

# trust matters Trustee Matters

A Publication for Missouri Hospital Trustees



## Missouri Rural Healthcare Summit Held at Citizens Memorial Hospital

Gov. Mike Parson's first [Missouri Rural Healthcare Summit](#) was held at Citizens Memorial Hospital in Bolivar on Dec. 4, 2018. The event brought together more than 200 stakeholders and industry leaders from across Missouri to discuss topics such as economic development in rural communities, Medicaid, rural hospitals, workforce provider access, telemedicine/behavioral health and more.

Parson shared in the opening speech that 40 to 50 percent of Missourians are rural, "and they are just as important as other people in the state." He talked about looking for solutions to fix the health care problem and how coming together in the summit would be a step in the right direction. "We have to fix the current system before we can ever expand the system," Parson said. "In order to fix the system, we have to ask, 'How can we do better?'"

"The summit featured rural health experts and provided a platform to talk about our challenges and the opportunities that exist in improving the health of patients in rural Missouri," says Donald J. Babb, Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director of Citizens Memorial Hospital/Citizens Memorial Health Care Foundation.

During the keynote address, Babb emphasized the need for better access to health care for patients in rural communities. "Our residents deserve access to exceptional care, and it is part of CMH's mission to provide that care to every generation," says Babb.



Donald Babb, CEO/Executive Director,  
Citizens Memorial Hospital/Citizens Memorial Health Care Foundation

Babb talked about Citizens Memorial's journey and key drivers that have contributed to the organization's success. It hasn't been an easy road, though, according to Babb. Navigating the constant changes in health care is compounded by workforce recruiting hurdles.

"We've had to come up with innovative ideas to recruit medical providers and nurses as we have continued to expand our services over the years," says Babb. "One way is through our Medical Excellence Scholarship program, which helps students pay for school in return for them coming back to work at CMH. It is a win-win for the student and for us."

Other issues discussed during the summit included reimbursement challenges and the increases in Missouri Medicaid costs.



The Reimagine Rural Health initiative explores 10 rural health issues that were raised at the rural health summit and proposes policy options that should be considered to address them.

MHA's goal is to work with the Parson administration and other stakeholders to develop programs and policies that help Reimagine Rural Health in Missouri to provide a strong and sustainable health care system well into the future.

We hope you will join us in sharing this information throughout your social networks and communities. And, let us know your ideas to [#ReimagineRuralHealth](#).

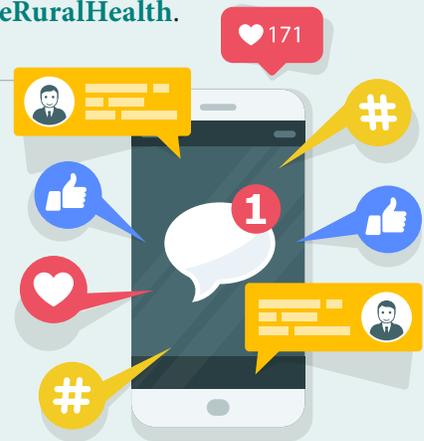
**Reimagine Rural Health web page:**  
[www.mhanet.com/ReimagineRuralHealth](http://www.mhanet.com/ReimagineRuralHealth)

**Missouri Hospital Association Social Media:**

- Facebook: [@MOHospitals](#)
- Twitter: [@MOHospitals](#)
- LinkedIn: [Missouri Hospital Association](#)

**Missouri Health Matters Social Media:**

- Facebook: [@MissouriHealthMatters](#)
- Twitter: [@MOHealthMatters](#)



## TRUSTEE RESOURCES

- [The Board's Role in Cybersecurity \(Part One\)](#)
- [Top 10 Trends for 2019](#)
- [The Board's Role in a Changing Health Care Environment](#)
- [Accelerating Progress through Leadership Integration](#)

For additional trustee resources from the American Hospital Association, visit [trustees.aha.org](http://trustees.aha.org).



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## A MESSAGE FROM

*Steven Edwards*

*President & CEO, CoxHealth*

*2019 MHA Board Chair*

Hospice author Kata McGahan wrote, “Deep within every crisis is an opportunity for something beautiful.” In many ways and by multiple measures, our Missouri hospitals, especially our rural hospitals, are in a state of crisis. This crisis is chiefly driven by demographic and payment concerns and confounded by a mental health crisis. Yet, beautifully, in this crisis is the opportunity to reimagine our future.

Recent data estimates that 31 of our 64 rural hospitals are operating at a loss, and about one-third of the total hospitals in Missouri are considered financially distressed. Especially acute in this crisis is the loss of inpatient psychiatric beds in the state. In 1990, there were 4,800 inpatient psychiatric beds. Today, that number has dwindled to below 2,000. Sadly, the demand for these beds has not decreased. Suicide rates, as one barometer of mental health, are tragically increasing. While the rest of the western world has seen suicide rates go down, the U.S. and Missouri have seen these rates increase materially above western world averages.

Reimagining rural health care offers the possibility of hope that far extends any threats we encounter. Re-engineering our systems and our payment structures to be focused on prevention and wellness instead of expensive acute intervention offers hope. Leveraging the power of telemedicine, and improving behavioral and primary care access is well within our imagination, and therefore, well within our power.

In crisis comes great opportunity, and opportunity is capitalized from the imagination of people with the courage to challenge the status quo. Our model of health care must evolve, and in the evolution, powerful transformation can occur. I am especially confident in the ability of health care to embrace this change as we are blessed to be powered by people with tremendous dedication, intelligence and compassion.

**Missouri Hospital Association**  
**2019 LEADERSHIP FORUM**

**May 16-17**  
Hilton Branson Convention Center | Branson, Mo.

**HSG Golf Outing & Social – May 15**

**Register by May 8**

## Missouri Hospitals' Community Benefit Exceeded \$3.3 Billion In 2017

By Dave Dillon, MHA's Vice President of Public and Media Relations

MHA recently released its [2019 Community Investment Report](#), which quantifies the significant financial contributions Missouri's hospitals provide for the communities they serve.

In 2017, Missouri hospitals provided more than \$1.4 billion in uncompensated care and exceeded \$3.3 billion in total community benefit — record totals for both categories.

“Hospitals are committed to building strong, healthy communities,” said Herb B. Kuhn, MHA President and CEO. “They provide a safety net for Missourians without insurance or the ability to pay for their care, support local causes, engage in wellness activities in the communities they serve and help train the next generation of health professionals.”

In 2017, the cost of providing care to Missourians at the bottom of the income ladder — individuals who are eligible under hospitals' charity care policies — increased by nearly \$76 million to \$795 million statewide. At the same time, the bad debt total increased by nearly \$90 million to \$628 million. Bad debt often results from an uninsured or underinsured individual's inability to afford out-of-pocket costs for care. The data reflect hospitals' cost for providing care.

Caring for the uninsured and underinsured isn't the only way hospitals benefit the communities they serve. Hospitals also absorb the unpaid costs of treating beneficiaries of Medicare and Medicaid, help educate and train the health care workforce, offer free or reduced cost clinic services, and donate to local causes. When combined with uncompensated care, these investments are known as community benefit. In aggregate, hospitals provided \$3.3 billion in community benefit statewide in 2017.

Hospitals have a significant influence on Missouri's economy. They provide a powerful financial boost to the communities they serve, where they often are the largest employer. In addition, hospitals must invest in their infrastructure to ensure the highest quality care and patient satisfaction. These investments underpin the economy of cities, small and large, providing support for families and businesses throughout the state.

“Hospitals play an important role in strengthening individual and economic health, both locally and statewide,” Kuhn said. “This report underscores the significant and increasing value hospitals provide.”



Resources referenced throughout this document can be found at [www.mhanet.com](http://www.mhanet.com).