



2026 AOHC Fall Conference

September 21-23, 2026

Embassy Suites Dublin

5100 Upper Metro Place, Dublin, OH 43017

Conference Agenda

Leading Ohio Public Health Forward

The 2026 AOHC Fall Conference is Ohio's premier educational and networking event for local public health leaders, bringing together health commissioners, leadership teams, medical directors, and public health professionals to address the most pressing issues affecting local public health practice. Through plenary presentations, panel discussions, and concurrent educational sessions, participants will explore emerging public health challenges, strengthen leadership and workforce competencies, examine evidence-based policies and practices, and gain practical strategies to improve organizational performance, financial sustainability, emergency readiness, and community health outcomes. The conference emphasizes innovation, collaboration, and leadership development while providing opportunities to learn from state and national experts, share best practices, and strengthen Ohio's public health system.

What You'll Learn

- Current public health issues, policy updates, and emerging trends impacting Ohio's local health departments.
- Practical leadership, workforce, and communication strategies to strengthen your organization.
- Innovative tools—including artificial intelligence, data, and quality improvement—to enhance public health practice.
- Effective approaches to financial stewardship, organizational sustainability, and operational excellence.
- Evidence-based strategies to address today's public health priorities.
- Actionable ideas and partnerships you can bring back to your health department to improve community health.

Why Attend the AOHC Fall Conference?

Connect with Ohio's public health leaders while gaining practical solutions you can implement immediately.

You'll Experience

- Nationally recognized keynote and plenary speakers
- Practical leadership and workforce development strategies
- Legislative and policy updates impacting local public health
- Artificial intelligence and emerging public health technologies
- Networking with colleagues from all 111 Ohio health jurisdictions
- Continuing education opportunities across multiple professions

Conference Highlights

- Major General Gregg F. Martin, US Army (Retired)
- Statewide AI Readiness Panel
- 20 Years of Smoke-Free Ohio
- ODH Leadership Update
- Children's Mental Health Keynote

Conference Agenda

Monday, September 21, 2026

10:00 AM	AOHC Board Meeting
10:00 AM – 5:30 PM	Registration
	New Health Commissioner Workshop/Luncheon
	New Health Commissioner Training
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM	<i>Melanie Schott, Director of Operations and Member Services, AOHC</i>
	Leading Through Conflict: Strategic Resolution, Negotiation, and Deescalation
	<i>Vicki Taylor, BS, MA, Health Commissioner, Ashland County Health Department</i>
1:00 – 1:15 PM	Welcome
	<i>Melissa Howell, MS, MBA, MPH, RN, REHS, Health Commissioner, Greene County Public Health, Vice President, AOHC Board of Directors and Fall Conference Chair</i>
1:15 – 2:15 PM	Plenary I - 20 Years Smoke-Free: Lessons from a Landmark Public Health Campaign
	<i>Susan Jagers, JD, (Moderator), Executive Director, AOHC</i>
	<i>Bill Franks, MPH, College of Public Health and Health Sciences, Kent State University</i>
	<i>Tracy Sabetta, BA, Principal, Initiative Consulting</i>
	<i>Teresa Long, MD, MPH, Health Commissioner (Retired) Columbus Public Health, Adjunct Professor, OSU College of Public Health</i>
2:15 – 3:15 PM	Plenary II – Strengthening Vaccine Policy and Public Confidence: Applying Evidence-Based Messaging to Address Vaccine Hesitancy
	<i>Julie Sweetland, PhD, Senior Advisor, FrameWorks Institute</i>
3:15 – 3:45 PM	Break

Conference Agenda

3:45 – 5:00 PM

Plenary III - Four Short Dynamic Talks

One – Driving Community Engagement and Workforce Training with Academic and Community Partnerships

Paula Song, PhD, Dean, College of Public Health, The Ohio State University

Two – Managing the Unexpected: The Role of Home-Based Primary Care programs, Long-Term Care Facilities and Homeless Service Providers during the 2017-2018 California Wildfires

Aram Dobalian, PhD, JD, MPH, Professor and Chair, Health Services Management and Policy, Center for Public Health Practice, The Ohio State University

Three – Beyond Hesitancy: How Policy Design — Not Just Persuasion — Shapes Vaccine Uptake

Simon F. Haeder, PhD, MPA, MA, Associate Professor of Public Health, College of Public Health, The Ohio State University

Four – When Summer Doesn't End: How City Lights and Urban Heat Are Extending Ohio's Mosquito Season

Megan Meuti, PhD, Associate Professor of Entomology, The Ohio State University

5:00 – 6:30 PM

Opening Dinner

6:30 – 7:30 PM

Plenary Session IV - Statewide AI Readiness, Gaps, and the Path Forward

Melanie Schott, BA, (Moderator) – Director of Operations and Member Services, AOHC

Jared Warner, MEM, REHS, Health Commissioner, Highland County Health Department

Vicki Taylor, BS, MA, Health Commissioner, Ashland County Health Department

Erik Balster, MPH, REHS, Health Commissioner, Butler County General Health District

7:30 PM

Adjourn

Conference Agenda

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

7:30 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration
9:00 – 10:10 AM	AOHC Business Meeting Ballots open at the end of this session.
10:10 – 10:15 AM	Welcome <i>Julianne Nesbit, MPH, REHS, Health Commissioner, Clermont County Public Health, President, AOHC Board of Directors</i>
10:15 – 11:00 AM	Ohio Department of Health Update <i>Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, MBA, Director of Health, Ohio Department of Health</i>
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Plenary Session V – BIPOLAR GENERAL: My Forever War with Mental Illness <i>Major General Gregg F. Martin, PhD, US Army (Retired)</i>
12:00 – 12:30 PM	Break/View Exhibits
12:30 – 1:30 PM	Lunch ▪ Local Public Health Services Collaborative Board of Managers Meeting/Lunch ▪ Medical Director University Luncheon

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Tuesday, September 22, 2026

1:30 – 3:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions

A. From Conflict to Collaboration: Practical Workforce Strategies for Today's Public Health Leaders

Linda Pataky, SHRM, Human Resource Manager, Lorain County Public Health

B. Implementing a Novel Mental Health Awareness Training within Local Health Departments and the Community

Diana Patel, PhD, Project Coordinator

Kayla Varney, MPH, Research Assistant, Kent State University

C. Waste in Plain Sight: QI Wins Hidden in Everyday Administrative Processes

Brad Hollingsworth, MS, PE, Hollingsworth Consulting LLC (partnering with the Public Health Services Council of Ohio)

D. 2026 AOHC Statewide Salary Survey Results and Trend Analysis (Panel Discussion)

Garrett Guillozet, MPA, REHS, Health Commissioner, Delaware Public Health District

Jared M. Warner, MEM, REHS, Health Commissioner, Highland County Health Department

Tyler Briggs, MPH, Assistant Director of Health Promotion and Prevention, Wood County Health Department

3:00 – 3:30 PM

Break/View Exhibits

Conference Agenda

3:30 – 5:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions

E. Data-Driven Policy Analysis: A Practical Framework for Controversial Public Health Issues

Anne Goon, MS, RD, LD, Executive Director, Public Health Services Council of Ohio

Annabelle M. Fisher, Public Health Student, Intern, Bowling Green University

F. Operationalizing Fundamental Financial Benchmarks for LHD Success

Noah Stuby, MBA, Greene County Public Health

G. From Now to Next: A Modern Succession Strategy

Julianne Nesbit, MPH, REHS, Health Commissioner; Clermont County Public Health

Tara Jimison, DNP, RN, TTS, Director of Nursing; Clermont County Public Health

Maalini Vijayan, MPH, REHS, Assistant Health Commissioner of Community Health Services, Clermont County Public Health

H. The Human Side of Leadership: Retaining Talent and Inspiring Performance

Lisa M. Russell, PHR, Senior Learning & Development Consultant, Kane Learning

5:00 PM

Adjourn

5:30 – 7:00 PM

President's Reception (All Registrants Welcome) Smoke-free Ohio 20 yr. Anniversary

Conference Agenda

Medical Director University

12:15 – 1:15 PM	Lunch and Networking
1:15 – 2:00 PM	Session I - The New Era of Cancer Screening: Emerging Technologies and Public Health Practice <i>Norah L Crossnohere, PhD, MHS, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine, The Ohio State University College of Medicine</i> <i>Meaghan Costello, MD, Primary Care Research Fellow, The Ohio State University</i>
2:00 – 3:45 PM	Session II - Shared Vision: What's Ahead in Public Health <i>Tabitha Jones-McKnight, DO, MPH, CPE, Assistant Medical Director, Ohio Department of Health (ODH)</i> <i>John Kennedy, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Ohio Department of Behavioral Health</i> <i>Dana Vallangeon, MD, DABFM, FASAM, DipABLM - Assistant Medical Director, Ohio Department of Medicaid</i>
3:45 – 4:00 PM	Break or View Exhibits
4:00 – 5:30 PM	Session III – Employing the next Public Health Generation: Academic Partnerships between Local Health Departments and Colleges of Public Health <i>Paula Song, PhD, MHSA, MA, Dean, College of Public Health, Professor, Health Services Management and Policy, The Ohio State University</i> <i>Sonia Alemagno, PhD, Dean, Professor Health Policy & Management, Kent State University</i> <i>*Additional speaker pending.</i>
5:30 PM	Adjourn
5:30 – 7:00 PM	President's Reception (All Registrants Welcome) Smoke-free Ohio 20 yr. Anniversary

Conference Agenda

Wednesday, September 23, 2026

7:30 AM – 12:00 PM	Registration
7:30 – 9:00 AM	AOHC District Concurrent Meetings
9:15 AM – 10:15 AM	AOHC Legislative Update <i>Greg Kesterman, MPA, REHS, Health Commissioner, Hamilton County Public Health</i> <i>Adriane Casalotti, MPH, MSW, Chief of Government and Public Affairs, NACCHO</i> <i>Victoria Van de Vate, MPP, Director of Government Affairs, NACCHO</i>
10:15 – 10:45 AM	Break/View Exhibits
10:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Plenary VI – Promoting Mental Wellness Before a Concern or Crisis <i>Ariana Hoet, PhD, Executive Clinical Director, The Kids Mental Health Foundation</i>
12:00 – 12:30 PM	View Exhibits: Ballots Closed
12:30 – 2:30 PM	Lunch and Awards Ceremony <i>Business Session</i>
2:30 PM	Adjourn

Continuing Education

Medical: This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of the University of Cincinnati and the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners. The University of Cincinnati is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The University of Cincinnati designates this live activity for a maximum of *12.00 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*. Physicians should claim only the credits commensurate with the extent of their participation.

Nursing: *12.75 AMA PRA Category Credit™* can be submitted to satisfy the nursing CNE contact hours requirements.

Registered Environmental Health Specialists: 14.75 continuing education has been approved for the Registered Environmental Health Specialists through the Ohio Department of Health.

Certified Health Education Specialists: 13.75 continuing education is being sought for the Certified Health Education Specialists through the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing.

***AOHC has applied for these CEs at the relative agencies.**

Conference Sponsors

We are grateful to the organizations that partner with AOHC to support this conference. The most current list of sponsors will be available on the AOHC website and recognized throughout the conference.

AOHC Fall Conference Hotel

ROOM RATE DEADLINE IS SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2026

Conference Hotel	Embassy Suites 5100 Upper Metro Place Dublin, OH 43017 DIRECTIONS TO THE HOTEL
Conference Room Rate	\$149.00+Tax Single/Double occupancy (plus applicable state and local taxes)
To make reservations	Call 1-800-220-9219 Group Code: 93U or reserve your room through the AOHC/Embassy Suites website. BOOK YOUR HOTEL ROOM CLICK HERE FOR THE HOTEL TAX EXEMPT PROCEDURES
Travel Assistance:	Travel assistance is available through the CDC Workforce Development Grant. Eligible attendees may receive reimbursement for one hotel night at the Embassy Suites Dublin or mileage reimbursement up to \$200. To qualify for hotel reimbursement, reservations must be made at the Embassy Suites Dublin using the conference room block by August 30, 2026. Attendees who do not stay at the conference hotel may request mileage reimbursement at \$0.58 per mile, up to the \$200 maximum. A completed expense reimbursement form with mileage documentation must be submitted to AOHC. Expense forms will be available at the registration desk.

DEADLINE FOR ROOM RATE IS SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2026

AOHC Fall Conference Registration

Advance Registration Deadline is September 11, 2026

[REGISTER FOR FALL CONFERENCE](#)

Registration Fees:

	Advance		After September 11 and Onsite	
	Member*	Non-Member	Member*	Non-Member
Full Conference:	☐ \$250	☐ \$300	☐ \$280	☐ \$340
One Day Only:				
Mon only (9/21)	☐ \$80	☐ \$140	☐ \$115	☐ \$200
Tues only (9/22)	☐ \$140	☐ \$180	☐ \$155	☐ \$240
Wed only (9/23)	☐ \$100	☐ \$160	☐ \$135	☐ \$220

***The Member rate is applicable to all employees of Ohio local health departments and state agency staff (i.e., ODH).**

Registration Choices:

I will attend the New Health Commissioner Workshop on Monday at 10:00 AM (New HCs with less than 3 yrs experience only please): Yes ☐ No ☐

I will attend the Monday evening dinner*: Yes ☐ No ☐

Concurrent Sessions: Please select your concurrent sessions (not applicable if attending MDU):

Tuesday 1:30-3:00 PM (A-D) Circle first choice: A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

Tuesday 3:30-5:00 PM (E-H) Circle first choice: E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

I will attend Medical Director University (MDU) on Tuesday (Medical Directors only): Yes ☐ No ☐

I will attend the President's Reception Tuesday evening: Yes ☐ No ☐

I will attend Wednesday morning HOT breakfast and am NOT staying at the hotel: Yes ☐ No ☐

☐ Check here if you agree to share your contact information with sponsors and exhibitors.

Cancellation Policy: To qualify for a full refund of the registration fees, a written cancellation must be received by AOHC no later than **September 11, 2026**.

Questions: Please call: 614-781-9556 or email: aohc_2@aohc.net.

If you need assistance with your registration, please call our office or email Denise Ross at dross@aohc.net.