



Date: June 17, 2026

Time: 1:30 PM

Crowne Plaza Springfield
3000 S. Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 529-7777

Room rates: \$129 single/double plus tax

Book with IHA's discounted rate by [*clicking here*](#).

Rooms are held under the Illinois Health and Hospital Association room block through May 27, 2026.

Registration is open only to IHA-member hospitals and health systems and 2025 IHA Corporate Sponsors. Mid-America Healthcare Executive Forum members are welcome to register for the pre-conference workshops.

Bring Your Leadership Team and Save

Receive a complimentary registration when you register four or more attendees from the same hospital or health system corporate office by May 1. Bring your leadership team to maximize the meeting's impact.

Team pricing applies to the June 18 meeting only.

Small & Rural Hospitals Meeting | June 18, 2026

First person per hospital or health system: \$195/person

Each additional person*: \$150/person

**Additional registrant(s) must be employed at the same hospital or health system corporate office.*

Pre-Conference Workshops | June 17, 2026 (Optional Add-On)

\$100/person (flat rate, no discounts)

A changing healthcare landscape—shaped by policy shifts and new technology—calls for new models of care delivery in rural communities. Reimagining the small and rural hospital of tomorrow will be a major focus of this year's Small & Rural Hospitals Annual Meeting. To aid in this effort, the meeting will present a toolbox of solutions tailored to small and rural hospitals. You'll benefit from real-world examples and best practices to expand access to care and improve health outcomes, while ensuring hospital viability. Attend to hear from leaders navigating similar realities and build the connections that move those ideas forward.

These executive-level workshops are designed to support strategic leadership and organizational decision-making in small and rural hospitals. They are offered in collaboration with the Mid-America Healthcare Executives Forum, an independent chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE).

The workshops are open to IHA and Mid-America Healthcare Executives Forum members. A separate registration fee is required to participate.

1:30 p.m.

The Role of Data and Advanced Analytics in Transforming Healthcare

Data is abundant in healthcare, yet understanding how to translate the data into sound, actionable strategies remains the true differentiator. In this workshop, Illinois small and rural hospital leaders will discuss how their organizations are using analytics to inform executive decision-making, improve operational performance, and enhance quality care without overextending limited resources.

Panelists will share practical examples of dashboards, governance structures and performance metrics that can guide action at the executive level. The session will focus on how leaders can build a sustainable analytics culture that supports strategic planning, accountability, and continuous improvement to transform healthcare.

3 p.m.

Networking Break

3:30 p.m.

Financial Sustainability of Healthcare Organizations: A Plan of Action

How can small and rural hospitals continue to navigate fluctuating reimbursement, rising labor costs, and evolving community needs—all while preserving access to essential services? This interactive workshop will bring together Illinois hospital leaders to share practical approaches to strengthening financial performance without compromising mission or care quality.

In this moderated discussion with real world examples, panelists will explore how peer organizations are prioritizing capital investments, evaluating service lines, managing expense pressures, and communicating difficult trade-offs with their boards and stakeholders. Designed for executive teams, this session will highlight practical approaches and governance practices that support long-term financial stability in an unpredictable environment.

5-6 p.m.

Networking Reception Sponsored by IHA Business Resources

Open to all Mid-America Healthcare Executives Forum and IHA member registrants

7:30 a.m.

Registration and Breakfast Buffet

8:30 a.m.

Welcome

Trevor Huffman

CEO, Jacksonville Memorial Hospital

Chair, 2025 IHA Small and Rural Hospitals Constituency Section

8:40 a.m.

The Future of Healthcare: Redefining the Rural Hospital of Tomorrow

Shawn DuBravac, PhD, CFA

Global Futurist, Author, President of Avrio Institute

Small and rural hospitals across Illinois are at a turning point. As financial and workforce pressures grow and patient needs evolve, the next decade of care delivery will require a new approach. The future will not be defined by larger buildings or more beds, but by smarter systems, stronger community partnerships, and technology that helps hospitals do more with what they already have.

New tools, including artificial intelligence, automation, and real-time data systems, are enabling smaller hospitals to extend their reach, improve operational efficiency, and deliver high-quality care closer to home. To achieve success, organizations must learn to integrate intelligence into daily operations, strengthen their workforce with digital tools, and redesign care pathways around the realities of rural communities.

In this keynote address, futurist and best-selling author Dr. DuBravac will outline a compelling and practical vision of what comes next, and how intelligent tools can expand access, stabilize operations, and strengthen the health of the communities you serve.

10 a.m.

Networking Break with Corporate Sponsors

10:30 a.m.

Strengthening Access, Quality and Affordability Through Rural Healthcare Transformation

Tommy Ibrahim, MD, MBA, MHA

Executive Vice President and Chief Transformation Officer, Sanford Health

10:30 a.m.

Sanford Health's Transformation Journey | Presentation

Rural healthcare is evolving at a rapid pace. Leaders are navigating workforce shortages, financial pressures, an aging demographic with increasingly complex healthcare needs and rising consumer expectations—all while striving to expand access and sustain high-quality, affordable care in their communities.

Dr. Ibrahim will explore how Sanford Health is advancing rural transformation through intentional care redesign focused on improving access, quality, patient experience and affordability. He will highlight the strategic decisions and lessons learned in deploying new care models that improve outcomes and reduce the cost of care. You'll hear about leveraging AI-enabled workflows, expanding virtual care, strengthening value-based strategies, and building the systems and capabilities to support innovation at scale. Dr. Ibrahim will also share where the organization is headed next.

11:15 a.m.

From Strategy to Playbook | Fireside Chat

Expanding on the themes from Dr. Ibrahim's presentation, this conversation will translate strategy into practical guidance for rural and community hospitals of all sizes. The discussion will focus on where to start, what to prioritize, what to partner on and how to drive meaningful transformation, even without scale.

You'll gain actionable insights to strengthen access, improve quality and build sustainable models for the future of rural healthcare.

12:00 p.m.

Networking Lunch with Corporate Sponsors

1:15 p.m.

Concurrent Breakout Sessions (select one)

Session 1 – Advocacy That Works: A Leader's Toolkit

Effective advocacy is an essential skill for small and rural hospital leaders. This session will identify how hospital leaders can proactively cultivate positive, ongoing relationships with elected officials so trust and familiarity are in place as new issues arise. Designed for both newer advocates and experienced leaders refining their approach, this session will guide you in strengthening long term connections—and making your case effectively when it matters most.

Session 2 – Using Chronic Conditions Data to Enhance Population Health

Left untreated, chronic conditions can lead to poorer patient outcomes requiring significant hospital resources. Rural communities face higher rates of such conditions and higher related death rates. This session will demonstrate how chronic conditions dashboards from IHA's COMPdata Informatics can provide clarity on this key indicator of population health and where healthcare needs are greatest. COMPdata experts will guide you through the dashboards, focusing on the prevalence of chronic conditions and their impact on lengths of stay, average charges, and comorbidity counts.

Session 3 – Strengthening the Healthcare Workforce: Statewide Insights and Rural Solutions

Workforce challenges continue to shape the operational and financial realities of small and rural hospitals. In this session, you'll hear from IHA's workforce policy lead on statewide initiatives and emerging priorities, followed by a moderated discussion featuring hospital leaders who have successfully implemented best-practice workforce programs in their own organizations. The session will offer peer-driven insights into practical approaches to recruitment, retention, and staff development that support local workforce planning and long-term sustainability.

2 p.m.

Networking Break with Corporate Sponsors

2:15 p.m.

Federal Update: What Rural Hospital Leaders Need to Know

Susan Doherty, MA, LNHA

Vice President, Field Engagement

Rural Health and Regional Executive Team

American Hospital Association

Hear from a top AHA leader on federal policy developments that matter most to small and rural hospital leaders right now. This session will offer clarity on how the 2026 election and emerging federal policy changes could affect hospital operations and strategic planning. You'll gain insight into how hospital leaders can anticipate change, assess risk and focus on what's most likely to shape your organization in the year ahead.

3 p.m.

President's Address

A.J. Wilhelmi

IHA President and CEO

Drawing on the themes and discussions from the meeting, Wilhelmi will offer his perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing small and rural hospital leaders—and how IHA is relentlessly advocating for public policies that support your work to care for communities. Wilhelmi's address will conclude the meeting with final reflections for hospital leaders.

3:30 p.m.

Adjournment

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

- Identify practical examples of how small and rural hospitals are expanding access to care and improving patient outcomes through program design, partnerships, and care delivery approaches.
- Discuss financial and operational considerations influencing decisions around service lines, resource allocation, and long-term organizational strength in rural hospitals.
- Examine how hospital leaders are using data and analytics to support executive decision-making, monitor performance, and inform planning without overextending limited resources.
- Assess the role of executive and board leadership in guiding decisions that affect access to care, organizational priorities, and community trust.

This Annual Meeting is designed for healthcare leaders and decision-makers from small and rural hospitals and rural-serving health systems. Attending as a team allows you to learn together and translate insights into action.

The meeting will benefit:

- Hospital and health system executives
- Board members and trustees
- Finance leaders
- Operations leaders
- Quality and patient safety leaders
- Human resources leaders
- Physician and medical staff leaders
- Nursing leaders
- Compliance and regulatory leaders
- Government relations leaders
- Strategy, business development, and data/analytics leaders

Susan Doherty, MA, LNHA

Vice President of Field Engagement, Rural Health and Regional Executive Team, American Hospital Association (AHA)

Susan Doherty has been with AHA since 2020 and currently serves as the vice president of field engagement, rural health and regional executive team. In this role, she collaborates across association teams to enhance and advance AHA's rural health service offerings and agenda. Doherty is the lead for the Rural Health Services Committee, which provides input to AHA on rural policy issues. She also oversees the regional executives who cover all states and territories within AHA membership. Doherty was previously the regional executive for the seven mountain states that make up Region 8.

Having grown up in rural North Dakota, Doherty spent much of her career in healthcare in North Dakota and Minnesota. Her administrative and policy experiences focused on payment, practice, immigration, public and community health improvement, and external relations, as well as operational accountabilities for care and services.

Doherty brings academic and applied experience to her work, having taught political science, health policy, and healthcare management undergraduate and graduate courses for Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, University of Minnesota, and North Dakota State University. She is a licensed nursing home administrator.

Shawn G. DuBravac, PhD, CFA

President, Avrio Institute

Acclaimed futurist and trend caster, Dr. Shawn DuBravac is author of the New York Times best-seller *Digital Destiny: How the New Age of Data Will Transform the Way We Work, Live, and Communicate*, which explores how the world's mass adoption of digital technologies portends the beginning of a new era for humanity in business, healthcare, finance, transportation, and culture. As president of Avrio Institute, Dr. DuBravac helps leaders prepare for uncertain and divergent futures. He previously served as chief economist for the Consumer Technology Association (CTA), which represents more than 2,000 consumer tech companies.

Dr. DuBravac writes extensively on disruptive technological shifts. His analysis has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Financial Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wired*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Barron's* and on-air with *CNBC*, *Bloomberg*, *NPR*, *CBS*, and other media outlets. He has been named one of the top 50 futurist speakers by *Readwrite*, one of 27 finance thought leaders to read and follow by *Prophix*, and was on *Dealerscope's* "40 under 40" list of people to watch in the technology industry. He is past-President of the CFA Society of Washington, D.C., and the Conference of Business Economists, and is a founding trustee of the CTA Foundation and a past board member of the National Association of Business Economists.

Tommy Ibrahim, MD, MBA, MHA

Executive Vice President and Chief Transformation Officer, Sanford Health

As Executive Vice President and Chief Transformation Officer, Dr. Tommy Ibrahim is responsible for reimagining how care is redesigned and delivered across the Sanford Health's rural footprint. He oversees enterprise transformation efforts spanning several domains, including information technology, cybersecurity, data and analytics, artificial intelligence, innovation, and value-based care transformation and research. His work focuses on advancing sustainable, technology-enabled models of care that improve access, affordability and outcomes.

Previously, Dr. Ibrahim served as President and CEO of Sanford Health Plan. He was responsible for health plan strategy, including driving affordability and enhancing patient and member outcomes through broader population health initiatives, value-based care programs, and innovative care delivery models. Dr. Ibrahim also served as president and CEO of Bassett Healthcare Network and has held numerous executive leadership positions within the healthcare industry for more than 15 years.

His past roles include Executive Vice President and Chief Physician Executive for INTEGRIS Health in Oklahoma, Chief Physician Officer and Vice President of Medical Affairs at MercyOne in Des Moines, Iowa, and Senior Vice President and Chief Physician Executive at St. John's Hospital in Springfield, Illinois. He serves in advisory roles for several healthcare venture and innovation organizations and is a frequent speaker and published thought leader on advancing rural health and transforming care delivery through innovation and technology.

A.J. Wilhelmi

President & CEO, Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA)

A.J. Wilhelmi became IHA President and CEO on January 1, 2016, leading the association that represents more than 200 hospitals and health systems as they care for their patients and communities, and advocates for a sustainable, patient-focused healthcare system that provides high-quality care and promotes healthy communities. Previously, Wilhelmi served as IHA's Chief Government Relations Officer from 2012 to 2015. With his experience in both the public and private sectors, Wilhelmi is

strengthening IHA's ability to address the many needs of hospital and health system members. Wilhelmi and IHA staff collaborate with state leaders, legislators, and other key stakeholders to develop workable solutions to support patients, hospitals, and the state's healthcare delivery system.

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