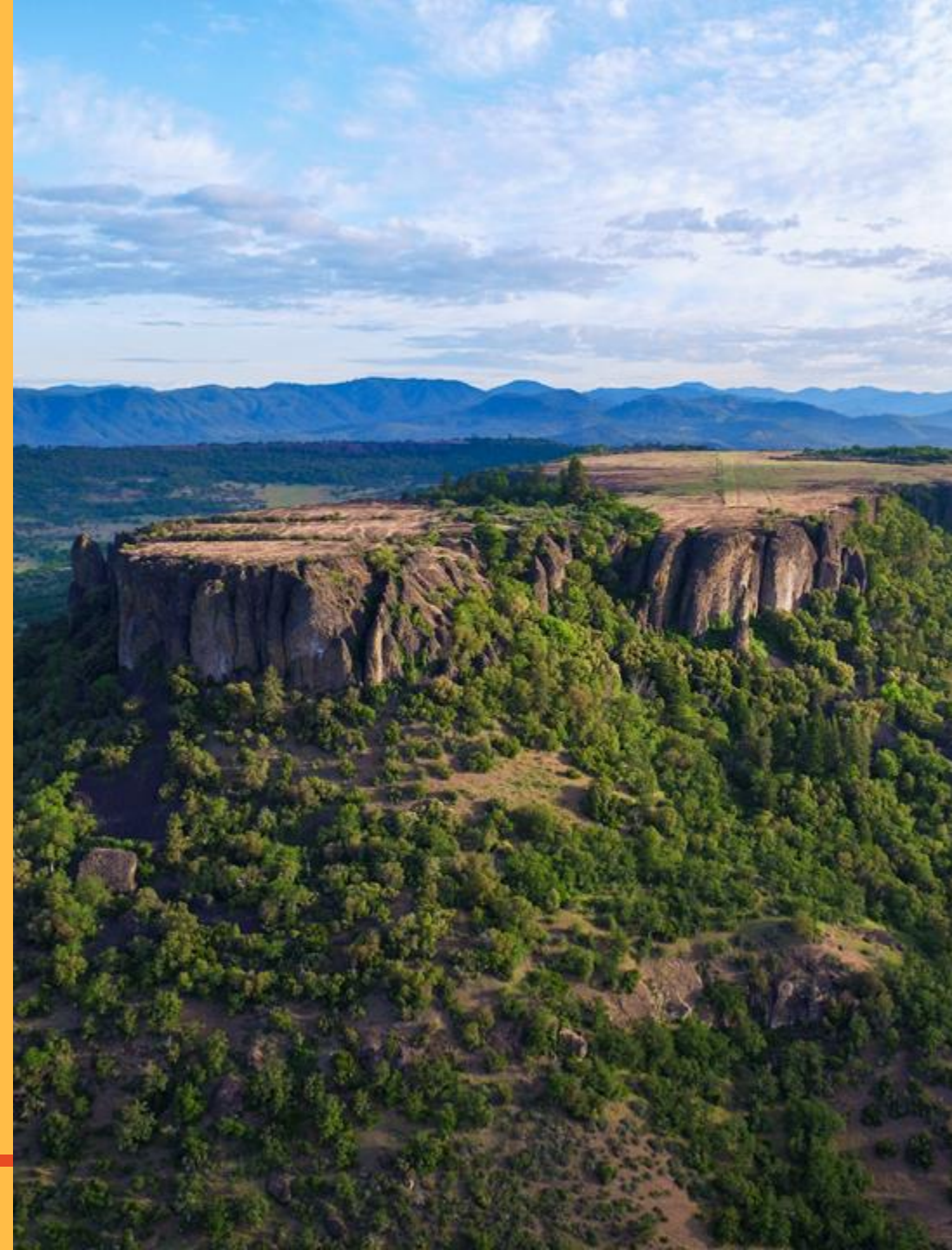
SOMS Sustainability

- Administrative support
- Seed money provided by local CCO
(Jackson Care Connect)
- Local businesses are starting to sponsor
- Discussing sustainable funding



SOUTHERN OREGON
MEDICAL SOCIETY

How's it going?



How's it going SOAPP?

- Three providers hired
- Applicants see the collaboration as an attractive characteristic
- Monthly Board meetings support ongoing collaboration
- Impacts entire community
- Supported by local businesses and government

How's it going SOMS?

- Great turnout
- Positive feedback on presenters
- Participants love the opportunity to connect
- New leaders are emerging
- Community is strengthening



SOUTHERN OREGON
MEDICAL SOCIETY

Key learnings

- Collaborative spirit helps everyone
- We need to connect
- Involve business community and civic leaders
 - Health care is a key community asset, and key economic driver

Questions

VISIT OUR WEBSITE



www.soappinfo.com

