



“All Hands On Deck!

**Navigating the Treacherous Waters of Hospitalization and Surgery in
Older Adults”**

**21st Annual
Rocky Mountain
Geriatrics Conference**

September 11-12, 2025

**University of Utah
Healthcare, Educators,
Leaders & Innovators
Complex (HELIX)
30 Mario Capecchi Drive,
Salt Lake City, Utah**



For more information go to: <https://medicine.utah.edu/internal-medicine/geriatrics/conferences/rocky-mountain>

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Welcome to the 2025 Rocky Mountain Geriatrics Conference! This year's conference brings together clinicians, practitioners, and researchers dedicated to advancing evidence-based, age-friendly care for older adults in the perioperative and inpatient settings. Topics will include delirium prevention and management, prehabilitation, frailty optimization, and shared decision-making frameworks.

Over the next two days, we'll explore practical, team-based approaches to optimizing perioperative care and managing the hazards of hospitalization. We'll also examine strategies to prevent avoidable admissions and expand health system capacity for the growing population of older adults.

Attendees will leave with actionable knowledge and hands-on skills they can immediately apply to reduce preventable harms—such as delirium, hospital-associated debility, and unnecessary readmissions. By implementing these proven strategies, participants will be better equipped to improve patient safety, support recovery, and foster more age-friendly healthcare environments in their own institutions

After completing this learning activity, participants should be able to:

1. **Outline practical, interdisciplinary strategies for optimizing perioperative care in older adults**, emphasizing approaches in nutrition, mobility, and functional assessment that minimize complications and enhance recovery.
2. **Identify system-level models and interventions that support age-friendly surgical and hospital care**, such as the Geriatric Surgery Verification Program and Acute Care for Elders (ACE) Units.
3. **Apply communication frameworks to improve shared decision-making and advance care planning**, particularly in high-risk surgical candidates and older adults with decisional impairment.
4. **Recognize common pitfalls and evidence-based approaches in hospital care for older adults**, including delirium prevention, in-hospital fall reduction, and the appropriate use of medications in the perioperative period.
5. **Evaluate strategies to prevent avoidable hospital admissions and support transitions of care**, including behavioral symptom management in dementia and post-discharge home health models like Heal at Home.

Keynote Speakers:



Margaret 'Gretchen' Schwarze, MD, MPP, FACS, Professor, Department of Surgery, University of Wisconsin

Gretchen Schwarze, MD, is a UW Health vascular surgeon and an associate professor in the Department of Surgery, Division of Vascular Surgery at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. Dr. Schwarze treats all forms of vascular disease. The most common are atherosclerosis (hardening of arteries) and vein disease (varicose veins).

In her practice, she addresses all aspects of peripheral vascular health and has a particular interest in preventive vascular care. She specializes in vascular and endovascular surgery to improve circulation in blood vessels throughout the body, except for the heart and brain. At the core of her practice is individualized care. Dr. Schwarze understands that every person is unique and has their own set of goals, beliefs and circumstances. She partners with her patients to ensure they receive the specialized care that best fits their needs

Her clinical research focuses on how clinicians talk to patients and families about major treatment decisions, like surgery or starting serious treatment, such as dialysis. She aims to develop strategies that can improve this vital communication.

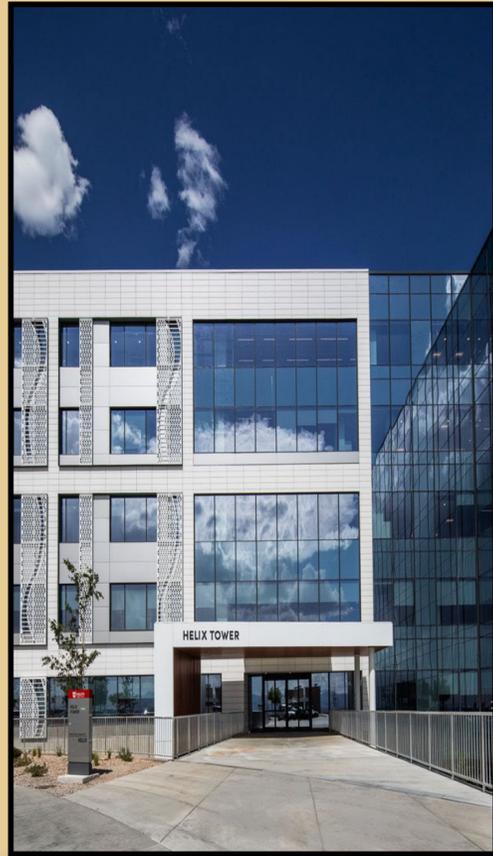
Dr. Schwarze is a nationally recognized expert in surgical decision-making, informed consent, advance directives and end-of-life care. She leads the UW Health clinical medical ethics committee. Outside her practice, Dr. Schwarze enjoys spending time with her husband, who is a transplant surgeon, and their two daughters.



Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley PT, PhD, FAPTA Professor & Director Rehabilitation Science PhD Program, Vice Chair for Research PM&R, Director CU RESTORE Team, University of Colorado; Associate Director of Research at the VA Eastern Colorado VA Healthcare System GRECC

Dr. Stevens-Lapsley is a Professor in the Physical Therapy Program at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Center and Associate Director of Research at the VA Eastern Colorado Healthcare System GRECC. Her research is centered on optimizing mobility and functional recovery in older adults by identifying, integrating, and advancing innovative, evidence-based rehabilitation strategies through rigorous research methods and collaborative partnerships. With more than 25 years of clinical research experience across diverse older adult populations, her work spans from investigating the mechanisms of skeletal muscle dysfunction to testing implementation of best rehabilitation practices in post-acute care. More specifically, her research includes clinical trials of pragmatic interventions for medically complex populations and health services research examining how rehabilitation services influence hospitalization rates and functional outcomes. Her clinical research program has produced over 200 publications, earned numerous awards, and secured more than \$25 million in funding.

AGENDA - DAY 1 – SEPTEMBER 11, 2025



7:00 – 7:45 AM	BREAKFAST AND REGISTRATION		
7:45 – 8:00 AM	WELCOME	Opening Remarks	Megan Puckett, MD
8:00 – 9:00 AM	KEYNOTE	Better Conversations for Better Informed Consent: Helping Older Adults Consider Whether Surgery is Right for Them	Gretchen Schwarze, MD
9:00 – 9:45 AM	PLENARY	The Salt Lake City VA COGS Program: Promoting Autonomy and Improving Outcomes in Older Adult Surgery Patients	Carole Baraldi, MD
9:45 – 10:00 AM	BREAK		
10:00 – 10:45 AM	PLENARY	Utilizing Pre-operative Therapy Services to Improve Post-operative Outcomes	Clay Watson, PT, Dan Mills, PT
10:45 – 11:30 AM	PLENARY	Welcome to the No Fall Zone: Interdisciplinary Care to Outwit Gravity	Nicole D. Pappas, PT, DPT, SCCE, GCS
11:30 – 12:00 PM	PANEL DISCUSSION	From Hospital to Home: Common Sense Nutrition Strategies for Complex Transitions of Care	Kristin Hueftle, MD, CMD, Lacey Watson, BSN, RN, WCC, IP, Keelan Cuyler, M.S, CCC-SLP
12:00 – 1:00 PM	LUNCH		
1:00 – 2:30 PM	PLENARY	System Strategies to Increase Capacity for Age-Friendly Care	
1:00 - 1:30		Geriatric Surgery Verification	Jess Cohan, MD, MAS, FACS, FASCRS
1:30 - 2:00		Inpatient Geriatric Consult Service	Shaun Chatelain, DO
2:00 - 2:30		ACE Unit	Roxanne Weiss, MD
2:30 – 3:00 PM	PANEL DISCUSSION	Q&A	Jess Cohan, MD, Roxanne Weiss MD, Shaun Chatelain, DO
3:00 – 3:15 PM	BREAK		
3:15 – 4:00 PM	PLENARY	Cognitive Impact of Carotid Disease and its Surgical Interventions	Cali Johnson, MD, EdD, FACS
4:00 – 4:15 PM	Concluding remarks		

AGENDA - DAY 2 - SEPTEMBER 12, 2025



7:30 – 8:00 AM	BREAKFAST		
8:00 – 8:15 AM	WELCOME	Opening Remarks	Megan Puckett, MD
8:15 – 9:15 AM	KEYNOTE	Countering Hospital-Associated Deconditioning in Older Adults	Jennifer Stevens-Lapsley, PT, PhD, FAPTA
9:15 – 9:30 AM	BREAK		
9:30 – 10:15 AM	PLENARY	Dispelling Perioperative Myths	Emilee Borgmeier, MD
10:15 – 11:00 AM	PLENARY	Caring for Older Adults with Decisional Impairment	Maureen Henry, JD, PHD
11:00 – 12:15 AM	LUNCH		
12:15 – 1:00 PM	PLENARY	Addressing Complexities in Older Trauma Patients	Cathy A. Maxwell, PhD, RN, FAAN, FNAP
1:00 – 1:30 PM	PLENARY	Delirium Prevention is Everyone's Job	Chelsee Marshall, BSN RN, Lauren Chamberlin, MSGERON, Roxanne, Weiss, MD
1:30 – 2:15 PM	PLENARY	Age-Friendly Delirium Care: From Recognition to Recovery	Megan Puckett, MD, Haley Solomon, MD
2:15 – 2:30 PM	PANEL DISCUSSION	Delirium Q&A	Chelsee Marshall, BSN RN, Lauren Chamberlain, MSGERON, Megan Puckett, MD, Haley Solomon, MD
2:30 – 2:45 PM	BREAK		
2:45 – 3:30 PM	PLENARY	Behavioral and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia: Non-pharmacological Management for the Care Team and Preventing Hospitalization	Rebecca Shaw, DNP, PMHNP-BC, Liz Garcia Leavitt, LCSW, Wendy Mohlman, Ed.D., MS, BSN, Michelle Sorweid, DO, MPH
3:30 – 4:15 PM	PLENARY	Heal at Home: Vertical Integration of a Home Health Agency into Hospital Operations	Jared Huber, MD
4:15 – 4:30	CONCLUSION		



Lodging and Transportation

University of Utah Campus Map:

<https://map.utah.edu/>

Salt Lake City Marriott University Park:

<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/slcup-salt-lake-city-marriott-university-park/overview/?scid=f2ae0541-1279-4f24-b197-a979c79310b0>

University Rate: \$199.00 per night. The Federal government per diem rate for Salt Lake City is \$142 per night. To reserve a room at the government rate, contact Marriott coordinator at Kaitlyn.Harding@marriottslc.com or 801-584-3317.

University of Utah Campus Shuttles:

<https://commuterservices.utah.edu/campus-shuttle/>

Yellow Cab:

<https://yellowcabutah.com/>

801-521-2100

Utah Transit Authority: Helix building is across the street from the University Medical Center Station

<https://www.rideuta.com/>

TRAX, UTA's light rail system, offers convenient connections to community destinations, shopping centers, schools and universities, FrontRunner stations, bus hubs and Park & Ride lots throughout the Salt Lake valley. TRAX runs seven days per week, with 15-minute frequency during peak times. https://www.rideuta.com/-/media/Files/Change-Day/April-2025/Rail_Map_Apr2025.pdf

Tourist Attractions in Salt Lake City:

<https://www.visitsaltlake.com/things-to-do/>

<https://www.visitutah.com/articles/48-hours-salt-lake>

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g60922-Activities-Salt_Lake_City_Utah.html

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

REGISTRATION FEES

	EARLY BIRD	RECEIVED AFTER SEP 10, 2025
PHYSICIANS	\$199	\$299
NON-PHYSICIANS	\$129	\$199
STUDENTS/TRAINEES	\$49	\$49

SECURE AND EASY REGISTRATION: REGISTER EARLY REGISTER ONLINE...USE OUR SECURE SERVER AT: <https://medicine.utah.edu/internal-medicine/geriatrics/conferences/rocky-mountain>
(CREDIT CARD PAYMENT ONLY)

MULTIPLE ATTENDEES CAN BE PAID ON THE SAME CARD.
ALL FEES ARE DUE IN ADVANCE; REGISTRATIONS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED WITHOUT PAYMENT.

YOUR REGISTRATION WILL BE CONFIRMED BY EMAIL AT TIME OF REGISTRATION. IF CONFIRMATION IS NOT RECEIVED, PLEASE CONTACT, HEATHER PODOLAN, HEATHER.PODOLAN@HSC.UTAH.EDU
DIVISION OF GERIATRICS, 30 N MARIO CAPECCHI DR,
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84112.
(801) 213-4156

ALTERNATE REGISTRATION METHOD NEEDED? CONTACT:
HEATHER

FEES INCLUDE: CONTINENTAL BREAKFASTS, LUNCHES, REFRESHMENTS, SYLLABUS MATERIALS, AND ACCREDITATION CERTIFICATES.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

CANCELLATION OF REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED IN WRITING NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 09. ALL FEES PAID WILL BE REFUNDED, MINUS A \$50 PROCESSING FEE, FOR CANCELLATIONS RECEIVED BEFORE AUGUST 26TH. BETWEEN AUGUST 26TH-SEPTEMBER 09TH CANCELLATIONS WILL BE SUBJECT TO A \$100 PROCESSING FEE. NO REFUNDS WILL BE ISSUED AFTER SEPTEMBER 10TH FOR CANCELLATIONS OR NO-SHOWS. SUBSTITUTIONS ARE PERMITTED IF REQUESTED IN WRITING. PLEASE FAX CANCELLATION OR SUBSTITUTION REQUESTS TO (801) 585-3884.

THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CANCEL THIS CONFERENCE IN THE EVENT OF UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES OR IF THE MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE REGISTRATION IS NOT MET. IN THE EVENT OF CONFERENCE CANCELLATION, REGISTRATION FEES WILL BE REFUNDED.

COMPLETE CONFERENCE INFORMATION AND ONLINE REGISTRATION ARE ALSO HERE : <https://medicine.utah.edu/internal-medicine/geriatrics/conferences/rocky-mountain>

ACCREDITATION



Accreditation: The University Of Utah School Of Medicine is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

AMA Credit: The University of Utah School of Medicine designates this live activity for a maximum of **_14.00_ AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)**™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

CME Passport: The CME credits that physicians earn from this activity will be submitted to ACCME's CME Passport, a free, centralized web application where you can create a personalized account to view, track, and generate transcripts of your reported CME credit. Please contact UUCME (CME.Office@hsc.utah.edu) with any questions.

ABIM MOC Part II -

Successful completion of this CME activity, which includes participation in the evaluation component, enables the participant to earn up to 14 MOC points in the American Board of Internal Medicine's (ABIM) Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program. It is the CME activity provider's responsibility to submit participant completion information to ACCME for the purpose of granting ABIM MOC credit.

ABS SA CC MOC Part II-

Successful completion of this CME activity [, which includes participation in the evaluation component], enables the learner to earn up to 14 credits toward the CME [and Self-Assessment] requirement(s) of the American Board of Surgery's Continuous Certification program. It is the CME activity provider's responsibility to submit learner completion information to ACCME for the purpose of granting ABS credit.

ABTS MOC Part II -

Successful completion of this CME activity [, which includes participation in the evaluation component,] enables the learner to earn up 14 credits credit toward the CME [and Self-Assessment requirements] of the American Board of Thoracic Surgery's Maintenance of Certification program. It is the CME activity provider's responsibility to submit learner completion information to ACCME for the purpose of granting ABTS credit.

ABOHNS MOC Part II -

Successful completion of this CME activity, which includes participation in the evaluation component, enables the participant to earn their required annual part II self-assessment credit in the American Board of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery's Continuing Certification program (formerly known as MOC). It is the CME activity provider's responsibility to submit participant completion information to ACCME for the purpose of recognizing participation.

All attendees are encouraged to use the CME system to claim their attendance. Physicians will be awarded AMA PRA Category 1 credits TM; all other professions will be awarded attendance at a CME event credit that they may use for their re-credentialing purposes. Nurses seeking contact hours must claim through the CME system. All users will be able to print or save certificates. For questions regarding the CME system, please contact the UUCME Office. For questions regarding re-credentialing process or requirements, please contact your re-credentialing organization.

NONDISCRIMINATION AND DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT: The University of Utah does not exclude, deny benefits to or otherwise discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sex, disability, age, veteran's status, religion, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, genetic information, or sexual orientation in admission to or participation in its programs and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request, with reasonable notice. Requests for accommodations or inquiries or complaints about University nondiscrimination and disability/access policies may be directed to the Director, OEO/AA, Title IX/Section 504/ADA Coordinator, 383 University Street, Level One OEO Suite, Salt Lake City, UT 84112, 801-581-8365 (Voice/TTY), 801-585-5746 (Fax).

Please contact Christopher Turner or Heather Podolan, for more information, at 801-582-1565 x 2435 / 801-213-4156 or email your question to CHRISTOPHER.TURNER3@VA.GOV / HEATHER.PODOLAN@HSC.UTAH.EDU