



2025 Region IX Clinical Leadership and Excellence Conference

June 22 – 24, 2025 | Reno, NV

Tracks:

- A) Leadership Development
- B) Evolving Care Team Models

Day 1: Sunday – June 22, 2025

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Conference Registration Open

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Meet the Coaches

Learn about the Western Clinicians Network Coaching Program for FQHC Clinical Leaders. In this informal meet and greet, you can meet our coaches and learn more about our groundbreaking program designed by FQHC clinicians, for FQHC clinicians.

1:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

- Sonia Reidy, President of the Board of Directors, Western Clinicians Network
- Nancy Bowen, CEO, Nevada Primary Care Association

1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

Opening Session: Legal and Compliance Updates for Health Center Providers: What to Know Now

Join Feldesman Leifer attorneys Molly Evans and Dianne Pledgie as they provide the latest federal legal and compliance updates for health center providers, including updates on providing care to patients who are immigrants, providing reproductive health care and gender affirming care. The presenters will respond to top questions from health centers about collecting and documenting information on patient immigration status to providing and documenting reproductive health care and gender affirming care to when patient records must be disclosed to law enforcement to whether the FTCA will cover gender affirming care. The presenters will also discuss regulatory changes and legal challenges expected within the first year of the Trump administration.

Speakers:

- Dianne Pledgie, JD, Partner, Feldesman Leifer, LLP
- Molly Evans, JD, Partner, Feldesman Leifer, LLP

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM

Exhibitor Networking Break

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Peer Learning

Join your health center colleagues to collaborate in small group discussions on important topics facing your organization. Attendees will participate in small group discussions on topics ranging from personnel challenges to team-based care models. This is a great opportunity to make new connections, discuss emerging issues, and share strategies for approaching the daily challenges and opportunities of holding a clinical leadership position.

5:00 PM

Conference Concludes for the Day

5:00 – 7:30 PM

Western Clinicians Network Annual Board of Directors Meeting & Election
(Invitation Only)

Day 2: Monday – June 23, 2025

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Continental Breakfast with Exhibitors

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

General Session: The National Landscape for Health Centers in 2025

Speakers:

- Representatives from HRSA and CMS*

10:30 – 10:45 AM

Break and Exhibitor Networking

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Breakout Sessions

1A: Pioneering "Clinic First" in a New Family Medicine Residency Program Continuity Clinic

In addition to robust medical training, family medicine residents need expertise working within and leading dynamic, mission-driven, multi-disciplinary outpatient practices. This session will share our experience designing and implementing the Clinic First model at a new Family Medicine Practice ("continuity clinic") at our Federally Qualified Health Center. We will discuss our challenges and strategies for consistent scheduling of resident clinics to meet educational and clinic priorities, including care team cohesion and continuity, scheduling of specialized procedures, gynecology, and osteopathic manipulative treatment clinics, and reliance on a small group of clinic preceptors already familiar with our clinic flow and operations.

We will demonstrate our successes and challenges with resident in-basket management, particularly with providing remote access and individual and group training in in-basket coverage. We will demonstrate our intentional curriculum of resident involvement in Quality Improvement activities starting in their first year, including their role in panel management and inpatient/outpatient transitions. We will share our experience with creating

shared educational experiences for the family medicine residents alongside the clinic's primary care providers. We will also discuss the creation of our Community Advisory Council, a new ACGME requirement for family medicine residencies, which, through patient and community participation in the residency, ensures that the residency will improve equity, quality, and access to care in communities served by the family medicine practice.

Speakers:

- Dr. Casey Kirkhart, DO, Chief Medical Officer, Santa Cruz Community Health
- Salla Henessy, MD, Academic Medical Director, Santa Cruz Community Health

1B: Breaking the Silence: Statewide and Community Health Approaches to Physician Wellness

Physician burnout is a critical issue impacting healthcare providers, patient outcomes, and healthcare organizations. Community health centers and statewide initiatives have developed innovative strategies to combat burnout, promote well-being, and foster a culture of resilience.

This session will explore efforts from Mariposa Community Health Center and El Rio Health, which have implemented data-driven interventions, peer support programs, AI tools, and cultural wellness initiatives—culminating in national recognition for their success. Additionally, the session will highlight the work of the Nevada Physician Wellness Coalition (NPWC), an independent organization formed in response to physician suicide, which addresses systemic barriers to help-seeking behaviors and fights the “Culture of Silence” around physician mental health.

Participants will gain insights into both organizational and statewide strategies to improve physician wellness, reduce stigma, and implement practical solutions in their own settings. This session offers a replicable model for fostering well-being in diverse healthcare environments.

Speakers:

- Colleen Camenisch, MBA, Executive Director, Nevada Physician Wellness Coalition
- James Williams, MD, Associate Medical Director, Mariposa Community Health Center
- Mark Schildt, MD, Chief Wellness Officer, El Rio Health

12:00 PM – 12:30 PM

Lunch

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

General Session: National Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education

Speaker:

- Christine Arenson, MD, National Center Co-Director*

1:30 PM – 2:45 PM

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

2A: Harnessing Emotional Intelligence to Build Stronger Care Teams

In healthcare, where teamwork and effective communication are essential to delivering quality patient care, emotional intelligence (EI) plays a pivotal role in fostering strong and resilient teams. EI competencies such as empathy, self-awareness, and conflict management enable healthcare professionals to navigate high-pressure environments, enhance collaboration, and reduce burnout. Teams with higher levels of EI demonstrate increased trust, better conflict resolution, and improved coordination, ultimately leading to enhanced patient satisfaction and care quality. Understanding the 4 components of EI as well as the 7 qualities of leaders with high EI will be critical to developing strong team dynamics. This presentation explores practical strategies for healthcare leaders to cultivate emotionally intelligent teams, including implementing EI training programs and fostering a culture of emotional awareness. By integrating EI into team-building practices, healthcare organizations can achieve more effective communication, stronger resilience, and improved patient outcomes in today's complex medical landscape.

Speakers:

- Laura Baynard, RN, MAOL, Chief Operations Officer, Shasta Community Health Center
- Dorothy Bratton, PA, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Shasta Community Health Center

2B: Training a New Generation of Advanced Practitioners in Community Medicine

Neighborhood Healthcare's Advanced Practitioner Training Academy (APTA) is an intensive 14-week training program for newly graduated Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants. This program was developed to meet the complex health needs of our patients, at a time when it was difficult to hire experienced clinicians. The training and support that it provides has enabled graduates to provide high quality, comprehensive primary care to our complex, underserved patient population. Since APTA's inception 16 clinicians have completed the program. Our graduates are now managing patient panels, and some have expanded their knowledge to include transgender care, HIV services and serve our PACE patients.

Speaker:

Dr. Paige Thiermann, MD, FAAFP, Regional Medical Director, Neighborhood Healthcare – El Cajon

2:45 – 3:15 PM

Break and Exhibitor Networking

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

3A: An Integrated Intake Model for Mental Health Care in Large Multiservice Clinics

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) face challenges meeting mental health care demands due to limited resources and growing patient needs. Petaluma Health Center (PHC) developed the Intake Team, an innovative, efficient model for managing mental health referrals by balancing patient preferences with clinical needs for personalized care.

The Intake Team serves as a hub, coordinating internal and community mental health resources. Patients are contacted within 2–5 days of referral for orientation and a preliminary discussion. A comprehensive intake assessment follows, addressing subjective concerns and clinical needs to shape treatment recommendations. Outcomes are communicated to patients, aligning them with appropriate services such as short-term therapy, external referrals, brief targeted interventions, or no services when not required. Weekly team reviews refine plans for complex cases.

Key operational features include recruiting skilled clinicians, establishing referral workflows, maintaining a resource schedule, and tracking metrics via a centralized dashboard. Financial benefits include reduced no-show rates, optimized service utilization, and increased provider productivity.

This model enhances patient engagement and outcomes while maximizing resources. The presentation will provide an in-depth exploration of the PHC model including its clinical, operational, and financial frameworks. It will demonstrate how the system enhances the quality of mental health care while achieving financial sustainability and improving overall financial health for the department.

This presentation offers leaders actionable insights into PHC's solution for improving mental health service access, efficiency, and integration.

Speakers:

- Ken Weinstock MD, Clinical Director, Behavioral Health, Petaluma Health Center
- Mayra Gonzalez LCSW, Associate Clinical and Operational Director, Behavioral Health, Petaluma Health Center

3B: Clinical Pharmacists: Bridging Gaps in Rural Primary Care

Due to the provider shortage, especially in rural healthcare settings, Mariposa Community Health Center (MCHC) looked for options to continue providing high-quality care without additional burdens to the providers. In this session we will discuss how clinical pharmacists were integrated into the team to meet this need. For example, with a Collaborative Practice Agreement in place at MCHC, our Clinical Pharmacy team provides Diabetes Management, Colorectal Cancer Screening, Hepatitis C Management, Population Health Measures, Immunization Services and several others to complement the medical team.

Speakers:

- Jeanna Szablicki, PharmD, Director of Clinical Pharmacy Services, Mariposa Community Health Center
- Hee Ju, PharmD, Manager of Clinical Pharmacy Services, Mariposa Community Health Center
- Michael Castillo, RPh, Chief Pharmacy Officer, Mariposa Community Health Center

4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Networking Reception

Day 3: Tuesday – June 24, 2025

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Continental Breakfast and Exhibitor Networking Opportunity

9:00 AM – 10:15 AM

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

4A: The CHC of 2030

This session will explore the evolving landscape of health care, and the challenges Community Health Centers (CHCs) may face by 2030. Key topics include the potential dominance of risk-based contracts, the financial impact of collaborations with hospitals and other providers, and the anticipated compliance environment of the future. Acknowledging the uncertainty of some variables, the session will provide guidance on financial and operational strategies that could help CHCs enhance key metrics, optimize performance, and mitigate risk. Participants will also gain insight into the human and financial resources necessary to address future challenges. Special emphasis will be placed on implementing best practices in strategic planning to ensure CHCs are financially prepared to deliver comprehensive primary and preventive care in the years ahead.

Speakers:

- Catherine Gilpin, MBA, CPA, Partner, Forvis Mazars
- Scott Gold, CPA, Partner, Forvis Mazars

4B: Advancing Health Equity: Best Practices for Community Health Centers

In this session, we will explore how community health centers can effectively implement equity best practices in their organizations, drawing insights from athenahealth's commitment to addressing health inequities. Attendees will learn about the importance of culturally inclusive care, the need for ongoing implicit bias education, and strategies for building trust with patients from a variety of backgrounds. We will also examine how tailored outreach efforts and supportive policies can enhance patient engagement and deliver culturally responsive patient care. A health center will provide a case study on how they have

implemented SDOH screening tools into their EHR to advance health equity, sharing workflows for others to follow.

Speakers:

- Allyson Livingstone, PhD, Executive Director Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, athenahealth
- Harsha Ramchandani, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Bay Area Community Health
- Reema Menezes, MD, Medical Director, Bay Area Community Health

10:15 AM – 10:45 AM

Break

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

5A: Building Momentum: A Rhythm for Success and Shared Accountability

Every organization faces the challenge of turning ambitious goals into actionable results. In this session, participants explore how implementing a structured Rhythm of Operations and real-time dashboards can create alignment, enhance staff engagement, and track meaningful progress against strategic goals—all while fostering a culture of transparency and accountability. Through practical examples and interactive discussions, we'll share tools and processes developed to ensure every team member understands their role in accomplishing the organization's mission. These tools are adaptable and designed to meet the unique needs of various organizational structures, offering participants the flexibility to integrate what they learn into their existing systems.

Participants will gain insights into developing a cadence of operational check-ins, progress reviews, and dashboards to create organizational clarity and unite teams around common values and shared goals. They will leave the session equipped with tools and strategies to implement or refine systems that enable them to work smarter, not harder, while creating an inclusive and connected workplace where all contributions matter. By the end of the session, attendees will be able to articulate the benefits of a Rhythm of Operations and identify specific steps they can take to strengthen alignment and accountability in their own organizations. Whether you're just beginning to think about operational rhythm or looking to refine your current processes, this session will provide you with the tools to enhance what you're already doing in a way that works for your team and mission.

Speakers:

- Leigh Felton, MBA, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), LifeLong Medical Care
- Cecilia Aviles, MBA, BSN, RN, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), LifeLong Medical Care

5B: Get the Best of Both Worlds – Building an Incentive Program That Connects Productivity and Quality

Axis Community Health implemented the Care Based Incentive (CBI) program for medical providers in 2016 and Integrated Behavioral Health providers in 2019 with the goal of promoting access to care and enhancing quality of care. The program incentivizes providers to meet or exceed both productivity and quality targets to increase their base compensation. By aligning provider compensation with productivity and quality measures, the CBI program fosters better care delivery while driving organizational goals.

In this session, participants will learn about the components of the CBI program and how it motivates providers to meet key performance benchmarks. The Quality Enhancement Department at Axis has developed tools, including performance dashboards and care gap lists, to help providers and care teams track progress, identify areas for improvement, and reach their targets. Additionally, biannual Panel Management Meetings provide a platform for providers to collaborate with the Quality Enhancement team, review performance data, and develop actionable strategies to meet program objectives.

Beyond incentivizing individual performance, the CBI program promotes team-based care, enhances provider engagement with quality metrics, and supports value-based reimbursement models. Moreover, the program contributes to provider retention, ensuring long-term patient relationships and continuous improvement in care delivery. This session will explore how these strategies and tools contribute to the success of the CBI program and its broader impact on organizational and patient care outcomes.

Speakers:

- Angelina Speltz, MHA, Sr. Director of Quality Enhancement, Axis Community Health
- Dawnell Moody, DO, MPH, FAAP, Chief Medical Officer, Axis Community Health
- Jennifer DeGroat-Penney, PsyD, Chief Integration Officer, Axis Community Health

12:00 – 12:30 PM

Lunch

12:30 – 1:30 PM

Difficult Conversations Workshop

Join this interactive session to identify effective and accessible conflict resolution strategies to implement in your health center. These skills will help clinicians approach difficult conversations with personnel of all levels. Attendees will have the opportunity to practice modeling the skills presented and will leave with an actionable set of tools to practice at their organization.

Speakers:

- Tyree Davis, DDS, Chief Medical Officer of Ancillary Services, Nevada Health Centers
- Eladio Pereira, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Mariposa Community Health Center

1:30 – 1:40 PM

Closing Remarks

- Francisco J. Silva, Esq., President and CEO, California Primary Care Association

1:40 – 2:00 PM

Introduction of Incoming Board, Presentation of Award, and Prize Drawings

CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

2:00 – 5:00 PM

Post-Conference Immersive Learning at Northern Nevada HOPES

DRAFT