

Counter-Crisis Strategy for Colorado Community Providers

2026 Alliance Summit
September 3, 2026





Hi, I'm Sean!

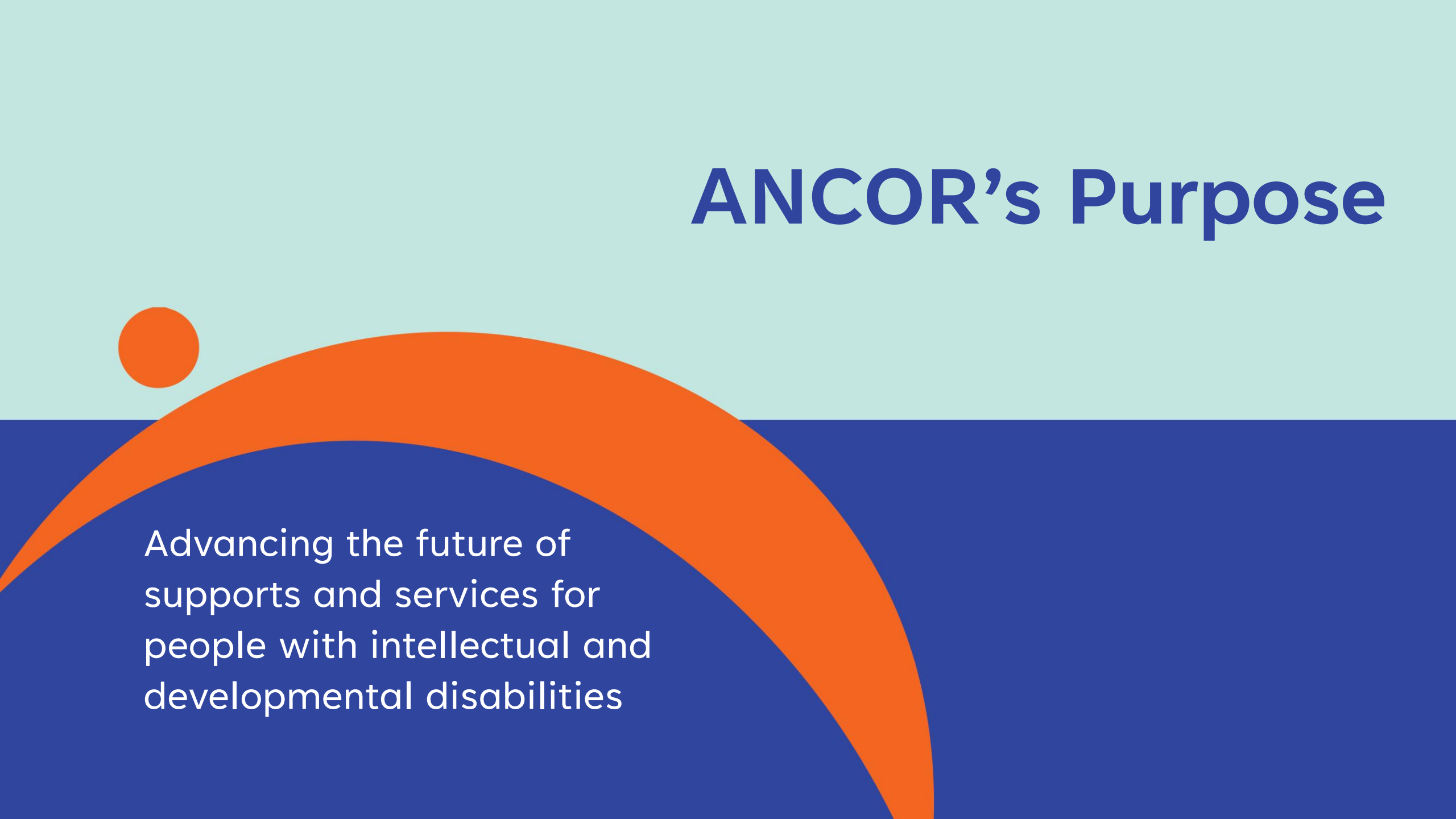


**Vice President, Membership &
Communications @ ANCOR**

Let's connect on LinkedIn!



ANCOR's Purpose



Advancing the future of
supports and services for
people with intellectual and
developmental disabilities

Scenario A

- You're the Executive Director of a service provider that is building a small apartment complex to provide affordable housing solutions for people with I/DD and others in the community.
- Following the completion of Phase 1 of construction, residents have begun moving into the lower floors of the building while work to finish the upper floors continues.
- During Phase 2 of construction, a contractor installed a faulty gas valve that led to an explosion in the building. The extent of the damage and whether there are injuries or casualties are unclear.

Scenario B

- It's 2027 and Colorado has a new governor. His nominee for Executive Director of HCPF served in the state legislature, where she routinely voted against efforts to increase funding for disability services.
- Despite the HCPF nominee's voting history, your Board urges you to put out a statement supporting her nomination, hoping that doing so can help build a relationship. Reluctantly, you agree.
- Just weeks after she is confirmed, the new HCPF Director gives a press conference in which she says several offensive things about people with I/DD, including the use of the R-word.

Consider

- What makes these scenarios similar?
- What makes these scenarios different?
- What would you do in either of these scenarios?

Crisis Defined

Any situation that both amplifies exposure to reputational risk AND can be mitigated or exacerbated by communication.

SOURCES OF CRISIS

- Organizational missteps
- Individual action
- Wrongdoing by affiliates
- External events
- Failure to build goodwill

4 Step Strategy for Countering Crisis

1. Anticipate

Identify likelihood of potential scenarios

2. Prepare

Messages, messengers & materials

3. Activate

Put your plan into action

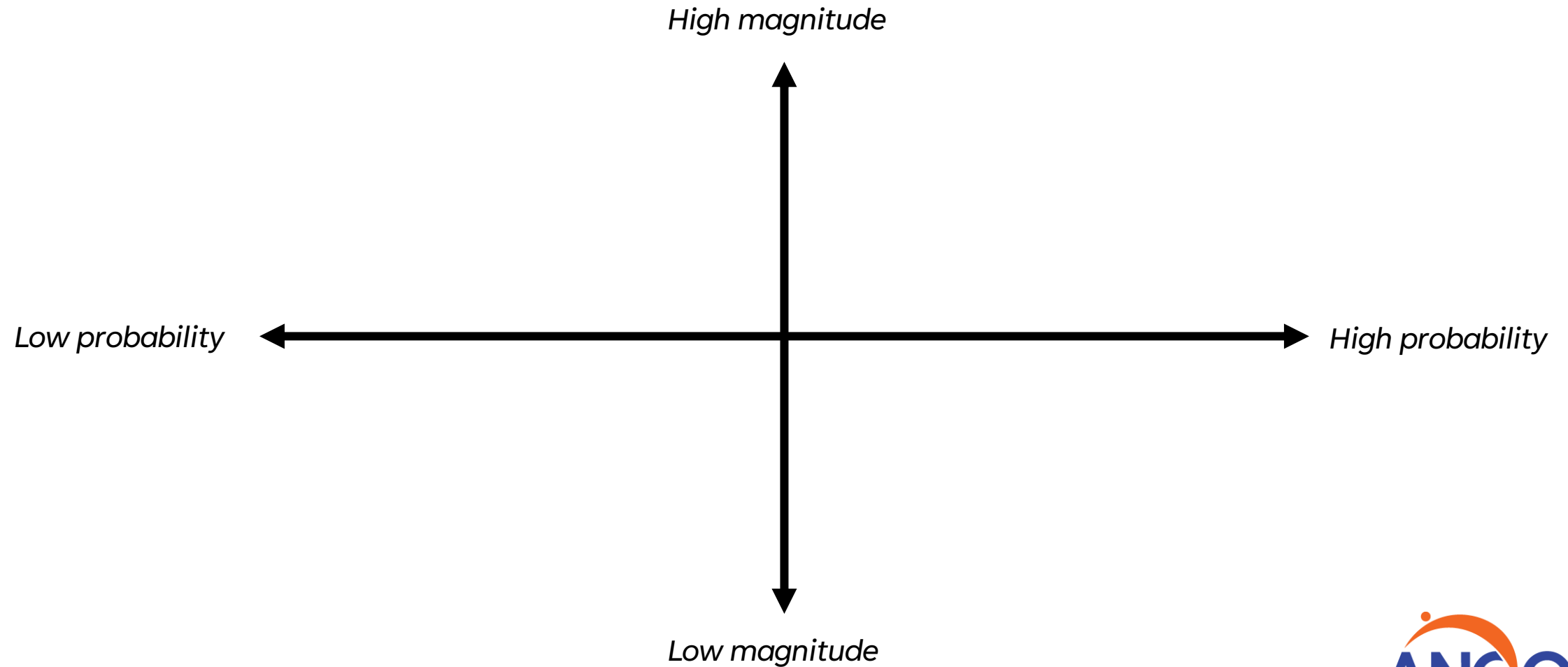
4. Evaluate

Debrief what worked and what didn't

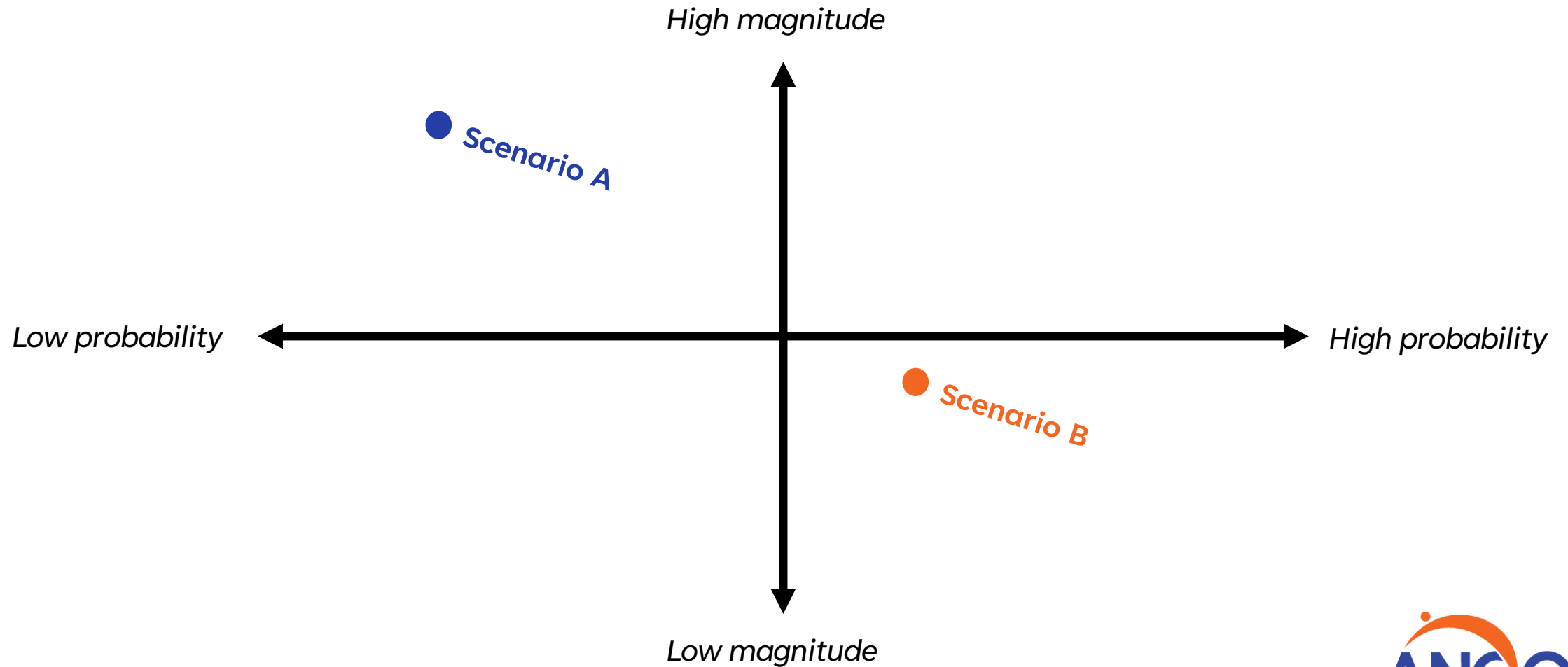
Anticipating Crisis



Assessing Likelihood



Plotting Our Scenarios



Preparing for Crisis



Craft Your Message

- Determine and document your policies for responding to requests for comment.
- Develop evergreen messaging that articulates the value of your organization and who it serves (e.g., key data points reflecting the importance of your services).
- Identify the stories of success that can counter narratives that portray your organization and its services in a negative light.

Train Your Messengers

- Identify the spokespeople who can credibly articulate the messages developed.
- Consider the profile of the spokespeople on whom you could call in a crisis and match those profiles to the situations you can anticipate (e.g., do you need a board member or a family member to speak to XYZ situation?).
- Train spokespeople regularly and check in to ensure they feel comfortable and confident.

Prep Your Materials

- Determine which stories you can craft so they're ready to call upon when crisis strikes.
- Develop profiles of real people and their experiences to help guide conversations with reporters and lawmakers.
- Create or take inventory of existing collateral to be used proactively to depict your commitment to quality (e.g., quality measures).

Activating in Crisis



During the Crisis, Ask Yourself

- Who is most directly impacted by the situation? Who might be indirectly impacted?
- Which past experiences might we draw on to inform our path forward?
- What might stakeholders' reactions be if we do nothing? Consider people supported, family members, donors, lawmakers and community partners.
- What role might the media play in mitigating or amplifying the situation?
- What collateral damage might result from our communication strategy?

Evaluating Your Response



After the Crisis, Ask Yourself

- Among all the possible outcomes you could have experienced, how did things turn out?
- Which of your strategies worked well? Which strategies didn't serve you well?
- What actions or outcomes should be documented for countering future crises?

Your Questions Answered

Resources for Diving Deeper



Medicaid Resource Center



The Latest

Summary of Medicaid Provisions in H.R. 1

On July 4, 2025, the budget reconciliation bill, H.R. 1, was signed into law, cutting almost \$1 trillion in Medicaid funding. This summary provides an overview of key provisions impacting the Medicaid program.

[Read the Summary](#)

Implementation Timeline: Access Rule and Budget Reconciliation Law

This timeline summarizes the major provisions of the HCBS Access Rule and the 2025 Budget Reconciliation Law and their corresponding implementation date.

[View the Timeline](#)

Fact Sheet: Program Integrity in the Medicaid HCBS Program

This fact sheet outlines why investing in HCBS is necessary to preserving Medicaid program integrity.

[Dive Deeper](#)

Advocacy Toolkit



Advocacy 101



Lobbying 101

Tips to follow and pitfalls to avoid to ensure a successful lobbying visit.

[Get Started](#)



How a Bill Becomes a Law

A step-by-step introduction or refresher on how a bill becomes a law.

[See the Steps](#)



Contacting Members of Congress

What you need to know to ensure your outreach to federal lawmakers goes well.

[Begin Your Outreach](#)



SEE YOU IN
NEW ORLEANS!

save the date

ANCOR CONNECT '27
APRIL 5-7, 2027



Get in Touch!

Sean Luechtefeld, Ph.D., CAE



sluechtefeld@ancor.org

