



## Farley's Features: June 20

# Bridging research and policy



Welcome to Farley's Features, the Farley Health Policy Center's monthly newsletter, focusing on key health policy issues that span primary care, behavioral health, and public health practice. Our interprofessional team invites your perspectives as we pursue health policy research, translation, implementation, and education.

### Message from the Farley Center

Dear Alison,

Last month we hosted our fifth and final Colorado legislative update session. This year, in addition to discussing state bills, we provided analysis and insights into the federal budget process with specific focus on the impacts on Medicaid funding and services in Colorado. Overall, we covered 29 bills out of the 733 measures introduced.

Major themes this legislative session included:

- State budget woes with the Joint Budget Committee working hard to resolve a \$1.2 billion shortfall. Despite their ability to craft a state budget without severe cuts to Medicaid or education, the underlying problems causing budget shortfalls will continue without reform to the Colorado Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR).
- Conflicts between Democratic legislators and Democratic Governor Polis intensified, with disagreement over unionization requirements and regulation of technology companies in the state.
- A continued focus on firearm injury prevention, with 16 firearm-related bills debated and 13 passed.
- Timely response to the Trump administration's executive orders and other federal actions.

We're grateful to the 157 professionals who attended these sessions and asked thoughtful questions of our team. We also want to thank the individuals who filled out our evaluation form, 94% of whom said they would be very likely to recommend the legislative updates to a colleague.

We intend to reconvene if a special session is called in 2025 or when the next regular session begins in 2026. If you have not been attending these sessions and would like to, please reach out to [farleyhealthpolicycenter@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:farleyhealthpolicycenter@cuanschutz.edu).

Best,

Lauren Hughes, Kyle Leggott, and Lakshmi Karra

### Recent Publication

#### New Colorado Sun Op Ed

As Colorado braces for Medicaid cuts, Farley Center researchers remind policymakers that this program is a critical safety net for the health of our citizens and our economy. Read [this new op-ed in The Colorado Sun](#) from Stephanie Gold, Kyle Leggott, Lauren S. Hughes, and Apoorva Ram.

### Upcoming Partner Events

#### University of Colorado Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative: Documentary & Dialogue

Join our partners for a screening of "The Tennessee 11" documentary on Sunday, June 22, 2025. This event aims to foster respectful dialogue on gun rights and safety, featuring a post-film panel with Colorado community leaders engaged in collaborative firearm injury prevention work. [Find out more and get your tickets.](#)

#### Levitt Distinguished Speaker Series

Curious about how trauma shapes the brain—and how science is helping people heal? Don't miss the 5th Annual CSTAHR Greg White Levitt Lecture, featuring Dr. Negar Fani, a clinical neuropsychologist and professor at Emory University. In this compelling talk, Dr. Fani will explore how trauma—especially racial trauma—affects the brain and body, and how innovative therapies are being used to support healing in marginalized communities. [Learn more and register.](#)

### What We're Reading

#### Federal Cuts

['Medicaid saved my life.' Patients, physicians detail importance of the program as GOP weighs deep cuts](#) from Colorado Public Radio News emphasizes the critical role Medicaid plays for Coloradans, especially vulnerable populations.

[The impact of federal actions on academic medicine and the U.S. health care system](#) from the Association of American Medical Colleges offers a succinct yet comprehensive overview of cuts currently under consideration and their impact on academic health systems.

[Lessons learned from Arkansas' experience with a Medicaid work requirement](#) from Milbank Memorial Fund details the potential impact of Congresses budget reconciliation bill's mandate for all states to implement a work requirement for Medicaid expansion enrollees.

#### Health Policy & Systems

The Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law just published [a full issue themed around 60 years of Medicaid](#).

[An interview with Zirui Song](#) from the New England Journal of Medicine discusses the rise of concierge and direct primary care practices in the United States.

["All I Do Is Win": Why beating benchmarks doesn't mean that ACOs are reducing costs](#) from Health Affairs features analysis and discussion of how to understand, design, support, and measure patient-centered, cost-efficient care under the umbrella of accountable care.

[Mental health and substance use challenges facing the United States: What can state policymakers do?](#) from Milbank Memorial Fund discusses actions state policymakers can take to address the mental health and substance use crises in the U.S.

["An uncertain future" - The impacts of United States and other government funding cuts on global mental health services](#) from the Global Mental Health Action Network showed that about 750,000 people globally lost services immediately following these cuts.

#### Maternal & Child Health

[COVID vaccine changes confuse and upset some parents and families](#) from NPR reports on updated CDC recommendations regarding COVID-19 vaccinations for pregnant individuals and children.

[Trends in county-level MMR vaccination coverage in children in the United States](#) from JAMA shares research revealing a decline in childhood MMR vaccination rates across U.S. counties between 2019 and 2024, coinciding with a resurgence of measles outbreaks.

[Helping mothers and children thrive: Rethinking CMS's Transforming Maternal Health \(TMaH\) model](#) from Milbank Quarterly, discusses the Transforming Maternal Health (TMaH) Model and its potential to improve maternal and infant health outcomes.

#### Public Health

[Projected outcomes of removing fluoride from US public water systems](#) from JAMA Health Forum explores the projected outcomes of removing fluoride from US public water systems, and its potential impact on dental health.

[Deep cuts erode the foundations of US public health system, end progress, threaten worse to come](#) from the Associated Press details how federal public health cuts are eroding the US public health system, impacting prevention efforts and responses to outbreaks like measles.

#### Health Disparities

[Modeling a path to multiracial well-being: Potential impact of investments in the vital conditions for health and well-being](#) details a study from Ripple recently published in PLOS One that used a computer model to simulate the effects of federal interagency plans on improving multiracial well-being and reducing disparities.

[Data suggests Colorado companies are reducing DEI positions faster than the country as a whole](#) from Colorado Public Radio News indicates that Colorado companies are reducing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) positions at a faster rate than the national average.

[Abortion opponents are coming for mifepristone using what medical experts call 'junk science'](#) from 19th News examines the debate around mifepristone and the faulty research claims used by abortion opponents.

**The Farley Center's May health policy journal club further examined the transforming healthcare landscape under the Trump Administration. They discussed environmental health deregulation, food and nutrition policy shifts, potential changes to vaccine protocols, public trust under current administration, and public awareness of threats to public health. See all readings available at the [health policy journal club web page](#).**

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Farley's Features is a monthly spotlight on critical and timely health policy issues from the Farley Health Policy Center. We focus on health policy research, translation, implementation, and education. We'd love to hear from you! Reach out to us at [FarleyHealthPolicyCenter@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:FarleyHealthPolicyCenter@cuanschutz.edu) with any questions or comments about Farley's Features and our work in general.



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