Weekly Update
June 7th

New Episode! #59 Delegate Sam Rasoul

www.vrha.org
VRHA News

The Pride of Rural Virginia
Virtual Kick-Off Celebration
Saturday, June 12th, 2021  1-2:30 pm

Join community members and health providers from around the state to learn more about the Pride of Rural Virginia project and how to attend a chat in your area!

Register Here!

Members in the News

There’s a new medical director at Olde Towne Medical & Dental Center

Olde Towne Medical & Dental Center is welcoming its new medical director, Dr. Gregory Biernacki. A graduate of Miami University, he received his Doctor of Medicine from Georgetown University School of Medicine, Washington, D.C. He attended medical school as part of the Health Professions Scholarship Program and was commissioned as a Captain in the United States Air Force Medical Corps upon graduation. Biernacki completed his residency in Preventive Medicine and received a Masters of Public Health at the Medical College of Virginia. He is boarded by the American College of Preventive Medicine in Public Health, Preventive Medicine and Aerospace Medicine.

National News

NRHA Accepting Applications for Health Equity Council, Fellows & Rural Hospital CEO Certification Programs
NRHA's Rural Health Fellows program is a yearlong, intensive training that develops leaders who can articulate a clear and compelling vision for rural America. Each year, NRHA selects 10 to 15 highly motivated individuals who have proven their dedication to improving the health of rural Americans through their educational or professional experience.

The goal of the Fellows program is to educate, develop and inspire a networked community of rural health leaders who will step forward to serve in key positions in NRHA, affiliated rural health advocacy groups, and local and state legislative bodies. NRHA is now accepting applications for our 2022 Rural Health Fellows cohort through Sept. 3.

*VRHA has had 6 Board Members accepted into the Fellows program over the years!*

NRHA's Health Equity Council highlights issues related to and advocates on behalf of rural multiracial, multicultural, LGBTQ, veteran, homeless, and other underserved and underrepresented populations. NRHA is currently seeking applications for individuals interested in serving on the council board.

Potential candidates must have significant rural health experience and an established record of work. Council members must also be NRHA members, and active participation in council events is required. Submit your application by Aug. 5.

Rural Hospital CEO Certification Program - In response to the rural hospital CEO Turnover Study and hospital closure crisis, NRHA is introducing the Rural Hospital CEO Certification Program to arm rural CEOs with the competencies and skill sets to take on the unique challenges of rural hospitals and be or continue to be a top performing rural hospital CEO.

2021 Compendium of Rural Community Health Initiative Best Practices

Through the Rural Community Health Initiative, NRHA aims to support and promote the innovative community health programs that are occurring in rural areas. As a part of this initiative, NRHA is producing a compendium of best community health practices in rural communities.

For those that are a Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Community-Based Division grantee (this includes Network, Planning, Outreach and Rural Communities Opioid Response grantees), we hope that you will consider completing a submission form to be included in NRHA's compendium of best practices. The work of this initiative and the submissions to this compendium will help to share resources with not only our membership, but key rural stakeholders across the United States, providing accessible and creative practices to rural communities and their health providers. You are welcomed to share this information with colleagues that you believe have best practices to share.
Calendar

**Racism Is a Public Health Crisis Webinar Series #2**  
"The National Landscape and Next Steps for Virginia"  
**Thursday, June 10th, 2021   10:00 - 11:30 am**

The Institute for Public Health Innovation is proud to partner with Voices for Virginia's Children and the Virginia Public Health Association to present a webinar series that will explore the background, context, and future for this resolution. The second webinar will provide perspectives on the national landscape for similar resolutions and the next steps for Virginia. More details and a registration link will be available soon. Please reach out to Rebecca Epstein if you have any questions at repstein@institutephi.org

**Telehealth Operations and Quality: Ask Anything**  
**June 16, 2021   1:00 pm - 2:00 pm**

This session, moderated by HITEQ’s Training and Technical Assistance Advisor, Natalie Truesdell, will provide an open forum for health centers to ask panelists their most pressing questions about telehealth services in the health center setting.

**Motivational Interviewing: Evidence-Based Strategies & Principles for Guiding Conversations With Your Patients**  
**June 30, 2021   12:00 pm - 1:00 pm**

Attendees will learn how to uncover what motivates patients to change and review active listening & productive communication strategies. This high level overview will be the first in a series of Motivational Interviewing sessions that will be presented over the next year.

**Capital AHEC Presents Series - Lupus Education**  
**June 28, 2021   6:00 pm**

Come hear our keynote speaker, rheumatologist Dr. Beth Rubinstein (VCU), to learn about lupus, including populations most at risk, signs and symptoms of lupus, and when to refer.

**US Hepatitis Academic Mentorship Program Virtual Summit**  
**Monday, July 27, 2021   9:45 am - 1:30 pm**

The US-HAMP (United States Hepatitis Academic Mentorship Program), a program of the Kentucky Rural Health Association would like to invite you to the US-HAMP Summit on July 27, 2021. This will be a virtual event for Key State Leaders. Please refer to HAMP attachment for agenda/program about US-HAMP.
Resources

Fact Sheets - COVID-19 Vaccines are Free/Gov. IDs Not Required

Share these fact sheets to help both patients and providers better understand their rights and responsibilities regarding access to COVID-19 vaccines. A Social Security Number and/or government ID may be requested, but is NOT required. COVID-19 vaccines are 100% free for every individual living in the U.S. – even without insurance. COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet for Patients/Español - PDF and COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet for Provider/ Español - PDF

Areas with High Poverty: Changing How the 10-20-30 Funding Formula Is Applied Could Increase Impact in Persistent-Poverty Counties

Provides an overview of the "10-20-30 formula" used by some agencies, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development, to allocate funding to persistent poverty counties. Describes how agencies identify persistent-poverty counties, the proportion of funds awarded to these counties in fiscal years 2017-2020, and the impact and limitations of the 10-20-30 formula. Highlights matters for future consideration by Congress.

Rural Disparities in End-of-life Care for Patients with Heart Failure: Are They Due to Geography or Socioeconomic Disparity?

Examines the relationship of rurality, socioeconomic background, and end-of-life care for patients with heart failure in Maine. Includes data on healthcare utilization at end-of-life by age, sex, rurality, insurance type, and area deprivation index.

AARP Rural Livability Workshop Report

Report describing rural community characteristics with a focus on rural elders. Discusses rural demographics, community dynamics, public spaces, housing transportation, economy, healthy living, broadband access, and disaster readiness.

Rural Health Network Development Planning Grants Awarded to Entities in Counties with Majority Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Populations, 2003-2020

Policy brief describing the prevalence of Rural Health Network Development Planning Grants awarded to organizations in counties with majority Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC) populations. Features statistics on number of grantees by year and focus of work, and percentage of grantees in minority BIPOC counties by year.

Voices From the Field: A Qualitative Study of the Challenges and Promising Practices of Rural Public Health in Addressing HIV and Hepatitis C
Examines rural vulnerability to HIV and hepatitis C for people who inject drugs. Presents findings from interviews with 36 public health professionals from rural states, addressing funding limitations, staffing and infrastructure challenges, public health initiatives, telemedicine strategies, and community education programs.

**Vaccine Hesitancy among Rural Hospitals: The Arrival of a Challenging "New Normal"

Summarizes the results of a survey of rural hospital leaders between March 12-April 15, 2021, regarding COVID-19 vaccination among rural hospital personnel. Explores the percentage of rural hospital employees that have declined a vaccine, are partially vaccinated, and are fully vaccinated; reasons for declining the vaccine; and changing attitudes toward the vaccine.

**CMS OMH Building COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence Webinar

Recording of a May 13, 2021, webinar on resources and strategies to promote COVID-19 vaccine confidence. Includes information on the development of the COVID-19 vaccines, as data on their efficacy and safety. Transcript available by clicking the dots above the Subscribe tab, then selecting Open Transcript.

Additional links: Partner Webinar Supplemental Handout, Presentation Slides, Vaccinate with Confidence Fact Sheet

**Community Factors Associated With Telemedicine Use During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Examines the association of telemedicine use with community factors among people with commercial or Medicare Advantage insurance. Features a county-level map showing variation in the percentage of telemedicine visits during COVID-19, and statistics with breakdowns by low, middle, and high population density.

**COVID-19 Health Care Flexibilities: Perspectives, Experiences, and Lessons Learned

Recording of a May 19, 2021, U.S. Senate Committee on Finance hearing on healthcare flexibilities implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on telehealth. Discusses lessons learned and considerations for the extension of these flexibilities beyond the pandemic.

**COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Guidance: All-Hazards Incident Response and Recovery

Provides information and guidance for emergency managers on how to conduct disaster recovery and response operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Includes checklists and resources to help emergency managers adapt their response and recovery plans.
**Fast Facts: U.S. Rural Hospitals**

Infographic presenting data on rural hospitals using the American Hospital's Annual Survey Database for fiscal years 2015 through 2019. Includes information on the declining number of community hospitals, as well as data on rural community hospitals by ownership type and number of beds.

**From the Front Lines: COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts in Rural Communities Hit by the Opioid Epidemic**

Examines the COVID-19 response, including testing, contact tracing, and vaccination efforts, of HRSA Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) grantees. Discusses challenges related to vaccination efforts to reach rural individuals with substance use disorder/opioid use disorder and other rural residents.

**Interorganizational Care Coordination of Rural Veterans by Veterans Affairs and Community Care Programs: A Systematic Review**

Details the findings of a systematic review of the efficacy of care coordination initiatives by Veterans Affairs (VA) to care for rural veterans. Distinguishes data from pre- and post-Veterans Choice Act and post-MISSION Act. Defines organizational policy and administration, culture, and mechanisms of community care programs, as well as relational practices, contextual factors, and third-party administrators.

**Medicaid and Rural Health**

Provides an overview of rural residents, including socioeconomic characteristics, insurance status, and health status. Explores the availability of healthcare providers in rural areas, with a focus on primary care providers and hospitals. Discusses the role of Medicaid in rural health, as well as Medicaid policies and services that are important for providing healthcare in rural communities.

**Pain in the Nation: Alcohol, Drug, and Suicide Epidemics - Special Feature: COVID-19 and Trauma**

Explores the effect the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent trauma it has had on rates of suicide and alcohol- and drug-induced deaths across the nation. Breaks down data by a number of indicators, such as by age, race, and rural versus urban location.

**State and Community Efforts to Address Stimulant Use**

Explores state and community-based efforts to address stimulant misuse. Summarizes common themes and key findings that emerged from discussions with a diverse group of stakeholders. Covers program activities, funding sources, facilitators, and barriers to implementing programs to respond to stimulant use. Identifies policy options for community, state, and federal stakeholders. Includes rural references throughout.
**Vaccine Distribution in Rural Counties**

Presents data on COVID-19 vaccination rates and intention to be vaccinated by urban-rural status. Discusses vaccine distribution, challenges facing rural communities, and considerations for communication about the vaccines. Describes best practices in rural counties in Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia.

**NRHA COVID-19 Vaccine Resources**

This resource library includes conversation starters and public service announcements developed in partnership with the COVID Collaborative, Health Action Alliance, and the Ad Council that can help rural employers, small business owners and public sector employers share vaccine facts and improve vaccination access for employees and families.

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**Funding Opportunities**

**Closing the Gap with Social Determinants of Health Accelerator Plans** *NEW*

Funding to collaborate with multi-sectoral partners to develop an implementation-ready Social Determinants of Health Accelerator Plan to reduce disparities in health outcomes related to chronic disease in a tribal jurisdiction, community, or catchment area. Health disparity populations include rural and tribal communities, among others.

**Application Deadline: July 5, 2021**

**Community Economic Development Projects** *NEW*

Grants to Community Development Corporations (CDCs) for projects designed to address the economic needs of low-income individuals and families through the creation of employment and business opportunities, including expansion or construction of clinics and health centers. Priority points will be given to projects that create jobs in rural communities and counties of persistent poverty.

**Application Deadline: July 12, 2021**

**Family-Centered Approaches to Improving Type 2 Diabetes Control & Prevention** *NEW*

OMH expects the Family-Centered Approaches to Improving Type 2 Diabetes Control and Prevention initiative to identify specific family-centered factors (e.g., structural, instrumental, functional, cultural, and social needs) that affect patient self-management of diabetes (e.g., physical activity, healthy nutrition) and family members' health outcomes.
Application Deadline: July 13, 2021

**AAFP Foundation: Family Medicine Cares USA** *NEW*

Family Medicine Cares USA, an initiative of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) Foundation, helps new and existing free health clinics to care for the uninsured in areas of need across the United States. These grants of up to $25,000 should be used for the purchase of durable, sustainable equipment and instruments necessary for diagnosis and treatment related to primary care. Applicant clinics must have opened or be open within six months of the application deadline date, have completed or be in the process of completing the Volunteers in Medicine America new clinic development process, and have an AAFP member who maintains active, ongoing involvement with patient care at the clinic.

Application Deadline: July 15, 2021

**Service Area Competition Funding for Health Center Program (Areas Served with a Project Period Start Date of December 1, 2021)** *NEW*

Funding to provide comprehensive primary healthcare services to an underserved area or population. Areas with a December 1, 2021 project period start date are eligible to apply.

Application Deadline: July 19, 2021

**Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts** *NEW*

The Foundation for Opioid Response Efforts has issued a Request for Proposals aimed at specific projects that bring an innovative approach to long-standing, complex issues related to stemming the tide of the nation’s opioid crisis. This RFP will support projects that can explore and/or evaluate new "outside-the-box" ideas, bring together approaches from several diverse fields, and engage multi-disciplinary, cross-sector teams to solve some of the most intractable problems created by the crisis. The focus is on projects with solutions in the following areas: Professional Education & Training, Timely & Actionable Data, and Supporting the Transition from Treatment to Recovery. Nonprofits and universities, as well as state, local, and tribal government agencies, may apply.

Application Deadline: July 19, 2021

**CDC Health Science Fellowship** *NEW*

A research training opportunity with the Centers for Disease Control to conduct statistical analyses in the field of injury public health, including projects examining variations in fatal and nonfatal injury rates between rural and urban populations.

Application Deadline: July 19, 2021

**Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC)** *NEW*
Grants for projects in the Appalachian region and Lower Mississippi Delta region that will provide career training and support services to eligible individuals in counties and parishes and/or areas currently underserved by other resources.

**Application Deadline: July 21, 2021**

**Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge** *NEW*

Grants for organizations to provide planning and implementation technical assistance to rural communities to foster placemaking, which is the process of creating quality places where people want to live, work, and play. The program goal is to create greater social and cultural vitality in rural communities aimed at improving people's social, physical, and economic well-being.

**Application Deadline: July 26, 2021**

**Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program Community Selection** *NEW*

As part of the Continuum of Care program, HUD will select up to 50 communities to participate in the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program to develop and execute a coordinated community approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness. At least 8 of the selected communities will be rural.

**Application Deadline: July 27, 2021**

**Technical Assistance for Small, Rural, Vulnerable Hospitals** *NEW*

Targeted technical assistance for rural hospitals to improve quality of care, maintain access to care, and address the challenges that are unique to small hospitals and the towns they serve.

**Application Deadline: July 30, 2021**

**Circle of Life Award: Celebrating Innovation in Palliative and End-of-Life Care** *NEW*

Award program that honors innovative programs and organizations that care for patients with serious or life-limiting illness and provide best practices and models for the field. Rural organizations have received the award in the past.

**Application Deadline: August 16, 2021**

**Foundation for Rural Service Community Grant Program** *NEW*
Grants to support a variety of local efforts to build and sustain a high quality of life in rural communities across America. Focus areas include business development, community development, education, and telecommunications.

**Application Deadline: September 15, 2021**

**AHRQ Small Research Grant Program (R03) *NEW***

Supports different types of health services research projects, including pilot and feasibility studies; secondary analysis of existing data; small, self-contained research projects; development of research methodology; and development of new research technology. Rural and frontier areas are considered a priority population.

**Application Deadline: July 6, 2022**

**Comprehensive Care for Adults with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus from Populations with Health Disparities (R01 Clinical Trial Optional) *NEW***

Funding for research focused on developing and testing strategies that adapt/implement recommended guidelines of comprehensive clinical care for individuals with Type 2 diabetes from health disparity populations.

**Application Deadline: September 7, 2024**

**HUD Section 242: Hospital Mortgage Insurance Program *NEW***

Loan and mortgage insurance program to help acute care hospital facilities with remodeling, expansion, modernization, equipment, refinancing, and acquisition. Small, rural Critical Access Hospitals are eligible to apply.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis.

**COVID Tech Connect Smart Device Donation Program *NEW***

A smart device donation program for hospitals, care facilities, and hospice centers to allow critically ill COVID-19 patients to connect with their loved ones. Priority is given to those in greatest need, including facilities in rural areas.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis.

**American Rescue Plan Act - Pediatric Mental Health Care Access - New Area Expansion**

Funding for the expansion of state and/or regional networks of pediatric mental healthcare teams into new states and geographic areas. Teams will provide tele-consultation, training, technical assistance, and care coordination for pediatric primary care providers to diagnose, treat, and refer children with behavioral health conditions.
Projects should focus on achieving health equity related to racial, ethnic, and geographic disparities in access to care, especially in rural, frontier, hard to reach, and other underserved areas.

**Application Deadline: July 6, 2021**

**Community Mobility Design Challenge Grants**

Grants to support planning activities for communities seeking innovative ways to address the particular mobility challenges experienced by low-income community members for whom a lack of transportation is an obstacle to the pursuit of economic, health, and social well being.

**Application Deadline: July 12, 2021**

**Opioid Crisis Innovation Challenge 2021**

Grants for innovative, multi-disciplinary projects to address the opioid crisis reducing overdoses, increasing access to treatment, and supporting long-term recovery. Projects should focus on vulnerable populations, which includes rural communities.

**Application Deadline: July 19, 2021**

**Service Area Competition Funding for Health Centers Program (Areas Served with a Project Period Start Date of February 1, 2022)**

Funding to provide comprehensive primary healthcare services to an underserved area or population. Areas with a February 1, 2022 project period start date are eligible to apply.

**Application Deadline: July 19, 2021**

**Veterans Housing Rehabilitation and Modification Pilot Program**

Grants to rehabilitate and modify the primary residence of veterans who are low-income and living with disabilities, with a focus on helping them regain and/or maintain their independence to alleviate critical health, life, and safety issues. Applicants from rural and other geographic areas that lack reliable internet access may request a waiver from the electronic submission requirement through HUD’s Office of Rural Housing and Economic Development.

**Application Deadline: July 30, 2021**

**Foster G. McGaw Prize for Excellence in Community Service**

Monetary awards that honor health delivery organizations that have demonstrated exceptional commitment to community service.
Application Deadline: July 31, 2021

**NBCC Foundation Rural Scholarships**

Scholarships for students residing in rural areas who are currently enrolled in a master’s level counseling program and are committed to practicing in rural communities after graduation.

Application Deadline: July 31, 2021

**Alcohol and Other Substance Use Research Education Programs for Health Professionals (R25 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)**

Grants to support research educational and outreach activities that complement other formal training programs in the mission areas of the NIH Institutes and Centers, especially the public health impact of alcohol, opioids, and other substances, their associated consequences, and the persistent stigma associated with them.

Application Deadline: August 10, 2021

**Rural Healthcare Provider Transition Project (RHPTP)**

Technical assistance for rural healthcare providers to build capacity in value-based care (VBC), with emphasis on efficiency, quality, patient experience, and safety. The program's goal is to guide small rural hospitals and rural health clinics that are not currently participating in VBC to prepare for participation in a health system focused on value.

Application Deadline: September 10, 2021

**Foundation for Rural Service Community Grant Program**

Grants to support a variety of local efforts to build and sustain a high quality of life in rural communities across America. Focus areas include business development, community development, education, and telecommunications.

Application Deadline: September 15, 2021

**Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health (R01, R03, and R21)**

Funding for research that seeks to identify, develop, test, evaluate, and/or refine strategies to disseminate and implement evidence-based practices into public health, clinical practice, and community settings. This program is featured in the Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences Selected List of Funding Opportunities Relevant to Rural Cancer Control.
Application Deadline: May 7, 2022

The Home Depot Foundation: Community Impact Grants Program

The Home Depot Foundation's Community Impact Grants Program provides support to nonprofit organizations and public service agencies in the U.S. that are using the power of volunteers to improve their communities. The Program focuses on support for organizations that serve veterans in local communities, as well as organizations that serve vulnerable and underserved communities. Grants of up to $5,000 are made in the form of The Home Depot gift cards for the purchase of tools, materials, or services.

Requests will be accepted on a rolling basis through Dec 31, 2021

AHRQ Health Services Research Demonstration and Dissemination Grants (R18)

Supports the dissemination and implementation of research projects related to AHRQ's mission to produce evidence to make healthcare safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable. AHRQ's priorities include an interest in rural and frontier healthcare delivery.

Application Deadline: September 30, 2022

Long-Term Effects of Disasters on Health Care Systems Serving Health Disparity Populations (R01- Clinical Trial Optional)

Grants for research focused on understanding the long-term effects of natural and/or human-made disasters on healthcare systems serving health disparity populations. Health disparity populations include, but are not limited to, American Indians, Alaska Natives, and underserved rural populations.

Application Deadline: Sep 7, 2023

Co-infection and Cancer (R01 and R21 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)

Grants for research on the roles of co-infection and cancer to inform prevention and treatment strategies for infection-related cancers. Applicants are encouraged to investigate co-infection and its relation to causes of risk among racially/ethnically diverse populations and those from urban and rural areas who are poor and medically underserved, and populations who may have a disproportionate burden of infection-related cancers.

Application Deadline: Jan 7, 2023

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Telehealth Strategies for Individuals with HIV and Substance Use Disorders
Notice of Special Interest for research to explore and develop telehealth methods and strategies for diagnosis, prevention, treatment, and population analysis in individuals living with HIV and substance use disorder.

**Application Deadline: Sep 7, 2024**

**Evidence for Action: Investigator-Initiated Research to Build a Culture of Health**

Grants for research that expands the evidence needed to build a Culture of Health. A Culture of Health is broadly defined as one in which good health and well-being flourish across geographic, demographic, and social sectors; public and private decision making is guided by the goal of fostering equitable communities; and everyone has the opportunity to make choices that lead to healthy lifestyles.

**Application Deadline: Accepted on an ongoing basis**

**Virtual Living Room - Using Technology to Address the Critical Healthcare Needs of Veterans in Rural Areas**

A grant program that combines rural technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs resources, and local support to provide solutions to improve healthcare access for veterans in rural areas.

**Application Deadline: Accepted on an ongoing basis**

**COVID-19 Coverage Assistance Fund**

The US Department of Health and Human Services, through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has announced a new program covering costs of administering COVID-19 vaccines to patients enrolled in health plans that either do not cover vaccination fees or cover them with patient cost-sharing. Since providers cannot bill patients for COVID-19 vaccination fees, this new program, the COVID-19 Coverage Assistance Fund (CAF), addresses an outstanding compensation need for providers on the front lines vaccinating underinsured patients. The CAF is funded through the Provider Relief Fund Program and will accept eligible claims from providers dated on or after December 14, 2020.

**Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Pioneering Ideas Brief Proposals**

Grants for innovative projects that are working to build a culture of health, ensuring that everyone has access to the care they need and all families have the opportunity to make healthier choices.

**Applications accepted on an ongoing basis**
Angel Flight East COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment and Vaccine Transport

A volunteer pilot network that transports personal protective equipment and COVID-19 vaccines for distribution to areas in need.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

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