This past Saturday at New College Institute in Martinsville, VA, local health professionals came together with members of the community and discussed several ways to create more welcoming environments for LGBTQIA+ patients in local clinics and hospitals.
Panelists from left to right: Michael McNeely - The Madeline Center; Courtney Eure-Hart, P.A. - Martinsville Family Practice; Brittany Anthony - Martinsville/Henry Co. Coalition for Health & Wellness; Ariel Johnson - Legacy Wellness, Virginia HARM Reduction Coalition; Heather Ashe - Director of Pharmacy, SOVAH Health-Martinsville; Tory Shepherd - Chief Operating Officer SOVAH Health-Martinsville. Not pictured: Dr. Sheranda Gunn-Nolan - Chief Medical Officer, SOVAH Health; Doug BeMent - Chief Financial Officer, SOVAH Health-Martinsville

Our next two community chats will be in Farmville/Prince Edward County on August 21st, and Pulaski County on August 28th. For more information and registration links, visit www.vrha.org/pride.

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**Members in the News**

**Improvements to operating rooms underway at Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital**

A long-planned $15 million renovation of Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital in Rocky Mount has gotten underway.

“The project involves a complete renovation of operating rooms, surgical services and our pharmacy,” said Carl Cline, vice president and administrator at Franklin Memorial. “The timeline is that this project will be completely finished in June of 2023.”

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**National News**

**Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Center for Medicare National Stakeholder Webinar on Price Transparency:**
**Compliance with Hospital Price Transparency Final Rule: 8 Steps to a Machine-Readable File**

*Wednesday, August 11, 2021  2:00-3:30 pm ET*

Effective January 1, 2021, each hospital operating in the United States is now required to provide publicly accessible standard charge information online about the items and services they provide in 2 ways:

- Comprehensive machine-readable file with all items and services
• Display of 300 shoppable services in a consumer-friendly format

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will host a webinar on Price Transparency focusing on how hospitals can meet the requirements of the Hospital Price Transparency Final Rule for posting standard charge information in the comprehensive machine-readable file. We will review the document "8 Steps to a Machine-Readable File of All Items & Services" and highlight specific good and bad examples of hospital compliance.

Please use the following link to register in advance for this webinar: https://cms.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_yWgu0qHkTearA3v7Cq885g.

The accompanying presentation will be available at www.cms.gov/hospital-price-transparency/resources approximately one week prior to the webinar. For additional information regarding hospital price transparency, please review the information on our website at www.cms.gov/hospital-price-transparency.

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**HRSA Announces Major Effort to Strengthen and Expand Community-Based Residency Programs in Rural and Underserved Communities**

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced investments to strengthen and expand community-based primary care medical and dental residency programs in rural and underserved communities. Funding from the American Rescue Plan will support and expand Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) programs, includes details on current funding available.

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**Virginia News**

**Gov. Ralph Northam announces proposal to spend $485 million on Virginia’s mental health hospitals and resources**

Over the past year and half, the pandemic has magnified many of the issues already facing the state’s psychiatric hospitals and system, such as overcrowding and understaffing. The intensified challenges limit the hospitals’ ability to take on more challenging and often violent patients under involuntary detention orders, forcing them to stop taking in new patients.

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**Calendar**

**Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) National Advisory Council (NAC) Meeting**

**August 11, 2021  1:00 pm - 5:00 pm**

The meeting will be open to the public and will consist of discussions of substance use prevention priorities, including the prevailing Institute of Medicine model, as well as
agency practices regarding innovation and evaluation of programs. The meeting will also include updates on CSAP program developments.

**HRSA Maternal Health Webinar Series: Focus on Racial Equity**
*August 12, 2021  3:00 pm*

Highlight innovations and promising practices as well as resources to promote and further maternal health and well-being across the lifespan.

**The Lupus Initiative: Eliminating Health Disparities in Lupus**
*August 24, 2021  6:00 pm*

Join Dr. Beth Rubinstein (VCU) to learn about lupus, including populations most at risk, signs and symptoms of lupus, and when to refer.

**Community Health Workers' Role in Advancing Equity**
*August 24, 2021  3:00 pm*

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are taking a larger role in patient-centered care and community health. Yet, questions remain around the scope of their work, licensure requirements, and available funding sources to build a capable workforce. In this webinar, we will clarify their work and explore their role in advancing equity.

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**Resources**

**Personal Care Assistance in Rural America**

Explores where people with disabilities who need help with self-care and daily activities live, and compares that to where Personal Care Aides (PCAs) are located. Includes demographics on PCAs, with breakdowns by urban and rural location, and county-level maps showing metropolitan, micropolitan, and noncore areas, and levels of mismatch in numbers of PCAs per 1,000 people with self-care disabilities.

**Community Health Centers Telehealth Promising Practices: Case Studies from the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Offers a series of eight case studies on how community health centers developed or expanded telehealth programs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Discusses challenges faced, best practices, and lessons learned for each program.

**Education and Training of the Rural Healthcare Workforce**

This recently updated topic guide provides information on strategies, programs, and activities used to educate and train the rural healthcare workforce, including a new FAQ on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Federal Agencies' Investment in Rural Cancer Control Fosters Partnerships between Researchers and Rural Communities**

Highlights how researchers and rural communities are working together to address rural cancer prevention and control, with support from federal funding. Discusses projects that
address health behaviors, cancer screening, vaccination, and rural participation in clinical trials.

**Rural COPD Resources and Efforts**

Provides information on Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and rural disparities related to the disease. Offers links to a guide for hospitals to improve COPD care, webinars, podcasts, and resources from other organizations.

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**Funding Opportunities**

**Engaging and Empowering Vulnerable Families and Communities to Prevent Opioid Use Disorder and Overdose ** *NEW*

Grants for projects to develop, adapt, and/or evaluate promising evidence-based models of family and community based prevention for opioid use disorder (OUD) and overdose for children and families, especially those at highest risk.

**Application Deadline: September 20, 2021**

**Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) Program** *NEW*

Funding to support the training of residents in new or expanded primary care residency training programs in community-based ambulatory patient care centers.

**Application Deadline: September 21, 2021**

**Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Grants and Guaranteed Loans ** *NEW*

Financing and grant funding for agriculture producers and rural small businesses to purchase, install, and construct renewable energy systems or complete energy efficiency improvements. An example of a potential project may be the installation of solar panels for hospitals or clinics to improve energy costs.

**Application Deadline: November 1, 2021**

**Palliative Care in Home and Community Settings Research (R01 and R21 Clinical Trial Optional) ** *NEW*

Grants to support research aimed at determining needs and best practices for the integration of palliative care into home and community settings. Applications should consider approaches that may be implemented in rural/remote areas, as well as urban areas, and that are sensitive to ethnicities and cultures.

**Application Deadline: September 8, 2022**

**Direct Relief Partnership Network ** *NEW*

A partnership program for healthcare facilities that extends medication access to patients who are unable to afford prescriptions, reduces procurement costs of medications and
supplies, and leverages resources to foster healthier communities. Partner facilities order online from Direct Relief’s pharmaceutical inventory.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

**Kent Richard Hofmann Foundation Grants**

Grants to support community-based organizations providing direct services, education, or research in the areas of HIV and AIDS, with priority given to smaller communities and rural areas.

**Application Deadline: September 3, 2021**

**Rural Health Fellows Program**

A year-long, intensive fellowship program designed to develop a community of rural health leaders.

**Application Deadline: September 3, 2021**

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

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

**Application Deadline: September 7, 2021**

**The Role of Work in Health Disparities in the U.S.**

Grants for innovative population-based research in how work or occupation influences health outcomes and health status among health disparity populations and how work functions as a social determinant of health. (FBOs/CBOs eligible).

**Application Deadline: September 8, 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**

**Wilderness and Austere Medicine Fellowship**

A year-long training experience for physicians to develop clinical skills and leadership capacity to provide high quality healthcare in resource limited settings and prepare for leadership positions in the field of wilderness and austere medicine.

**Application Deadline: September 15, 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**

**Business and Industry CARES Act Loan Guarantee Program**

A USDA program for lenders to guarantee their loans to rural businesses and agricultural producers to supplement their working capital to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the economic impacts of COVID-19.

**Application Deadline: September 15, 2021**

**Resident Opportunity and Self Sufficiency Service Coordinator Program**

Grants to fund service coordinators to assist residents of public and Indian housing in making progress towards economic self-sufficiency, including the provision of job training, employment, adult education, housing, and health resources.

**Application Deadline: September 17, 2021**

**Massachusetts General Hospital Fellowship Program in Rural Health Leadership**

A full-time fellowship for early-career clinicians who have an interest in partnering with rural communities to improve health. The fellowship includes a Master's Degree in Public Health at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and focused clinical time in Rosebud, South Dakota at an Indian Health Service site.

**Application Deadline: September 30, 2021**

**Small Town America Civic Volunteer Award**

Monetary awards to recognize extraordinary volunteer service in areas with 25,000 people or less, with a goal of raising awareness of the need for citizens to fill critical civic roles including local government boards and councils, volunteer firefighters, EMTs, and advisory committees that support other key local government functions in small localities.

**Application Deadline: October 15, 2021**

**EMS Leadership Academy and Rural Scholarships**

A two-part, 60-hour leadership program designed to prepare participants to lead and manage EMS agencies. Scholarships are available for rural EMS providers.

**Application Deadline: October 20, 2021**

**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 Home Depot gift cards for the purchase of tools, materials, or services.

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

AHRQ Small Research Grant Program (R03)

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

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: September 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: January 7, 2023
Comprehensive Care for Adults with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus from Populations with Health Disparities (R01 Clinical Trial Optional)

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

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: September 7, 2024

The Role of Work in Health Disparities in the U.S. (R01 Clinical Trials Optional)

Grants for innovative population-based research in how work or occupation influences health outcomes and health status among health care disparity populations and how work functions as a social determinant of health.

Application Deadline: September 8, 2024

Appalachian Community Fund Technical Assistance Grants

Funding for technical assistance needs for community-based organizations that address underlying causes of economic and social distress in the Appalachian region.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis.

Intermediary Relending Program (IRP)

Provides low interest loans to intermediaries that re-lend to businesses to improve economic conditions and create jobs in rural communities.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis.

DATA 2000 Waiver Training Payment Program

One-time direct payment of $3,000 to Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics for each eligible provider who possesses a DATA 2000 waiver to prescribe buprenorphine for the treatment of opioid use disorder.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

SEARCH - Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households

Funding for financially distressed rural communities of less than 2,500 people to assist with feasibility studies, design assistance, and technical assistance on water and waste disposal projects.
Healthy Food Financing Initiative Technical Assistance

As part of the Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI), the Reinvestment Fund provides technical assistance for early stage healthy food access projects in underserved areas with a focus on management, financial health, and operations.

Application Deadline: Accepted on an ongoing basis

American Electric Power Foundation Grants

Supports nonprofits working in the areas of hunger, housing, health and safety, human services, education, and the environment in American Electric Power's eleven state service area.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) J-1 Visa Waiver Program

Offers a J-1 Visa waiver to foreign physicians who commit to serving for 3 years in rural Appalachian areas, allowing them to remain in the United States.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

Appalachian Community Fund Technical Assistance Grants

Funding for technical assistance needs for community-based organizations that address underlying causes of economic and social distress in the Appalachian region.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Scholarship

Scholarships for nurse practitioners working in safety-net settings to pursue a post-master's certificate as a psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

Southeast Rural Community Assistance Loan Fund Program

Community development loans to local governments, public service authorities, user associations, nonprofit organizations, and other community entities for the development and/or construction of large-scale community projects.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

Virginia AHEC Scholars Program

A multidisciplinary certificate program for health professions students in Virginia that offers opportunities for hands-on training, experience in rural and underserved communities, and networking with other students and professionals.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

Virginia EMS Scholarship
Scholarships to support qualified applicants seeking to earn an initial or advanced EMS credential within Virginia.

**Applications accepted on an ongoing basis**

**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**

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

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.