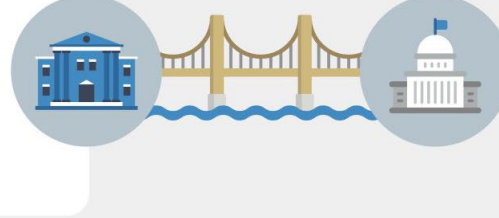


Farley's Features: September 26

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,

Recently, health policy work in Colorado and the United States has faced several serious setbacks. The passage of the federal budget reconciliation bill has had significant reverberations in Colorado's state budget, necessitating a special session about which we provided an update on September 8. We spoke with nearly 60 members of our campus community about the session, and how Colorado lawmakers resolved much (but not all) of the budget shortfall.

Additionally, changing recommendations and guidelines from federal health agencies have necessitated swift, decisive action from Colorado's health agencies allowing for pharmacies to vaccinate without a prescription. Additionally, a summit convened by the Rose Family Foundation among vaccine advocates and experts (attended by our director Shale Wong, MD, MSPH) sought to determine critical next steps.

This month, Vanessa Case, MS-CEP, MSHA, and I were excited to attend Public Health in the Rockies, presenting a 90-minute workshop on Messaging for Health Policy Change as well as a poster session on our Rural Futures project. We appreciated the passion and engagement from more than 40 of our public health colleagues attending the workshop, nearly all of whom had worked on a health policy issue.

Although our challenges continue to mount, we are heartened to see that experts in Colorado and nationwide continue to advocate for whole health for all.

Best,
Alison Reidmohr, MA
Communications Officer, Farley Health Policy Center

Recent Work and Publications



September 10-12, Farley Center faculty, staff, and partners attended the **Starfield Summit IX: Vitality Signs**, in Crystal City, Virginia. There, they had in-depth discussions with a variety of experts on how health systems might better understand patients' whole health, inclusive of mental, emotional, and social well being. Pictured from the Farley Center Vitality Signs team are Larry Green, MD, Ally Costello, MD, MBA, Stephanie Gold, MD and Doug Fernald, MA. Farley Center Steering Committee Member, Glen Mays, PhD, MPH, also attended the conference and is pictured in the photo.

Lauren S. Hughes, MD, MPH, MSc, MHCDS, FAAFP, State Policy Director of the Farley Health Policy Center, and Stephanie Gold, MD, FAAFP, scholar at the Farley Health Policy Center, have published several papers and reports recently in their respective roles on the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Standing Committee on Primary Care. Dr. Hughes is co-chair of the committee, Dr. Gold is a fellow on the committee. They are co-authors of [a discussion paper](#), "Implementing High-Quality Primary Care in 2025: Key Policy Priorities," and [a consensus study report](#), "Building a Workforce to Develop and Sustain Interprofessional Primary Care Teams," both published August 2025. More recently, they co-authored [a consensus study report](#), "Response to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services CY 2026 Physician Fee Schedule and Other Changes to Part B Payment and Coverage Policies Proposed Rule," published September 2025 by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.



Farley Center faculty and staff hosted a table at this year's Anschutz Campus Block Party, playing health policy jeopardy for prizes. We introduced ourselves to new potential partners and learners on campus, and had a great time doing so. Pictured here, see our Center Coordinator, Vanessa Reeves, MA, managing the Farley Center booth!

Partner Highlights

The Department of Family Medicine (DFM) will be holding the next in their endowed lectureship series on Wednesday, November 12, "Finding Meaning in Medicine" presented by Edward MacPhee, MD, and Amy Sholler Dreier, PhD. All are welcome from both on and off campus for this hybrid-style event. Please share within your networks and register to attend. [Here is the full event web page for further information and registration.](#)

Several weeks ago, our partners with the Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative responded following a local shooting at Evergreen High School with several timely, useful resources. Visit [their LinkedIn post](#) for more information and follow their page to keep up to date with their firearm injury prevention research.

What We're Reading

Behavioral Health

[More Colorado kids Sought Mental Health Support This Summer Than in Past Years](#)

from the Colorado Sun describes a 26% uptick in children showing up at the emergency department at Children's Hospital because of mental health challenges between June and July this year compared with the same timeframe last year.

[Colorado's Youth Suicide Rate Hits 17-year Low. But Experts Say Mental Health Struggles Persist](#) from the Denver Post provides good news (and caution) from the state's data on youth suicide.

[Why Are Suicide Rates Among the Oldest Coloradans Three Times Higher Than Teenagers?](#) from the Colorado Sun shows the elevated risk of suicide for older Coloradans.

[CU Anschutz Receives \\$50M Challenge Gift to Transform Mental Health Care](#) from the Anschutz news room describes a new mental health collaborative to be headquartered in the Anschutz Health Sciences building.

State Public Health and Injury Prevention

[Colorado Issues Orders Allowing People to Get a COVID Vaccination This Year Without a Prescription](#) from the Colorado Sun discusses Colorado's response to changing vaccine policy at the federal level.

[Teachers, Farmers, Advocates Urge Colorado Voters to Approve New Funding for School Meals and Food Stamps](#) from CPR describes two voter initiatives to fund universal school meals in Colorado.

[Evergreen High School Shooter's Online Footprint Reflects New Wave of Extremism. Experts Say](#) from the Denver Post describes an online "nihilist network" that glorified other mass shooters that may have informed Desmond Holly, the suspect in the Evergreen High School shooting.

Federal Health Policy

[The Crisis at CDC. Explained](#) from Stat News is a six-minute explainer summarizing Susan Monarez' resignation as CDC Director.

[Expiring Subsidy Could Leave Tens of Thousands in Colorado Without Health Insurance. Polis Warns Congressional Delegation](#) from Colorado Public Radio describes the downstream effects of expiring tax credits for Affordable Care Act marketplace plans.

[Trump's Medicaid Cuts Were Aimed at 'Able-Bodied Adults.' Hospitals Say Kids Will Be Hurt.](#) from KFF Health News explores the billions in lost revenue the Children's Hospital Association says it stands to lose as a result of the budget reconciliation bill.

Health Care Policy & Reform

[Why Is Having a Baby So Expensive in the US?](#) from KFF News is a five-minute video covering the cost of labor and delivery in the U.S., including possible policy solutions.

[Colorado Hospitals Provided \\$141 Million in Charity Care in First Quarter — Up 26% From Last Year](#) from the Denver Post gives an update on charity care benchmarks in the state.

[Instead of Selling, Some Rural Hospitals Band Together To Survive](#) from KFF Health News demonstrates innovative collaboration among hospitals in rural North Dakota.

State Budget

[Liberal Groups Want to Change Colorado's Income Tax Structure. Can They Get Their Proposal Before Voters?](#) from the Colorado Sun describes a current effort led by the Bell Policy Center to overcome Colorado's ongoing funding shortages.

[What the Colorado Legislature Did During its Special Session to Tackle a \\$750M Budget Hole](#) in the Colorado Sun gives an overview of cuts made in August to address budget shortfalls.

[Colorado Governor Cuts Spending on Medicaid, Higher Education and Grants to Plug \\$750M Hole in State Budget](#) from the Colorado Sun describes cuts from the executive branch.

The [FY 2025-26 HCPF Budget Reductions Fact Sheet](#) published by HCPF details what services will be reduced or cut according to corresponding budget reductions.

The Farley Center's August health policy journal club discussed how Medicare sets payments for physicians and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation's Strategy to Make America Healthy Again. See all readings available at the [health policy journal club web page](#).

Subscribe to Farley's Features

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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