

Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD)
2026 Mid-Year Meeting and Data Day
June 15-17, 2026
At the Pavillion at Madison Square Park, Derby, Ks

Day 1 – June 15, 2026

Registration from noon to 1:00 p.m.

Welcome from 1:00 to 1:10 p.m.

Session 1 – The Wide World of Local Public Health (30 minutes)

This facilitated, peer-learning session engages local health department leaders in identifying unexpected, complex, or uncommon challenges encountered in health department administration, including those arising during emergencies, disasters, or periods of rapid system change. Using real-world examples, participants will explore how these situations were assessed, managed, and resolved, with attention to preparedness concepts such as adaptive decision-making, continuity of operations, staff resilience, and coordination under pressure. The session supports professional reflection, systems thinking, and knowledge exchange relevant to nursing leadership and public health emergency readiness.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify atypical or complex challenges encountered in local health department operations, including during emergency or high-impact events.
2. Analyze peer-identified strategies and resources used to support continuity of operations and effective response.
3. Apply shared lessons learned to strengthen preparedness, problem-solving, and decision-making in local health department practice.

Contact Hour(s): .5

Presented by: Randy Bowman is an experienced executive leader with a career spanning more than 30 years in public service and systems leadership. He currently serves as Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments, where he provides strategic direction, legislative advocacy, and operational leadership in support of local public health agencies across the state. Known for building strong partnerships and advancing effective, data-driven policy, Mr. Bowman has led complex organizations through periods of reform and growth. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Washburn University and is a Certified Public Manager.

Session 2 – A Local Health Department as a Target for Property Tax Reduction Advocates (50 minutes)

This facilitated discussion examines the impact of political, fiscal, and public scrutiny on local health departments through a real-world case study. Participants will explore lessons learned related to preparedness and response capacity, including sustaining essential services, managing workforce stress, and maintaining public trust during periods of instability. The session highlights leadership strategies, crisis communication, and fiscal decision-making critical to both routine operations and public health emergencies.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify communication strategies that support transparency and trust during periods of public scrutiny or crisis.
2. Describe approaches for maintaining essential health department services and workforce readiness during disruptive events.
3. Evaluate leadership strategies that strengthen organizational resilience and emergency preparedness capacity.

Contact Hour(s): 1

Presented by: Brie Greeson, RN, BSN, ADN, DNP-c is an accomplished nursing executive and public health leader known for decisive leadership, operational strength, and clear communication in complex healthcare settings. With experience spanning high-acuity clinical care, hospital operations, and county-level public health administration, she excels in guiding multidisciplinary teams, strengthening regulatory readiness, and improving organizational performance. Her academic and professional foundation includes active RN licensure, FEMA emergency management certifications, BLS, and formal leadership training, supported by an ADN, BSN, and ongoing Doctor of Nursing Practice studies.

Break 2:30 to 2:45 p.m.

Session 3 – What Is Your Biggest Success Story? (30 minutes)

Through small-group discussion and facilitated reporting, participants will reflect on recent successes in local public health practice, including initiatives that strengthened workforce capacity, community partnerships, or preparedness efforts. Participants will identify enabling factors such as leadership, collaboration, and flexible systems that support both routine services and emergency response readiness.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify factors contributing to successful public health initiatives that enhance system readiness or response capacity.
2. Analyze peer examples to recognize strategies that support resilience and preparedness.
3. Articulate how leadership and collaboration contribute to effective public health outcomes during routine and emergency operations.

Contact Hour(s): .5

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Session 4 – No Agenda, Just Coffee (50 minutes)

This session introduces a relationship-centered model for community engagement that supports both routine public health work and emergency preparedness. Drawing from rural Kansas field experience, the presenter will discuss strategies for building trust before, during, and after public health emergencies. Participants will learn how informal, human-centered interactions strengthen communication, improve message credibility, and support community cooperation during public health response and recovery efforts.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Recognize how trust is built through informal, relationship-based interactions rather than traditional outreach methods.
2. Apply techniques to identify and connect public health concepts within everyday conversations in a way that feels natural, relevant, and non-transactional.
3. Develop strategies to build and sustain authentic community relationships over time, including maintaining trust across staff or leadership changes.

Contact Hour(s): 1

Presented by: Candice Sauers is a public health and local government leader with a strong focus on community-centered systems, clear communication, and organizational culture. She currently serves as Deputy Director of the Saline County Health Department, where she supports strategic planning, fiscal oversight, preparedness, and cross-sector collaboration to strengthen community health outcomes. Known for translating complex public health issues into accessible, actionable messaging, Ms. Sauers also created and hosts an award-winning podcast highlighting local government and community partnerships. Her leadership work in organizational culture and public health systems has received national recognition, and she is actively engaged in advancing rural and community health initiatives at the national level.

Break from 4:05 to 4:20 p.m.

Session 5 – What Is Ahead and Are We Prepared as Local Health Departments? (50 minutes)

This interactive session engages participants in identifying current and emerging challenges facing local health departments, including preparedness gaps, workforce capacity, and system readiness for public health emergencies. Participants will prioritize shared challenges and collaboratively explore strategies, partnerships, and resource-sharing opportunities that support both preparedness and ongoing service delivery.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify current and emerging challenges affecting local health department emergency preparedness and readiness.
2. Differentiate between local and shared preparedness challenges across jurisdictions.
3. Develop potential strategies to strengthen preparedness, response capacity, and interagency collaboration.

Contact Hour(s): 1

Presented by: Randy Bowman is an experienced executive leader with a career spanning more than 30 years in public service and systems leadership. He currently serves as Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments, where he provides strategic direction, legislative advocacy, and operational leadership in support of local public health agencies across the state. Known for building strong partnerships and advancing effective, data-driven policy, Mr. Bowman has led complex organizations through periods of reform and growth. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Washburn University and is a Certified Public Manager.

Wrap-Up – Day 1 and Looking Into the Future (20 minutes)

This facilitated synthesis session summarizes key themes from Day 1, including leadership, organizational, systems readiness, and preparedness priorities. Participants will identify future-focused actions that support local health departments, sustained emergency preparedness, workforce resilience, and coordinated public health system.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Summarize key insights from Day 1 discussions.
2. Identify priority areas for strengthening local health departments.
3. Contribute to planning efforts that support long-term public health system readiness.

Contact Hour(s): 0

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Adjourn 5:30 p.m.

Networking with Peers – Optional (no credit) from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Day 2 – June 16, 2026

Registration from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

Session 6 – Public Health Policy and Budget Updates: Federal Policy and NACCHO Advocacy (30 minutes)

This session provides an overview of current federal public health policy and budget considerations and examines how national advocacy efforts support local health departments. Participants will learn how NACCHO represents local public health interests at the federal level and how membership resources can support funding, policy engagement, and workforce development relevant to nursing and public health practice.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify key federal public health policy and budget issues affecting local health departments.
2. Describe how NACCHO advocacy efforts support local public health practice.
3. Identify NACCHO resources available to support policy, funding, and workforce needs.

Contact Hour(s): .5

Presented by: Adrienne (Adriane) Casalotti, MPH, MSW is Chief of Government and Public Affairs at the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), where she leads federal policy, advocacy, and strategic communications efforts on behalf of the nation's nearly 3,000 local health departments. In this role, she works closely with Congress, federal agencies, and national partners to elevate the priorities of local public health and strengthen public health infrastructure nationwide. A seasoned public health and policy leader, Ms. Casalotti brings extensive experience in legislative affairs, health policy, and government relations, having previously served at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and on Capitol Hill. She holds master's degrees in public health and social work from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Session 7 – FY2027 State Formula Survey Results (60 minutes)

This session presents findings from the SFY 2027 State Formula Survey, highlighting key challenges, trends, and system-level issues affecting Kansas public health. Presenters will discuss implications for local health departments and opportunities for data-informed decision-making and planning.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify key challenges facing the Kansas public health system based on survey results.
2. Explain major trends and priorities impacting local health departments.

3. Utilize survey findings to inform planning and resource allocation decisions.

Contact Hour(s): 1

Presented by: Cristi Cain, MPH and Vickie Collie-Akers, PhD, MPH, CPH

Cristi Cain, MPH is a senior public health leader with extensive experience strengthening local public health systems through training, funding, and workforce development. She currently serves as Director of the Local Public Health Program at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, where she provides technical assistance and resources to all local health departments across the state and oversees major statewide learning, grant, and accreditation initiatives. Known for her leadership in workforce development and quality improvement, Ms. Cain has guided large-scale conferences, managed multi-million-dollar programs, and supported local agencies in advancing public health practice. She holds a Master of Public Health from the University of Kansas School of Medicine.

Vickie Collie-Akers, PhD, MPH, CPH is an Associate Professor in the Department of Population Health at the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC) and serves as the Kansas Health Foundation Professor of Public Health Practice. Her work focuses on strengthening public health practice through academic–practice partnerships, multi-sector collaboration, and community-based participatory research. Dr. Collie-Akers led the establishment of Kansas’s first Academic Health Department in partnership with Lawrence–Douglas County Public Health and has extensive experience evaluating community initiatives addressing chronic disease prevention and health equity. She holds a doctorate in applied behavioral science from the University of Kansas and a master’s degree in public health from Saint Louis University.

Break from 10:30 to 10:45

Session 8 – Strengthening State and Local Collaboration (60 minutes)

This session features remarks from the Deputy Secretary for Public Health at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), sharing state-level priorities, funding considerations, and expectations for collaboration with local health departments. The presentation will focus on aligning state and local efforts to support effective public health service delivery and system readiness. Time will be reserved for participant questions to promote shared understanding and communication between KDHE and local public health leaders.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe KDHE public health priorities affecting local health departments.
2. Identify opportunities to maximize the effective use of state public health resources.
3. Recognize strategies to strengthen communication and collaboration between KDHE and local health departments.

Contact Hour(s): 1

Presented by: Ashley Goss, MBA is a senior public health executive serving as Deputy Secretary for Public Health at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. In this role, she provides statewide leadership for public health strategy, policy implementation, and system performance, working closely with local health departments, legislators, and cross-sector partners. Her work includes strengthening public health infrastructure, advancing accreditation and quality improvement, and guiding Kansas' response to emerging health challenges. Known for her practical, systems-focused leadership, Deputy Secretary Goss brings extensive experience in community health systems, administration, and public health management to improving health outcomes for all Kansans.

Lunch Break from 11:45 to 12:30

Session 9 – New Community Engagement Course for Local Health Departments (30 minutes)

This session introduces a new asynchronous community engagement course developed for local health departments. The course focuses on building staff capacity to work towards transformational community engagement and applying practical strategies to engage community members, including populations of focus. Participants will learn how the course was developed, its key content areas, and how it can be used to strengthen equitable community engagement practices.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe key principles covered by the course, including the Spectrum of Community Engagement and transformational community engagement activities to engage populations of focus.
2. Identify educational resources available to support staff skill development in community engagement.
3. Recognize opportunities to integrate course content into local public health practice.

Contact Hour(s): .5

Presented by: Avanthi Chatrathi is a public health analyst whose work centers on advancing health equity through data-driven decision-making, community engagement, and systems improvement. She currently serves as an Analyst at the Kansas Health Institute, where she provides technical assistance and training to communities across Kansas, helping local partners use data and evidence-based practices to improve health outcomes and equity. Her work includes supporting maternal health initiatives, community engagement strategies, and public health systems alignment. Avanthi holds a Master of Public Health

from George Washington University and earned her Project Management Professional (PMP)[®] certification in 2024.

Session 10 – Inside PHAB Accreditation and Resources and How They Support You (50 minutes)

This presentation provides an overview of the services offered by PHAB, with a focus on how the Standards and Measures support staff and the implementation of public health services. It will highlight resources available to health departments, including an in-depth look at service and resource sharing, connecting how these supports can benefit small and rural health departments, with clear connections drawn between available resources and the Standards and Measures to strengthen capacity and improve practice.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe how PHAB standards and measures support public health practice improvement.
2. Identify PHAB resources applicable to small and rural health departments.
3. Apply accreditation-related tools to strengthen organizational capacity and service delivery.

Contact Hour(s): 1

Presented by: Ashley Spangler, MPH is a public health leader with more than a decade of experience advancing accreditation, quality improvement, and community-centered health systems. She currently serves as an Accreditation Specialist Team Lead with the Public Health Accreditation Board, where she provides technical assistance, oversees accreditation reviews, and supports workforce and systems improvement for health departments across multiple states. Known for her strengths in health equity, performance management, and collaborative leadership, Ms. Spangler helps translate public health standards into practical, measurable improvements. She holds a Master of Public Health and has extensive experience leading community health planning and cross-sector partnerships.

Break from 1:50 to 2:00 p.m.

KALHD Annual Mid-Year Business Meeting from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. (no credit)

Adjourn 4:00 p.m.

Day 3 “Data Day” – June 17, 2026

Registration from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

Welcome from 9:00 to 9:15 a.m.

What is the LHD AoS from 9:15 to 9:30 a.m.

Session 11 – Survey School: Knowing Your Audience (60 minutes)

Effective survey work begins with understanding who the information is intended to reach. This session will explore how identifying the intended audience can shape survey design, data interpretation, and communication strategies. Participants will consider how audience needs influence what information is shared, how it is interpreted, and how data can be used to support informed decision-making.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify key audiences for survey and data reporting efforts.
2. Describe how audience needs can influence data presentation.
3. Recognize strategies for tailoring data communication to different stakeholder groups.

Contact Hour(s): 1

Presented by: Dr. Sarah Jolley has worked for Wichita State University for over 20 years. She serves as the Evaluation Coordinator for the Center for Applied Research and Evaluation at WSU’s Community Engagement Institute. She has extensive experience with various research and evaluation methods, including surveys, needs assessments, interviews, and focus groups. Ultimately, Sarah has a passion for asking good questions and helping people have important conversations – conversations that can lead to meaningful change in organizations and communities.

Break from 10:30 to 10:45

Session 12 (Part 1) – Using Data to Spark Action (90 minutes)

An interactive session led by the Kansas Health Institute, including a hands-on data walk and practical strategies for talking about data, answering questions, and connecting information to real-world decisions. The innovative data walk model centers around community storytelling and peer-to-peer conversation. During a data walk, participants in small groups walk around a room, view data posters and discuss underlying issues and creative policy and system-focused solutions. Participants will experience the Upward Mobility Data Walk and learn how to mobilize community action using data.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the data walk model as a tool for community storytelling
2. Design a community storytelling experience for your audience using data
3. Apply strategies for facilitating meaningful conversations about data

Contact Hour(s): 1.5**Presented by:** Samiyah Para-Cremer Moore, M.Sc., Senior Analyst & Portfolio Strategist, and Avanthi Chatrathi, M.P.H., Analyst

Samiyah Para-Cremer Moore, M.Sc., Senior Analyst & Portfolio Strategist, specializes in community capacity building, population health research, including food security research, program evaluation, and the incorporation of health equity considerations into decision making. At KHI, Samiyah leads community engagement efforts and research initiatives to strengthen the Kansas public health system at state and local levels. She also provides direct technical assistance to communities to build their capacity for using data and evidence-based practices to improve health. Samiyah earned a master's degree in evidence-based social intervention and policy evaluation from the University of Oxford and bachelor's degrees in applied behavioral science, law and society and also Spanish from the University of Kansas.

Avanthi Chatrathi, M.P.H., Analyst, brings a strong background in equity-focused public health work to her role as Analyst at Kansas Health Institute. She supports technical assistance, research, and education initiatives delivered across communities in Kansas, including providing community engagement technical assistance through the Blue Cross and Blue Shield *Pathways to a Healthy Kansas* initiative. Previously, she guided health equity efforts at Jackson County Public Health in Missouri including the development and implementation of an organization-wide health equity strategic plan. Avanthi holds a master's degree in public health from George Washington University and a bachelor's degree in cognitive science from Northwestern University.

Lunch from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m.

Session 12 (Part 2) – Using Data to Spark Action (90 minutes)

See Part 1 for details

Contact Hour(s): 1.5

Wrap Up 2:45 to 3:00
