Virginia News

Virginia Health Leaders Advocate for Statewide Health Equity

Beth O’Connor, director of the Virginia Rural Health Association, provided context on health resource distribution for the nearly 2.5 million Virginians living in rural areas. Notable disparities include higher poverty and incarceration rates, and what O’Connor described as the “rural cancer paradox:” more rural Virginians are dying from cancer than urban residents despite not being diagnosed, because they are less likely to be screened for cancer in the first place.
NRHA’s fall events are going virtual due to COVID-19 trends

As an organization serving and consisting of public health leaders, NRHA has a responsibility to abide by and serve as a model for proper health precautions. The fourth wave of COVID-19 is hitting harder than anyone expected, and the situation is unlikely to improve by fall. That is why we have made the difficult decision to shift the association’s Rural Health Clinic and Critical Access Hospital Conferences to a virtual environment. As usual, you can register for these events at reduced virtual rates, and all content will be available Sept. 21-24 and on demand at your convenience for a full year. Virtual events allow NRHA to present – and you to experience – even more educational content than at an in-person event, creating even more educational value.

Calendar

Behavioral Health Assessment Officers: Managing Care for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders in Rural Emergency Departments  
September 2, 2021   2:00 pm

Focuses on the Behavioral Health Assessment Officer (BHAO) model to increase access to mental health & substance use disorder care in rural communities. BHAOs are licensed behavioral health providers who work in rural emergency depts. This provider evaluates & manages care for patients identified at screening to have behavioral health concerns. Attentive to the needs of the unique rural community they serve, BHAOs listen to community voices, understand local strengths & barriers, & navigate resources with skill.

2021 Virginia Cancer Conference  
September 15, 22, & 29, 2021   9:30 am - 12:30 pm daily

Provides education and training to key stakeholders in the Virginia cancer community. The conference will feature live presentations, breakout rooms, Q&A periods, and networking opportunities.

Pathways to Prevention Workshop: Improving Rural Health Through Telehealth-Guided Provider-to-Provider Communication  
October 12-14, 2021   11:00 am - 4:00 pm

More research is needed to better understand how provider-to-provider telehealth affects rural patients, populations, health care providers, and payers. Workshop speakers will identify those research gaps, as well as explore barriers to and facilitators of successful, sustainable implementation of provider-to-provider telehealth in rural settings.

Resources
The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is taking action to protect the health and safety of our nation’s patients and providers in the wake of the 2019 Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

CMS has compiled these resources to help you stay informed on CMS, HHS CDC and other materials and resources available on the COVID-19 vaccine. Please share these materials, bookmark the page, and check back often for the most up-to-date information.

You can find these and more resources on the CMS COVID-19 Policies & Guidance and the HHS COVID Education Campaign page.

**Grants Management 101 for RHC Vaccine Confidence Program**

Recording of an August 25, 2021, webinar for Rural Health Clinics that received funding through the Rural Health Clinic Vaccine Confidence (RHCVC) program. Covers strategies and tools for successful grant management and reporting.

**State Strategies to Increase COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Rural Communities**

Discusses the role of governors in addressing COVID-19 vaccine confidence, access, and uptake in rural communities. Presents three considerations for governors and state officials, examples of best and promising practices, and short- and long-term strategies for addressing challenges to vaccination efforts in rural areas.

**Potential Implications of SARS-CoV-2 Delta Variant Surges for Rural Areas and Hospitals**

Opinion piece highlighting features of rural healthcare systems that make it more difficult for those hospitals to withstand surges in COVID-19 cases. Suggests possible solutions for institutions, governments, and society as they navigate the potentially rural-dominant Delta variant phase.

**Youth Perceptions of Vaccination for COVID-19 in the United States**

Results of a national text message survey on the perspectives of youths aged 14-24 years regarding COVID-19 vaccine acceptability, perceived barriers to vaccination, and anticipated changes in behavior. Table 1 features demographic statistics with breakdowns including urban, suburban, and rural location.

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**Funding Opportunities**

**Cigna Foundation: Health and Well-Being Grants *NEW***

The Cigna Foundation is committed to eliminating health disparities and improving health and well-being for all. For the current Health and Well-Being Grants cycle, the Foundation seeks to partner with nonprofit organizations who are addressing the root causes of health inequity, including supporting under-resourced and systemically disadvantaged communities with poor social determinants of health. Funded programs should focus on chronic disease treatment and prevention, mental and/or behavioral health conditions,
dental health, wellness programs, or maternal, prenatal, and newborn health. Grants will range between $50,000 and $100,000 per year for up to three years.

Application Deadline: September 24, 2021

**T-Mobile Hometown Grants Program** *NEW*

The T-Mobile Hometown Grants Program is intended to help build stronger, more prosperous small towns and rural communities throughout the United States. Up to 100 towns each year for the next five years will receive community improvement grants of up to $50,000 each. The focus is on providing support to revitalize community spaces in towns with 50,000 people or less that help foster local connections. Elected leaders, town managers and employees, and nonprofit leaders are eligible to submit applications.

Application Deadline: September 30, 2021

**Clinical Workforce Development Training, Technical Assistance, and Learning Collaboratives for FQHCs** *NEW*

Training, technical assistance, and learning collaboratives for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and FQHC look-alikes in the areas of comprehensive primary clinical care teams, HIV prevention, sustainable training models, and postgraduate residency and fellowship programs.

Application Deadline: September 30, 2021

**Community Mobility Ready-to-Launch Grants** *NEW*

Grants and technical assistance to support communities that are ready to take concrete steps toward implementing transportation solutions to help underserved residents become more fully engaged in economic opportunities, improve their health and well-being, and/or become more integrated into their community.

Application Deadline: October 15, 2021

**NLM Information Resource Grants to Reduce Health Disparities (Go8 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)** *NEW*

Funding for projects that use computers, information technology, and health sciences libraries to bring health-related information to consumers and their healthcare providers. The program focus is on innovation and outreach in which information access can reduce health disparities and support underserved communities that bear a disproportionate burden of disease.

Application Deadline: October 22, 2021

**NBCC Foundation Minority Fellowship Program for Addictions Counselors** *NEW*

Fellowships for master's degree-level addictions counseling students from minority backgrounds. For the purpose of this program, minorities include racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, sexual orientation, rural, and military groups.

Application Deadline: December 15, 2021
Fellowships for master's and doctoral degree-level mental health counseling students from minority backgrounds. For the purpose of this program, minorities include racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, sexual orientation, rural, and military groups.

**Application Deadline: December 15, 2021**

**Innovative Mental Health Services Research Not Involving Clinical Trials (R01) *NEW***

Funding for innovative research that will inform and support the delivery of high-quality, continuously improving mental health services to benefit individuals with, or at risk for developing, a mental illness. Research on innovative service delivery models that seek to reduce disparities in service access, quality, and outcomes for racial and ethnic minority groups, individuals limited by language or cultural barriers, sexual and gender minorities, individuals living in rural areas, socioeconomically disadvantaged persons, and other underserved groups is encouraged.

**Application Deadline: September 7, 2024**

**Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Social, Behavioral, and Economic Impact of COVID-19 in Underserved and Vulnerable Populations *NEW***

Notice of Special Interest for research in understanding the response to the COVID-19 pandemic to help prepare more effectively for future public health emergencies. Populations that experience health disparities are a particular focus.

**Application Deadline: September 8, 2024**

**Southeast Rural Community Assistance Loan Fund Program *NEW***

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**

**Quality Payment Program Support for Small, Underserved, and Rural Practices *NEW***

Customized technical assistance for clinicians in small practices, including those in rural locations, Health Professional Shortage Areas, and Medically Underserved Areas to help them participate and succeed in the Quality Payment Program.

**Applications accepted on an ongoing basis**

**The Oak Hill Fund: Women's Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice *NEW***

The Oak Hill Fund was established to promote the well-being of mankind through effective and inspiring grantmaking. The Fund’s Women’s Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice program area invests in nonprofit organizations in the southeastern United States (including Virginia) that support the reproductive health and rights of women. The Fund supports efforts to provide, promote, or defend access to safe, affordable
reproductive healthcare and services, and to educate policymakers and the public on the importance of reproductive health, rights, and justice to women and families. Letters of inquiry may be submitted throughout the year.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

**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**

**AAPD Foundation Access to Care Grants**

Grants to support community-based initiatives that provide dental homes to children who are underserved and/or have limited access to oral healthcare.

**Application Deadline: October 1, 2021**

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

Funding to provide comprehensive primary healthcare services to an underserved area or population (areas served with a project period start date of May 1, 2022).

**Application Deadline: October 4, 2021**

**American Rescue Plan Act: Emergency Rural Health Care Grants**

Grants to provide emergency funding for eligible Community Facilities applicants to help rural hospitals and local communities increase access to COVID-19 vaccines, testing, healthcare services (including telehealth), and food assistance.

**Application Deadline: October 12, 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**

**Economic Development Administration American Rescue Plan Funding Programs**

Funding to support community-led economic development and to accelerate economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic while building local economies that will be resilient to future economic shocks. Investments made under this program will have an emphasis on equity and will directly benefit previously underserved communities,
including indigenous communities, rural areas, and regions with economies that have historically relied on coal mining. Past Economic Development Administration projects have included infrastructure to support healthcare facilities, health workforce development, and health and human services to assist people with getting jobs.

**Application Deadline: October 19, 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**

**National Rural Health Leadership Virtual Residency Program**

A one-year, fee-based virtual leadership training program designed to enhance the skills and ensure the success of new rural health leaders.

**Application Deadline: October 31, 2021**

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

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**

**America's Farmers Grow Communities Project**

Farmers enroll for a chance to direct $5,000 to local nonprofit organizations that are important to them and their communities.

**Application Deadline: November 1, 2021**

**Bloomberg Fellows**

A fellowship for individuals who want to achieve a Master's or PhD degree in Public Health, as well as on-the-ground training and experience. The program is looking for leaders working in the areas of addiction and overdose, environmental challenges, obesity and the food system, risks to adolescent health, and violence.

**Application Deadline: December 1, 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 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

Clinical and Translational Science Award (UM1 Clinical Trial Optional)

Funding for Clinical and Translational Program Hubs that are expected to develop, demonstrate, and then disseminate solutions to barriers that limit the efficiency and effectiveness of clinical and translational science research. A major interest of the program is improving rural health outcomes and eliminating health disparities.

Application Deadline: January 26, 2022

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

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

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

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**

**Effectiveness of Implementing Sustainable Evidence-Based Mental Health Practices in Low-Resource Settings to Achieve Mental Health Equity for Traditionally Underserved Populations (R01)**

Grants for research to develop and test the effectiveness of strategies for implementation and sustainable delivery of evidence-based mental health treatments and services to improve mental health outcomes for underserved populations in under-resourced settings. Under-resourced settings and populations include members of minority groups, other individuals experiencing disparities in mental health outcomes, and people living in a geographic area with a shortage of healthcare services.

**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**
Dispensary of Hope Dispensing Site Network

A national collaborative lead by a nonprofit medication distributor that sources donated medications to assist nonprofit health systems, hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies in serving their patient population, especially individuals experiencing poverty and those that are uninsured.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

USDA Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program

Direct USDA loans and/or grants to purchase, construct, enlarge, or improve essential community facilities for healthcare, public safety, education, and public services in rural areas.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

Community Heart & Soul Seed Grant

The Community Heart & Soul Seed Grant Program provides $10,000 in funding for resident-driven groups in small cities and towns to start the Community Heart & Soul model. Grant funding requires a $10,000 cash match from the participating municipality or a partnering organization.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis.

Public Health Student Intern Program

A one-semester internship experience within one of HRSA's bureaus or offices for students enrolled in a public health program.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis.

Zero Suicide Academy

A 2-day training for senior leaders of healthcare and behavioral healthcare organizations that seek to dramatically reduce suicides among patients in their care.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program

Funding that provides communities with a source of financing for economic development, housing rehabilitation, public facilities, and physical development projects, including improvements to increase resilience against natural disasters.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis.

Direct Relief Partnership Network

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
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.

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

Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) Training and Mentoring/DATA 2000 Waiver

Training to provide medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for clinicians in high-need communities. Clinicians who complete the training may be priority applicants for some NHSC loan repayment programs, and qualified disciplines can become eligible for the Loan Repayment Program Continuation Contract MAT Award Enhancement.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

3RNET Recruitment and Retention Assistance

Helps health professionals find jobs in rural and underserved areas and assists employers in recruiting and retaining **health professionals in rural and underserved areas**.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

CareQuest Executive Director's Fund

Supports convenings, events, and activities that promote oral health with a focus on reducing oral health disparities and advancing health equity.

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.

Applications 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

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.

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