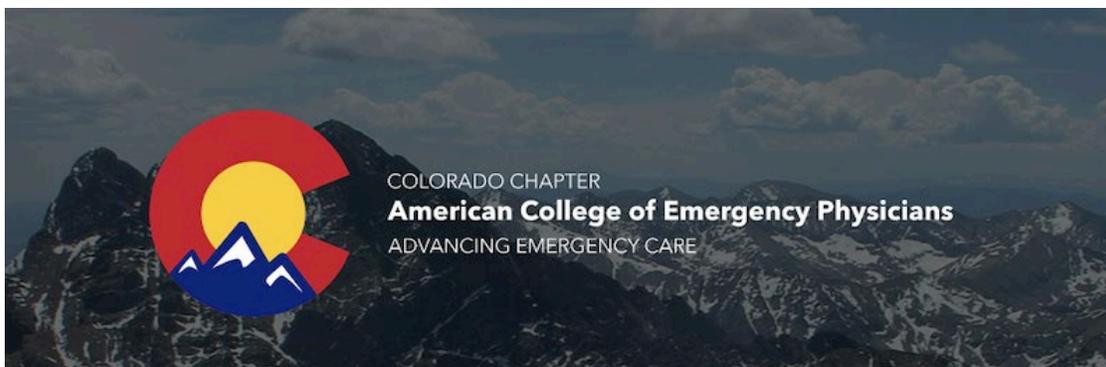


A Newsletter for the Members of the Colorado Chapter - Winter 2025

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CO ACEP President's Corner



Jasmeet, Dhaliwal, MD, MPH, MBA

President, CO ACEP

As we embark on a new year for Colorado ACEP, I'm honored to take on the role of Chapter President. I'd like to take a moment to express gratitude to Dr. Rebecca Kornas, our Immediate Past-President, for her outstanding leadership over the past year. She guided us through a challenging legislative session, expanded our membership, and fostered critical connections between physicians and legislators. She did a terrific job. Colorado ACEP is also incredibly fortunate to have the support and expertise of Suzanne Hamilton, our Executive Director, and Dan Jablan, our Lobbyist. Their efforts continue to strengthen our Chapter and our ability to advocate for emergency medicine physicians across the state.

[Read more.](#)

From the Capitol



Dan Jablan

CO ACEP Lobbyist

Observing the General Assembly in action during these first few weeks feels like watching a turtle race. You know they will eventually finish, but it's slow and steady in the meantime. Let me set the stage. The Colorado Democratic currently holds a trifecta with a Democratic Governor, the House of Representatives holding a 43-22 majority and the Senate holding a 23-12 majority. Each chamber is one away from "Super Majority." These numbers mean committees are dominated by the Democratic party. Of note, first year legislators are plentiful in both chambers. Finally, complicating the legislature is the fact that both the Democrat and Republican Caucuses in each chamber are split within their own ranks.

As of January 31, only 247 bills have been introduced (the 25th day out of 120). A typical session has around 650 bills. A year ago, 120 bills were filed in the House and 104 in the Senate. Several bill introduction deadlines have already passed, but history suggests that lawmakers will introduce at least 475 more pieces of legislation. Every legislative proposal will undergo

rigorous scrutiny regarding costs. As the session began the budget writers believed the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) must reduce expenditures by at least \$650 million to \$1 billion for the upcoming fiscal year. Members of the JBC are considering revoking unspent funds from the current fiscal year to assist in balancing the budget, which is a constitutional obligation.

However, the Budget Committee uncovered an error in population forecasts, which will result in additional budget cuts. Whenever the topic of Colorado's budget arises, you hear the term "TABOR." The Taxpayers Bill of Rights or TABOR limits state fiscal year spending, the amount of revenue that the state may retain and spend or save in reserves in a given fiscal year, to an amount grown annually by the sum of inflation and population growth.

This week, the Joint Budget Committee learned that the current fiscal year budget may be short \$36-\$119 million due to inaccurate population calculations. The FY 24-25 budget was based on projections of a growth rate of 3.8%, which is now calculated at only 3.2%. That equals \$115 million less to spend. TABOR does not include a definition of population growth. However, state law provides instructions on how it is calculated for the TABOR limit. The JBC voted to sponsor a bill to correct the population calculations. If this is successful, the state will only need to find the lower amount of \$36 million.

The December 2024 census estimates Colorado's population at 5,957,493 people. Colorado is the eighth-largest state by area and the 21st by population.

We call special attention to this budget crisis because it will inevitably impact Medicaid reimbursement rates.

The Trump Effect in Colorado

The Colorado Sun highlights how President Trump's actions and policies may impact Colorado. Governor Polis has requested \$5 million for "State Protection Funding" to address federal actions that could threaten funding

allocations or deal with federal government measures harmful to Colorado's interests, economy, and public policies. The Colorado Sun article summarizes issues related to abortion, the environment, health insurance, immigration, oil and gas, and outdoor activities.

Colorado joined other states in challenging the Trump Administration's freeze of federal funding. Governor Polis said, "this hurts children and hardworking families, jeopardizes American jobs and businesses, harms hospitals and safety net health providers, threatens road and bridge repairs, and impacts countless other programs."

CO ACEP's Focus Thus Far

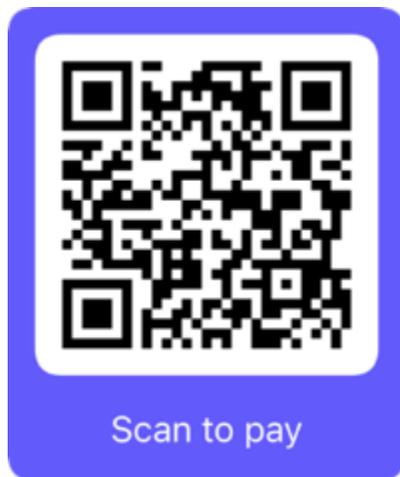
CO ACEP's priority bill has just been introduced. HB25-1151, if passed, will allow you to batch insurance claims for arbitration when insurers fail to reimburse you appropriately when you care for patients with whose insurance you are out-of-network. This will bring efficiencies to the process and bring Colorado's statute in alignment with the federal "No Surprises Act." As the bill is calendared for its hearings and debate, we will be reaching out to you to contact your legislator.

By the time this newsletter is distributed we will know the outcome of SB25-032 which will allow naturopathic doctors to prescribe Schedule III & IV regulated medications. This is a scope of practice expansion the naturopaths have attempted numerous times.

Stay tuned for more information about CO ACEP's advocacy on your behalf. We expect this session will be another wild ride for physicians.

As always feel free to reach out to us with any questions or thoughts about Colorado politics.

It will likely be a long 120-day legislative. We encourage you to engage in this process. Your ability to maintain a successful practice in Colorado is at risk. If you are unable to give your time to the cause, 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.



The CO ACEP Annual Meeting

We were grateful for those from around the state who joined us for this engaging meeting. It was wonderful meeting up with old friends and making new connections as we all work together for our specialty and our patients.



Dr. Jasmeet (“Jamie”) Dhalival, MD, MPH, MBA, CO ACEP’s new President, presented a token of appreciation to **Dr. Rebecca Kornas, MD, FACEP**, now immediate past president of CO ACEP, for her outstanding leadership and enthusiasm she brought to the office. Dr. Kornas was steadfast in leading CO ACEP through a very tough year in which physicians battled the trial lawyers over the elimination of medical malpractice caps which could have paved the way to nuclear verdicts that have been seen in other states. This is just one of the successes under Dr Kornas’ leadership and a good example of CO ACEP’s advocacy on your behalf. Dr. Jamie Dhalival will now take up the reins of presidency and lead us through what is expected to be an equally challenging year with the confidentiality of peer review activities at risk.

We were excited to celebrate our esteemed colleagues with the following awards:



Meritorious Service Award –

Dr. Kristen Nordenholz, MD, FACEP

The Meritorious Service Award honors significant achievements that have enhanced Colorado's Healthcare system and the profession of emergency medicine by exemplary service. At this year's annual meeting, Colorado ACEP recognized Dr. Kristen Nordenholz for the incredible work she has done throughout her inspiring career in Emergency Medicine.

Dr. Nordenholz completed her residency at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine Program and was chief resident in 1995. She started her career in Tuba City, AZ working for five years with the Indian Health Service leading a small yet mighty emergency department. She completed a master's in clinical research and returned to academics at the University of Colorado Hospital where she continues to work and teach as a professor of Emergency Medicine.

She has brought her passion to the bedside, dedicated to improving patient care throughout research in venous thromboembolism and anticoagulation, ultrasound, developing clinical pathways, and innovations that have positively impacted so many.

Throughout her career, Dr. Nordenholz has committed to teaching and working to improve patient experience as well as improving wellness for patients and medical professionals alike. She serves on the COACEP Board of Directors and the ACEP Wellbeing committee. For the Society for Academic Emergency (SAEM) Consensus Conference, Dr. Nordenholz participated in “Wellness for the Future: Cultural and Systems-Based Challenges and Solutions.” She has multiple presentations and publications on wellness, including a recent ACEP webinar on “Reinvigorating Emergency Medicine: Overcoming Compassion Fatigue.” Her energy and passion for what she does is contagious and is an engaging and inspiring teacher as core faculty for the Denver Health Emergency Medicine Residency. Dr. Nordenholz is an inspiration for us all for the positive impact that one person can have on so many lives.



Dr. Eric Hill, MD, FACEP –

Physician Advocate Award

He completed his undergrad at University of Colorado at Boulder getting dual degrees in kinesiology and biology in 2001. Then working in the world of EMS as a paramedic/firefighter/EMS supervisor for the Boulder Rural Fire District, Weld County Ambulance Service, Broomfield Emergency Ambulance Service and then New Orleans EMS as a paramedic before starting medical school at Louisiana State University School of Medicine. He completed his residency at the Brooke Army Medical Center, San

Antonio, TX, then served as a Brigade Surgeon and Senior medical officer in the 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division he was deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2009- 2010.

He is a Major and United States Army Physician and worked in their Medical Corps, May 2006 – July 2013 and was a staff physician in the Emergency Department of Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Fort Gordon, GA.

Dr. Hill then returned home to Colorado where he has worked with the CarePoint team as an attending EM physician at HCA HealthOne Aurora Medical Center, Aurora, CO since July 2013. Where one of his partners, Rachelle Klammer, relayed that he required many a talking to with his medical director upon return to civilian medicine for his gruffness and blunt demeanor. The team at TMCA was not yet used to his military style. He served as chair of Emergency Services, HCA HealthOne Aurora Medical Center, Nov 2018 – Nov 2020.

He is the EMS Medical Director of multiple EMS agencies including Rampart Search and Rescue, Aurora Fire Rescue, Falck Rocky Mountain, and HealthOne Aurora Medical Center.

He serves as a Medical Officer CO-2 Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) on the Aeromedical Evacuation Team for Critical Care. Ask him to tell you some stories about what this really entails.

He was appointed by Governor Polis, July 2019 State Emergency Medical & Trauma Advisory Council (SEMTAC) for the State of Colorado and currently serves as this committee's chair. He is also the current chair of the Statewide Trauma Advisory Committee and a member of the Colorado EMS System Sustainability Task Force.

There is a running joke between many of those in leadership about how many jobs we work. But Eric works more jobs than I do (both paid and

voluntary). Plus has three kids and a wife, Dr. Shannon Hill, who is a family medicine physician who runs a thriving primary care practice, Broomfield Family Practice. They are a power couple.

In his roles working with EMS and NAEMSP, as a state and national leader, Dr. Hill has worked with CO ACEP to keep us informed on evolving concerns of our EMS community regarding legislation regarding hyperactive delirium and how emergency medicine physicians can continue to support our EMS colleagues to provide the best possible care for our patients across Colorado.

Congratulations and thank you to Eric for all his work furthering EMS and EM. We look forward to continuing to work with you.



Dr. Jennie Buchanan, MD, FACEP –

John Marx Education Award

Colorado ACEP was proud to recognize Dr. Jennie Buchanan, MD, FACEP, as the 2024 recipient of the John Marx Education Award for the significant impact she has had on emergency medicine education throughout her career.

Dr. Buchanan, a Professor of Emergency Medicine through the University of Colorado School of Medicine, currently serves as Assistant Program Director for the Denver Health Emergency Medicine Residency Program and has worked at Denver Health Medical Center since her residency where she served as Chief resident in 2007. In 2009, she completed her Toxicology Fellowship at the Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center where she continues to serve as faculty.

Dr. Buchanan's commitment to innovative education is inspiring and has been recognized throughout her esteemed career. She has received multiple recognitions for her contributions all highlighting her exceptional work with residents, fellows, and medical students. Dr. Buchanan's bedside teaching is next to none- she leads by example receiving multiple accolades from nurses, residents, peers, and patients for her compassionate care and professionalism, and is an exceptional clinician.

The impact of Dr. Buchanan's teaching is far reaching, graduating multiple residents per year, who have become leaders in Emergency Medicine spanning across the globe from Alaska to New Zealand to New York. Residents she taught are now the front lines for patients and are teaching the next generation of medical students and residents how to provide compassionate evidence-based care. COACEP thanks you, Dr. Buchanan, for your commitment to Emergency Medicine, your incredible skill as an emergency medicine and toxicology educator and dedicated leadership that is actively leaving a long-lasting positive impact on the practice of Emergency Medicine.



Dr. Parth Shah, DO –

Rising Star Award

Dr. Shah came to Colorado from the east coast, where he completed his undergraduate degree at the New York Institute of Technology and graduating magna cum laude with his bachelors in life sciences before completing medical school at the New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine. He then went on to residency at the Zucker School of Medicine completing his residency at the North Shore University Hospital and Long Island Jewish Medical Center during the height of the Covid pandemic.

He moved with his significant other to Denver and began work with the AdventHealth US Acute Care Solutions (USACS) team in 2022, working at Parker, Porter, Littleton and Castle Rock. He currently serves on the critical care committee at AdventHealth Parker. Dr. Shah is beloved by the nurses and the person his partners are grateful to see walking into a busy department. He has a calm, casual demeanor in the emergency department but is “a boss when shit hits the fan” per Dr. Mark Huber, one of his partners.

In 2024, he served as the Colorado ACEP Leadership and Advocacy Fellow and the young physicians section co-chair for Colorado ACEP. In this capacity, he participated in the ACEP Leadership and Advocacy conference, joining other chapter leaders advocating for safer emergency department working conditions, a collaborative solution to boarding and a fix to the perennial problem of Medicare funding cuts and the physician fee schedule.

He is currently in the process of completing the USACS Scholars program and further developing his operational and leadership skills in emergency medicine.

He is an active and engaged young physician that we are proud has chosen to dedicate his time to Colorado ACEP, working to advocate for our specialty and the community of patients that we serve.

Congratulations, Parth!



**Dr. Megan Purdy –
Rising Star Award**

Dr. Megan Purdy clearly deserves the Resident Rising Star Award! Dr. Purdy is one of our outstanding second year EM residents in the Denver Health Emergency Medicine Residency. Not only did Dr. Purdy make time as an intern to join CO ACEP and attend meetings, but she also showed her advocacy strength firsthand by 1. Writing an Op Ed, 2. Speaking at a Press conference at the Capital AND testifying on the floor of a Senate subcommittee Hearing in defense of the Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB). Basically, her arguments were so compelling that the authors of the bill which would have effectively gutted the PDAB, pulled their bill, and re wrote it as a much-improved bill which did not have the same negative consequences. Although perhaps this does not sound like a great achievement, this has huge national consequences since CO is one of the first states to have a PDAB and if the CO PDAB had been allowed to fail so quickly out of the gate, this would have been a devastating precedent for all the other states trying to obtain a PDAB.

Dr. Purdy, congratulations on your great contributions. You are very deserving of this Rising Star Award.

CO ACEP has other physicians to celebrate and will do so in the next issue, but we need to shout out one more exciting CO ACEP's achievement.

Celebrating Dr. Todd Unger, MD, FACEP



We are thrilled to announce that Dr. Todd Ungar has been awarded the prestigious designation of Fellow of the American College of Emergency Physicians (FACEP) by the American College of Emergency Physicians. This honor recognizes Dr. Ungar's significant contributions to the field of emergency medicine and his unwavering commitment to clinical excellence, education, and leadership.

Dr. Ungar's career in emergency medicine began with his residency training at Denver Health, graduating in 2007. Currently, he is a vital member and leader with US Acute Care Solutions. He serves as the medical director at the CommonSpirit Golden Emergency and Urgency Center, bringing his expertise and dedication to providing exceptional care to his community.

Beyond his clinical responsibilities, Dr. Ungar is deeply committed to shaping the next generation of medical professionals. He serves as a clinical instructor at Rocky Vista University and contributes to the Foundations of Doctoring Program at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, where he inspires and mentors medical students with his wealth of experience and passion for education.

Dr. Ungar's dedication to service extends beyond the hospital and classroom. He previously served on the board of directors of Camp Wapiyapi, a nonprofit organization that provides summer camp experiences to children with cancer and their families, and he continues to contribute as a member of its medical advisory committee.

Earning the FACEP designation is a testament to Dr. Ungar's exemplary career and his profound impact on the field of emergency medicine. Please join us in congratulating Dr. Ungar on this well-deserved recognition!

Your Newly Elected Leadership:

President: **Jasmeet Dhaliwal, MD, MPH, MBA**

President-Elect: **Laura Edgerley-Gibb, MD, FACEP**

Treasurer/Secretary: **Kristen Nordenholz, MD, FACEP**

Past President: **Rebecca Kornas, MD, FACEP**

CO ACEP would like to welcome the following **new** members who will be joining our Board of Directors:

Dr. Alexander Beyer

Dr. Paul Pukurdpol, MD - Leadership Fellow

Dr. Parth Shah, DO

We would like to recognize our entire 2025 Board of Directors for their incredible hard work and dedication. Thank you for your volunteered time you've committed to upholding our specialty and patients.

Dr. Alexander Beyer, MD

Dr. Jasmeet Dhaliwal, MD, MPH, MBA

Dr. Ramnik Dhaliwal, MD, JD

Dr. Marc Doucette, MD

Dr. Laura Edgerley-Gibb, MD, FACEP

Dr. Patrick Joynt, MD

Dr. Bonnie Kaplan, MD

Dr. Rebecca Kornas, MD, FACEP

Dr. Emily McIsaac, DO

Dr. Kristen Nordenholz, MD, FACEP

Dr. Ross Orpet, MD

Dr. Ken Patrick, DO

Dr. Paul Pukurdpol, MD – Leadership Fellow

Dr. Parth Shah, DO

RESIDENTS

Dr. Abigail Leibowitz, MD

Dr. Megan Purdy, MD

Thank you to all our award recipients, board members, and to **all** our members for what you do every day for Emergency Medicine and for your patients. We had a great time celebrating everyone's hard work in 2024 and look forward to another active year advocating for Emergency Medicine and the patients which we serve.

Upcoming Events Calendar

CO ACEP 2025 Board of Directors' Meeting Schedule

- March 6, 12pm – 2pm Board Directors
- May 1, 12pm – 2pm Board Directors
- July 17, 12pm – 2pm Board Directors
- September 4, 12pm – 2pm Board Directors
- November 6, 11am – 1pm Board Directors

CO ACEP 2025 Executive Committee Meeting Schedule

- February 6, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee
- April 3, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee
- June 5, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee
- August 7, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee
- October 2, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee
- December 4, 12pm – 2pm – Executive Committee

Additional Important Meeting Dates

- April 27-29, ACEP's 2025 Leadership & Advocacy Conference, Washington, DC
- September 5-6, ACEP's 2024 Council Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah
- September 7-10, ACEP's Scientific Assembly, Salt Lake City, Utah
- November 7, 1pm – 5pm Leadership Symposium
- November 7, 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.

FROM NATIONAL ACEP



ACEP Resources & Latest News

ACEP Calls for Administration to Ensure Robust Federal Health Infrastructure

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) respectfully calls on the Administration to recognize the critical importance of a robust federal health infrastructure in safeguarding the prosperity and security of our nation, and the health and well-being of our people. [Read more.](#)

Act Now to Reverse the Medicare Cuts

With ACEP's strong support, new bipartisan legislation has been introduced to reverse the harmful Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) cuts. [Read more.](#)

Change is Happening Fast: ACEP is Your Voice in Washington When it Matters Most

The first days of the Trump Administration include seismic policy shifts with significant implications for emergency physicians and patients. [Read more.](#)

ACEP Strongly Applauds Senate Bill Supporting Physician Mental Health

Bipartisan legislation introduced in the Senate this week would reauthorize funding for the law named in honor of the life and legacy of Dr. Lorna Breen, an emergency physician who died by suicide during the pandemic. [Read more.](#)

Ohio ACEP is Protecting Emergency Physicians from Violence

A new Ohio law will help protect the state's emergency physicians and health care workers from violence. Ohio ACEP advocacy supported the effort from start to finish. [Read more.](#)

ACEP Applauds HHS for Raising Corporatization Concerns, Continues to Press for Change

ACEP strongly applauds the [new report from the Dept of Health and Human Services \(HHS\)](#) regarding consolidation in health care. [Read more.](#)

AHRQ Announces 'Special Emphasis' on Research to Reduce Boarding

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is doubling down on efforts to address boarding in the emergency department, building on ACEP-generated momentum. [Read more.](#)

Connecticut ACEP Leads Efforts to Boost Hospital Transparency Around Boarding Crisis - UPDATE

With the state legislative session now underway, ACEP members are leading the call for changes to alleviate the boarding crisis. Read the [report](#) prepared for legislators by Dr. Christopher Moore and the committee of physicians. [Read more.](#)

ACEP Applauds Reauthorization of Emergency Medical Services for Children Law

The ACEP-supported bipartisan Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Reauthorization Act of 2024 was signed into law December 23, 2024. [Read more.](#)

Upcoming ACEP Events and Deadlines

- [**Shift Change: Part II The First 100 Days of the 119th Congress and Trump Administration**](#)

February 13, 2025

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM Central time

Almost a quarter of the way into the first 100 days of the new Trump Administration and the 119th Congress, and the news cycle has been filled with new developments. Join ACEP advocacy staff to cut through the noise and learn what it all means for you as an emergency physician and for your patients. If you missed Part I, [view it here on demand.](#)

- [**ACEP Council 101**](#)

April 10, 2025

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM Central time

Join ACEP Council Speaker Melissa W. Costello, MD, FACEP, and ACEP Council Vice Speaker Michael J. McCrea, MD, FACEP, to learn about how the ACEP Council works and how even a single member can make a big impact on the policy and direction of the College. The ACEP Council is a deliberative body that meets once a year for two days in conjunction with the College's annual Scientific Assembly. The Council votes on resolutions that guide the activities of the College. Learn how to craft your resolution

and weigh in on the pressing issues in emergency medicine.

- [ACEP Leadership & Advocacy Conference](#)

April 27-29, 2025

Join your colleagues in Washington, DC, and make your collective voices heard to inspire change for your patients and your specialty. Both chambers of Congress are expected to be in session. Together, we'll:

- tackle problems facing EM such as the current boarding crisis,
- develop tools to advocate at all levels, and
- build relationships with policymakers and fellow advocates.

[Register today!](#)

- [ACEP25 Scientific Assembly](#)

September 7-10, 2025

For the first time, ACEP's annual meeting will be in the beautiful city of Salt Lake City, UT. The world's largest emergency medicine educational conference bringing together the global EM community.

Contact Us

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Suzanne Hamilton - Executive Director

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