

A Newsletter for the Members of the Colorado Chapter - Spring 2024

[View Web Version](#)



---

**In this edition:**

[CO ACEP's President's Corner](#)

[Important Message](#)

[From the Capitol](#)

[Colorado ACEP 2024 Interview](#)

[2024 ACEP/EMRA Outstanding Medical Student Award](#)

[Importance of DEI in Medicine](#)

[Member Spotlight](#)

[2024 Leadership and Advocacy Conference](#)

[CO ACEP 2024 Upcoming Events](#)

**News from ACEP:**

[Resources and Latest News](#)

[Upcoming Events and Deadlines](#)



## **CO ACEP President's Corner**

Rebecca Kornas, MD, FACEP

President-Elect CO ACEP

### **Still Fighting the Good Fight**

We as emergency medicine physicians are not the most patient of people. EM docs often like to identify a problem and come up with a solution, promptly.

For example, a 50 y/o man presents to the emergency department with left lower quadrant pain and is found to have ruptured diverticulitis (problem) and thereafter is dispositioned to an admission to the surgery team on antibiotics (solution, at least for our ED flow). When a problem is more complex, we can rise to the occasion, but if there is no immediate solution at hand, it can be challenging for us to stay engaged and focused.

### **The Long Game**

Advocacy is complex and multifaceted. Staying involved without becoming disheartened requires realizing that advocacy for our specialty is a long game. A marathon (or perhaps even an ultramarathon) and not a sprint. It seems like everything happens very slowly and then can come together all at once. Making that connection with a legislator during the preceding session over one issue, can open their door to you to be their medical content expert in the ensuing session and help to inform their votes on issues relating to medicine. Your team at Colorado ACEP has continued showing up, building relationships, being a constant reliable presence, and we have accrued political capital down at the capitol. We are currently on the short list of groups that legislators look towards to inform their decisions on bills that touch the house of medicine.

## **2024 Legislative Session EM Highlights**

This year has been another wild ride down at the Capitol and your Colorado ACEP team has kept our boots on the ground in Denver fighting the good fight for our profession and our patients. We came up with proactive legislation to batch like claims for arbitration that have rallied support from national ACEP in some of our battles to protect small businesses and our state's small democratic groups from challenges with arbitration in the state. Alas, this bill was killed in committee. Nonetheless, we shall persevere and will likely come back next year with some stronger arguments and more bill sponsors. In an effort to get in front of the Colorado Trial Lawyers Association's (CTLA) attempts to remove non-economic damage (NED) caps in Colorado and remove the protections from peer review ([ballot initiatives](#) 150, 274, 275, 276 and 277) we have joined a coalition of medical societies, COPIC and hospitals via the Coloradans Protecting Patient Access (CPPA). Where we get weekly updates and a seat on the CPPA board of directors to discuss and strategize how to best tackle this attack on our medical profession. Sen Mullica's SB 24-130 with its reasonable increase in NED malpractice caps from \$250k (currently 5th lowest in the US) to \$600k (squarely middle of the pack) was introduced and passed out of committee, but it seems there is more to come on this matter even this late in the session. There are ongoing negotiations regarding CTLA's ballot initiatives and how malpractice caps in Colorado will evolve in the coming years.

[Read more.](#)

---

### **Important Message**

**From: CO ACEP Board of Directors**

Dear Fellow EM Docs,

We write to you as your CO-ACEP Board of Directors to inform you that there are some VERY important issues in our Colorado legislature RIGHT NOW, brought against us from the Colorado Trial Lawyers Association (CTLA). Please join us in **opposing these harmful ballot measures and supporting SB-130. We urge you to take immediate action on:**

1. **Malpractice Caps:** There are many newly proposed ballot measures from the CTLA (see below) that threaten to make health care more expensive, harder to find and less safe in our state. Instead, there's a reasonable alternative bill up for consideration, sponsored by Senator Kyle Mullica who is an ED RN in our CO Senate. You can take action by writing and calling your legislators: [Find My Legislator](#)

SB 130 bill will increase malpractice caps in a **fair and balanced way**. Our state's malpractice caps which have not been increased in 20+ years and are rightfully due for an increase, which this bill will accomplish. SB-130 would increase the limit on how much individuals can collect when they win a lawsuit to a reasonable level, commensurate with inflation and put us within the median of other states malpractice caps (typically ranging from \$250k-\$1M) while still protecting health care for millions of Coloradans. Passing this bill positions Colorado in a position of continuing to attract and retain talented health care providers, which preserves access to health care (including specialty care) and protects patients from skyrocketing health care costs.

2. **Peer Review Protections:** The Colorado Trial Lawyers Association (CTLA) has put forth Ballot Initiatives 150, 274, 275, 276 and 277, ([ballot initiatives](#)) which would **destroy peer review protections, eliminating the safe spaces in medical care and education that promote patient safety** (i.e. this would include case review conferences, near miss discussion and any conversations about patient care including learning). In addition, these ballot

initiatives would **eliminate reasonable limits on the amount of money an individual can collect when suing a health care provider. One would completely remove caps in Colorado, opening us up to [multimillion dollar verdicts](#).**

These ballot initiatives would result in many health care specialists opting out of higher-risk procedures and patient care, charging more for these services, or leaving their practices and the state of Colorado altogether. The impact on Coloradans would be devastating decreased access to care, more expensive health care and reduced health care quality and patient safety. **THESE ARE ALL the THINGS that you and your team at Colorado ACEP work to IMPROVE, not REDUCE and DESTROY.**

**This medical community is standing strong with our patients to safeguard health care protections in Colorado.** We won't compromise on patient safety, quality of care, affordability, or access. Please join us in **opposing** harmful ballot measures AND **supporting** SB-130. Let us know if you are willing to learn more, testify, write letters, and stand with us!

Sincerely,

Your CO ACEP Board of Directors

Rebecca Kornas, MD FACEP

Bonnie Kaplan, MD

Kristen Nordenholz, MD, MSc  
FACEP

Rachelle Klammer, MD, FACEP

*with*

Emily McIsaac, DO

Jasmeet Dhaliwal, MD, MPH,  
MBA

Ross Orpet, MD

Ken Patrick, DO

Ramnik Dhaliwal, MD, JD

Parth Shah, DO

Marc Doucette, MD

*and*

Laura Edgerley-Gibb, MD, FACEP

RESIDENTS

Anna Engeln, MD, FACEP

Evan Gerber, MD

Alexis Garza, MD, FACEP

Megan Purdy, MD

Bill Hilty, MD, PhD

---

## From the Capitol



Dan Jablan

CO ACEP Lobbyist



Suzanne Hamilton

Executive Director

The Colorado General Assembly meets for 120 days each year beginning in January and ending this year on May 8<sup>th</sup>. As of this writing, there remain only 9 days in this legislative session. In this 2024 legislative session, 693 bills have been introduced to date. In the past 111 days, they have addressed just over 300 of those bills. That means they have under 215 hours to act upon the remaining almost 400 bills assuming they work 24 hours a day from here on out. Obviously, that will not happen, so in this session we will likely see a record number of bills die on the calendar for lack of action. Fortunately for the CO ACEP members, the vast majority of bills we have supported have made it through the system. Those remaining which will likely die are also good news. Let's look at just a few of CO ACEP's accomplishments this legislative session on your behalf.

**Bill Number & Title:** [HB24-1014](#) - Deceptive Trade Practice Significant Impact Standard

**Summary:** This bill would have created a new and significant exposure to additional liability. Would enable an additional case to be filed against you for alleged medical practice under the Colorado Consumer Protection Act (CCPA) which carries treble damages. Professional liability insurance does not cover claims under the CCPA.

**CO ACEP Position:** Oppose

**Outcome:** Impact on your practice: expected to be killed in the Senate Judiciary Committee

**Impact on you/your Practice:** Protected you from a new form of liability which would not be covered by your professional liability insurance.

**Bill Number & Title:** [HB24-1153](#) – Physician Continuing Education

**Summary:** As introduced this bill would have required every physician, regardless of specialty, to complete 40 hours of CME per licensure renewal cycle in reproductive, sexual, and gender-based care and explicit and implicit bias.

**CO ACEP Position:** Amend

**Outcome:** We were able to amend the bill such that you need only to attest that you have completed 30 hours of CME. The hours you complete to maintain your board certification count towards that 30 hours, and self study hours are also counted. There are no topic specific (sexual, reproductive health, etc.) requirements in the bill.

**Impact on your practice:** Saved you from taking your time and fees to complete 40 hours of CME that may, but not necessarily, apply to your patient base.

**Bill Number & Title:** [HB24-1171](#) – Naturopathic Doctor Formulary

**Summary:** Would have allowed naturopaths to prescribe and administer Schedule III-V drugs.

**CO ACEP Position:** Oppose

**Outcome:** Bill was killed.

**Impact on your practice:** Avoided yet another scope of practice expansion as well as leaving you in the position of taking care of patients who suffered medical consequences because of being misdiagnosed and prescribed the wrong prescription medication.

**Bill Number & Title:** [SB24-163 – Arbitration of Health Insurance Claims](#)

**Summary:** Allow for the bundling of out-of-network claims for arbitration.

**CO ACEP Position:** Support (CO ACEP caused the bill to be introduced)

**Outcome:** Was killed in the Senate Health Committee by 1 vote.

**Impact on your practice:** While unsuccessful this year due to some ugly behind the scene's politics, we will continue to advocate for you in simplifying and reducing the cost of arbitration to make arbitration cost effective.

Those bills are simply a sampling of the 76 bills CO ACEP is involved with on your behalf. It has been a very contentious legislative session, and yet your CO ACEP has been quite successful to date. Please watch for a full report after the legislature adjourns Sine Die. In the meantime, understand that we cannot do all this work on your behalf without your support. Encourage your colleagues to join you in these efforts.

It is also very important to understand that our wins and losses next year will depend on the November elections. It is just as important that CO ACEP be involved in the campaigns of candidates and legislators that support emergency medicine and your patients. We encourage you to engage in this process. Please consider donating to the CO ACEP Small

Donor Committee. This committee was formed to maximize CO ACEP's voice at the Capitol. A \$50 contribution is all it takes to make an impact.



---

## Colorado ACEP 2024 Interview

### Senator Kyle Mullica

Hometown: Thornton, CO



#### **Why did you choose to pursue a career in the legislature?**

I was lucky enough to serve on my local city council before running for the legislature. I initially got involved when my daughter Gabriella was born because I wanted to be a part of creating a community that provided her with the opportunities, she needed to build a quality life.

In the process, I was able to learn about the similar hopes and dreams of my neighbors which inspired me to run for House District 34. Having that experience serving at the local level has allowed me to be a better policymaker because I'm always putting my community's needs and interests first.

### **What surprised you the most about working as a legislator?**

Unfortunately, how partisan it can be on what I perceived to be non-partisan issues. I ran vaccine legislation to increase childhood immunization rates in my first year, and it turned into a huge fight. I had completely underestimated the vitriol and misinformation. I had assumed it was science, and that everyone agrees that vaccines save lives. I was wrong. But I will say it hasn't stopped me from continuing to fight for science and public health, nor has it stopped me from continuing to try to work across the aisle.

[Read more.](#)

---

*Colorado's Own*

*2024 ACEP/EMRA National*

***Outstanding Medical Student Award Recipient***



Coco Wham, MS, NRP  
MD Candidate, 2024

University of Colorado  
School of Medicine

CO ACEP leadership extends an enthusiastic congratulations to future doctor Coco Wham for being recognized as an EM-bound medical student who excels in humanism, professionalism, leadership and service to medical organizations, community service, research, and academic excellence.

---

### ***Importance of DEI in Medicine***



Parth Shah, DO

CO ACEP Fellow

With the recent introduction of the Embracing Anti-Discrimination, Unbiased Curriculum, and Advancing Truth in Education (EDUCATE) Act by Congressman Greg Murphy, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives are under the spotlight. Simply put, the EDUCATE Act aims to pull federal funding from medical schools that adopt policies and requirements relating to DEI. This has historically been viewed as advancing the field of medicine

and patient care by providing patients with physicians they can relate to, bringing new perspectives into the field, and cultural competency. In contrast, some policymakers perceive DEI initiatives as a way to push a political narrative.

[Read More.](#)

---

### **CO ACEP Member Spotlight**



Sam Slade, DO

#### **Where did you train?**

Medical school: Touro University of Nevada in Las Vegas, Nevada;  
Residency: Kingman Regional Medical Center in Kingman, Arizona

#### **Where do you practice in Colorado?**

I am the emergency department medical director at San Luis Valley Health in Alamosa, Colorado.

#### **Why did you choose to practice where you do?**

During my training at a rural facility, I learned various skills which allowed me to become proficient in providing medical attention at a hospital with limited resources. There are particular challenges working in this kind of

environment, and I feel I am particularly suited to make decisions due to my education and experience. I enjoy working collectively with the CMO and other medical directors in several departments to improve the care of patients in this community.

**Hobbies outside of medicine?**

When I am not working, I enjoy spending time outdoors, camping and hiking, with my family. The past two years, we have delighted in the mountains above Colorado Springs. This summer we hope to explore Lake Isabel and participate in more water activities.

**Favorite place to visit in Colorado?**

I can't seem to get enough of the Seven Falls Area at the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs; I especially appreciate the green trees. Growing up in Las Vegas, I have hiked many canyons and seen a lot of desert (which I love), but the water falls and evergreen trees are a different kind of beautiful. It's a great place to take family and friends when they visit.

**Anything else you would like us to know about you?**

For the past two years, I have been diligently working on a project to improve sepsis care in the emergency department. It has been very challenging to move the needle, but it has been rewarding. Much collaboration with nursing staff, admitting physician staff, and hospital administration has been required to make progress. In addition, it has also involved educating individual providers and reviewing numerous cases.

**What issues would you like to see CO ACEP address this year?**

I am grateful the Colorado ACEP is working on the medical malpractice caps bill that is going to the state legislature and working against the proposed ballot initiatives to end caps and end peer review protections. This could be something that could greatly affect not only emergency department care, but also the availability of maternity and other specialty care in rural Colorado.

---

## **ACEP Leadership and Advocacy Conference**



Jasmeet Dhaliwal, MD, MPD, MBA

President-Elect CO ACEP

The 2024 ACEP Leadership and Advocacy Conference took place in Washington, DC from April 14-16. It offered a rich agenda packed with workshops, seminars, and networking events designed to enhance the advocacy skills and influence of emergency medicine physicians.

The conference began on Sunday, April 14, with a variety of specialized sessions including the Chapter Executives Forum, a Health Policy Primer hosted by EMRA and YPS, and a Women in Emergency Medicine Leadership Workshop.

Monday, April 15, started with a breakfast briefing by the Emergency Medicine Data Institute, discussing new insights into acute, unscheduled care. The day continued with various keynotes and discussions, such as the use of social and traditional media to influence Congress, a panel featuring DOJ lawyers on antitrust in healthcare, and a roundtable on unionization in emergency medicine. Notable sessions included 'All Aboard! Advocating for Change' and discussions about diversity and opiate use disorders, reflecting the conference's focus on current critical issues.

[Read More.](#)

---

## **Upcoming Events Calendar**

### **CO ACEP 2024 Board of Directors' Meeting Schedule**

July 18, 12pm – 2pm Board Directors

September 5, 12pm – 2pm Board Directors

November 14, 11am – 1pm Board Directors

### **CO ACEP 2024 Executive Committee Meeting Schedule**

June 6, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee

August 1, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee

October 3, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee

December 5, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee

### **Additional Important Meeting Dates**

September 27 & 28, 2024 ACEP's 2024 Council Meeting, Las Vegas, NV

September 29 – October 2, 2024, ACEP's Scientific Assembly, Las Vegas, NV

November 14, 1pm – 5pm Leadership Symposium

November 15, 8am – 5pm CME Program "EM: High Risk – Do Not Miss"

For more information about participating in any of the meeting listed above, please contact CO ACEP Executive Director Suzanne Hamilton at [suzanne.acep@comcast.net](mailto:suzanne.acep@comcast.net).

---

**FROM NATIONAL ACEP**



### **ACEP Resources & Latest News**

#### **ACEP-Developed Due Process Legislation Introduced by Congress:**

The bipartisan "Physician and Patient Safety Act" was introduced this week. This ACEP-developed legislation would ensure emergency physicians have a fair process before any termination, restriction, or reduction of professional activity. Urging Congress to support this legislation was one of ACEPs top priorities at the 2024 Leadership and Advocacy Conference (LAC). [Read more.](#)

[Read the press release](#) | [Hear from ACEP President Dr. Aisha Terry](#)

#### **ACEP's New State Legislative Dashboard Highlights Chapter Advocacy**

**Activities:** Use a new one-stop shop to stay current on state-level legislative and regulatory activities with ACEP's new State Legislative Dashboard. The dashboard was announced at ACEP's Leadership and Advocacy Conference earlier this year and covers initiatives such as health care worker safety, legal mandates on clinical practice, mental health and boarding, scope of practice, and others. Issue-specific details are behind a member login. [Read more.](#)

**Save on Fees With New Payment Option for ACEP Membership:** ACH transfers, or electronic checks, are now available for new and renewing ACEP members, allowing a secure bank-to-bank money transfer which eliminates processing fees for you and ACEP. Members on an installment plan or auto-renew can easily update their payment information any time by accessing the “Payment Methods” section of My Account on ACEP's website. [Read more.](#)

**Want To Present a Course at ACEP24 in Las Vegas?** Off-Track Courses are designed for ACEP sections and committees, new speakers, and topics beyond ACCME guidelines. They also have later submission deadlines so there is still time to be considered for ACEP24! Learn more and submit your off-track course proposal by June 30. [Read more.](#)

**EMS Week Marks its 50th Anniversary, May 19-25** ACEP and the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) will celebrate EMS Week May 19-25 to honor the dedication, commitment, and sacrifice of emergency medical service professionals around the country. This year marks the 50th anniversary of National EMS Week with the theme, “Honoring Our Past, Forging Our Future.” ACEP President Aisha Terry, MD, MPH, FACEP, said, "Emergency physicians are grateful to lead EMS teams and we are proud of our EMS colleagues who ensure life-saving care begins well before patients arrive in the emergency department." [Read more.](#)  
Related: [Read the press release from ACEP and NAEMT.](#)

**ACEP understands that expertise and experience are emergency physicians' most powerful tools.** Sharing them with other emergency physicians and hospitals can improve patient outcomes across the country. The College has been working tirelessly to establish an innovative, new **Emergency Medicine Data Institute** that will harness vital metrics from emergency departments nationwide to improve quality of care, transform practice management, and lead public and population health management.

Click here to [learn more](#) and be sure to [register for ACEP24](#) and attend the **EM Data Institute panel discussion**; details to be announced soon.

## Upcoming ACEP Events and Deadlines

**"Vegas Baby!"** [Registration is now open for ACEP24](#). Take advantage of ACEP23 pricing — limited time only!

**May 20:** [Pressure Ulcers and Bunk Beds: Protecting Patient Safety During Times of ED Crowding and Boarding](#)

**May 30:** [Vector Borne Disease Resources for the Emergency Physician](#)

**June 6:** [Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Being a SANE Medical Director but Were Afraid to Ask](#)

---

## Contact Us

Rebecca Kornas, MD, FACEP - President

Suzanne Hamilton - Executive Director

303.905.8777 | [suzanne.acep@comcast.net](mailto:suzanne.acep@comcast.net) | [Website](#)

## Colorado Chapter ACEP

**1520 W Dry Creek Rd.**

**Littleton, CO 80120**

© 2026 Colorado Chapter ACEP. All rights reserved.

Getting too many emails? Update your [ACEP Email Subscription Center](#) and select only what you want to receive.