



SHSMD Connections: The Ultimate Pre-conference Strategy Session

Your insider playbook for maximizing engagement, networking like a pro, and navigating every highlight of the conference.



Meet Your Session Leaders



Terri Flood
Vice President of
Business Development
Wayne HealthCare

Tom Wiser
Vice President
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Adam Higman
Partner, Strategic
Consulting
Press Ganey

Cori Ahrens
VP, Client Experience
Unlock Health



Networking for Introverts

- **Low-Pressure Approaches**
- **Recharge Spots**
- **Quality Over Quantity**



Your Conference Hub: The Mobile App



- **Download the mobile app:**
Your all-in-one hub to build your schedule, view presentations and handouts, access attendee roadmaps, network, take notes, and explore exhibitor details.
- **Stay connected:**
Complimentary Wi-Fi is available in all session rooms.

The First-Timer's Survival Guide



What to Wear: Business casual is standard for sessions. Pack comfortable walking shoes!



The Walking Factor: Convention centers are massive. Comfort beats fashion every single time.



Wear Your Badge Proudly: Keep it visible at all times.



Hit the Ribbon Zone: Customize your badge with fun, informative ribbons.



Travel Tip: When booking your return flights, consider scheduling an afternoon departure on Tuesday so you can fully participate in the closing keynote session without rushing out early.

How I Planned My Schedule



- **The "Must-Have" Rule:** Pick exactly one high-priority session per time block that aligns with your core organizational goals.
- **Always Have a Backup:** Popular breakout rooms fill up fast. Select a secondary session option in advance just in case.
- **Leverage the Conference App:** Use built-in scheduling, map tools, and attendee messaging to customize your learning itinerary on the go.

Pro-Tip

"Don't over -book yourself. Leave whitespace in your schedule for impromptu hallway conversations. That is often where the best insights happen."

New Member and First-Time Attendee Orientation



Sunday, September 27 from 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM ET



Welcome & Orientation



Interactive Engagement



Maximize Your Value

Professional's Package



15-minute Career Counseling at the SHSMD Booth



Complimentary Headshots with Capturely



Career Center & Employer Perks

Employers receive a 10% discount on job postings purchased between September 27 and October 31, 2026

The Art of the Follow-Up

Digital Sorting

Snap photos of business cards or instantly connect on LinkedIn via mobile QR codes while adding a quick note about what you discussed.

The 48-Hour Rule

Reach out within 2 days post-conference. Reference your specific conversation and share a relevant article or resource to stand out.

Long-Term Value

Set a calendar reminder to check in a month later with updates or invitations to collaborate on shared healthcare marketing challenges.



Call for Volunteers

- **Open until October 9, 2026**
- **Get involved and volunteer!** Grow your network and make an impact by applying for volunteer opportunities across various committees and initiatives:
 - Catalyst Conversation Facilitator
 - Conference Planning Committee
 - Education and Editorial Advisory Board
 - Executive Strategies Task Force
 - Member Community Ambassador
 - Member Engagement Committee
 - Micro-Volunteering
 - Recognition and Scholarships Committee
 - Small or Rural Working Group



Advice from Conference Chairs

"Engage boldly, step outside your usual hospital network circle, and don't hesitate to ask solution partners hard questions about real-world implementation barriers."

— SHSMD Conference Committee Chairs

The "Can't-Miss" Keynotes



Opening Keynote – Improv & Leadership:
Move from "No, but" to "Yes, and".



Featured Keynote – Innovation & Strategy: Discover actionable cross-disciplinary frameworks.



Closing Keynote - Sherri Jacobs:
Equipping leaders to navigate uncertainty and foster smart risk-taking.



Conference Sneak Peeks & Highlights



Sessions & Workshops: Over 36 breakouts, 10 pre-conference workshops (included in price!), 3 keynotes, and active presentation theaters in the exhibit hall.



Tracks & Roadmaps: Choose from 5 distinct learning tracks and 9 customized roadmaps designed around your exact professional focus areas.



Provider Partnerships: Every session pairs provider leaders with solution partners to ground high-level theory in proven, real-world case studies



The American Hospital Association (AHA) Connection

New Formats & Interactive Workshops

- **Deep Dives:** 3 distinct time slots featuring interactive small group work, exercises, and peer-to-peer discussions.
- **Exclusive Experience:** Pre-conference workshops are NOT recorded and will not be included in virtual recordings. Attend live for maximum value!



The 5 Conference Learning Tracks



Marketing & Digital Engagement

Modern strategies for building brand awareness, consumer loyalty, and effective digital channels.



Communications & PR

Navigating reputation management, crisis comms, and engaging messaging for healthcare stakeholders.



Innovation & Cross-Disciplinary Solutions

Breaking down silos and uniting multi-functional teams for forward-thinking breakthroughs.



Strategic Planning & Business Development

A premier dedicated curriculum for planners targeting service line growth, mergers, acquisitions, and facility master planning.



Career & Leadership Development

Equipping healthcare leaders with executive skills, emotional intelligence, and change management tools.

Attendee Roadmaps



- First-Time Attendee Roadmap
- Senior Leader Roadmap
- Rural or Small Community Health Care Organizations Roadmap
- AI (**NEW!**)
- Budget Pressure & ROI (**NEW!**)
- Branding in Health Care (**NEW!**)
- Children's Hospitals (**NEW!**)
- Population & Behavioral Health Roadmap(**NEW!**)
- Data Analytics, Research, & Insights Roadmap(**NEW!**)
- Physician Relations & Strategies

Catalyst Conversations/Member Meet Ups



Formerly known as Member Meet Ups

Children's Hospital: Proudly entering its second year

Young Professionals: Emerging leaders and young professionals to connect, share fresh perspectives, and accelerate their careers

- The President's Club / Senior Leader Catalyst Conversation
- Catalyst Conversation: Strategic Planners & Business Developers
- Catalyst Conversation: Marketers
- Catalyst Conversation: Communicators and Public Relations
- Catalyst Conversation: Children's Hospitals
- Catalyst Conversation: Small or Rural Organization
- Catalyst Conversation: Young Professionals



Navigating the Solution Center/Exhibit Hall

- **Passport to Prizes:** Collect stamps as you visit participating booths for a chance to win great prizes
- Connect directly with exhibitors to discover new tools, insights, and solutions for your organization
- Map Out Your Must-Visits and Engage Solution Providers
- Badge Scanning
- Managing Contacts
- Collect Insightful Resources & Swag

Evening in Baltimore

Welcome reception Sunday night in the exhibit hall, followed by open evenings in Baltimore on Monday to explore the waterfront or connect at solution provider receptions.

Recommendation: Start managing your party RSVPs and dinners now before top spots fill up!



Share SHSMD Connections with Your Organization

Debrief	Debrief with your team
Access	Access virtual recordings
Host	Host a replay lunch-and-learn
Explore	Explore past conference handouts
Circulate	Circulate partner resources

Questions & Discussion

We are ready for your questions! Let's make this year's SHSMD Connections conference your most successful event yet.