

APRIL 8, 2026

# QIC & DON Regional Meeting

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Name



Position



Facility

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Welcome &  
Introductions

# Today's Agenda

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Quality Programs  
Overview & Update



BREAK



You Can Be a  
Change Agent



Adjourn – Opening  
Luncheon

# Quality Programs Overview

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# Rural Hospital Flexibility Program

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- **Federal cooperative agreement** distributed by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) creating the designation of the CAH model via the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.
- Each state is designated a grantee by the Governor. In MT, the grantee is DPHHS with the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) providing oversight. MHREF partners with OIG. Leslie Howe and Sadie Jones are the contacts at OIG.
- MHREF has been awarded the primary contract since the inception of the Flex program in 1999 and administers most of the Flex activities. OIG retains fiscal oversight; partners with the Public Health & Safety Division for operational improvement, population health improvement and EMS improvement activities; and is responsible for program evaluation and submissions to HRSA.



Quality Improvement & Infrastructure

Finance & Operations



Population Health

EMS



# A little bit more about Flex

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Flex = PIN = MBQIP which are all under the MHREF Quality Programs umbrella. Flex also has programming that is administered by DPHHS in the areas of Finance & Operations, Population Health and EMS.

Flex Data = MBQIP (9 measures)

Things not within our scope: staffing recruitment & retention, virtual access to conferences, behavioral health services, building QI infrastructure, eCQM, MBQIP reporting platforms

Things we do offer:

- Mentoring new QI staff – QI Cohorts
- Showing what other facilities are doing – Office Hours and Newsletter
- Education on data and usage – Office Hours and Site Visits

# DPHHS Update

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# DPHHS Staffing

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**Sadie Jones serves as the Flex Program Lead.**

**DPHHS partners within the Public Health & Safety Division include:**

Shari Graham (EMS)

Alyssa Johnson (Trauma Systems)

Jessica Kechely (Lactation Counseling)

Melissa Dale (Walk With Ease)



# DPHHS Flex Programming Update

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## **Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS)**

- 6 provider courses offered annually
- +1 additional course supported through carryover funding

## **Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC) Training**

- 15 scholarships for the 40-hour virtual certification

## **CLC Train-the-Trainer Program**

- 15 Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) participating

## **Annual Breastfeeding Collaborative**

- May 4–5, 2026 | Fairmont Hot Springs

## **Worksite Walk With Ease Program**

- 8 CAHs participating
- +2 additional CAHs through carryover funding
- 6 Tai Chi Leader Training scholarships funded through carryover



# DPHHS Flex Programming Update

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## **National CARES Registry Subscription**

-Maintained by Flex to support ongoing cardiac arrest data collection and reporting

## **EMS Service Manager Training**

-Annual in-person workshops

## **Time-Sensitive Illness and Injury (TSII) Quality Improvement Education**

- 3 annual TSII Emergency Care Provider (ECP) trainings utilizing EMSTS staff and SIM Montana contracts

-2 annual TSII trainings for EMS Medical Directors



# Flex EMS Supplemental

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## Background Information

- Montana Frontier EMS Academy is a comprehensive training initiative to strengthen Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in the vast frontier areas of our rural state through recruitment, retention, and educational strategies. The Montana Flex program, in collaboration with the Montana Office of Rural Health (MOHR) Area Health Education Centers (AHECs), and the Emergency Medical Services Trauma and Systems Section (EMSTS), will work to address the critical shortage of qualified EMS providers in underserved rural communities in Montana

## Current updates

- 6 MT EMS agencies involved
- Contract with SIM-MT to provide education for EMS providers at participating EMS agencies. The EMT Endorsement training course targets 6 strategic host agencies, facilitating regional collaboration by allowing neighboring providers to join the curriculum.
- *Just Culture* Workshop for EMS leaders with Matthew Streger in Helena June 2026



# MHREF Update

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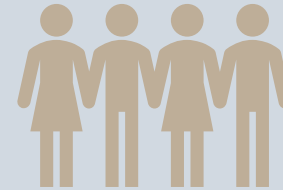
# Flex Hospital Impact – Finance & Operations

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## Financial Indicators Workshop

*13 CAH staff from 8 facilities participated*



## Conditions of Participation Webinar Series

*229 CAH staff from 41 facilities attended*

*76 RHC staff from 30 facilities attended*

# Flex Hospital Impact – Finance & Operations

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Lean Internship Project – work begins in June

- Applications closed 3/31
- 7 spots available
- Notification to selected facilities will be coming soon.

# Flex Hospital Impact – Quality Improvement

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- Quality Improvement Collaborative – 10 facilities participated
  - Poster display during Welcome Reception
  - Thursday 4:00 – Session E1 – Learning from the Field: Lessons from the QI Fellowship
- Certified Professional in Patient Safety
  - 18 participants, 1 new CPPS so far!

# Flex Hospital Impact – Quality Improvement/Population Health

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## Mock Surveys

*Roosevelt Medical Center – Swing Bed Survey*

*Beartooth Billings Clinic– CAH Survey*

*Stillwater Billings Clinic– Swing Bed Survey*

*Dahl Memorial Healthcare– Swing Bed Survey*



## CAH Infrastructure Assessment

47 CAHs completed the Assessment



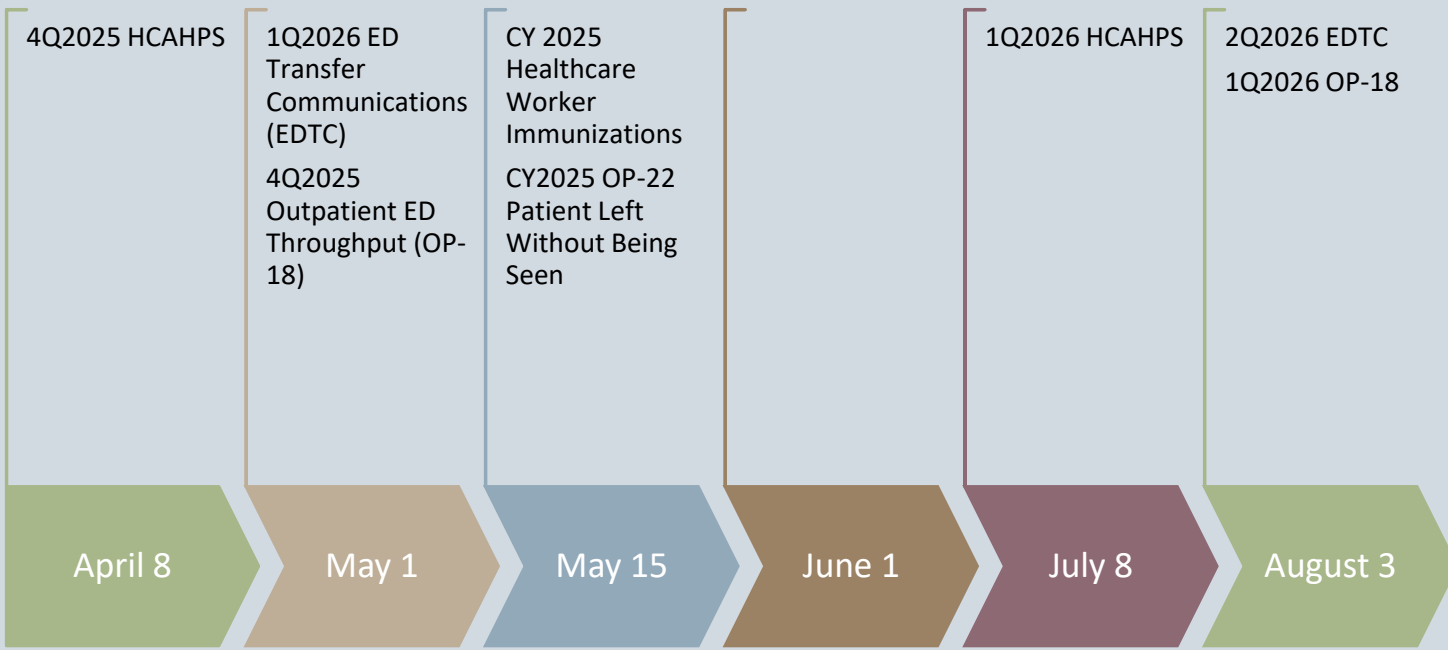
## Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plans

Dahl Memorial Healthcare

McCone County Health

# Flex Data Update

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# Data Reporting Deadlines

# PIN Benchmarking

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- Formed work group January 2026
- Reviewed current PIN Benchmarking set consisting of 35 measures
- Selected set of measures based on relevance to all 5 MT Peer Groups
  - Current PIN Benchmarking
  - HQIC Measure Set
  - Current CMS Quality Measures Report
- [Measure set](#) list now 16 or so (tentative) measures
- Next Steps:
  - Finalizing measure list
  - Reporting Platform
  - Rebranding

# Upcoming Opportunities

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- Billing & Coding Bootcamp
  - *RHC May 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>*
  - *CAH June 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>*
- RHC Practice Management Workshops
  - *June 2026, registration coming soon*
- Spotlight Article Submission
  - *June 2025*
- Quarterly Meet Up
  - *August 2025*

# Planned Activities for FY26

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- Montana Healthcare Conference – October 2026
- CoP Webinar Series – November 2026
- Certification Program - Application November 2026
- QI Cohort – December 2026

# Upcoming Opportunities Continued

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## **Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC) 40-Hour Training**

- Registration opening soon

## **Walk With Ease & Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention**

- Registration opening soon

## **Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) Provider Training**

- Bozeman | April 17–18, 2026 — 2 MD/DO slots, 1 APP slot available (0 refresher)
- Missoula | May 1–2, 2026 — 1 MD/DO slot available (0 APP, 0 refresher)
- Billings | August 14–15, 2026 — 7 MD/DO slots, 2 APP slots available
- Great Falls | October 2–3, 2026 — 8 MD/DO slots, 3 APP slots available
- Billings | November 6–7, 2026 — 9 MD/DO slots, 5 APP slots available

## **Montana Trauma Systems Conference & EMS Managers Workshop**

- September 9, 2026 at Northern Hotel | Billings

## **Time-Sensitive Illness & Injury Skills Workshops**

- April 9, 2026 — Billings
- April 23, 2026 — Frenchtown

# MHREF

## **Casey Driscoll**

Director of Quality Programs

[Casey.Driscoll@mtha.org](mailto:Casey.Driscoll@mtha.org)

(406) 457-8000

## **Jack King**

Finance & Operations Program Specialist

[Jack.King@mtha.org](mailto:Jack.King@mtha.org)

(406) 457-8016

## **Lindsay Konen**

Quality Improvement Programs Specialist

[Lindsay.Konen@mtha.org](mailto:Lindsay.Konen@mtha.org)

406-457-8002



# Office of Inspector General

## **Sadie Jones**

Flex Coordinator

[Sadie.Jones@mt.gov](mailto:Sadie.Jones@mt.gov)

(406) 444-2868

## **Leslie Howe**

Program Support & Improvement Section

Supervisor

[LHowe@mt.gov](mailto:LHowe@mt.gov)

(406) 444-9519

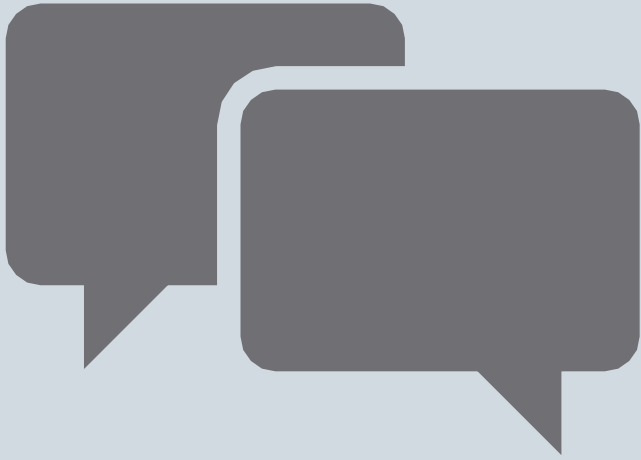
## **Michelle Truax**

Inspector General

[MTruax@mt.gov](mailto:MTruax@mt.gov)

(406) 444-2037





Open Discussion

# Break

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9:50 – 10:00

