



National Rural Health Association

Rural Health Equity Conference
May 15-16, 2023 — San Diego, CA

Monday, May 15

1 – 1:15 p.m.

Conference Welcome

Alan Morgan, MPA, NRHA CEO

Mary-Katherine Smith McNatt, DrPH, MPH, NRHA Health Equity Council Chair

1:15 – 2:30 p.m.

Opening Plenary

Using Insights from the Rural Health Equity Toolkit

Luciana Rocha, MPH, NORC at the University of Chicago Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis research scientist

Alana Knudson, PhD, NORC at the University of Chicago Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis director

This session discusses the Rural Health Information Hub's Rural Health Equity Toolkit, including examples of how rural community health programs have sought to advance health equity through strategic framing and planning, identifying community priorities, fostering multi-sector partnerships, and building organizational capacity. Considerations for implementation, evaluation, and sustainability will be included.

2:30 – 2:45 p.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

2:45 – 4 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

1A. Trust-based Philanthropy Is A Game Changer in Addressing Rural Social Determinants of Health

Carla Gibson, MPA, REACH Healthcare Foundation vice president of programs

Tonia Wright, BA, Grace Advertising and Consulting/Altruism Media Inc., president and chief executive officer

As philanthropy enters uncharted waters embarking in trust-based grantmaking, rural communities have opportunity to push the envelope to address social determinants of health. Trust-based philanthropy fosters systemic, equity-centered changes and opens new pathways for optimal health outcomes. Learn how one rural community is making inroads optimizing on this pivotal time.

1B. Critical Indigenous Health Inequities in Inadequate Transfer Systems

Christopher Jentoft, MD, Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility clinical director

Geography and an inadequate system of interfacility transfer are challenges to addressing health inequity for rural and Indigenous patients. This session describes how systems that deliver emergency care and transfer to definitive care were strained during the pandemic and proposes policy solutions to advance health care equity.

Native American Access to Care in Non-tribal Areas

Mary-Katherine McNatt, DrPH, MPH, A.T. Still University College of Graduate Health Studies MPH Public Health Department chair and professor

Marsha Presley, PhD, MPH, A.T. Still University College of Graduate Health Studies MPH research associate and faculty

Michael Tongkeamha, Texas Native Health outreach coordinator

Presently, 78% of Native Americans live outside reservations. In both rural and urban developments, Native Americans have limited access to basic healthcare. Additionally, funding for Native American healthcare is below the national average allotted. This session examines issues and solutions to healthcare access for Native Americans living outside reservations.

1C. Building Power for Health: BIPOC Rural Community Organizing

Jenna Gaarde, MPH, The Praxis Project program director for research and training

Danielle Lucero, MPH, MSW, The Praxis Project program manager for research and training

The Praxis Project has been convening a Community of Practice of 16 Black, Indigenous, and people of color rural community organizers building power for health. We will share findings from four Learning Circles designed to landscape rural organizing, build capacity and relationships, and inform the ecosystem of rural organizing.

4 – 4:15 p.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

4:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Concurrent Session

2A. Rural Arizona CHW Workforce Development Network (RAzCHOW)!

Floribella Redondo Martinez, BA, Arizona CHW Association chief executive officer

Susan Kunz, MPH, Susan Kunz Consulting independent consultant

The Rural Arizona CHW Workforce Development Network (RAzCHOW), a RHND grantee, is building the capacity of CHWs and the rural organizations that employ them to improve access to care, improve health outcomes, and promote health equity. Learn about voluntary certification in AZ and how CHWs/CHRs/Promotores are increasing value-based reimbursement.

Community Health Workers and Health Literacy: Bringing Health Equity and Positive Health Outcomes to Rural and Underserved Populations

Michal Searls, MEd, Ohio University director of professional programs and partnerships

Kerri Shaw, MSW, LISW-S, C-CHW, Ohio University associate professor of instruction and community health worker lead

Melissa Kimmel, MPA, MA, Ohio University executive in residence and aging lead

This presentation will discuss methods to address the challenges of achieving health literacy and influence social determinants of health through community health workers and identify opportunities for further research and education. Discussion includes education, approach, and strategies to become culturally inclusive and sensitive using specific examples from rural Appalachian Ohio.

2B. Using Telehealth to Deliver Provider Visits in Schools

Randy McKinney, MS, MPA, Louisiana Primary Care Association healthcare technology and innovations manager

This session highlights the development of an RHC/School District collaboration resulting in what has been referred to as "The Bienville Model" of providing health services to children, faculty, and staff in rural Bienville Parish Schools (Louisiana) through Telehealth delivery. The program received NRHA's 2019 Outstanding Rural Health Program Award.

How Mobile Integrated Health can Support Vulnerable Populations

Lindsay Corcoran, MHA, Stroudwater Associates senior consultant

Rebekah Jones, MBA, Great Mines Health Center chief operating officer

Justin Duncan, BS, NRP, CCMT-P, FP-C, Washington County Ambulance District chief executive officer

Gain insight into how one FQHC and an ambulance district in rural Missouri leveraged health related data to identify a vulnerable population and created a Mobile Integrated Healthcare Network to bring primary care to the home of those most at risk and now expanded to include behavioral health and SUD/OD.

2C. Ending The Syndemic in Rural Tennessee

Rebecca Amantia, PhD, Tennessee Department of Health End the Syndemic project associate and researcher

Amber Coyne, MPH, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Tennessee Department of Health CDC public health advisor

Abigail Anderson, MPH, Tennessee Department of Health End the Syndemic epidemiologist intern

End The Syndemic Tennessee is a movement that addresses HIV, sexually transmitted infections, substance use disorder, and viral hepatitis. This presentation highlights the unique rural experiences captured through Tennessee's first statewide syndemic needs assessments to better understand the needs and barriers across these health conditions and support services.

Tuesday, May 16

7 – 8 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

Poster Session

8:00 – 9:15 a.m.

Opening Plenary

Housing as a Social Determinant of Rural Health Equity

Megan Lahr, MPH, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center senior research fellow

Katie Rydberg, MPH, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center program manager

Madeleine Pick, MPH, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center research fellow

In this session, we will describe rural/urban differences in housing characteristics (e.g., quality and affordability). We will also describe within-rural housing-related health equity issues by race, ethnicity, and disability status. Finally, we share results from key informant interviews and case studies highlighting policy implications and best practices in rural housing.

9:15 – 9:30 a.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

9:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

3A. FORHP – Behavioral Health

3B. Partnerships Promote Rural Health Equity via Vaccine Confidence

Michelle Rodgers, PhD, University of Delaware associate dean and Extension Foundation director of cooperative extension and outreach

Dawn Burton, Prairie View A&M University program specialist

Lindsey Haynes-Maslow, PhD, University of North Carolina associate professor

Rural health equity necessitates vaccine uptake among adults. Systemic obstacles to uptake are lack of trust between healthcare entities and rural communities. The Cooperative Extension system, a trusted messenger, promotes vaccine education through local rural partnerships using culturally competent, tailored messaging regarding preventive vaccines to promote health equity.

3C. The National Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services Standards Capacity-Building Workshop

*Mariana Gonzalez, BSPH, Southeast Arizona Health Education Center (SEAHEC) program manager for health equity
Pablo Albelais, Southeast Arizona Health Education Center (SEAHEC) program manager for health equity*

In this capacity-building workshop, you will learn how the implementation of the National Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services standards in rural healthcare entities, help advance health equity, improve quality of care, reduce healthcare disparities, and lower risk factors like geographic isolation, limited job opportunities, and others.

AZ Librarians Fostering Resilient Rural Communities

Laura Schweers, MSW, University of Arizona College of Public Health Center for Rural Health program management assistant

Lisa Lewis, Arizona Library Association President

Mona Arora, PhD, MSPH, University of Arizona College of Public Health Center for Rural Health assistant researcher and professor

This session highlights features and outcomes of a program co-developed by UArizona Center for Rural Health and the Arizona Library Association. The aim of the program is to reduce health disparities in rural communities by engaging and empowering librarians as community leaders through training and funding of mini-grants (14 libraries).

10:45 – 11:00 a.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Concurrent Session

4A. FORHP

4B. Outreach as Equity: Early intervention for High-Risk Covid

Christopher Jentoft, MD, Chinle Comprehensive Health Care Facility clinical director

Myles Stone, MD, MPH, Sacred Peaks Health Center medical director

Collaboration between public health and medical agencies proved essential to limiting severity of COVID-19 in a rural, Indigenous community. Frequent, in-person evaluations of people at risk for severe COVID-19 limited communitywide mortality was supported by an integrated, data-driven response that adapted real-time data to identify patients for evaluation and treatment.

Rural Covid-19 Resiliency: Addressing high risk, underserved populations

Cambron Walker, MS, Kittitas County Public Health Department health promotion specialist

Facilitated by health department staff, a Covid-19 Health Equity Coalition awarded nearly \$200,000 in rural carve out funding to support resiliency in Kittitas County, a rural county with 45% of its population in unincorporated areas. Projects include peer support for Latinx community and cultural opportunities for Native American/Alaskan Native families.

4C. Caring with Pride: Health for Rural LGBTQ+ Communities

Rachel Blanton, MHA, Cornerstone Whole Healthcare Organization Inc. chief operating officer

Camille Evans, Valor Health director of behavioral health

Jeffery Pennings, DO, Full Circle Health faculty physician

Three collaborative partners in rural Idaho highlight their efforts to develop a consult and training model to enhance access to LGBTQ+ affirming healthcare services outside of specialty clinics and urban treatment settings.

Affirming LGBTQIA2S+ Care in a Small Town Clinic

Anthony Carney, DNP, University of Kentucky assistant professor

This session will showcase strategies used by a nurse practitioner led clinic in Wilmore, Kentucky to provide affirming healthcare access for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, asexual, and two-spirit patients. LGBTQ+ Patients in this small town now have access to hormone therapy, HIV prevention, primary care, and mental health care.

12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Networking Lunch

1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Plenary Presentation

Developing partnerships to address COVID-19 in rural communities

Dorothy Evans, MPH, MEd, CDC Foundation program manager

Corina Norrbom, MD, Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service Center for Civic Engagement health policy fellow

Spring Schmidt, PhD(c), Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence executive director

The CDC Foundation partnered with community-based organizations to address the equitable uptake and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Two grantees, the Hmong American Center and the Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence, will discuss the challenges, strategies, and partnerships they engaged to build vaccine confidence in diverse rural communities.

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

2:45 – 4:00 p.m.

Concurrent Session

5A. Oral Health

5B. Improving Health Equity through Hospital and Community Collaboration

Kaarin Lund, MPH, National Rural Health Resource Center senior community program specialist

Suzanne Snyder, MSW, Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Hospital State Division public health analyst and program officer

Joann Emge, BSN, Sparta Community Hospital chief executive officer

Jennifer Barbour, MPA, Sparta Community Hospital director of relations

With support from the Delta Region Community Health Systems Development Program, learn how Sparta Community Hospital utilized a stepwise approach to identify and start addressing health equity challenges alongside community partners. Leverage this approach to understand and address the needs of your unique, rural community.

Addressing Health Literacy in a Rural Border Region

Shiloh Williams, PhD, MSN, RN-BC, CNE, San Diego State University assistant professor and El Centro Regional Medical Center director of research

This session will explore how one rural-border hospital strived to address health equity by better understanding the health literacy needs of their population during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants will explore strategies for addressing low health literacy in racially and ethnically diverse communities and supporting patient centered care.

5C. Amplifying Policies Toward Better Rural Futures

Hollie Storie, MPH, ChangeLab Solutions senior policy analyst

Edgar Camero, MA, ChangeLab Solutions planner

Towards Better Rural Futures project aims to amplify state and local policies and practices that advance racial, economic, and health equity for communities across the rural United States. This session will provide an overview of a policy scan designed to identify policies that address structural barriers in BIPOC rural communities.

Measuring What Matters: Reassessing Equitable Rural Health Success

Bonita Robertson-Hardy, JD, Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group co-executive director

Marjory Givens, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison Population Health Institute associate director and County Health Rankings & Roadmaps co-director

Calvin Allen, Rural Forward NC director

Whether our towns have clean water, connected residents, and an inclusive economy — all impact our opportunity to be healthy. The Thrive Rural Health Framework can help your organization or community identify its social and economic assets, implement strategies, and measure progress to advance equitable prosperity, health, and wellbeing.

4:00 – 5:15 p.m.

Plenary Presentation

A Rural Lens at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Office of Minority Health

Darci Graves, MPP, MA, MA, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Office of Minority Health co-chair of the rural health council

Captain Wanda Finch, MSW, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Office of Minority Health deputy director

In this session, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Office of Minority Health will highlight CMS's new Framework for Advancing Health Care in Rural, Tribal, and Geographically Isolated Communities to expand on efforts in advancing health equity, expanding access to quality, affordable health coverage, and improving health outcomes.

5:15 p.m.

Conference Adjourns

Thank you for your attendance and your continued support of NRHA and the Health Equity Conference! Join us next year in New Orleans, LA on May 5-6, 2024.