

AMDPA 2026 Scientific Session Program

June 5-6, 2026 | Mayor Joyce Ferguson Civic Center
212 West Polk Ave, West Memphis, AR

Theme: The New Reconstruction of Rural Healthcare: Rebuilding the Workforce and Advancing Quality Care by Centering Providers, Patients, and Community Voice

Friday, June 5, 2026

Pre-Conference

1:00-3:00 PM

East Arkansas Family Health Center - Site Tour

900 North 7th Street, West Memphis, AR

5:00-6:00 PM

AMDPA Annual Business Meeting & Election of Officers

6:00-7:00 PM

2026 AMDPA Scientific Welcome Reception

7:00-8:00 PM

The New Reconstruction of Rural Healthcare: Rebuilding the Workforce and Advancing Quality Care by Centering Providers, Patients, and Community Voice

Kenya Eddings, MPH — Director, Arkansas Minority Health Department

Mandy Thomas — Health Center Manager, DHP Administration, Arkansas Department of Health

Sharanda Williams, MA, BA — Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, UAMS College of Medicine

Mayor Marco McClendon — 13th Mayor, West Memphis, Arkansas

Description: Examines strategies to strengthen rural health systems by investing in the workforce, improving care delivery, and elevating the voices of providers, patients, and communities in shaping sustainable solutions.

Saturday, June 6, 2026

8:00-9:15 AM

Closing the Cancer Gap in Rural America: Screening, Access, and Survival (Breakfast Session)

Ronda Henry Tillman, MD, UAMS — Muriel Balsam Kohn Chair in Breast Surgical Oncology; Professor & Executive Vice-Chair, Department of Surgery, College of Medicine; Division Chief, Breast Surgical Oncology; Director of Health Initiative and Disparities Research, Department of Surgery; Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Jonathan Laryea, MD — Professor of Surgery and Chief of the Division of Colon & Rectal Surgery, Department of Surgery, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Karen Crowell, MD — Physician Educator and Clinical Coordinator, Department of Surgery, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Olivia Wilson, MS, CHES — Project Director, Office of Health Initiatives and Disparities Research, Division of Breast Surgical Oncology, Department of Surgery, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Susan Ward Jones, MD — Chief Executive Officer, East Arkansas Family Health Center

Description: Improving early detection, access, and outcomes for cancer in rural communities.

9:20-10:05 AM

The State of Rural Oral Health: Access, Workforce, and Community Realities

Caleb Stanton — Executive Director, Arkansas Oral Health Coalition

Marie Walsh, DDS — Dentist, East Arkansas Family Health Center

Description: Explores oral health's impact on chronic disease and integration into care.

10:05-10:20 AM

Break

10:20-11:05 AM

The Impact of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in Rural Healthcare

Lanita S. Shaverd, PharmD — Moderator; Chief Executive Officer, Community Health Centers of Arkansas, Inc.

Susan Ward Jones, MD — Chief Executive Officer, East Arkansas Family Health Center
Sandra Brown, RN — Chief Executive Officer, Jefferson Comprehensive Care System, Inc.
Allan Nichols — Chief Executive Officer, Mainline Health Systems, Inc.
Description: Highlights FQHCs as access points and drivers of integrated care.

11:10-11:55 AM

At the Frontlines of Care: The Role of Pharmacists in Rural Healthcare Delivery

Marlene Battle, PharmD — Moderator; President, AMDPA
Freda Barnett, PharmD — Pharmacist
Dewitt Hill, PharmD — Pharmacist, East Arkansas Family Health Center
Description: Explores pharmacist roles in chronic care, prevention, and coordination.

11:55 AM-1:00 PM

Good Health Doesn't Happen: How Barbershops Are Changing Men's Health

Tiffany F. Haynes, PhD — Associate Professor, Department of Health Behavior and Health Education; Assistant Dean for Culture and Engagement
Jennifer Coopwood —
Justin Johnson — Barbershop Owner
Timmy Perry — Barbershop Owner
Description: Explores how trusted community spaces like barbershops are helping advance men's health by promoting prevention, health education, screening awareness, and stronger connections to care.

1:00-1:45 PM

Birthing Equity in Rural America: Strengthening Maternal Care Across the Continuum

William Greenfield, MD, MBA — Professor, Obstetrics & Gynecology, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
Kay Chandler, MD — Arkansas Surgeon General; Women's Health Medical Director, DHA Family Health | ADH
Description: Strategies to improve maternal health outcomes in rural communities.

1:50-2:35 PM

When the Hospital Closes: The Ripple Effect on Rural Health and Community Survival

Shaletha Jones, MD — Hospitalist, Ouachita County Medical Center
Glenda P. Harper, PhD, RN — President & CEO, Ouachita County Medical Center
Description: Examines the impact of rural hospital closures and sustainability strategies.

2:35-2:50 PM

Break

2:50-3:35 PM

Reconstructing Cardiovascular Care in Rural America: Advancing Prevention, Access, and Outcomes

Anthony Fletcher, MD — President, Association of Black Cardiologists
Description: Interprofessional approaches to reducing cardiovascular disease.