

# Rural Emergency Hospitals

## What is a Rural Emergency Hospital?

Rural Emergency Hospital (REH) is a Medicare rural designation that allows hospitals to maintain access to essential emergency, observation, and outpatient hospital services within communities that cannot sustain inpatient hospital operations.

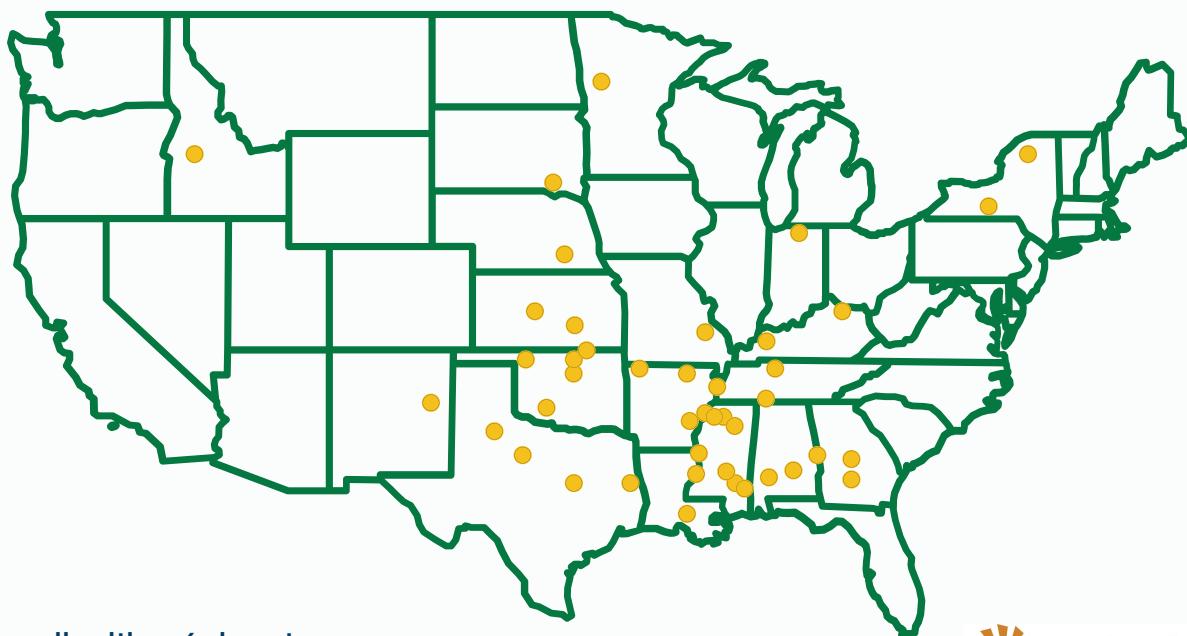


The REH designation helps preserve needed access to care by reducing the national rate of rural hospital closures.

Counties with REH conversions share characteristics of: 1) high median rates of **poverty, uninsured individuals**, and people in **poor or fair health**; 2) **health care access challenges**, with fewer primary care and mental health providers and **higher emergency department visit rates** among Medicare beneficiaries.

## Map of Rural Emergency Hospitals

42 hospitals have converted to a Rural Emergency Hospital since January 2023.



# NRHA Legislative Priorities

## Rural Emergency Hospital Improvement Act

(S. 4322 in the 118th Congress)

*Sens. Moran (R-KS) and Smith (D-MN)*



Authorizes REHs to provide swing bed services.



Allows Distinct Part Units for inpatient psychiatric and inpatient rehabilitation and allows obstetric labor and delivery units.

Allows facilities operating similarly to an REH to convert to the designation.

5% add-on payment for laboratory services under Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule.

Makes REHs eligible for SHIP grants and to serve as National Health Service Corps sites.



## H.R. 44 Rural 340B Access Act

*Reps. Bergman (R-MI) and Dingell (D-MI)*



Adds REHs as eligible covered entities in the 340B program, making the designation a more viable option for rural hospitals.