

Save the Date

23RD NORTHWEST REGIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

WEATHERING *the* PERFECT STORM: *challenges & changes*

March 24 & 25, 2010

Red Lion Hotel at the Park
Spokane, Washington

Join colleagues from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska at this 23rd annual gathering of rural health leaders and advocates to share strategies and cutting edge ideas, discuss innovations and out-of-the-box ideas, and share stories during these economic times that may be brewing the perfect storm.

“Our theme, *Weathering the Perfect Storm: Challenges and Changes*, is the perfect lead-in to our conference,” said John Hanson, 2010 conference chair and rural health specialist with the Washington State Department of Health. “There are forces converging on rural health care right now that hold the threat of disaster, yet it is under pressure like this that we find our best creative thinking. We hope you will join us as we gather some of the best thinkers and doers in our region and the nation to seek and to find the most effective ways to survive these trying times.”

This year's conference focus is on weathering economic challenges and changes through sharing proven tips, tools, methods or initiatives. Sessions will focus on an exchange of information about programs and innovative strategies that can be models for changing rural health and health care delivery at the state and regional levels.

Each year approximately 300 rural health professionals and advocates gather to share and learn about collaborative rural models, innovative community projects, quality initiatives, and other underlying themes that shape the way business is conducted in rural health. The conference is designed to be of interest to a wide range of rural health advocates including rural clinicians, community leaders, administrators, board members, commissioners, policy makers, public health professionals, educators, and others.

Plenary Speakers:

- **NW Health Leaders Panel** with representatives from Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and Washington will present hot topics from each state including native health, HIT, recruitment, access and economic impacts.
- **Tom Locke, MD, MPH** is the Health Officer for Clallam and Jefferson Counties in Washington and works actively with the three rural public hospital districts in his jurisdiction. Dr. Locke's vision of health care reform focuses on an integration of public health and medical care systems to emphasize disease and injury prevention, universal access to critical health services, and accurate, timely community health status information. He believes the goal of a reformed system should be to improved community health not the amount of health care services delivered.
- **Tim Skinner, MEd** at 3RNet (National Rural Recruitment & Retention Network), will present on recruitment, retention, the importance of partnering with the community, and workforce development.

Call for Presentations Deadline Oct. 30th:

A call for presentations went out in September for breakout sessions. For more information on presentation topics and submission guidelines go to www.ahec.spokane.wsu.edu.

Reception:

Enjoy the joint conference reception with colleagues from across the Northwest on Tuesday, March 23, 2010 which follows the NW Regional Critical Access Hospital Conference that same day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the same location.

More Information:

For more information on both conferences including exhibitor and sponsor opportunities, go online to www.ahec.spokane.wsu.edu or contact the Area Health Education Center of E. WA, WSU Extension at ahec@wsu.edu or 509.358.7640.