



Farley's Features: November 21

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,

This week, the Farley Center hosted the Colorado site visit for the National Academy of Medicine State Health Policy Fellowship (SHPF). As [this year's Colorado State Health Policy Fellow](#), I was thrilled to spend time both with my counterparts from other states and state health policy experts and government officials in my home state. Three other SHPFs were here (representing Georgia, Texas, and Wisconsin) along with six Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellows.

On Monday, we spent the morning meeting with former Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs and Dean at the University of Colorado School of Medicine for 25 years Richard Krugman, MD. We then visited with leaders from the Center for Improving Value in Health Care (CIVHC), and the Behavioral Health Administration. In the afternoon, we traveled to the Attorney General's office and toured the Colorado State Capitol before visiting the Division of Insurance. Tuesday, we learned more about the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, as well as the Colorado Children's Campaign and the Colorado Hospital Association. Wednesday, we visited the Lieutenant Governor's office and talked with two legislators leading in health policy in Colorado.

This visit strengthened my understanding of all the organizations and people working to improve health for all Coloradans. It is humbling and exciting to learn how I can contribute to their many and varied efforts. More to come.

Best,

Kristina Wilson, MD, MPH (she/her)
State Health Policy Fellow, Farley Health Policy Center

Recent Work and Publications

An interview with Farley Center Senior Scholar, Distinguished Professor of Family Medicine at the University of Colorado, a family physician, and policy expert, Larry Green, MD, opened [New England Journal of Medicine's podcast, "Not Otherwise Specified."](#) NOS host Lisa Rosenbaum explores the current crisis in primary care, dissecting the ideals, realities, and dangerous misunderstandings contributing to its decline. Dr. Green shares a personal and frustrating anecdote: despite his decades in the field, he can't even call his own medical practice directly, instead being routed through a call center.

Farley Center Deputy Director, Emma Gilchrist, MPH, is featured in coverage in the Pueblo Star Journal about a local event sponsored by the Arts Alliance for Health. She describes how "expanding access to immersive and creative opportunities can empower youth with the tools for self-expression, resilience and connection." Read [Where creativity meets healing for Pueblo's youth](#) for more information.

Farley Center Education Director, Daniel S. Goldberg, JD, PhD, and Scholar, Sarah Hemeida, MD, MPH, and Linda Brou, MPH, co-authored a recent publication titled, ["Targeting Addiction Structural Stigma Embodied in Law \("TASSEL"\)](#): Findings from an intrastate legal mapping study." The study uses legal mapping methods to identify how laws systematically perpetuate stigma against people with addiction (PWA) at the state, county, and municipal levels. The research confirms that every jurisdiction surveyed maintains laws that promote stigma, making law a "powerful mediator" of health inequities.

The Farley Center State Policy Director, Lauren S. Hughes, MD, MPH, MSc, MHCDs, FAAFP, was the subject of a recent [KFF Health News "Bill of the Month" article](#) after an emergency car accident led to a \$64,000 bill after an overnight stay at an out-of-network hospital. Dr. Hughes details her frustrating, months-long experience navigating insurance denials and the limitations of the No Surprises Act.

Farley Center faculty had a formative role in developing and continue to advise the National Academy of Medicine's (NAM) State Health Policy Fellowship, which [was recently awarded](#) to **Kristina Wilson, MD, MPH, Associate Professor of Clinical Practice in Orthopedics at CU Anschutz**. The NAM fellowship places health professionals in state executive and legislative offices to develop and implement state health policies. In this, the second year of the pilot fellowship program, the Farley Center hosts and provides mentorship to the Colorado fellow while continuing to advise and participate in strategic planning meetings for the fellowship overall.

What We're Reading

Colorado State Policy & Election

["These students give us hope": 20 years of rural medicine training](#) from the Anschutz newsroom highlights work from friend of the Farley Center, Mark Deutchmann, MD, on the rural medicine track.

[How Medicaid cuts will hurt Colorado families caring for adult children with disabilities](#) from the Colorado Sun reports that proposed Medicaid cuts of up to 10% will affect 8,600 people with developmental disabilities and their caregivers, who warn the move will increase long-term costs.

[Colorado governor says state Medicaid spending is out of control, proposes measures to rein it in](#) from the Colorado Sun explores Governor Polis's 2026-27 budget proposal which seeks to slash projected Medicaid spending growth by more than half.

[Supporters of Propositions MM and LL declare victory](#) from Colorado Public Radio explains Propositions MM and LL, which will increase taxes on wealthy households (earning over \$300,000) to fully fund free school meals for all public school students.

[Rural counties face challenges urban ones don't with or without the loss of SNAP benefits](#), from the Colorado Sun highlights that rural counties face greater challenges in food security due to long distances and limited pantry capacity.

Federal Health Policy & Medicare

[Tracking key HHS public health policy actions under the Trump administration](#) from KFF Health News shows a useful list describing health policy actions from January 20 to present.

[Medicare beneficiaries are not luddites](#) from KFF Health News notes that a large majority of Medicare beneficiaries already use digital health tools and are receptive to greater health technology use.

[Congress and the executive branch and health policy 101](#) from KFF Health News provides a foundational overview of the federal government's role in health policy, detailing the functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

Prevention & Behavioral Health

[Doctor Mike wants to fix distrust in medicine](#) from STAT features a family medicine physician who started a YouTube channel in 2017 to combat misinformation on social media and emphasized that institutions need to communicate effectively online to rebuild public trust.

[Young U.S. men among the loneliest](#) from Axios highlights Gallup data showing a rise in loneliness, particularly among men, with fewer reporting a large number of close friends compared to previous generations.

[From narcans to gun silencers, opioid settlement cash pays law enforcement tabs](#) from KFF Health News investigation found that while most of the \$54 billion in national opioid settlement funds is going to treatment, over \$61 million has been spent on law enforcement purchases, like guns and vehicles.

[Traumatic spinal cord injury and subsequent risk of developing chronic cardiovascular, neurologic, psychiatric, and endocrine disorders](#) from JAMA Network Open found that meeting at least two lifestyle recommendations (e.g., exercise, diet) was associated with a lower prevalence of multiple chronic conditions in older adults, emphasizing the role of lifestyle in mitigating disease.

The Farley Center's November health policy journal club covered pharmaceutical policy and reforms, with a focus on prescription drug affordability. 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 with any questions or comments about Farley's Features and our work in general.



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