

2026 NAIRO Conference Schedule

Please join us for an informal Happy Hour at the Headwaters Lounge from 5:00 to 7:00 pm on Monday the 16th.

All educational sessions will be in Suwannee 18/19/20/21.

The exhibitor space is in Suwannee 17. Our two Gold level sponsors will have tables in Suwannee 18/19/20/21.

Breaks will take place in the exhibitor space in Suwannee 17.

Breakfasts and lunches will be in Suwannee 16.

Receptions will be in Suwannee 16/17.

Day 1: Tuesday, February 17

7:00 am - 5:00 pm	Registration and Exhibitors
7:30 am - 9:00 am	Breakfast
8:30 am - 9:00 am	First-Time Attendees Meeting
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Member Meeting - Introduction of the new Executive Committee and Committee Chairs for 2026-2028 All are invited to attend.
10:15 am - 10:30 am	Welcome Session Val Aiello, NAIRO President & Eric Hatfield NAIRO Vice President and Symposium Chair
10:30 am - 11:25 am	A View from the Capitol Presented by Shawn Griffin, MD - <i>President and CEO, URAC</i> In this annual session, Shawn Griffin, MD, President and CEO of URAC, looks

	<p>ahead to where federal attention is heading and what those signals mean in practice. The discussion will focus on emerging themes coming out of Washington, including how lawmakers and agencies are thinking about oversight, accountability and flexibility in a rapidly changing health care environment. Shawn will also explore how artificial intelligence in health care is increasingly part of these conversations, including early thinking around data use, guardrails and trust as AI adoption accelerates. Attendees can expect a practical, plainspoken conversation that helps put the year ahead into context and highlights what to watch next.</p>
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	<p>Lunch</p>
12:30 pm - 1:25 pm	<p>Title: The Future of the Review Industry in this AI Enabled World Presented by Madhu Reddiboina, MS - <i>Founder, CEO, and President, RediMinds</i> In this session, Madhu Reddiboina will explore how artificial intelligence is reshaping the review industry—from accelerating case resolution to improving consistency, quality, and fairness. Drawing on real-world experience with IROs, WCUMs, HUMs, IDREs, and AI governance committees, he will share strategies for integrating intelligent automation without compromising clinical judgment or compliance. Attendees will leave with a forward-looking perspective on how reviewers, regulators, and technology leaders can co-create a future-ready, AI-augmented review ecosystem.</p>
1:30 pm - 2:25 pm	<p>Title: Leading the Review Organization of the Future: Strategy, Stability, and Same-Page Thinking Presented by Steve Gran - <i>Co-Founder and Managing Partner, WorkExcellence, LLC</i> This session will explore how organizations in the healthcare review industry can shift from reactive operations to intentional, strategic growth by learning to work on the business. We'll introduce a practical framework grounded in the Work Excellence Method to help stabilize operations, resolve pain points, and build alignment across teams. Attendees will hear directly from peer organizations currently applying this method, gaining insight into the challenges and outcomes of stepping back to improve how work is structured and measured. The goal: to provide leaders with an actionable approach for creating clarity, driving performance, and scaling with purpose.</p>

2:25 pm - 2:40 pm	Break
2:45 pm - 3:40 pm	How to create a good medical review? Presented by Dr. Douglas Lurie This presentation outlines the key elements of a quality medical review. A good review is clear, concise, error-free, timely, evidence-based, unbiased, and independent. It addresses only the questions asked and stays within the scope of the request. Proper case assignment to the most appropriate specialist is essential to ensure accuracy, credibility, and high-quality outcomes.
3:45 pm - 4:00 pm	Day 1 recap and day 2 introduction
5:00 pm - 7:30 pm	Welcome Reception Sponsored by <i>IMEDECS</i>

Day 2: Wednesday, February 18

7:00 am - 5:00 pm	Registration and Exhibitors
7:30 am - 8:50 am	Breakfast
9:00 am - 9:15 am	Sponsor Presentation
9:20 am - 10:20 am	<p>Title: Navigating Federal Healthcare Contracting in a Time of Change Presented by Tris Carpenter - <i>Red Team Consulting</i> For organizations providing independent medical review and healthcare services, expanding into Federal contracts with CMS, VA, and other agencies can feel complex and uncertain. This session, led by Tris Carpenter, will demystify the Federal acquisition process and provide a practical roadmap for how review organizations can position themselves to compete and succeed. Attendees will gain insight into how opportunities are forecast, how decisions are made inside agencies, and what small and mid-sized firms can do to prepare competitive proposals, build teaming relationships, and stay compliant while pursuing new Federal business.</p>
10:25 am - 10:45 am	Break
10:50 am - 11:50 am	<p>The WHY of Oversight Presented by Cheryl Mason - <i>Department of Veterans Affairs</i> The importance of independent oversight and its value and impact to customers, leaders, organizations, and stakeholders – the WHY!</p> <p>Change is constant and these days fast. Transformation is like the big waves surfers chase. But surfers learn one lesson early, if you don't read the waves and surf at the right time, the wave can pummel you.</p> <p>In the ocean of transformative change, establishing a new standard for collaboration and efficiency in oversight and review is necessary for the future.</p> <p>What is needed to surf this ocean?</p>

	<p>Strategic keys that can drive impact</p> <p>Accountability– what is the basis and who is responsible? Accountability both internally and for stakeholders builds the credibility of the work of the team.</p> <p>Accountability – laws, regulations, policies, directives – are they followed? Yes/no?</p> <p>Collaboration -Building relationships across the different groups within and across oversight/stakeholder organizations</p> <p>Collaboration - requires respect and trust – both must be earned</p> <p>Effectiveness and efficiency – these are not the same but each often supports the other. How?</p> <p>Resolution -Who, what, and how do we impact through our work – more than you think!</p> <p>The Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General (VA OIG) provides oversight of the second largest Department in the federal government – the US Department of Veterans Affairs. My team includes medical inspectors, auditors, special agents/investigators, a data analytics team, and a management and administrative professionals’ team.</p> <p>Come learn about us and how we are surfing the ocean of change!</p>
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm - 2:25 pm	<p>Quality in the Behavioral Health World</p> <p>Presented by Marlene McDermott</p> <p>Understand and measuring quality care in the behavioral health space has historically been difficult to achieve. There are few tests or labs to complete to understand the functioning level of a patient. The information used is often a patient report of their symptoms. This session will discuss the ways clinicians can improve their documentation of behavioral health improvement. It will also discuss the ways quality and compliance departments can interpret the documentation to validate wellness is being properly measured and addressed in treatment.</p>

2:30 pm - 3:25 pm	AI FOMO Presented by Katie Bakewell , NLP Logix Let's be honest: the 'AI Gold Rush' has made it feel like you're falling behind if you aren't integrating LLMs into every corner of your business. But do you actually need a neural network, or do you just need a better Excel formula? This presentation is a reality check for the AI era. We're going to break down what is (and definitely isn't) AI, how to spot 'AI-washing,' and how to evaluate your actual needs without the FOMO. We'll wrap up with a practical roadmap for the 'Build vs. Buy' dilemma to ensure your tech stack stays lean, effective, and actually smart.
3:25 pm - 3:40 pm	Break
3:45 pm - 4:40 pm	Peeking Around Corners - A Look At What Keeps Me Up At Night Presented by Gerry Stanley, MD - <i>Cigna Medical Director</i> "Peeking around corners" will be a fast-paced, candid conversation that dives into the forces reshaping our industry and the broader insurance ecosystem. Expect an honest look at the trends, disruptions, and blind spots that keep industry leaders up at night – delivered with energy, humor and zero sugarcoating. We'll explore emerging challenges, unexpected opportunities, and what it really takes to stay ahead in a constantly shifting landscape. Attendees should come ready for a lively, thought-provoking conversation that as fun as it is revealing.
4:45 pm - 5:00 pm	Day 2 recap and day 3 introduction
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm	Cocktail and Networking Reception Sponsored by <i>ManageWare</i>

Day 3: Thursday, February 19

7:00 am - 12:00 pm	Registration and Sponsor & Exhibitor Tables
7:30 am - 8:30 am	Breakfast
8:30 am - 8:50 am	Sponsor Presentation
8:55 am - 9:50 am	External Reviews - A 360° View Panelists: Eric Hatfield, Rob Feguer, and Gerry Stanley A 360-degree view from the perspective of the various review stakeholders and parties involved, which will provide a better understanding of the external review process.
9:50 am - 10:05 am	Break
10:05 am - 11:00 am	URAC Independent Review Organization Program V6.0 Overview Presented by Rose Reich and Monica Gordy – URAC This presentation provides a high-level overview of the current version of the Independent Review Organization (IRO) Standards, Version 6.0, including eligibility requirements for Internal, External, and Comprehensive reviews; the phases of the accreditation process and scoring; commonly missed standards; and an overall summary of the standards, along with a preview of the upcoming release of Version 7.0.
11:00 am	Hotel Check Out Time
11:00 am - 11:15 am	Giveaways – Must be present to win!
11:15 am - 11:30 pm	Closing Remarks