



DEPARTMENT OF  
**PUBLIC HEALTH &  
HUMAN SERVICES**

# 2026 Conference Agenda

Tuesday, October 6, 2026

9:00 — 12:00 p.m.      Vendor Set-Up

9:00 — 12:00 p.m.      Registration  
*Registration Table*

*Immanuel Living Room*      Silent Auction Opens

12:30 — 1:00 p.m.      **Welcome**  
*Blue Cross Blue Shield Ballroom*      Tessa Bailly, Aging Services Bureau Chief, Senior and Long-Term Care Division, DPHHS  
Lindsey Carter, Senior and Long-Term Care Administrator, DPHHS

1:00 — 2:30 p.m.      **Keynote Session**  
*Blue Cross Blue Shield Ballroom*      **Fundraising that Fits: Smart Strategies for Busy Leaders**  
Kim Phillips, Director, Portage Zhang Senior Center and President of the Michigan Association of Senior Centers

2:30 — 2:45 p.m.      Break

2:45 — 4:00 p.m.      Break-Out Sessions

*Angel Care Breakout Room*      **Creating Hope: The Power of Respite for Caregivers**  
Susan Moore, RN, FCN, Dementia Navigator, Logan Health and President, Flathead Respite Care

*EPAGA Home Care Breakout Room*      **Engaging Aging Adults in Recreation**  
Tess Sneeringer, Recreation Program Manager, City of Missoula

*Heart to Heart Home Care Breakout Room*      **Big Sky Waiver Overview and Updates**  
Catherine Edmisten, Big Sky Waiver Section Supervisor, Senior and Long-Term Care Division, DPHHS

4:00 — 5:00 p.m.      **General Session**  
*Blue Cross Blue Shield Ballroom*      **Sustainable Solutions for Senior Care: Opportunities in Montana's Five-year Rural Healthcare Transformation Grant**  
Rachel Fox, RHTP Grant Program Manager, DPHHS



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# 2026 Conference Agenda

Wednesday, October 7, 2026

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|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6:30 — 7:30 a.m.<br><i>Blue Cross Blue Shield Ballroom</i> | <b>Thai Chi for Arthritis Class Demonstration (Come one Come all)</b><br>Melissa Dale, Arthritis and Falls Prevention Program Manager, Public Health and Safety Division, DPHHS<br>Erin Bley, Health Education Specialist, Public Health and Safety Division, DPHHS                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 7:30 — 8:00 a.m.<br><i>Registration Table</i>              | <b>Registration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <i>Immanuel Living Room</i>                                | <b>Silent Auction Opens</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 8:00 — 8:30 a.m.<br><i>Blue Cross Blue Shield Ballroom</i> | <b>Welcome</b><br>Tessa Bailly, Aging Services Bureau Chief, Senior and Long-Term Care Division, DPHHS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 8:30 — 9:30 a.m.<br><i>Blue Cross Blue Shield Ballroom</i> | <b>Keynote Session:</b><br><b>Rustler, Swindlers, and Scammers: Protecting Big Sky Country from Modern-Day Outlaws</b><br>Clark Flynt-Barr, Government Affairs Director, AARP's Financial Security Team                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 9:30 — 9:45 a.m.                                           | Break                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 9:45 — 11:15 a.m.                                          | Break-Out Sessions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>Angle Care Breakout Room</i>                            | <b>Reimaging Congregate Dinning with the Voucher Program</b><br>Ria Overholt, Community Services Director, Missoula Aging Services                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>EPAGA Home Care Breakout Room</i>                       | <b>Beyond the Checkbox: Overcoming Pitfalls in Medicaid Eligibility, Documentation, and Maintenance</b><br>Jennifer Fox, Policy Bureau Chief, Human and Community Services Division, DPHHS<br>Kimberly Lamb, Specialized Medicaid Program Manager, Human and Community Services Division, DPHHS<br>Thresa Broad, Medicaid Program Manager, Human and Community Services Division, DPHHS<br>Jill Vessar, Client Service Supervisor, Human and Community Services Division, DPHHS |
| <i>Heart to Heart Home Care Breakout Room</i>              | <b>A 101 Approach to Researching and Writing Grants</b><br>Gayle Carlson, Chair, Governor's Advisory Council on Aging and former Executive Director of the Montana Food Bank Network                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |



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Wednesday, October 7, 2026

11:15 – 11:30 a.m. Break

11:30 – 1:00 p.m. **Centenarian Luncheon sponsored by AARP**  
*Blue Cross Blue Shield Ballroom* Welcome  
Gayle Carlson, Chair, Governor's Advisory Council on Aging

1:30 – 2:45 p.m. Break-Out Sessions

*Angle Care Breakout Room* **Subrecipient Grant Management of Federal and State Funds**  
Nate Thomas, Fiscal Bureau Chief, Senior and Long-Term Care Division, DPHHS  
Tessa Bailly, Aging Services Bureau Chief, Senior and Long-Term Care Division, DPHHS

*EPAGA Home Care Breakout Room* **Palliative Care for All Montanans: From City Streets to Country Roads**  
Carissa Taylor, NP – BC ACHPN

*Heart to Heart Home Care Breakout Room* **Ask the Expert: An Elder Law Q and A**  
Susan Gecho Gobbs, Former Contract Attorney, Aging and Disability Legal Assistance Program

2:45 – 3:00 p.m. Break

3:00 – 4:15 p.m. **General Session**  
*Blue Cross Blue Shield Ballroom* **Bright Minds, BOLD Ideas: Community Solutions to Dementia**  
Facilitator: Kyla Rock, Alzheimer's and Dementia Program Manager, Public Health and Safety Division, DPHHS  
Jennifer Crowley, The Life Care Experts, Kalispell  
Ria Overholt, Missoula Aging Services  
Kathy Linton, Fireweed Human Performance, Helena  
Carissa Taylor and Emily Sweeney, Music and Memory Collaborative, Helena  
Sara Hammel, Mountain View of Cascadia, Eureka  
Deb Lessmeier and Susan Moore, Logan Health, Kalispell  
Maja Pederson and Samantha Morigeau, UM and CSKT Tribal Health

5:15 – 5:00 p.m. **Awarding of Advisory Council on Aging Mini Grants**  
*Blue Cross Blue Shield Ballroom* Governor's Advisory Council on Aging



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# 2026 Conference Agenda

Thursday, October 8, 2026

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| 6:30 – 7:30 a.m.<br><i>Blue Cross Blue Shield<br/>Ballroom</i>  | <b>SAIL Class Demonstration (Come one Come all)</b><br>Melissa Dale, Arthritis and Falls Prevention Program Manager, Public Health and Safety Division, DPHHS<br>Erin Bley, Health Education Specialist, Public Health and Safety Division, DPHHS                      |
| 7:30 – 8:00 a.m.<br><i>Registration Table</i>                   | <b>Registration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <i>Immanuel Living Room</i>                                     | <b>Silent Auction Opens</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 8:00 – 8:30 a.m.<br><i>Blue Cross Blue Shield<br/>Ballroom</i>  | <b>Welcome</b><br>Tessa Bailly, Aging Services Bureau Chief, Senior and Long-Term Care Division, DPHHS                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.<br><i>Blue Cross Blue Shield<br/>Ballroom</i> | <b>General Session:</b><br><b>Awakening Possibility: A Journey Toward Better Brain Health</b><br>Melanie Williams, Program Director, Alzheimer's Association, Montana<br>Kyla Rock, Alzheimer's and Dementia Program Manager, Public Health and Safety Division, DPHHS |
| 10:00 a.m.                                                      | <b>Silent Auction Closes</b> (Winners can pick up items and pay by cash, check, or credit card)                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 10:00 – 10:15 a.m.                                              | Break                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 10:15 – 11:30 a.m.                                              | Break-Out Sessions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <i>Angle Care<br/>Breakout Room</i>                             | <b>Building Capacity in Montana Long-Term Supports and Services</b><br>Denise Brunett, Community Services Bureau Chief, Senior and Long-Term Care Division, DPHHS                                                                                                      |
| <i>EPAGA Home Care<br/>Breakout Room</i>                        | <b>Older Americans Act Programmatic Overview</b><br>Tessa Bailly, Aging Services Bureau Chief, Senior and Long-Term Care Division, DPHHS<br>Courtney Hoskins, OAA Consultant                                                                                           |
| <i>Heart to Heart<br/>Home Care<br/>Breakout Room</i>           | <b>Vulnerable Adult Exploitation in Montana</b><br>Trevor Tangen, Adult Protective Services Bureau Chief, Senior and Long-Term Care Division, DPHHS<br>Jeremy Alvarez, Major Case Agent, Department of Justice                                                         |
| 11:30 – 1:00 p.m.                                               | Lunch and Closing Remarks                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

Travel Safely!