

**National Rural Health Association
49th Annual Rural Health Conference
11th Rural Hospital Innovation Summit
May 19-22, 2026 – San Diego, CA**

Agenda

Tuesday, May 19, 2026

5 – 7 p.m.

Exhibit Hall Welcome

Seaport D-H

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Breakfast

Seaport Foyer

8 – 9:30 a.m.

Opening Session & Keynote

Seaport ABC

Kate Sapro, PhD, CMS, Deputy Director of the Office of Rural Health Transformation

Hear the latest update from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on the early outcomes of the Rural Health Transformation Program and learn about opportunities for stakeholders to engage in advancing rural health.

9:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

1A

Community Health Workers and Promotores: What the Work Really Looks Like

Balboa ABC

Heather Clark, DrPH, Texas A&M University School of Public Health, Assistant Professor of Practice

Gabriela Boscan Fauquier, National Rural Health Association, Senior Director of Program Services and Development

This session explores data from a five-year collaboration with NRHA to better understand the similarities and differences in employment characteristics and roles of rural community health workers and CHWs. Data collected include work settings, topic areas, job responsibilities,

training preferences, and more. Differences between states, job titles, and job expectations will be discussed. Speakers will discuss the current five-year extension of this project as well.

1B

Artificial Intelligence in Rural Healthcare

Gaslamp AB

Qian Huang, PhD, MA, MPA, East Tennessee State University, Research Assistant Professor

Whitney Zahnd, PhD, University of Iowa, Assistant Professor

Shiloh Williams, PhD, RN, San Diego State University, Assistant Professor

Jue Wang, PhD, University of Toronto, Assistant Professor

This session explores practical applications, emerging opportunities, and critical challenges associated with implementing Artificial Intelligence (AI) in rural healthcare. Attendees will examine the evolving policy landscape, identify strategies to overcome implementation barriers, and discuss collaborative approaches to leverage AI effectively, improving healthcare access and reducing disparities within rural communities.

1C

Justice Without The Juris Doctor: Bridging Legal Gaps in Health Care (FORHP)

Gaslamp CD

Anna Feins, BA, FORHP, HRSA, Program Coordinator of Black Lung Clinics Program

Bradley Johnson, CRT, Stone Mountain Health Services, Director of Lay Advocacy

This session explores a HRSA-funded rural black lung clinic providing free, non-lawyer legal representation for coal miners. Learn how benefits counseling and court advocacy embedded in health settings can improve outcomes, secure compensation, and offer a replicable model for rural health providers working at the intersection of health and justice.

1D

Powering Rural Health Through State Partnerships

Old Town AB

Jed Hansen, PhD, APRN, FNP-C, Nebraska Rural Health Association, Executive Director

Margaret Woepfel, MSN, RN, CPHQ, FACHE, Nebraska Hospital Association, Chief Nursing & Informatics Officer

Explore how Nebraska's Rural Health and Hospital Associations joined forces to advance rural health. Through case studies in Age-Friendly, maternal health, and dental access. This session highlights how blending clinical data expertise with grassroots infrastructure knowledge creates

impactful, scalable solutions for rural communities through shared advocacy, education, and data-driven initiatives.

1E

Recruiting and Retaining Nurses to Critical Access Hospitals

La Jolla AB

David Schmitz, MD, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Professor and Chair, Department of Family and Community Medicine

Stacy Kusler, BA, CPRP, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Workforce Specialist

The Community Apgar Project encompasses national research service projects enabling rural communities to assess and improve capabilities for recruitment and retention of providers including nurses, physicians, and CEOs. This updated program is specific to recruiting and retaining nurses to CAH rural communities. Presenters will also share the North Dakota findings.

1F

State Lessons in Advancing Rural Health Policy

Coronado A

Cody Mullen, PhD, Purdue University, Clinical Professor, Department of Public Health; Director of Master of Health Administration Program

State laws and policies significantly shape rural health outcomes. This session features policy experts collaborating with legislators and agencies across multiple states, sharing effective strategies and tools for advancing state-level policy education and advocacy to improve rural health.

RHIS – Operations Track

Sustaining Rural Maternity Care Services

Coronado D

Marie Barry, Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative (RWHC), Director of Community Economic & Workforce Development

Christine Trautman, MD, Reedsburg Area Medical Center, OBGYN

Melody Hargis, MSN, RN, Door County Medical Center, Director, Inpatient Services

Theresa Hollinger, MHA, MSN RN, NEA-BC, Grant Regional Health Center, Chief Nursing Officer

Kelsi Craker MSN, RN, RWHC Maternity Services Coordinator

The Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative launched a Maternity Services Workgroup to maximize the ongoing supply and quality of maternity services in rural Wisconsin. Hear from member CAHs about the collaborative strategies being utilized to help preserve and sustain access to and quality of maternity care in rural communities.

RHIS – APM / VBC

Leveraging Rural Data to Create Meaningful Public Policy

Coronado E

Jim Lee, Michigan Health and Hospital Association, Senior Vice President of Data Policy & Analytics

Michael Shepherd, University of Michigan, Assistant Professor

Jeremiah Hodshire, Hillsdale Hospital, President & CEO

This session will highlight the innovative approach the Michigan Health & Hospital Association (MHA) took to supporting rural hospitals after the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025. The session will highlight the collaborations between a University of Michigan rural researcher and key stakeholders across the state.

1G

Contributed Research Papers - Rural Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder

Coronado B

1. Access and Perceived Barriers to Substance Use Treatment

Tamika D. Gilreath, PhD, Texas A&M University School of Public Health, Professor

2. Rural and Urban Availability of Substance Use Treatment Facilities

Ty Borders, PhD, Texas Christian University, Professor and Chair

3. Acceptability of Harm Reduction Services in Rural Wyoming

Ruth Korankye, University of Wyoming, Research Assistant

4. Older Adults' Mental Health Treatment Use: Rural-Urban Differences

Carrie Henning-Smith, PhD, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, Associate Professor

10:45 – 11:00 a.m.

Poster Session/Break

Seaport Foyer

11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Plenary Session – Health Resources and Services Administration Health Update

Seaport ABC

Tom Morris, M.P.A., Federal Office of Rural Health Policy/HRSA, Associate Administrator

Candice Chen, M.D., M.P.H., Bureau of Health Workforce/HRSA, Associate Administrator

This session will provide updates regarding key federal activities that help improve access to quality health care in rural communities.

12:15 – 2:30 p.m.

Lunch in Exhibit Hall

Seaport D-H

12:30-1:15pm

Partner Session: A Day-In-the-Life of the Rural Patient - Innovative Technologies to Transform Rural Healthcare and Patient's Lives

Seaport ABC

Monica Coley, Amazon Web Services, – Leader, Rural Health Transformation Program

Samantha Bauer, Leidos QTC, Associate Director of Rural Health

Lily Olson, Dimagi, Managing Director, US Strategy

Patrick Winter, Commure, - SVP of Commercial Operations

Lisa Bari, Innovaccer, Vice President of Policy and Partnerships

Gabriela Armijo, Electronic Caregiver, Business Development Manager

Join Amazon Web Services (AWS) and five leading healthcare technology partners as we walk through the Day-In-the-Life of the Rural Patient scenario leveraging leading solutions and technology innovations that directly address core priorities of the Rural Healthcare Transformation Program.

1:30 - 2:15 p.m.

Partner Session: Building Viable Governance for Safe AI in Rural & Community Health

Seaport ABC

Laura Kreofsky, Microsoft, Director of Rural Health Resiliency

Tyler Wallace, PhD, Scale Street Healthcare AI Training, Principal Consultant

Understand what safe AI means in healthcare and see practical, relevant rural health use cases. Learn the minimum governance and literacy needed to proceed responsibly and leave with clear next steps, not just ideas!

1:30 – 5:00 p.m.

**Student Track Session/Student Constituency Group Meeting
Regatta C**

2:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

2A

Obstetric and neonatal care access in rural communities

Balboa ABC

Katy Kozhimannil, PhD, MPA, University of Minnesota School of Public Health, Distinguished McKnight University Professor

Julia Interrante, PhD, MPH, University of Minnesota School of Public Health, Research Fellow

Emily Sheffield, MPH, University of Minnesota School of Public Health, Doctoral Student

Kevan O'Hanlon, University of Minnesota, Project Coordinator

Amidst rising maternal and infant mortality, both of which are elevated for rural residents, access to childbirth and higher-level neonatal care services are essential. This session provides updates on maternity and neonatal care closures, examines factors in proximity to neonatal intensive care units, and describes predictors of obstetric unit closures.

2B

Closing Gaps: Smart Staffing in Rural Psychiatry Programs

Gaslamp AB

Vishal Adma, MD, Integrated Psychiatric Consultants, President and CEO

Heidi Monroe, DBH, Johnson Memorial Health, Director of Behavioral Health

Rural communities face barriers in accessing timely psychiatric care due to provider shortages, coverage gaps, and inconsistent oversight. This session presents innovative staffing strategies to expand rural program capacity and improve clinical outcomes, offering a practical framework for single-source staffing and highlighting a successful implementation at a rural psychiatric hospital.

2C

The Future of Rural Health: An Interactive Discussion

Gaslamp CD

John Gale, MS, Maine Rural Health Research Center and Cutler Institute, Senior Research Associate

Learn how rural health providers are leveraging resources from community partners, foundations, and the private and public sectors to address patients' needs – food, housing, and transportation. Find out how the economic vitality of rural communities improves when social determinants of health are addressed. Resources and tools will be highlighted.

How rural hospitals could transform for the future of rural health

Kevin Bennett, PhD, University of South Carolina, Professor & Director

Jeremy Levin, Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative, Director of Advocacy

Discussion of the future of hospital service delivery, and the issues facing survival; discuss the potential of the Rural health transformation program and discuss specific examples of innovative programs; discuss what the future of rural hospital care could include, and how such care will need to evolve to survive.

2D

Stronger Together: Rural Public Health and Primary Care

Old Town AB

Cody Mullen, PhD, Purdue University, Clinical Professor

Michael Meit, MA, MPH, East Tennessee State University, Director, Center for Rural Health and Research

Alana Knudson, PhD, NORC Walsh Research Center, Director

Diane Hall, PhD, MSED, Office of Rural Health, CDC, Director

This panel presentation session will include a discussion of the role of public health in rural communities, the response to past rural emergencies, and the connection between where primary care and public health meet. Hear solutions and resources to connect with local rural public health.

2E

Data-Driven Solutions for Strengthening Rural Nurse Workforce

La Jolla AB

Qian Huang, PhD, MA, MPA, East Tennessee State University, Research Assistant Professor

Kathleen Kinser, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, R, Tennessee Center for Nursing Advancement, Nurse Scientist

Shiloh Williams, PhD, RN, San Diego State University, Assistant Professor

This session highlights emerging tools and strategies to support rural nurse workforce planning, including Geographic Information Systems dashboards and integrated data systems. Learn how

these innovations are shaping policy, addressing geographic disparities, and informing sustainable solutions to meet the evolving healthcare needs of rural communities.

2F – Implementing a Rural Aging Lens within SRHAs and RHTP Activities

Coronado A

Nancy Wexler, DBH, The John A. Hartford Foundation, Senior Program Officer

Rebecca Yeboah, National Rural Health Association, Program Coordinator

Jennifer Muthig, New York State Association for Rural Health (NYSARH), Executive Director

Andy Lowe, New England Rural Health Association (NERHA), Executive Director

Ann Marie Day, MBA, New England Rural Health Association (NERHA), Chief Operating Officer

This session will focus on state-level partnerships and activities of the National Rural Age-Friendly Initiative (NRAFI) and how State Rural Health Associations (SRHAs) utilize funding from The John A. Hartford Foundation to elevate age-friendly priorities and strengthen rural health systems in their states. We will also highlight NRHA's NRAFI activities and resources concentrated around the state's older adult-focused Rural Health Transformation Program activities.

RHIS - Operations Track: Rural Hospital Closures: Early Warning Signs For Rural Leaders

Coronado D

Jeff Sommer, Stroudwater Associates, Managing Director

The Stroudwater Rural Hospital Closure Study has been constructed to provide timely insights specifically for rural hospital leaders. The study also creates a framework for assessment of the risk of closure along with targeted action steps/course correct based on the early markers signifying increased risk of closure.

Rural Medicare Policy Updates (FORHP)

Coronado E

Courtney S. Turner, MPH, Policy Coordinator, HRSA/Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

Marguerite Peterseim, MPH, National Rural Health Association, Senior Government Affairs and Policy Coordinator

Carrie Cochran-McClain, DrPH, National Rural Health Association, Chief Policy Officer

This session will provide participants with an overview of recent Medicare policies that affect rural clinicians and health care facilities. Participants will learn about recent legislative changes affecting rural healthcare and CMS's recent or upcoming proposed policy changes. Participants

will also hear about policy and research activities and resources from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy and a future forecast of upcoming policy areas by NRHA.

2G

Contributed Research Papers – Veterans Health

Coronado B

- **Veteran Firearm Injury and Death Rates by Rurality**
Tess Gilbert, VA Portland Health Care System, Research Associate
- **Exploring Innovative Pathways for Rural Native Veterans' Reintegration**
Cynthia Goss, Veterans Rural Health Resource Center - Salt Lake City, Population Specialist
- **Enhancing Rural Veteran Access to Pelvic Health Rehabilitation**
Kristen Gray, PhD, VA Puget Sound Health Care System, Research Health Science Specialist
- **Identifying and Overcoming Barriers to Rural Caregiver Identification**
Claire Grant, PhD, VA CHOIR, Postdoctoral Research Fellow

3:45 – 4:00 p.m.

Poster Session/Break

Seaport Foyer

4:00 – 5:15 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

3A

Improving Autism Primary Care in Rural Communities

Balboa ABC

Oyin Oloniniyi, MPH, American Academy of Pediatrics, Program Manager, ECHO Initiatives
Erika Davis, PhD, MPH, American Academy of Pediatrics, Manager, Program Evaluation
Erin Kelly, PhD, American Academy of Pediatrics, Director, Mental and Relational Health

AAP NRACH ECHO training center will describe how an ECHO Autism Collaborative expands care for children with autism in rural primary care settings. We will show how ECHO learning increases capacity, fosters interdisciplinary collaboration, and improves access to neuroaffirming, trauma-informed care for autistic children in underserved communities.

Building Capacity for Rural Pediatric Primary Care

Oyin Oloniniyi, MPH, American Academy of Pediatrics, Program Manager, ECHO Initiatives

Erika Davis, PhD, MPH, American Academy of Pediatrics, Manager, Program Evaluation
Erin Kelly, PhD, American Academy of Pediatrics, Director, Mental and Relational Health

AAP will share insights from the NRACH ECHO Training Center, highlighting how it builds pediatric workforce capacity in rural and frontier communities. This session explores collaborative learning, mentorship, and practical tools that empower clinicians to address mental and behavioral health needs in underserved pediatric populations

3B

The Sustainable Rural Ecosystem: Create a lasting quality infrastructure via the American Heart Association Preventative, Acute, Chronic Disease Frameworks

Gaslamp AB

Mindy Cook, BSN, American Heart Association, Senior Director Rural Health Care Quality
Deanna Jackson, BSN, RN, CPHQ, CEN, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, Quality Director
Altaj Ibrahim, MHSAA, Sunset Health, Quality Director

Explore how the American Heart Association's Preventative, Acute, and Chronic Disease frameworks strengthen sustainable rural ecosystems by improving hypertension control, acute cardiac and stroke care, and post-acute care integration. Learn how these efforts can align with Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) grants—an unprecedented opportunity for rural health innovation.

3C

TXREP, An Innovative Statewide Academic-Community Partnership

Gaslamp CD

Kia Parsi, MD, Texas A&M Rural and Community Institute (ARCHI), Executive Director
John Henderson, Texas Organization of Rural and Community Hospitals, President & CEO
Melissa Lackey, MSN, RN, Texas A&M Rural and Community Institute (ARCHI), Director of Rural Health Support and Engagement
Albert Ruiz, Texas State Office of Rural Health Program, Rural Health Specialist

Texas A&M Rural Engagement Programs (TXREP) is an innovative legislative-funded initiative partnering an academic institution with community hospitals and clinics. The A&M Rural and Community Health Institute and other colleges leverage university resources to provide solutions for 100+ hospitals and clinics in Texas, improving operations and promoting workforce development opportunities.

3D

Strengthening the Evidence Base for Rural Health

Old Town AB

Michael Meit, MA, MPH, ETSU/NORC Rural Health Research Center, Deputy Director

Shena Popat, MHA, NORC Walsh Research Center, Senior Research Scientist

Lisa Davis, MHA, Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health, Director and Outreach Associate Professor of Health Policy and Administration

Expanding the rural health evidence base is essential for improving outcomes, yet many programs are developed and tested in urban contexts. This session explores the benefits, challenges, and key considerations for piloting and evaluating health-related programs in rural settings to generate relevant, actionable insights for rural communities.

3E

RHTP Bright Spots: Case Studies of Best Practices

La Jolla AB

John Henderson, CEO, Texas Organization of Rural and Community Hospitals

Alfred Sams, CEO, Rough Riders Health Network, North Dakota

Brock Slabach, NRHA, Chief Operations Officer

The Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) was rapidly considered as part of H.R. 1 and quickly implemented, leading to the allocation of \$50 billion in less than three months. Despite this swift action, rural facilities have expressed concerns about whether they will benefit from the program. This session will highlight successful examples where RHTP resources are making a positive impact on rural healthcare providers. The goal is to showcase these bright spots and encourage the adoption of best practices in other states and local communities.

3F

Policy and Implementation Strategies for MFT and MHC Integration (FORHP)

Coronado A

Holly Andrilla, MS, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, University of Washington, Deputy Director,

Janessa Graves, PhD, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, University of Washington, Director

Garth Miller, MD, FACS, CRHCP, Whidbey Island Public Hospital District, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Medical Officer

Anna Swanson, MPA, Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, Health Resources and Services Administration, Public Health Analyst

Effective January 1, 2024, mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists can bill Medicare independently for mental illness diagnosis and treatment. Speakers will share lessons

learned on supporting practitioner participation, billable service lines, patient and practitioner outcomes, and describe the evolving distribution and supply landscape following this policy change.

RHIS – Operations Track

Prepared for the Unexpected: OB Emergencies in Rural EDs

Coronado D

Jacquelyn Alvarado, DNP, MHA, APRN, CNM, C-EFM, C-OBE, C-OBQS, CHSE, FACNM, Texas A&M Rural and Community Health Institute, Director, Rural Maternal Health

Rural Emergency Departments without obstetric services face unique challenges in maternal emergencies. This session presents a simulation-based training model that builds team readiness, improves maternal safety, and equips rural providers with low-cost, scalable tools to stabilize patients before transfer, reducing morbidity and mortality in underserved communities.

Filling Rural Workforce Gaps: Connecting Communities to Care (FORHP)

Coronado E

Michael Fallahkhair, MPH, FORHP, Deputy Associate Administrator

Mike Shimmens, MA, 3RNET, Executive Director

Stacy Kusler, BA, 3RNET, North Dakota Network Coordinator

Rural hospitals and clinics continue to face persistent workforce shortages that threaten access to care. This session will highlight how 3RNET helps address these challenges by connecting health care employers with qualified candidates and practical recruitment resources. Speakers will provide an overview of 3RNET's national work, discuss how recruitment support happens at the state level, and share a real-world example of how filling a staffing gap strengthened a rural facility's ability to serve its community.

3G

Contributed Research Papers – Maternal Health

Coronado B

- **Maternal Care Designation and Utilization of prenatal care**
Songyuan Deng, PhD, University of South Carolina School of Medicine, Associate Scientist
- **Financial Challenges of Providing Rural Obstetric Services**
Julia Interrante, PhD, University of Minnesota, Researcher/Statistical Lead
- **Texas Rural-Urban Reimbursement Disparities for Maternal Delivery**
- *Reyann Davis, Texas A&M University, Director Value-Based*

- **Rural Maternal Health Outcomes Before and After Obstetric Unit Closures: A Mixed-Methods Analysis of Access, Equity, and Workforce Impact**
Sarvesh Mohan, Cornwall Hospital, Clinical Manager

Thursday, May 21, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Constituency Group Meetings and Continental Breakfast

Public Health Status/Clinical Constituency Group – Gaslamp AB

Research & Education Constituency Group – Old Town AB

FQHC/Rural Health Clinic Constituency Group – Gaslamp CD

Statewide Health Resources Constituency Group – Coronado B

Hospital Constituency Group - Coronado D

9:00 – 10:15 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

4A

Trends in Medication Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder

Balboa ABC

*Holly Andrilla, MS, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, Deputy Director & Research Scientist
Principal*

Janessa Graves, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, Director

Sara Woolcock, MPH, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, Research Scientist

There is ongoing concern nationally about the opioid crisis. We will present findings on the availability and receipt of medication treatment for opioid use disorder (MOUD) nationally. We will present findings on the change in the receipt of MOUD in rural communities with and without RCORP funding and urban counties.

4B

Remote Possibilities: Collective Defense for Rural Communities/Google

Gaslamp AB

Sarah Morales, Google, Senior Program Manager

Bill Reid, Google, Security Advisor

Threats to rural healthcare are threats to the entire community. This session explores the shared cyber risks across healthcare, water, electricity, and local governments. Learn how an

attack on one organization poses a collective risk and how healthcare providers can lead the creation of a community-wide collective defense.

4C

Breaking Silos: Coordinating Rural School Mental Health Care

Gaslamp CD

Amanda North, The Center for Rural Health Innovation, Executive Director

Rural schools face severe mental health workforce shortages, fragmented care, and Medicaid billing barriers. This session shares results from a pilot integrating the Whole Child framework with the Collaborative Care Model to improve cross-agency collaboration, streamline services, and expand equitable school-based mental health care for rural North Carolina students.

School-Based Behavioral Telehealth for Rural Access

Claire MacGeorge, MD, MSCR, Medical University of South Carolina, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Medical Director of School-based Health

Caitlin Koob, PhD, MS, OTR/L, Medical University of South Carolina, Research Associate

Edrin Williams, DHA, Medical University of South Carolina, Center for Telehealth, Executive Director, Grants and Research

School-based behavioral telehealth provides a unique opportunity to improve access to mental health care for children living in rural areas. Telehealth is increasingly being utilized to overcome rural-specific distance and resource barriers. Best practices for implementing telehealth in schools to improve access and reduce health disparities will be described.

4D

Community Health: From Theory to Practice

Old Town AB

Kalie Kerth, PharmD, Rural Health Center at Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU) College of Pharmacy, Director

Brock Slabach, MPH, COO, National Rural Health Association

Improving rural community health means addressing social determinants beyond healthcare facilities. Effective collaboration with local partners is vital for strategies that enhance overall well-being. This session will review trends in community-based care accountability, outline key areas for collaboration, and introduce an educational approach to prepare professionals for complex health challenges.

4E

Future-Ready: How Educational Institutions are Powering the Workforce

La Jolla AB

Cassandra Pope, SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare, Program Manager

Kevin Bennett, PhD, SC Center for Rural and Primary Healthcare, Director

Courtney Catledge, DNP, University of South Carolina-Lancaster, Regional Palmetto College Dean

Discover how colleges and universities such as the University of South Carolina-Lancaster foster programs that drive workforce development to meet evolving industry needs, highlighting strategies that expand access, boost economic mobility, and create career pathways, specifically for rural populations, ensuring that all communities are prepared for the future of work.

4F

Mapping Rural Maternal and Neonatal Care: New Research Insights (FORHP)

Coronado A

Katy Kozhimannil, PhD, MPA, University of Minnesota School of Public Health, Distinguished McKnight University Professor

Elizabeth Crane, Mission Analytics, Inc., Health Researcher

Kate Crothers, MPH, RN, MaineHealth, Grant Project Manager

Karis Tyner, DNP, HRSA/FORHP, Research Project Coordinator

Greta Stuhlsatz, PhD, HRSA/FORHP, Statistician

Exploring rural maternal health at the intersection of program implementation and research. The panel will focus on recent findings around maternal and neonatal healthcare access in rural America and techniques to support and enhance data collection and improve program implementation.

RHIS – Operations Track

Examining hospital and service line changes and finances

Coronado D

Casey Balio, PhD, East Tennessee State University Center for Rural Health and Research & ETSU/NORC Rural Health Research Center

Mark Holmes, PhD, University of North Carolina Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, Director

Brian Whitacre, PhD, Oklahoma State University, Professor and Neustadt Chair

Rural hospitals face unique operational and financial challenges, which have implications for changes in service lines offerings, vulnerability, and closure. This session will describe the

current state and recent evidence on rural hospital and service line openings, closings, and finances, including spatial analyses and reflections from a rural hospital administrator.

RHIS – APM / VBC

Quality as a VBC Readiness Strategy

Coronado E

Sarah Brinkman, Stratis Health, Senior Program Manager

Cody Utz, Holton Community Hospital, Quality Director

Organizational capacity for quality improvement is a critical component for moving towards value-based care. Two rural hospitals that participated in the Rural Healthcare Provider Transition Project will share strategies and lessons learned through a focused initiative to increase capacity and infrastructure for quality across all aspects of their organizations.

4G

Contributed Research Papers – Rural Workforce/Education

Coronado B

- **Roadmap for Strengthening Rural Physician Workforce Through State GME**
Lori Rodefeld, University of North Carolina, Deputy Director
- **Rural Road to Medicine: Inspiring Rural Texan Students**
Hannah Whittaker, Texas A&M University College of Medicine, Student
- **Rethinking Rurality in Graduate Medical Education**
Emily M. Hawes, PharmD, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Sheps Center for Health Services Research, Professor
- **Producing rural physicians: 20 year strategies, outcomes, cost**
Mark Deutchman, MD, University of Colorado, Associate Dean for Rural Health
Roberto Silva, MD, University of Colorado, Family Physician Director of the Rural Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship

10:15 – 10:45 a.m.

Poster Session/Break

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

5A

Creative and Child-centered Conversations About Social Media

Balboa ABC

Cori Cross, MD, FAAP, Pediatrician

Dulce Reyes, student

Join the American Academy of Pediatrics Center of Excellence on Social Media and Youth Mental Health to learn about the Center's child-centered framework for understanding youth social media use, conversation starters to engage youth, and how to connect with youth and families around social media and mental health.

Integrating Pediatric Obesity and Mental Health in Rural Care

Oyin Oloniniyi, MPH, American Academy of Pediatrics, Program Manager, ECHO Initiatives

Erika Davis, PhD, MPH, American Academy of Pediatrics, Manager, Program Evaluation

Erin Kelly, PhD, American Academy of Pediatrics, Director, Mental and Relational Health

AAP will share implementation insights on pediatric ECHO programs that integrate obesity and mental health care in rural settings. This session highlights how AAP National Rural Adolescent and Child Health ECHO Training Center builds workforce capacity, supports trauma-informed care, and equips clinicians to deliver comprehensive, whole-child services in underserved communities.

5B

Enhancing Team-Based Care & ACO Success through Medicare Wellness Visits

Gaslamp AB

Reyann Davis, Texas A&M Rural and Community Health Institute, Director, Value-Based Care

Paul Aslin, MHA, Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals Clinically Integrated Network, Executive Director

Melissa Matlock, Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals Clinically Integrated Network, Population Health and Quality Analyst

Cami Wade, RN, Texas A&M Rural and Community Health Institute, RN Clinical Care Coordinator

Krystal Stuart, MA, Texas A&M Rural and Community Health Institute, Care Coordinator Associate

The Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals (TORCH) Clinically Integrated Network and Texas A&M have partnered together providing care coordination as an extension of rural clinics workforce. This panel will explore tools to enhance care coordination, streamline workflows, and advance value-based care, focusing on lessons learned and future opportunities.

5C

Reframing the Narrative: Strengths of Rural Communities

Gaslamp CD

Catherine Smith, LAPSW, The Healing Trust, Program Partner

Jacy Warrell, MPA, Rural Health Association of Tennessee, Chief Executive Officer

Rural communities are often discussed through a lens of scarcity which overlooks the strengths rural communities possess – generational knowledge, cohesion, and streamlined decision-making. We'll explore an abundance mindset which creates effective, community-driven programming, and design initiatives that build on the inherent strengths of rural communities.

5D

Food Insecurity and Chronic Disease in the United States

Old Town AB

Emma Boswell, MPH, University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center

Peyyin Hung, PhD, University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Co-Director of the University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Associate Professor at the University of South Carolina Department of Health Services Policy & Management

Elizabeth Crouch, PhD, University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Co-Director of the University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Associate Professor at the University of South Carolina Department of Health Services Policy & Management

Food access is essential to health; yet, rural communities face persistent barriers. Limited chronic disease and food security data hinder actionable solutions. This session will discuss updated data on food access, food security, and strategies to identify high-need rural areas to guide targeted public health resource allocation.

Improving Chronic Disease Integrating CHWs and Central Kitchens

Jamie Jeffrey, MD, FAAP, HealthyKids Wellness and Weight Management program and KEYS 4 HealthyKids, CAMC Weight Loss Center, Medical Director

Kim Tieman, MSW, ACSW, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Vice President and Program Director for Health

Chronic disease outcomes are improved through integrated approaches addressing clinical and social determinants in rural communities. This strategy combines community health workers with a Central Kitchen model, using farm-to-table meals and principles. It presents clinical and strategic dimensions of using a Central Kitchen to address chronic disease.

5E

Rural Clinical Training: Trends, Challenges and Solutions

La Jolla AB

*Holly Andrilla, MS, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, Deputy Director & Research Scientist
Principal*

Randy Longenecker, MD, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center

Janessa Graves, PhD, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, Director

Natalia Oster, PhD, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, Research Scientist

Competition for rural clinical training sites has been identified as a barrier preventing NP and PA programs from providing rural training to their students. Medical schools and residencies also struggle to find preceptors and teaching sites. We will share findings on trends, barriers and solutions to sustain rural clinical training.

5F

Rural 101: Applications and Implications of Defining Rural (FORHP)

Coronado A

Greta Stuhlsatz, PhD, HRSA/FORHP, Statistician

Karis Tyner, DNP, HRSA/FORHP, Research Project Coordinator

Arrianna Planey, PhD, MA, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Assistant Professor

This session will provide and landscape of defining rural in the federal government and federally funded research. Representatives from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy will discuss current rural definitions, rural research, and program eligibility determinations. Panelists will discuss research use cases, how to navigate determining

RHIS - Operations

Real-World AI Strategies Driving Results in Rural Hospitals

Coronado D

Laurence Coman, Avo, COO & Cofounder

Athena Minor, PhD, DNP, MSN, RN, Ohio County HealthCare, Chief Nursing and Chief Clinical Officer

This session will share affordable AI strategies—like ambient scribing—that cut post-visit documentation time by 17%, reduce chart review time by 87%, and improve medication dosing compliance by 35%, easing provider burden, driving better care, maximizing reimbursement.

RHIS - APM/VCM

Alternative Payment Models and Value-Based Care: Making the Economics Work for Rural Hospitals

Coronado E

Anna Anna, Rural Health Redesign Center, Chief Administrative Officer

5G

Contributed Research Papers

Coronado B

- **Lung Cancer Screening Eligibility and Adherence by Rurality**
Brianna Holston, Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine, Research Assistant II
- **Cervical Cancer Screening for Rural Women with Self-Collection**
Elizabeth VonderHaar, MD, Teal Medical
- **National dialysis availability, quality, and ownership by rurality**
Casey P Balio, PhD, East Tennessee State University Center for Rural Health and Research, Research Assistant Professor
- **Differential Rural-Urban NICU Access in North Carolina, 2009-2021**
Susie Gurzenda, NC Rural Health Research Program, Graduate Research Assistant

12:00 – 1:45 p.m.

Rural Health Awards Luncheon

Seaport D-H

Join NRHA for a tribute to the 2026 Rural Health Award winners.

2:00-2:20 p.m.

CDC office of Rural Health Update

Seaport ABC

Diane Hall, PhD, CDC-Office of Rural Health, Director

This session will provide updates regarding key federal activities that impact rural public health and health in rural communities.

2:20 – 3:30 p.m.

Terry Reilly Lecture

Seaport ABC

Sarah Jane Tribble, KFF Health News, Chief Rural Correspondent

3:15 – 3:30 p.m.

Poster Session/Break

3:30 – 4:45 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

6A

A Snapshot of US Children's Health by Rurality

Balboa ABC

Cassie Odahowski, PhD, University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Research Assistant Professor

Elizabeth Crouch, PhD, University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Director and Associate Professor

Joni Nelson, PhD, James B. Edwards College of Dental Medicine, Medical University of South Carolina, Associate Professor and Division Chief

Nicholas Yell, PhD, University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Postdoctoral Research Associate

Emma Boswell MPH, University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina

Taryn Farrell MPH, University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina

Understanding factors impacting childhood health is essential to preventing negative health outcomes. This session will provide a snapshot of US children's health by rurality, examining 1) all-cause mortality and leading causes of death, 2) trends of physical, mental, and oral health outcomes, and 3) environmental factors impacting rural children.

6B

Fighting Burnout with Bytes: Using Generative AI

Gaslamp AB

Sarah Morales, Google, Senior Program Manager *Bill Reid, Security Advisor*

Madeline DuPlessis, Optura AI, Director of Enterprise Sales

Bill Reid, Google, Security Advisor

The rural workforce crisis is fueled by administrative overload. This session explores how generative Artificial Intelligence can drastically reduce documentation and paperwork. Learn how to deploy this innovative technology to improve clinician satisfaction and build a resilient, long-term workforce, keeping providers caring for their rural communities.

6C

Wearables, Apps, and Virtual-Reality for Rural Veterans' Mental-Health

Gaslamp CD

Hilary Touchett, PhD, RN, Michael E DeBakey VA Medical Center, Research Health Scientist
Julianna Hogan, PhD, Michael E DeBakey VA Medical Center, Clinical Psychologist
Kathleen Grubbs, PhD, Central Arkansas VA Healthcare System, Clinical Psychologist
Shannon Sisco, PhD, Michael E DeBakey VA Medical Center, Whole Health Clinical Director

Panelists discuss innovations used to supplement care provided by rural VAs and how these programs can be implemented among other rural mental health programs. Topics include remotely delivered online peer support groups, wearables for sleep and stress, virtual reality home-based pain treatment, and virtual reality for mindfulness and relaxation.

Strategies for Implementing Telehealth Programs across Care Contexts

Jennifer Freytag, PhD, Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Science Specialist
Stephanie Day, PhD, Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Services Researcher
Giselle Day, PhD, Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Science Specialist
Hilary Touchett, PhD, Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Services Researcher

Implementing telehealth programs presents unique challenges for every rural clinic. This panel will present successful implementation strategies applied at Veterans Administration (VA) rural mental health clinics. Panelists will use examples to initiate an audience-led conversation on tailoring strategies to meet needs of provider and patient populations within and outside VA.

6D

Sustaining Obstetrical Regionalized Levels of Care: What Will It Take?

Old Town AB

Karen Weis, RNC, University of Kansas Medical Center, Professor/Christine A. Hartley Rural Nursing Professorship
David Jordan, United Methodist Health Ministry Fund, President & CEO of United Methodist Health Ministry Fund

Across the U.S., there are growing maternity care deserts. Predominantly rural states struggle to maintain regionalized models of care. Access to inpatient and outpatient maternal care for 105 Kansas counties were assessed. A panel will discuss the impact of hospital closures and approaches for sustaining regionalized levels of care.

State-led Innovations to improve rural maternal health

Whitney Wiggins, Health Resource and Service Administration, Public Health Analyst

HRSA Maternal and Child Health Bureau, State Maternal Health Innovation program's purpose is to reduce maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity. This session shows the impact of State led Maternal Health Task Force innovative programs addressing skilled workforce, direct clinical care, enhanced data quality, and community engagement in rural areas.

6E

Bridging Gaps: Community Health Workers Transform Rural Health

La Jolla AB

Michaela Amburgey, MPH, UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health, Rural Project Manager

William Baker, BA, RN, UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health, Director

This presentation explores the critical role of Community Health Workers (CHWs) in rural healthcare teams, highlighting the long-standing Kentucky Homeplace CHW program as a proven, cost-effective model. Utilizing program data and published research, we demonstrate how CHWs improve chronic disease outcomes, reduce healthcare usage, and bridge social and healthcare gaps.

Growing Community Health Workforce: Networks Make the Difference!

Andy Lowe, New England Rural Health Association, Executive Director

Aisling Ryan-Abbott, DNP, FNP-C, New England Rural Health Association, Clinical Education and Workforce Consultant

Kiara Badillo, New England Rural Health Association, Public Health & Education Consultant

Learn how an innovative program trained over 150 community health workers in rural counties across Massachusetts. A collaborative network of AHECs, community colleges, health centers, and community partners reaches into immigrant communities to recruit and train people to start them on the path to careers in the rural healthcare workforce.

6F

Networks That Work: Scaling Rural Solutions Through Collaboration (FORHP)

Coronado A

Karis Tyner, DNP, FORHP, HRSA, Research Coordinator

George H. Pink, PhD, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Professor Emeritus

Paul Aslin, MHA, Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals Clinically Integrated Network, Executive Director

This panel examines rural health networks as a policy and operational strategy for rural providers. Researchers from the University of North Carolina will provide the landscape by sharing their findings comparing independent and system-affiliated rural hospitals. A FORHP representative will discuss the impact and future of our network programs, while a clinically integrated network leader will share best practices from the perspective of an established network.

RHIS - Operations

When Patients Leave: How CAHs Respond to Outmigration

Coronado D

Sally Buck, MS, FACHE, National Rural Health Resource Center, Chief Executive Officer

Jonathan Hatfield, Klickitat Valley Health, Chief Executive Officer

Matthew Bancroft, MPH, National Rural Health Resource Center, Business Development Specialist

Rural hospital leaders share real-world strategies to address outmigration, improve service alignment, and recapture market share. Presenters will highlight tools, data, and lessons learned to help Critical Access Hospitals strengthen financial stability and meet local health needs. Session includes practical examples, planning resources, and current trends in patient migration.

RHIS - APM/VCM

Operational and Regulatory Impacts of the OBBB and more.

Coronado E

Brian Bertsch, Eide Bailly, Principal

Jared Heim, Eide Bailly, Strategic Financing Director

The OBBB and other regulatory updates continue to change the operational landscape for healthcare providers. This session will discuss the major changes and the impact to providers. It will also include a discussion of how we see facilities reacting, strategies to consider, discussion points for Congressional leaders, and more.

6G

Contributed Research Papers - Geographical Analyses

Coronado B

- 1. Geographic Disparities in Long-Term Care for Aging Populations**

Yvonne Jonk, PhD, Maine Rural Health Research Center, Director, University of Southern Maine, Research Professor

- 2. System-level Effects of Collaborative Health Communities**

Audrey Price, MPH, Georgia Health Policy Center, Georgia State University, Research Associate

3. Geographic Variation in Health Care Spending Across Rurality

Janessa Graves PhD, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, University of Washington, Director, Associate Professor

4. Community Perspectives on Aging Across Tennessee

Kayla Alvis, PhD, East Tennessee State University, Research Assistant Professor

5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Meet the Editor: An Open Discussion with the Editor of The Journal of Rural Health Room Balboa ABC

Ty Borders, PhD, Texas Christian University, Professor and Chair

The Journal of Rural Health (JRH) is the official scholarly publication of the NRHA. The Editor will provide an update on current statistics for the JRH and will answer questions about publishing in the journal.

Friday, May 22, 2026

7:15-8:30 a.m.

Breakfast/Interest Group Meetings

Seaport Foyer

7:15-8 a.m.

Special Interest Group Breakfasts

Seaport ABC

Rural Behavioral Health & Substance Use Disorder

Rural Indigenous Peoples Health

Rural Veterans Health

8:00-9:30 a.m.

Washington Update

Seaport ABC

Carrie Cochran-McClain, National Rural Health Association, Chief Policy Officer

Join rural health's top federal lobbyist for an insider's update about what's going on in Washington and what to expect in the next year.

9:30 – 9:45 a.m.

Break

9:45 – 11:00 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

7B

Expanding Access: Integrating Specialty Services into Rural Health Clinics

Gaslamp AB

Ellen Garlick, Forvis Mazars, Senior Manager

This presentation will focus on integrating specialists into Rural Health Clinics (RHCs). We will also cover opportunities for new multi-specialty RHCs. We will discuss regulatory changes, opportunities for RHCs, and considerations for adding specialists to improve healthcare services and reimbursement.

Driving Hospital Sustainability through RHCs

Gregory Wolf, Wintergreen, Principal

With the passing of the OBBB, hospitals now more than ever must identify and leverage revenue-generating opportunities to secure operations. This presentation will focus on specific strategies hospitals, particularly CAHs, can use to drive and sustain vital services within rural markets.

7C

Impacts of Transportation Access on Hawai'i's Rural Health

Gaslamp CD

John Desfor, MPH, University of Hawaii Rural Health Research and Policy Center, Policy and Data Analyst

Through interviews with 40 community stakeholders, the University of Hawaii Rural Health Research and Policy Center found that lack of access to transportation in rural Hawai'i significantly impacts healthcare access and utilization. Policy options to address challenges were co-designed with the community for consideration by policymakers.

7D

The Rural Route to Student Mental Health

Old Town AB

Gavin O'Neil, LCSW, Memorial Medical Clinics, Licensed Clinical Social Worker

This session highlights how a Rural Health Clinic-led Mobile Behavioral Health Unit partnered with seven rural schools to expand access for youth. Presenters will share strategies to overcome workforce shortages, billing barriers, and stigma while delivering psychiatric and counseling services directly to underserved students in their daily school environment.

Integrated Comprehensive Care Collective for Rural Health

Paula Hill-Collins, DNP, FNP-BC, PCNP, The Health Wagon, Vice-President/Chief Clinical Director
Teresa Tyson, DNP, MSN, FNP-BC, FA, The Health Wagon, President/ CEO

Discover how the Integrated Comprehensive Care Collective model unites medical, dental, vision, mental health, pharmacy, and veterinary care to transform rural health. Learn how mobile units, telehealth, and community partnerships break barriers, improve chronic disease management, and strengthen public health by addressing the unique needs of underserved populations.

7E

New Partners Pilot Project – Advancing Rural Adult Immunization with Partnerships and Trusted Messengers

La Jolla AB

Charleigh Granada, CDC, Public Health Analyst

Diana Dedmon, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, AFN-C, University of Tennessee, Associate Professor and Director of Clinical Affairs

Beth O'Connor, M.Ed., Virginia Rural Health Association, Executive Director

Grant Anderson, University of Minnesota, Assistant Professor

7G

Contributed Research Papers – Rural Hospitals

Coronado B

- **The Financial Impact of Medicare Advantage on Rural Hospitals**
Braden Fineberg, Vector Health AI, Co-founder and CTO
- **The Early Experience of Rural Emergency Hospitals**
Aditya Pillutla, UNC Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, Research Assistant
- **Rural, Poorer Populations and Adverse Medicare Payment Adjustments**
Mary Smith, PhD, Mississippi State University, Assistant Professor
- **Rural Emergency Hospitals and Telehealth: Mixed-Methods Analysis**
Jillian Harvey, PhD, Medical University of South Carolina, Professor

11:00 a.m.

Conference Adjourns

2026 Accepted Poster List

Mortality Risks Associated with Living in Ambulance Deserts

Yvonne Jonk, PhD, Research Professor, University of Southern Maine

Heidi O'Connor, MS, Sr Data Analyst, University of Southern Maine

Farmers cultivating resourcefulness: A qualitative study

Jeanne Ward, PhD, RN, MPA, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Indiana University

Melissa Perkins, Research Project Specialist, University of Southern California

John Blossnich, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor, University of Southern California

Tele-Collaborative Outreach to Rural Patients with Chronic Pain

Travis Lovejoy, PhD, MPH, Clinical Director, Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, VHA Office of Rural Health, Portland, OR

Natassja Pal, BS, Program Manager, Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, OR

Sarah Ono, PhD, Operations Director, Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, VHA Office of Rural Health, Portland, OR

Una Makris, MD, Chief of Rheumatology, VA San Diego Health Care System, San Diego, CA

Amanda Mixon, MD, MPH, Associate Professor, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Nashville, TN

Erin Krebs, MD, MPH, Core Investigator, Center for Care Delivery and Outcomes Research, VA Minneapolis Health Care System, Minneapolis, MN

Steven Dobscha, MD, Director, Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, OR

Melinda Davis, PhD, Director, Oregon Rural Practice-Based Research Network, Portland, OR

Benjamin Morasco, PhD, Core Investigator, Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, OR

VetCoor: Building Rural VA–Community Partnerships to Improve Veteran Care Coordination

Carolyn Turvey, PhD, Amanda Heeren, LISW, Kimberly McCoy, MS, Lilian Dindo, PhD, Merlyn Rodrigues, MA, Natalie Suiter, BS, MBA, Lea Buckridge, RN, BAN, Teresa Meyers, MBA, Elliot Alcantara, LPN, Bryan Weichelt, PhD, Jeffrey Vanwormer, PhD, Jesse Richardson, BS, Caitlin Link, MPH, Glen Buth, BAAS, Lori Karvonen, James Yates, Lindsey Fuhrmeister, BA

Identifying Gaps in Rural Farm Community-Based Healthcare

Olivia Passe, BS, Wake Forest School of Medicine

Dawn Caviness, MD, BSN, Associate Professor of Family Medicine Cabarrus Family Medicine Residency Program, Wake Forest School of Medicine

Tele-Collaborative Care for Rural Veterans with Chronic Pain

1/ Sarah S. Ono, PhD, Core Investigator/Co-Director, Veterans Rural Health Resource Center-Portland, VHA Office of Rural Health; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System; Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Oregon Health & Science University 2/ Natassja Pal, BS, Research Project Manager, Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System; Oregon Health & Science University 3/ Diana J. Govier, PhD, MPH, Core Investigator, Veterans Rural Health Resource Center-Portland, VHA Office of Rural Health; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System 4/ Benjamin J. Morasco, PhD, Core Investigator, Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System; Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Oregon Health & Science University 5/ Travis I. Lovejoy, PhD, MPH, Core Investigator/Co-Director, Veterans Rural Health Resource Center-Portland, VHA Office of Rural Health; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System; Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Oregon Health & Science University

Bridging the Rural Digital Health Divide

Jasrina Kaushal, BS, Medical Student, American Medical Student Association

Sohawm Sengupta, BS, Medical Student, American Medical Student Association

Rural-Urban Differences among Older Adults: Evidence From 2019-2023

Oluyomi Oloruntoba, DrPH, BDS, MPH, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Southwest Rural Research Center, School of Public Health, Texas A&M University

Marvellous Akinlotan, BDS, PhD, Clinical Assistant Professor and Director of Health Services Research, Department of Pediatric Dentistry, College of Dentistry, Texas A&M University

Hye Jin Park, PhD, MPH, Research Associate, School of Dentistry Office of Research, University of Utah

Caleb Ochimana, MPH, PhD Student, Department of Health Policy and Management, Texas A&M University

Nima Khodakarami, PhD, MSc, MBA, Assistant Professor, Department of Health Policy and Administration, Pennsylvania State University

Gogool Falia, MBBS, MBA, PhD Candidate, Department of Health Policy and Management, Texas A&M University

Alva O. Ferdinand, JD, DrPH, Director, Southwest Rural Health Research Center, School of Public Health, Texas A&M University

Rural-Urban Differences in Health Provider Physical Activity Advising

Brianna Holston, B.S., Research Assistant II, University of Southern Maine

Erika Ziller, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Vermont

Medicaid Mental and Behavioral Health Hospitalizations Following ARPA

Gogool Falia, PhD(c), MBBS, MBA, CPH, Doctoral Candidate, Southwest Rural Health Research Center, Texas A&M University

Distribution of Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants

Aakriti Shrestha, PhD, MPH

Hye Jin Park, PhD, MPH, RN
Emesomhi Eboreime, MPH
Caleb Ochinana, B.Pharm, MPH, MBA
Oluoyomi Oloruntoba, DrPH, BDS, MPH
Alva O. Ferdinand, DrPH, JD

Structural Language Barriers in Rural Veteran Virtual Care

Victoria Ngo, PhD, Advanced Fellow in Geriatrics, Department of Veterans Affairs
Da Jung Chang, PhD, Advanced Fellow in Geriatrics, Department of Veterans Affairs
Ryan Holliday, PhD, Clinical Research Psychologist, Department of Veterans Affairs
Shiloh Jordan, PhD, Director of Training for Psychology, Department of Veterans Affairs
Lindsey Monteith, PhD, Clinical Research Psychologist, Department of Veterans Affairs
Nainwant Singh, MD, Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development, Department of Veterans Affairs
Emma Quach, PhD, Research Health Scientist, Department of Veterans Affairs
Stephanie L. Shimada, PhD, Research Health Scientist, Department of Veterans Affairs
Mark Zocchi, PhD, Health Science Specialist, Department of Veterans Affairs
Shibei Zhao, MPH, Statistician, Department of Veterans Affairs
Pengsheng Ni, MD, Research Associate Professor, Boston University
Linda Am, MPH, Health Science Specialist, Department of Veterans Affairs
Camilla B. Pimentel, PhD, Research Health Scientist, Department of Veterans Affairs

Rural Dementia Healthcare: Military Service, Mental Health, Comorbidity

Traben Pleasant, PhD, Qualitative Analyst, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon; Layton Aging and Alzheimer's Disease Center, Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon
Brooke Jespersen, PhD, Post-Doctoral Fellow, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon
Rachel Wall, MS, Health Services Researcher, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon; Layton Aging and Alzheimer's Disease Center, Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon
Elizabeth Hulen, PhD, Health Science Specialist, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon
Allison O'Neill, MPH, Data Analyst, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon
Loretta Shields, PhD, D.Min, Bio-Statistician, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon

Diana J. Govier, PhD, MPH, Core Investigator, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon; Oregon Health & Science University, Portland, Oregon
Ayushi Gulati, MPH, Center Coordinator, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon

Travis I. Lovejoy, PhD, MPH, Clinical Director, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon

Sarah S. Ono, PhD, Operations Director, VHA Office of Rural Health - Veterans Rural Health Resource Center, Portland, Oregon; Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care, VA Portland Health Care System, Portland, Oregon

Counselors Assisting Veterans to Engage in Services (CAVES)

Angie Waliski, PhD, LPC-S, NCC, Research Scientist, Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System (CAVHS), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Psychiatry, College of Medicine, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Monica Matthieu, PhD, LCSW, CAVHS, VA, Saint Louis University, School of Social Work

Laura Watlington, LCSW, Suicide Prevention Program, CAVHS, VA

Michael Jaques, CAVHS, VA

Leonard Burgest, CAVHS, VA

Rural Provider and Community Perspectives on Tennessee Health

Tyra Girdwood, PhD, RN, Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC)

Satya Surbhi, PhD, Associate Professor, UTHSC

Avinash Pakker, Data Analyst, UTHSC

Matt Harris, PhD, Professor, UT Knoxville

Sultan Mahmud, PhD, Data Engineer, UTHSC

Jim Bailey, MD, Professor, UTHSC

Wendy Likes, PhD, DNSc, APRN, Dean, UTHSC

Interventionalists' Experiences Remotely Addressing Cancer Pain

Sarah A. Minter, PhD, Assistant Professor of Health Services Research, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN

Andrea L. Cheville, MD, Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN

Navigating Rehabilitation Referrals for Rural Veterans

Mi Jung Lee, PhD, Assistant Professor, VRHRC-GNV and University of Florida

Consuelo Kreider, PhD, Associate Professor, VRHRC-GNV and University of Florida

Jaewon Kang, PhD, Assistant Professor, VRHRC-GNV and Colorado State University

Amber Armstead, PhD, Associate Professor, VRHRC-GNV and Medical University of South Carolina

Kimberly Findley, RN, VRHRC-GNV

Keith Myers, DPT, Director, VRHRC-GNV

Longitudinal Workforce Outcomes of a Rural-Focused Medical School Preadmissions Pathway

Jana Lee, MS, Rural Scholars Program Director, University of Missouri School of Medicine

Whitney LeFevre, MD, Assistant Dean for Rural Health, University of Missouri School of Medicine

Rural Community Health Workers' Early Language Education Videos

Caitlin Raaz, PhD, CCC-SLP, Associate Professor, University of Northern Colorado

Rooted in Rural Care: Expanding Alabama's Health Workforce

Meghan Rivera, EdD, MPH, MHA, Assistant Director of Rural Programs, The University of Alabama

Antonio Gardner, PhD, MS, MCHES, Director of Education and Evaluation for Rural Programs, The University of Alabama

Drake Lavender, MD, Director of Rural Programs, The University of Alabama

James Leeper, PhD, Professor Emeritus, The University of Alabama

Jackie Luker, MD, Associate Director of Rural Programs, The University of Alabama

Candace Lacey, MS, Rural Programs Coordinator, The University of Alabama

Cynthia Moore, BS, Rural Programs Coordinator, The University of Alabama

Preferred Physician Recruitment Incentives in Rural VA Facilities

Shannon Kenyon, PhD, Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness and Safety, Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center

Aisha Khan, PhD, Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness and Safety, Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center

Patrick O'Mahen, PhD, Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness and Safety, Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center

Vivian Ramont, MPH, Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness and Safety, Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center

Sylvia Hysong, PhD, Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness and Safety, Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center

Missouri Rural Drowning Risk Analysis for 2020-2025 – For Poster Session

Nima Lal, MPH, Student, Missouri State University

Molly Lancaster, PhD MCHES, Assistant Professor, Missouri State University

Geospatial Analysis of Rural Geriatric Care Gaps

Lynette Kelley, FNP, Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical System, Aurora, CO

Sara Elgayar, MS, Birmingham VA Medical System, Birmingham, AL

Catherine Dawson, MD, New England Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), Bedford VA Medical Center, Bedford, Massachusetts; University Chobanian and Avedisian School of Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Eileen Dryden, PhD, Center for Healthcare Organization and Implementation Research(CHOIR), Bedford VA Medical Center, Bedford, Massachusetts, USA, Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences, UMass Chan Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts, USA
William Hung, MD, Bronx Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), James J. Peters VA Medical Center, Bronx, New York, USA, Department of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, Icahn School of Medicine, New York City, New York, USA
Lauren Moo, MD, New England Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), Bedford VA Medical Center, Bedford, Massachusetts, USA, Center for Healthcare Organization and Implementation Research (CHOIR), Bedford VA Medical Center, Bedford, Massachusetts, USA, Department of Neurology, Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts, USA
Margaret Ding, MS, Bronx Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), James J. Peters VA Medical Center, Bronx, New York, USA
Emily Franzosa, DrPH, Bronx Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), James J. Peters VA Medical Center, Bronx, New York, USA, Department of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, Icahn School of Medicine, New York City, New York, USA

Five Years of STRETCH-OB Residency Track

Tsai Ling Liao, MD, Associate Director Family Medicine Residency Program
Emily Orr, MA, Research Associate, Department of Family and Community Medicine
Manorama Khare, PhD, MS, Research Professor, Director Division of Health Research and Evaluation
Joseph Garry, MD, FAAFP, FACS, Professor and Head, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford
Beth Schleicher, MD, Director, STRETCH-OB Advanced Obstetrics Family Medicine Residency Track, University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford
Rhonda Verzal, MD, Director Family Medicine Residency Program, University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford

County-Level Variation in Distance to Pharmacy Services Among Tennessee Medicaid Enrollees

Satya Surbhi, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC), Memphis
Aravind Dhanabal, MS, Data Analyst, UTHSC; Tyra Girdwood, PhD, RN, UTHSC
Md Sultan Mahmood, PhD, UTHSC
Matt Harris, PhD, UT Knoxville; James E. Bailey, MD, MPH, UTHSC
Wendy Likes, PhD, UTHSC

Rural-Urban Differences in Colorectal Cancer Screening among US Adults by Eligibility Status

Sarah Nowak, PhD, Larner College at the University of Vermont
Emily Hallgren, PhD, Larner College at the University of Vermont
Brianna Holston, University of Southern Maine
Erika Ziller, PhD, Larner College at the University of Vermont

Georgia Apex: Sustainable Mental Health for Rural Schools

Lacey Howcroft, MPH, CHES, Research Associate II at the Georgia Health Policy Center at Georgia State University

Jeniece Cordova, MSW, MPH, Research Associate II at the Georgia Health Policy Center at Georgia State University

Dr. Danielle Alexander, Ed.D., LPC, Program Manager at the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities.

Telehealth experiences among AI/AN Veterans: A qualitative evaluation

Linda Am, MPH, Center for Healthcare Optimization and Implementation Research (CHOIR), Department of Veterans Affairs, Bedford, MA

Mario Venegas, PhD, Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness, and Safety (IQeSt).

Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, Houston, TX, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX

Camilla Pimentel, PhD, Center for Healthcare Optimization and Implementation Research (CHOIR), Department of Veterans Affairs, Bedford, MA, New England Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), Department of Veterans Affairs, Bedford, MA, University of Massachusetts Lowell, Lowell, MA

Victoria Ngo, PhD, New England Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), Department of Veterans Affairs, Bedford, MA

Maria Venegas, PhD, Center for Healthcare Optimization and Implementation Research (CHOIR), Department of Veterans Affairs, Bedford, MA, New England Geriatric Research Education and Clinical Center (GRECC), Department of Veterans Affairs, Bedford, MA, Boston University School of Public Health, Boston MA

Rural–Urban Differences in Medicare Inpatient Discharges for Behavioral Health Conditions, 2019-2023

Hye Jin PARK, PhD, MPH

Oluyomi Oloruntoba, DrPH, BDS, MPH

Gogool Falia, MBBS, MBA, CPH

Caleb Agboni Yunusa Ochimana, B.Pharm, MBA, MPH

Marvellous Akinlotan, PhD, BDS, MPH

Alva O. Ferdinand, DrPH, JD

Provider-to-Provider Telehealth Use for Rural Obstetric Practitioners: Scoping Review

Emily Orr, MA, Research Associate, Department of Family and Community Medicine

Chloe Ford, MSc, Research Program Coordinator, Johns Hopkins University, School of Medicine

Holly Hudson, MLIS, Assistant Professor and Regional Health Sciences Librarian. University of Illinois Chicago

David Pluta, MPH, MSN, University of Chicago Medicine

Kristine Zimmermann, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor, University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford and University of Illinois Chicago

Jesseca Pirkle, MD, MPH, Family Medicine Resident, University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford

*Manorama Khare, PhD, MS, Research Professor, University of Illinois College of Medicine
Rockford*

*Joseph Garry, MD, FAAFP, FACSM, Professor of Clinical Family Medicine and Head, Department
of Family and Community Medicine, University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford*

Ruth Matthew, University of Illinois, Clinical Pharmacist

Policy Variation in Medicaid Children's Dental Coverage - For Poster Session

Taryn Farrell, MPH^{1,2}

Cassie Odahowski, PhD¹

Emma Boswell MPH^{1,2}

Peiyin Hung PhD^{1,2}

Elizabeth Crouch PhD^{1,2}

*1. University of South Carolina Rural Health Research Center, Arnold School of Public Health,
University of South Carolina (220 Stoneridge Drive, Suite 204, Columbia, SC 29201) 2. Health
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Housing Insecurity Among Rural Veterans: a Cross-Sectional Analysis

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Rural-Urban Disparities in Hospitalization and Emergency Department Visits Among Adults with Mental Health Challenges in the United States

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Pharmacist-Initiated Hormonal Contraception in North Carolina

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Rural Pharmacy Practice: Drivers, Barriers, and Educational Influences

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Rural Veterans and Perceived Quality of VA-Purchased Care

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Rural Readiness of Behavioral Health Training Programs

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Community Care Service Referrals for Older Rural Veterans

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Accelerating Impact: Updated Rural HPV Cancer Prevention Priorities

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Tackling the "Tyranny of Distance" through Tele-Geriatrics Services

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Patterns of Veteran Suicidal Self-Directed Violence in Oregon– For Poster Session

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Geographic variation in breast cancer screening among rural- compared to urban-residing women Veterans

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Growing and Connecting: Rural Oregon Veteran Suicide Prevention

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Unequal Prescriptions: Assessing Disparities in Medication Use in Rural Communities

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Opioid misuse and remediation in rural North Carolina

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Rural-urban adult mental health across birth cohorts

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'Bridge over Troubled Waters': Strengthening Rural Healthcare through Community

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Rural Emergency Hospitals and Telehealth: Perspectives and Analysis

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Bringing Geriatric Care Evaluation to Rural Areas: The GRECC Connect Project

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Development of Veteran Health on Native Lands Dashboard

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Missed Skin Cancer Diagnoses in Rural Primary Care

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“A Disjointed System”: Rural Older Veteran Care Coordination

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An Analysis of the Rural Health Experience: An Innovative Healthcare Pathway Program

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Beyond the Ivory Tower: Expanding Rural Specialty Expertise

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Strengthening Rural Healthcare through Sensory-Aware Autism Training

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Urban-Rural Cardiovascular Risk in Three Southern States

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Expanding Access to Clinical Trials in Rural America

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Continued Declines Across States in Hospital-Based Obstetric Services

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Nursing Home Staffing in the Rural and Urban U.S.

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Preventing Unintentional Firearm Injuries: Veteran Perspectives

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Mental Health Campaign Impact on Rural California Adolescents

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Measuring Obstetric Care Access with Different 'Rural' Definitions

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Rural Areas Trail Behind in Medicaid's Shift Toward Home- and Community-based Services

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Enhancing Stroke Systems of Care in Rural Alaska

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Rural-Urban Differences in FEMA National Risk Index Scores

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Smoking Continuation After a COPD Diagnosis in Appalachia

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Poverty Simulation for Interprofessional Rural Health Education

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Global Rural Workforce Development Through Family Medicine Training

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Patient Portal Enrollment in a Rural Health Center

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Overcoming the Top Barriers to Rural CHW Reimbursement

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Built for the Backroads: Postgraduate Outcomes of RVUCOM's Rural & Wilderness Medicine Track

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Firearm Injury Prevention with Rural Veterans: Multi-stakeholder evaluation

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Successfully Recruiting Rural Patients in Clinical Research

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An Analysis of Rural Workforce Recruitment Challenges

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Integrating Digital Mental Health into Rural Primary Care

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Proficiency in Special Veteran Populations in Rural Health: Considerations for Primary Care

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Impact of Virtual Nursing on Care Delivery in Rural Hospitals

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Pathway to Increase the Healthcare Workforce in Underserved Areas

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Veteran Perceptions of Low-Earth Orbit Satellite Internet

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The Power of Partnerships in Sustaining Behavioral Healthcare Access Programs: Lessons Learned from Technical Assistance Activities

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Physician Shadowing in Rural Health Immersion Program

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Compliance Evaluation of Autonomous Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Licensure Requirements in Florida

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U.S. Rural and Non-Rural Kidney Transplant Patients: Role of Telemedicine

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Trends in specialty consultations for diabetic foot ulcer

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Shaping Future Nurses Through Rural Clinical Immersion

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Advantage for Whom? How Medicare Advantage Games the System at Hospitals' & Patients' Expense

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Outcomes of a Rural Hospital Tele-Hospitalist Model

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Rural-Urban Veteran Differences in Dementia Specialty Care Utilization

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Medical Student Knowledge Gaps in Rural Medicine

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Expanding Rural Access Through Satellite-Enabled Mobile Telehealth: A Nurse-Practitioner-Led Model Using Starlink and TytoCare in Central Appalachia

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Strengthening Rural Healthcare Delivery Through Administrative Support Education

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Responding to Extremely High Rates of Perinatal Depression in Rural Maine: Innovative Ways to Address the Crisis

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Strengthening Rural VA Teams Through the AIM-HI Initiative

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Scoping Review of Telehealth Interventions for Mental Health in Rural Communities

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Bullying and Early Initiation, KY MS YBRS 2023

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Recruitment and Retention of Minnesota Rural Health Professionals

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Chronic Kidney Disease Knowledge Among Rural Ugandan Diabetics

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Underrepresentation of Rural Populations in Cancer-related Clinical Trials

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Development of Sustainable Training for Rural Native Veteran Health Care Navigators

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Training rural, primary care clinics on medical procedures

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