



Plains to Peaks
Emergency Medical & Trauma Service Region

A Cooperative Partnership of Emergency Medical and Trauma Service Providers Serving Cheyenne, El Paso, Kit Carson, Lincoln, and Teller Counties, Colorado



Critical Care & Community Paramedic Symposium

Thursday, May 14, 2026

Pikes Peak State College

Center for Healthcare Education & Simulation (CHES)

1850 Cypress Semi Drive, Colorado Springs, 80921

The Plains to Peaks RETAC is pleased to partner with numerous community healthcare partners to provide this continuing education event. The expected attendees are Paramedics with CC and/or CP endorsements. This is not intended for BLS providers.

There will be two tracks of education during the day: Community Paramedic and Critical Care Paramedic. Each track will provide five 45-minute lectures on topics of interest and four 60-minute breakout sessions utilizing the simulation equipment and staff at CHES. This is a great opportunity to learn from qualified speakers and then practice skills in a controlled environment. Lunch and breaks will be provided on site.

CE Credits will be provided by Rockstar Education of Delta, Colorado. Rockstar Education is a recognized IBSC training center.

Registration for the event is \$100.00 per attendee. Please register at www.plainstopeaks.org using [this link](#). All attendees will be billed after the event and are asked to pay by check. Unfortunately, Plains to Peaks RETAC is unable to accept credit card payments.

Any questions should be addressed to Kim Schallenberger at kschally@plainstopeaks.org or 719 342 5562

CRITICAL CARE PARAMEDIC		
0800-0845	Ventilator Management for Trauma Patients	Ryan Sanchez, Justin Brehe, & Sarah Cross - Children's Hospital Colorado-Colorado Springs
<p>This presentation will discuss various common and uncommon issues encountered when utilizing patient ventilators. There will be a focus on pediatric ventilator management in addition to adults. Learning Objectives include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the differences between pediatric & adult airway management 2. Recognize when patients need assisted ventilation 3. Identify when mechanical ventilation is needed and initiate appropriate settings based on patient physiology. 4. Describe the impact of airway size, resistance, and lung compliance in pediatric patients who require assisted ventilation. 		
0850-0935	Vasopressor Management	Sean Jarosz, FP-C; Flight for Life
<p>This presentation will cover basic aspects of critical care vasoactive infusions, medication infusion pumps, initiation and titration, and associated considerations in the transport environment. Attendees will be able to describe and appropriately adjust to changes in patient status during transport.</p>		
0940-1025	"Pre-Hospital Whole Blood: Why, Where, When, How?"	Dr. Matt Angelidis, MD; University of Colorado Health
<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Describe different blood products that can be used in Pre-Hospital Environment -Understand evidence Based Medicine Justification for deploying into Pre-Hospital Environment -Define the Logistical Process for Successfully Deploying Blood to Pre-Hospital Environment" -Describe outcomes from successful pre-hospital whole blood programs 		
1045-1130	"Hemodynamics and Pharmacologic Support in Cardiogenic Shock"	Brian Hendrix, BSN, RN, CFRN, CMTE; UC Health Lifeline
<p>A review of hemodynamic measurements and their value in the identification and management of cardiogenic shock states with pharmacologic approaches with case scenarios to apply the concepts.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the pathophysiology of cardiogenic shock and its impact on hemodynamic values. 2. Differentiate the mechanisms of action and clinical effects of commonly used inotropes and vasopressors. 3. Identify the appropriate pharmacologic agent based on the patient's presentation in order to optimize perfusion. 		
1135-1220	Critical Head Injuries	Dr. Eric Hill, MD, FACEP, FAEMS; Medical Center of Aurora
<p>Objectives of Lecture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the types of serious traumatic brain injuries and how they would present clinically. • Discuss blood pressure goals in TBI • Discuss airway management and respiratory goals in TBI • Discuss ICP measurement readings and how those could be impacted during transport • Discuss treatment medications and interventions to manage patients with increased ICP. 		

1300-1400	Skills TBD	
1405-1505	Circulatory Access Skills	Dr. Eric Hill, MD, FACEP, FAEMS; Medical Center of Aurora
<p>Dr. Eric Hill will be able to utilize the simulation equipment and staff at CHES to provide a comprehensive breakout session on circulatory access. Come prepared with questions from past experiences. Dr. Hill has a wealth of experience from both his military and private sector work.</p>		
1520-1620	Ventilator Management Skills	Jenna Mariano, RRT, NPS C-NPT; UC Health Lifeline
<p>This session will be a cover invasive & non-invasive management. Jenna has a wealth of experience over various settings taking care of patients. You are encouraged to bring your own ventilator to this session so you can practice making appropriate adjustments with your own equipment. This session will be able to take advantage of the simulation equipment and staff at the CHES campus of Pikes Peak State College.</p> <p>Objectives By the end of the Session, Attendees will be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More prepared to Interpret loops/waveforms • More prepared to manage high peak pressures • Across a variety of ventilators 		
1625-1725	Prehospital Trauma Management	Dr. Sean Keenan, MD FAAEM FAWM DiMM; Teller County Medical Director
<p>This session will explore the priorities of care of the trauma patient and ongoing management relevant to the critical care paramedic. Dr. Keenan will bring in some of the best practices used in prehospital and military guidelines to lead an interactive discussion and education session.</p>		

	COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC	
0800-0845	Perinatal Deserts: Challenges and Opportunities for Community Paramedicine	Ami Bess, MBA, BSN, RN, CFRN, CEN, CCRN, FAASN
<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define perinatal deserts and their impact on maternal and neonatal outcomes. • Identify regions in Colorado where pregnant patients face limited access to obstetric care. • Recognize high-risk pregnancy conditions requiring EMS activation or referral. • Describe the role of community paramedics in improving maternal health access and outcomes. 		
0850-0935	<u>Medical Durable POA, what do all of those letters really mean?</u>	Annie Dorchek, MSW, NRP, P-CP
<p>The MDPOA is a valuable advanced directive that is often poorly understood by you and your patients. This session will explore the value, legalities and ease of completion of an MDPOA. We will discuss who, what and why of MDPOA....including why you and your family members should have one, and <u>briefly</u> touch on other Advanced Directives as time allows.</p>		
0940-1025	In-Person Patient Assessment	Reuben Farnsworth, Delta County Ambulance Service
<p>This session will explore the complete physical exam being conducted in the patient's home. This will cover more than medications and vital signs but will get into the reasons behind the nature of the call. This assessment will include percussion, lung sounds, heart tones, abdomen, and all other aspects of the patient's presentation.</p>		
1045-1130	Lecture TBD	Speaker TBD
1135-1220	Behavioral Health Patient Assessment & Treatment	Dr. Eric "Stein" Bronsky, MD Common Spirit Health
<p>Dr. Bronsky will speak on community response and tiered EMS systems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the principles of a tiered fire department and EMS response system, including how call acuity and resource allocation can be matched to improve efficiency and patient outcomes. 2. Explain how field-based disposition pathways for behavioral health patients can safely reduce unnecessary emergency department utilization while improving patient-centered care. 3. Identify key components required to successfully develop, implement, and sustain specialized response teams, including interagency collaboration, training, and operational protocols. 4. Analyze strategies for addressing high-frequency 911 utilization by guiding patients toward appropriate care resources, thereby preserving emergency response capacity for critical incidents. 5. Discuss adaptive and patient-centered approaches to evolving response models for recurrent 911 callers, emphasizing supportive interventions that improve long-term outcomes while maintaining system readiness. 		
1300-1400	Deescalation Skills	James McLaughlin, NRP-CP; Ute Pass Regional HSD

<p>James will become the patient during these breakout sessions. Attendees will be encouraged to use active listening and other skills to de-escalate the situation. There will be plenty of time to discuss best practices and other options during the skills sessions. Attendees will learn various techniques to protect the patient, bystanders, and themselves during this interactive skills session.</p>		
1405-1505	Prenatal/Postnatal Skills	Ami Bess- MBA, BSN, RN, CFRN, CEN, CCRN, FFASTN; UC Health Lifeline
<p>Step into a high-stakes, hands-on escape room where clinical skills and critical thinking are your only way out. This immersive experience challenges participants to rapidly assess prenatal and postpartum patients, recognize subtle signs of deterioration, and make time-sensitive decisions in evolving obstetric emergencies. From fetal heart rate interpretation to postpartum hemorrhage recognition, teams must work together to uncover clues, apply evidence-based care, and “escape” before time runs out. Designed for transport, ED, and critical care providers, this interactive session reinforces essential assessment skills in a fun, fast-paced environment that mirrors real-world pressure.</p>		
1520-1620	Wound Management Recognition & Treatment	Matthew Merriman, MD; Common Spirit
<p>Dr. Merriman will review the various types of wounds you might encounter and then discuss the appropriate management. This may include cleaning, suturing, and stapling as needed. Attendees will receive suture kits, staplers, and other resources to practice skills under Dr. Merriman’s guidance. Attendees will be able to identify appropriate treatment modalities for various situations in the field as well as practice those skills.</p>		
1625-1725	Social Determinants of Health	Lindsey Doering, NRP-CP Ute Pass Regional HSD
<p>Social determinants of health, as defined by the World Health Organization: “conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and people’s access to power, money and resources” (WHO). Developing a working understanding of these conditions and how they influence an individual’s healthcare decisions is essential for providing effective, patient-centered care across all settings, including Mobile Integrated Health and Behavioral Crisis Response. Community paramedics are uniquely positioned not only to respond to acute medical needs but also to assess underlying social factors and connect patients with appropriate resources. In doing so, they can help disrupt cycles of unmet social needs, ultimately improving patient outcomes and reducing strain on the broader healthcare system. During this breakout session, participants will explore key social determinants of health and examine the evolving role of the community paramedic. Through guided tabletop discussions, the session will aim to strengthen participants’ knowledge base while equipping them with practical insights and considerations to apply in the field.</p>		

Community Paramedic Instructors



Ami Bess, MBA, BSN, RN, CFRN, CEN, CCRN, FFASTN, is the Chief Flight Nurse for UCHHealth LifeLine, a multi-modal critical care transport program serving the Rocky Mountain region. With more than 36 years of nursing experience and over three decades in high-risk obstetrics and critical care transport, she has dedicated her career to improving outcomes for mothers and newborns. Ami is a nationally recognized educator, published author in major transport medicine texts, and a frequent conference speaker. Her work focuses on perinatal care, maternal transport, and improving access to care in rural and underserved communities.



Annie Dorchak, is a Paramedic and EMS Captain overseeing the Community Paramedic program, ECARES, at Evergreen Fire/Rescue. Annie has 38 years of experience in EMS, the past 18 years with Evergreen Fire/Rescue. Annie has been instrumental in the development and success of the ECARES program. The ECARES program fills community and consumer- related gaps in our local health care system. Annie received her degree in Health Care Administration from Regis University and her Masters of Social Work at Metropolitan State University. Annie is compassionate in her ECARES work within the Evergreen Community, striving to keep our residents healthy and safe in their homes



James McLaughlin - is the Director of Community Paramedicine with Ute Pass Regional Health Service District (UPRHSD) and is affectionately known by most within the community as "Tiny." James has been involved with emergency medicine since 1991 and has been honored to serve the citizens of Ute Pass Regional Health Service District since 2008. James has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Colorado Tech., focusing on International Finance. The UPRHSD Paramedic Advanced Care Team (PACT) that James leads seeks to maximize value to the community by leveraging underutilized resources to meet the needs of marginalized and underserved populations. James is trained in Trauma-Informed Care, Motivational Interviewing (MI), and Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) interventions and is a certified level-three Crisis and Hostage Negotiator. In 2021, James was named the Colorado State Community Paramedic of the Year. James currently serves as chairman of the Pikes Peak State College Emergency Medical Service Advisory Committee, is a member of the Colorado Medical Board and the Colorado Mental Health Advisory Board, and is a Board Member of the Teller County Mental Health Alliance. James is an adjunct faculty member for Pikes Peak State College and the prestigious University of Colorado Health System.



Reuben Farnsworth has spent the last 25 years in EMS, holding positions from EMT-Basic on a rig, to Executive Project Manager for an international expeditionary medicine company. Reuben is currently the Deputy Chief for Delta County Ambulance, where he oversees the Divisions of Mobile Integrated Healthcare and Behavioral Health Transport. Reuben is a frequent speaker at conferences all over the US and is known for his ability to make learning fun, while breaking down complex topics into understandable portions. Reuben can be reached at rockstareducation@gmail.com . You can also follow him on Facebook for updates from the RockStar Medic.



Speaker TBD



Dr. E. Stein Bronsky, MD is an emergency medicine physician at Common Spirit, and **Co-Chief Medical Director** for both the [Colorado Springs Fire Department \(CSFD\)](#) and American Medical Response (AMR) in El Paso County. A former paramedic, he has been a driving force in modernizing local emergency response by helping to found and design the department's innovative **tiered response programs**, including the [Community Response Medicine \(C-MED\)](#) units, and CRT (mobile integrated behavioral health unit).



Dr. Matthew Merriman is an Emergency Physician working primarily at Penrose and St. Francis Hospitals. In addition to clinical and medical direction responsibilities in the Emergency Department, he works as Clinical Advisor for the South-Central Healthcare Coalition. He moved to Colorado Springs after serving over 7 years on active duty with the US Air Force. His military time included working in Emergency Departments in Northern California and Germany as well as experience with EMS medical direction, Tactical Combat Casualty Care instruction, Critical Care Air Transport, small mobile surgical teams, and Aerospace Medicine. He earned his MD at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry and subsequently completed residency in Emergency Medicine at Strong Memorial Hospital, including a year as Chief Resident. Outside of medicine his hobbies include backcountry skiing, flying small single engine airplanes, golfing, and cheering on the Buffalo Bills.



Lindsey Doering, BS, MS, NRP-CC. A dedicated and compassionate healthcare professional, Lindsey Doering has served as a paramedic for eight years across both urban and rural environments, bringing a broad and adaptable skill set to emergency medical care. For the past five years, she has specialized as a community paramedic in rural Teller County, where she focuses on bridging gaps in care for underserved populations. Lindsey is deeply committed to caring for vulnerable and marginalized individuals, advocating fiercely on their behalf while also honoring each person's autonomy in making healthcare and social decisions. Her approach emphasizes connection, dignity, and empowerment, ensuring patients are not only treated but supported in navigating complex systems and accessing appropriate resources. In addition to her fieldwork, Lindsey holds a master's degree in clinical Mental Health Counseling and provides outpatient therapy to a diverse client population. Her clinical focus centers on individuals who have experienced complex trauma, often compounded by social determinants of health. By integrating her emergency medical background with mental health expertise, she offers a holistic, trauma-informed approach that addresses both immediate needs and long-term well-being.

Critical Care Paramedic Instructors



Dr. Matthew Angelidis graduated from the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences in 2006 with a Medical Doctorate and then completed Emergency Medicine Residency training at Madigan Army Medical Center/University of Washington in Seattle. He went on to complete a 15-year career in the Army serving in tours overseas in Iraq before joining the UCHealth ER and EMS teams in Colorado Springs in 2017. He has spent his entire career working in EMS and serving as a Physician Medical Director for agencies in Washington, Texas, Georgia and finally here in Colorado where he currently serves as the Medical Director for the UCHealth Center for EMS Excellence overseeing the medical direction of over 100 EMS agencies in the Plains to Peaks RETAC in Southern Colorado. He is the Chief Medical Director for Colorado Springs Fire Department, Colorado Springs Police Department and Colorado Springs AMR. Additionally, he serves as the Medical Director for the UCHealth Mobile Stroke Treatment Unit in Southern Colorado. He also serves as the Medical Director for “The Broadmoor Pikes Peak International Hill Climb” on Pikes Peak Mountain.



Jenna Mariano has been a respiratory therapist since 2011. Jenna has worked in Adult ED/ICU as well as maintained a long career in pediatrics (NICU/PICU/CICU). She spent five years on the Children's One Flight Team and has recently become the Business Development Manager for UCHealth Lifeline. Complex Ventilation Strategy is Jenna's passion!



Dr. Eric Hill is a double board-certified physician in emergency medicine and emergency medical services at the Medical Center of Aurora where he is the EMS Medical Director. He is the Medical Director for Aurora Fire Rescue, Falck Rocky Mountain, and several rural fire districts in Colorado. In addition to his interest in EMS, Dr. Hill has expertise in disaster medicine and has several deployments with Team Rubicon and as a Medical Officer on the Rocky Mountain Disaster Medical Assistance Team, where he was certified in critical care flight medicine on the Aeromedical Evacuation Team. Dr. Hill earned bachelor's degrees in biology and kinesiology from the University of Colorado at Boulder. He received his medical degree from the Louisiana State University School of Medicine in New Orleans, LA, and then completed his residency training in emergency medicine at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, TX. Dr. Hill was honorably discharged after 7 years on active duty with the US Army at the rank of Major. While on active duty he was deployed for 10 months to the Iraq war in 2009-2010 as the Brigade Surgeon for 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division. Dr. Hill found his passion for prehospital care and field care in austere conditions when he was a firefighter and paramedic in Colorado in Boulder County for 7 years prior to medical school.



Brian Hendrix, BSN, RN, CFRN, CMTE, is the Base Lead for UCHealth LifeLine in Colorado Springs. He brings 25 years of critical care experience, including 17 years in critical care transport, including rotor wing, fixed wing, and ground transport. During his career in critical care transport, he has also served as Chief Flight Nurse and Clinical Simulation Instructor.



Sean Jarosz, FP-C is a Critical Care Flight Paramedic with Flight For Life Colorado, where he provides critical care interventions across the Front Range and Western Slope regions. With 10 years of experience—including high-volume 911 ground systems, specialty mobile stroke transport and rural EMS—Sean values critical care transport and is passionate about teaching and mentoring. Specific areas of interest include advanced critical airway management, pharmacology, EKG interpretation and cooking incredible food.



Justin Brehe, BSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, TCRN, CCRN, has been a nurse for five years splitting my time between Oakland and Colorado Springs. He has worked ICU and ER throughout career. The past three years have been with Children's Colorado as a CCTRN (Critical Care Trauma RN). Through this role Just has been able to provide education and support to the department improving outcomes for the community.



Dr. Sean Keenan MD FAAEM FAWM DiMM serves as a UC Health EMS Medical Director for the greater Teller County, CO (Pike's Peak) region covering over 1200 square miles with 14 fire and emergency medical services agencies and a robust Community Paramedicine program. He is also the Assistant Director; Prehospital, Trauma and Operational Strategy for the CU Anschutz Center for **CO**mbat **M**edicine and **BAT**tlefield (**COMBAT**) Research at the University of Colorado in Aurora, Colorado. He is an Adjoint Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine, CU Anschutz, Aurora, CO, and Adjunct Associate Professor of Military and Emergency Medicine at the Uniformed Services University, Bethesda, MD. He is Board Certified in Emergency Medicine and Emergency Medical Services, with a particular interest in wilderness, remote, and austere medicine. He spent 27 years in the active-duty Army, including 13 years directly supporting or assigned to Special Operations Forces units, with five (5) combat deployments. He is on the Board of Directors and is President for the Special Operations Medical Association (SOMA) and is a Board Member for the El Paso County Medical Society. His passion is prehospital trauma education, research and development, and he is a small-business co-owner and Executive Vice President of R2 Medical Group, and Trustee and CEO of a medical education nonprofit company, Specialized Medical Standards based in Colorado Springs, CO (www.austerecare.org) which developed and distributes the Austere Emergency Care and SMS Blood Course curricula, and directly supports the Prolonged Field Care podcast and the popular medical website: www.prolongedfieldcare.org.



Breakout Skills Session to be determined.