

# Health Highlights



Community Newsletter  
Spring 2026



Doug McCoy, CEO, Eastern Plumas Health Care

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PAYS OFF: H.R.1 CUTS NOT A THREAT TO EPHC

As a follow up to the video message on Medicaid cuts through the H.R.1 legislation delivered earlier this year, Doug McCoy, CEO, shared a positive report on the sustainability of Eastern Plumas Health Care.

Unlike many rural hospitals that are at high risk of closing, EPHC is thriving. "I'm very pleased to continue to report that EPHC is in a very good position. We have spent a lot of time over the last several years making sure that we're able to continue to provide services and grow services as we're going forward. Specifically in the last 90 days, we have taken a look at what the impacts are going to be for EPHC which are significant over the next 5 to 7 years," stated McCoy.

With a strategic plan already employed to mitigate these impacts, McCoy is pleased to report that starting in fiscal year 2028, EPHC has been able to

mitigate all of those cut reductions. "We can ensure that we don't have any service interruptions or issues going forward. We're very excited and I appreciate the work done by our board of directors and our leadership team," said McCoy.

With the addition of Senior Life Solutions, the rehabilitation program, and CalAIM Community Care, services keep expanding. McCoy stated, "We added seven new providers in 2025. So as part of our mitigation strategy, we are not reducing services, we're growing services."

He further stated, "Our mitigation strategy to offset those cuts does not come with the loss of any personnel or any impacts to any of the services we're currently providing"

How did EPHC accomplish this monumental feat? It was through a series of specific initiatives from

reestablishing different contracts for better pricing, leveraging technology, to reinstating MRI services that gave EPHC the ability to continue with their strategic growth plan.

The significant cuts anticipated for 2028 will not negatively impact operations for EPHC. "We have eliminated the risk for cut reductions, and we will be stronger than ever to be able to continue to service you and provide even more services as we're going forward into the future," said McCoy.

The video message can be viewed on [ephc.org](http://ephc.org), or by scanning the QR code below. The community is encouraged to contact Doug McCoy at [doug.mccoy@ephc.org](mailto:doug.mccoy@ephc.org) for any questions or concerns.



## THE BUSINESS OFFICE AT EPHC

The Business Office at Eastern Plumas Health Care plays a vital role in ensuring patients receive the financial guidance and administrative support they need to navigate their healthcare journey with confidence. Through a wide range of services, the department works hard to make healthcare more accessible, transparent, and patient-centered.

The Financial Services team assists community members with Medi-Cal applications, helping individuals obtain or maintain essential health coverage. They also guide patients through EPHC's Financial Assistance program, ensuring that cost is never a barrier to care. Each October, the team partners with Plumas Bank and Lombardi Insurance Solutions to host a Medicare seminar, offering community members a trusted place to ask questions about Medicare plans and coverage options. Additionally, staff provide clear patient estimates before services, helping remove the uncertainty around healthcare costs.

With 116 years of combined experience, the Billing Services and Cash Posting team focus on making payments and insurance processes straightforward. They bill insurance on behalf of patients, post payments promptly, and set up manageable payment plans when needed.

The Health Information Management department, backed by 39.5 years of experience, ensures medical records are accessible and accurate. They support the patient portal, process record requests, and verify that claims contain correct charges and diagnostic codes.

Human Resources oversees hiring and employee support, while Informatics provides essential technical expertise for EPHC's electronic medical records system. Administration, with 20 years of experience, works collaboratively to keep the organization running smoothly. Finally, the new Pre-Admit team ensures coverage is verified early, creating a seamless registration experience.

Together, these teams form the backbone of EPHC's commitment to exceptional service and compassionate care.

## WATERCOLOR WONDERS SPARKS CREATIVE CONNECTIONS



Left to right: Kathleen McCoy, Stephanie Gonzalez, Anne-Claire Benoit, Tessa Clawson, and Dennis McHale.

On a late afternoon in February, community members 65+ gathered at Broken Stick Arts & Crafts for a free watercolor class sponsored by EPHC's Senior Life Solutions program. The collaboration between Senior Life Solutions, Broken Stick Arts & Crafts, and instructed by local artist Tessa Clawson provided an opportunity to introduce the Senior Life Solutions program to older adults who might be experiencing feelings of sadness, frustration, low energy, apprehension, stress, and/or worry related to life changes that are often associated with aging or a chronic diagnosis.

"The watercolor class was created as a unique way of fostering connections, improving mental health, and finding personal fulfillment," said Kathleen McCoy, Program Director for Senior Life Solutions.

About a dozen community members and the Senior Life Solutions Team participated in the watercolor class which focused on expressionism and the creation of self-portraits. Color palettes were loaded with basic hues as instructor Tessa Clawson began the

class with instruction about the color wheel.

With a theme of self-expression and love, Valentine's chocolates, cookies, and sodas were shared with the group in between sessions of instruction and the process of creating art.

"By participating in these creative endeavors, older adults can find a sense of community and camaraderie, which can significantly enhance their sense of belonging," stated McCoy. "This, in turn, can help reduce feelings of loneliness or isolation, which are common concerns in senior populations."

McCoy plans to have other partnerships like the one with Broken Stick Arts & Crafts, as the program is a valuable resource to the community.

Anyone can make a referral to the program, self-referrals, provider referrals, or community consultation. For more information about this program call 530-832-6780 or visit [ephc.org](http://ephc.org) for more information about Senior Life Solutions.

## NEW POINT OF CARE ULTRASOUND GAME CHANGER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH

With the initiative to improve care delivery and patient outcomes from Donna Dorsey, ED Manager and the generous donation from the hospital Auxiliary, a state-of-the-art point of care ultrasound (POCUS) is now a reality for patient care.

“Unlike traditional imaging, POCUS provides real-time results at the bedside, reducing delays and improving access to care in our rural community,” said Dorsey. “It does not replace traditional ultrasound but is complementary to it.”

The game changer, a Mindray TE X Flex Edition Ultrasound System. It’s an advanced piece of equipment that provides clinicians a versatile tool tailored to a wide range of clinical scenarios, from routine examinations to more complex diagnostic challenges.

brings this capability to EPHC. Most of our physicians have had experience with ultrasound at other hospitals. It is a gradually developed skill, and with this machine available at EPHC ER, all our physicians now have this important tool available and can continue to develop their ultrasound skills,” exclaimed Dr. Paul Swanson, Emergency Physician and Director of the EPHC Emergency Department.

Since the acquisition of the POCUS, it has been Emergency Medicine Physician, Dr. William Mills who has the most experience with the machine. He was able to show a young woman with abdominal pain, who was 12 weeks pregnant, the beating heart of her fetus, reassuring her that her pregnancy was all right, and preventing the need for transfer to another facility.



Left to right: Will Strong, RN, Ashleigh Hilburn, RN, Donna Dorsey, RN, Paul Swanson, MD, Penny Holland, RN and Kellie Banks, RN..

The positive impact of using this technology is already evident. Without the POCUS, previous potential diagnosis may have had to be sent to Reno, but with this new system, physicians can now confirm/rule out issues keeping the patient local and expediting treatment.

“Point-of-care ultrasound has become universal for emergency physicians. Ultrasound is routinely used to help with the evaluation and treatment of a variety of common conditions. This state-of-the-art ultrasound machine

He can look for fluid around the heart which can be a cause of chest pain and shortness of breath and even determine an ectopic pregnancy, a life-threatening condition.

These are just a few examples of use, as many more of our emergency medicine physicians can attest that the POCUS has revolutionized healthcare delivery to EPHC by providing immediate, diagnostic imaging, reducing the need for patients to travel outside their community for specialized care.

## PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH



As your health care partner, EPHC is concerned about the growing number of measles cases in our surrounding counties in Northern California. Placer, Sacramento, and Shasta counties have each had reported cases during the first three months of 2026. EPHC wants to do everything we can to help prevent outbreaks in Plumas and Sierra County, especially within our District.

Measles is highly contagious, airborne, and can linger in the air for up to two hours after an infected person has left the area. The California Department of Public Health reports that roughly 90% of people who are unvaccinated and exposed to measles will contract the disease.

EPHC offers the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine at all of our clinics. We strongly encourage that any community member who has not had a vaccination receive one. Two vaccine doses provide 97% protection against measles and are an important defense to keep you and your family healthy. In addition, we supply other key vaccines to aid in your defense of other potential outbreaks.

Our mission is to help you remain as healthy as possible so along with vaccines we will continue our community outreach for preventative care such as annual mammograms, colon screenings, and blood pressure/diabetes management.

Thank you for helping us keep you safe and healthy in 2026!

**Doug McCoy, CEO**  
Eastern Plumas Health Care District

## SENIOR LIFE SOLUTIONS PROGRAM WELCOMES NEW THERAPIST

Eastern Plumas Health Care is pleased to welcome Stephanie Gonzales, Associate Clinical Social Worker (ACSW) as the new Therapist at the Senior Life Solutions program.

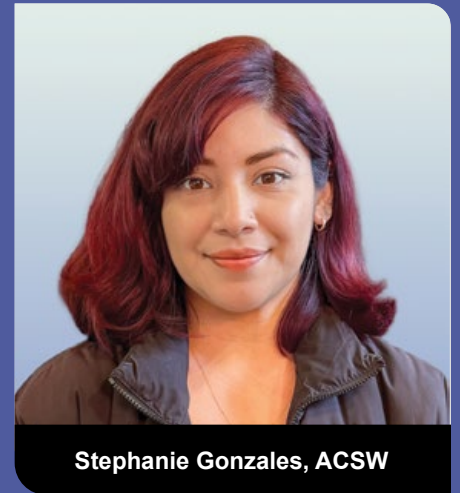
Stephanie Gonzales is a registered Associate Clinical Social Worker with the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. She earned her Master of Social Work degree from the University of Southern California. Her most recent employment was as a therapist at Reno Behavioral Hospital, where she provided individual and group therapy services to patients with acute mental health needs. Her experience includes clinical assessment, treatment planning, crisis intervention, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

As Therapist, she will be responsible

for providing therapeutic services for patients utilizing group, individual, and family therapy sessions. Additionally, Stephanie will focus on quality patient care and provision of services ordered by a physician.

Stephanie Gonzales said, "I'm so excited to work with SLS because of the commitment to fostering community and meaningful connection. I look forward to creating a safe and supportive space for individuals to feel seen, heard, and empowered. "

Stephanie is passionate about helping individuals build resilience, strengthen emotional well being, and create meaningful, lasting change. Outside of her practice, Stephanie enjoys spending time outdoors, journaling, and being with her



**Stephanie Gonzales, ACSW**

animals and husband finding balance and inspiration through the world around her.

For more information about Eastern Plumas Health Care 's Senior Life Solutions program, call (530) 832-6780 or visit [ephc.org](http://ephc.org).