

Official Proclamation of the Rural Health Action Alliance

Today, the undersigned organizations, announce the establishment of the Rural Health Action Alliance (RHAA), a coalition of health care providers and facilities who provide high-quality, evidence-based care to millions of Americans, particularly to those living and working in rural and underserved areas. The RHAA will work toward equitable access for care in rural America, hoping to bridge the rural divide. Together, we seek to advance federal policies to improve rural health outcomes. These include access to COVID-19 treatments and vaccines, continued expansion of telehealth technologies, and ensuring rural providers receive equitable resources compared to their urban counterparts.

The creation of RHAA, at this juncture, is critical. As COVID-19 continues to ravage the nation, a recent *Daily Yonder* article outlines the ongoing public health crisis facing rural America ([link](#)). According to the article, 80 percent of nonmetropolitan counties are now within the red-zone. Red-zone counties are those which have a new infection rate of 100 or more per 100,000 individuals. In total, during the week of November 2, there were 144,043 new infections in rural counties, up from about 110,000 the week before. Unfortunately, the situation is continuing to worsen. Additionally, according to recent NPR Analysis, one fifth of the first 100,000 COVID-19 deaths were in rural America, whereas rural deaths accounted for nearly half of deaths in the second 100,000 COVID-19 deaths ([link](#)). These trends in new COVID-19 cases and deaths are extremely concerning, and holistic advocacy—helping both providers and patients alike—is critical to ensuring that rural Americans are equipped with the resources needed to endure this pandemic and that health care remains a viable industry in rural areas.

With the election now behind us, RHAA hopes to be a resource to the Congress and the new Administration as they continue crafting solutions to the ongoing public health emergency. When America prevails from this crisis, the RHAA is committed to continuing to work together to support rural health and health care.

Sincerely,

*National Rural Health Association
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists
American Academy of PAs
American Optometric Association
National Association of Rural Health Clinics
American Nurses Association
American Pharmacists Association
American Podiatric Medical Association
American Association of Nurse Practitioners
American Chiropractic Association
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National League for Nursing
American Psychological Association
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Physical Therapy Association
National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health*