

Rural Health Association of Utah/Southern Utah AHEC
Board Communication
March 9, 2020

We held this meeting virtually as we needed to immediately and quickly determine our plan of action.

Question Posed by Locke Ettinger to all Board Members:

“We received the first request for a refund from our annual conference due to COVID - 19. The request came from an Intermountain Healthcare CEO who said that Intermountain has instructed their employees to suspend travel for the next 60 days.

Your input is appreciated on how we should proceed. The following are considerations:

1. Continue as planned and see what occurs over the next 3 weeks. If we have a mass exodus move to plan # 2 below. Refund requests as requested.
2. Change the format of the conference to via webinar (ZOOM) format - keeping the same time schedule for the panel members on April 10th. Inform the participants, panel members and sponsors of this change now and begin planning accordingly. Consider a partial refund to both participants and sponsors.
3. Cancel all together and refund the participants and sponsors.

Thank you for your input in the unfortunate circumstance”

- We had lots of discussion about what would work for the providers we were wanting to attend.
- Different board members work for different organizations so we were able to get many different opinions as well as the specific directions that they had been given already.
- We had many members suggest rescheduling but decided against it as we did not know what the future would look like and that would require rescheduling all those that we had gathered for our panels.
- Board members expressed concern that a conference had never been done virtually by our smaller organization.

Ultimately we determined:

“Dear Board Members:

Thank you for your input. We have also obtained information from our major sponsors, SUU and other organizations that have limited their employee travel as participants, moderators or panel members. We have decided to move the conference to an online format. This will be for the breakout sessions. This decision has been received as an innovative and positive way to keep

our momentum going forward. The communication will be going out shortly and include the following:

Sponsors:

We appreciate your sponsorship for the Rural Health Association Conference on April 10th. As a result of the COVID - 19 a number of organizations throughout Utah have restricted travel including domestic travel to conferences for their employees. This has resulted in a number of participants, panelists and speakers not being available for an in person conference. We have made the decision to change the conference to an "Online" format. The times will remain the same for all the breakout sessions and the moderators and panelists will join us from their locations. Your sponsorship will be acknowledged during all of the sessions and you will have access to the recorded content to use on your specific website. We will also resend the information of this new format to invite additional participants to the online conference. We will also leave each session with action items that will advance the health and well-being for rural Utah.

Paid Participants:

As a result of the COVID - 19 we have decided to change the conference to be an Online Webinar format. This will include each breakout session of the conference during the times scheduled (see attachment). These webinars will be recorded to be viewed at a later date. You will receive an email invitation for each of these breakout sessions. We will also include a written Utah legislative update and a message from Get Healthy Utah. We will be issuing refunds for your conference fee. Please confirm that you have received this email

Moderators and Panelists:

As a result of the COVID - 19 we have decided to change the conference to be an Online Webinar format. This will include each breakout session of the conference during the times that they are now scheduled (see attachment). We anticipate that you will be available to participate on the panel during the time it is now scheduled on April 10th. You will receive an email invitation for each of these breakout sessions. This will include your bio and picture. Please confirm that you have received this email.

Education Tables:

As a result of the COVID - 19 we have decided to change the conference to be an Online Webinar format. We will be issuing refunds for the education table. We appreciate your interest in participating in our conference and are disappointed in this unfortunate turn of events.

Thanks for understanding.”

- We will move forward with the conference on the same date virtually.
- We will figure out more details as we learn about the platform and what will need to be changed.

- We are interested to see the difference between virtual and live; especially for attendee numbers, money spent, and other counters we like to report.

Our April meeting to be held in association with the conference is canceled. We will reconvene in September.