



**VIRGINIA
RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION**



January 22, 2024



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VRHA News

2024 Legislative Alert!

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Which May Have an Impact on Rural Health

Updated Daily

Members in the News

[Delivery of medications by drone on Virginia's Eastern Shore successful, Tangier may be next](#)

The project marks a significant step forward in using drone technology to improve access to healthcare resources and enhance patient care by delivering medications straight to the patient's doorstep by drone. The team delivered three successful packages to three patients within two miles of Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital in Onancock, Virginia.

After this successful first patient delivery, the team plans to demonstrate more extensive and further-distance delivery and beyond visual line of site operations, eventually delivering to remote Tangier Island in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay.

VRHA Board Member Nick Chuquín, President of Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital, added, "Ensuring our patients have access to their essential medications is a top priority for Riverside. This collaborative project helps to improve our patients' health and quality of life by increasing medication adherence and removing transportation barriers. We are also focused on safety in all aspects: keeping the medications safe, such as temperature ranges, chain of custody, and double checks to make sure the right patient gets the right medication."

Virginia News

[The opioid epidemic cost Virginians \\$5 billion in 2021, new data shows](#)

Last year, Virginia Commonwealth University's Center on Society and Health collaborated with the Virginia Department of Health to calculate how much the opioid epidemic cost

Virginians financially in 2020, including families, businesses and government agencies. New data collection methods introduced in 2021 now suggest that the prevalence and economic impact of opioid addiction was underestimated in previous reports.

The data from 2021 revealed that nearly 150,000 people in Virginia had an opioid use disorder, 127% higher than 2020 estimates, with at least six Virginians dying of an opioid drug overdose every day on average. The calculator revealed that the overall cost of the epidemic in 2021 was more than \$5 billion, which is 43% higher than 2020 estimates. On an individual level, the financial impact of the opioid epidemic amounted to \$588 per Virginian on average.

The increased reports of opioid use in 2021 were in part due to changes in the NSDUH's survey methods to provide a more accurate estimate of the epidemic's impact. In the 2020 survey, questions about substance use disorder were given only to individuals who abused prescription drugs, such as taking them for longer periods of time or in larger amounts than what was prescribed. However, even when prescription drugs are used as intended, people can still be at risk of developing addiction.

Calendar

[2024 Rural Hospital Performance Improvement Virtual Conference](#)

[FORHP Regions A, B, C](#)

January 31, 2024 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Virtual

Session will highlight the following topics via hospital and clinic case studies:

- Rural Hospital Strategic and Operational Priorities
- Innovations and New Opportunities to Generate Revenue
- Recruitment and Retention Strategies
- Rural Health Clinic Best Practices and Future Direction

Resources

[Medicaid and CHIP Renewal and Transition Resources for Partners](#)

Offers resources for states, beneficiary and provider organizations, and other partners to better assist people with Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage to renew their healthcare coverage or transition to insurance options that better suit their needs. Includes outreach materials for different population categories, including racial and ethnic populations, people with disabilities and older adults, and rural populations.

[What's in it for Rural? Analyzing the Opportunities for Rural America in IIJA, CHIPS, and IRA](#)

Evaluates the significance to rural areas of appropriations and authorizations approved by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act. Identifies rural-significant funding by agency and sector, and discusses economic and financial aspects of allocations and funding structure. Summarizes major appropriations in infrastructure, energy, climate resilience, broadband, environment, and more. Provides recommendations for use and reporting of funds by officials, agencies, and policymakers.

[Purpose in Practice Podcast](#)

A podcast series that focus on issues related to clinical care for underserved patients.

Funding Opportunities

[CHS Seeds for Stewardship Grants](#) *NEW*

Matching grants to cooperatives for programs to strengthen hometown communities, with priority given to projects that enhance agriculture safety, farmer well-being, agriculture education, and **rural** community vitality.

Application Deadline: February 15, 2024

[AARP Community Challenge](#) *NEW*

Grants for projects that work to improve livability for all residents of a community. The 2023 application cycle will focus on public spaces; housing; transportation; civic engagement; diversity, equity, and inclusion; digital connections; community health; and economic empowerment, among others. Applications from **rural** communities are encouraged.

Application Deadline: March 6, 2024

[Continuum of Care Program Collaborative Applicant Registration](#) *NEW*

The Continuum of Care Program provides grants for community collaboration projects that assist individuals and families who are homeless by providing supportive care services, transitional housing, and permanent housing. Projects must designate a collaborative applicant and successfully complete a collaborative registration process to be eligible to apply for funding.

Application Deadline: March 7, 2024

[American College of Lifestyle Medicine HEAL Scholarship Program](#) *NEW*

A scholarship for clinicians who are underrepresented in medicine to assist with the costs associated with attaining education and certification in lifestyle medicine.

Application Deadline: March 17, 2024

[Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program](#) *NEW*

Grants to state designated entities to assist Critical Access Hospitals with quality and performance activities, including: stabilizing **rural** hospital finance; integrating emergency medical services (EMS) into their healthcare systems; incorporating population health; and fostering innovative models of healthcare.

Application Deadline: April 16, 2024

[Stand Down Grants](#) *NEW*

Provides funding for events that offer homeless veteran populations a variety of social services designed to help them to reintegrate into their communities, such as housing, healthcare, and employment opportunities.

Application Deadline: September 30, 2025

[USDA Rural Hospital Technical Assistance](#) *NEW*

Technical assistance for **rural** hospitals to identify and address healthcare needs and strengthen local healthcare systems. The overall goal of the program is to enhance hospital systems for improved efficiency and financial performance, bolster quality of care, and support communities.

Applications accepted on an ongoing basis

Appalachian Investments Supporting Partnerships In Recovery Ecosystems (INSPIRE) Initiative

Funding to assist in moving individuals in the Appalachian region from substance use disorder treatment to recovery to employment, with a focus on support services that enable and support individual successful entry or reentry into the workforce.

Letter of Intent (Required): February 16, 2024

Application Deadline: March 8, 2024

Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program

Grants to educate and train the primary care and geriatrics workforces to provide age-friendly and dementia-friendly care in integrated geriatrics and primary care sites/delivery systems and maximize patient and family engagement to address care gaps and improve health outcomes for older adults. Proposals that benefit older adults in **rural** or other underserved communities/populations are a priority.

Application Deadline: February 26, 2024

Hillman Innovation Programs

Grants to accelerate the development of bold, nursing-driven interventions that improve the health and healthcare of marginalized populations.

Letter of Intent (Required): February 27, 2024

The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program - Produce Prescription Program

Funding to support projects that demonstrate and evaluate the impact of prescribing fresh fruits and vegetables on the improvement of dietary health through increased consumption of fruits and vegetables, the reduction of individual and household food insecurity, and the reduction in healthcare use and associated costs.

Application Deadline: February 28, 2024

Rural Business Development Grants

Supports targeted technical assistance, training, and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in **rural** areas that

have fewer than 50 employees and less than \$1,000,000 in gross revenues.

Application Deadline: February 28, 2024

[ELEVATE: Internships at ARC](#)

ELEVATE is a paid summer internship opportunity where Appalachian students and recent graduates can elevate their careers, cultivate a deeper connection to the region, and innovate through meaningful projects that will impact their communities.

Application Deadline: February 29, 2024

[VA Quality Scholars Fellowship](#)

Two-year residential fellowship for clinicians who are interested in making veteran healthcare equitable and accessible for marginalized and rural populations. Fellows split their time between in-person clinical work, independent studies, and structured didactics while guided by a set of experienced mentors.

Application Deadline: March 1, 2024

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Telehealth in Cancer Care](#)

Notice of Special Interest for research on the use of telehealth in cancer-related care, with a focus on populations that experience inequities in access to care and have worse cancer outcomes compared to the general population.

Application Deadline: March 8, 2024

[SAMHSA Minority Fellowship](#)

A 1-year fellowship for psychiatry residents who are interested in addressing minority psychiatric mental health issues and committed to a career providing culturally sensitive psychiatric services for minority underserved populations.

Application Deadline: March 15, 2024

[American Psychiatric Association Diversity Leadership Fellowship](#)

A 2-year fellowship for minority psychiatry residents or those interested in minority and vulnerable populations. Activities are designed to prepare residents to teach, administer, and provide culturally competent, evidence based mental health and substance abuse services for diverse minority groups and at-risk populations.

Application Deadline: March 15, 2024

Physician Assistant Rural Training in Behavioral Health Program

The purpose of the Primary Care Training and Enhancement- Physician Assistant Rural Training in Behavioral Health program is to develop clinical rotations for primary care physician assistant students in **rural** areas. The goal is to increase the number of physician assistants trained to deliver these services in rural areas, including Medications for Opioid Use Disorder.

Application Deadline: March 15, 2024

Primary Care Training and Enhancement: Physician Assistant Rural Training in Behavioral Health (PCTE-PARB) Program

Funding to train primary care physician assistants to prevent, identify, diagnose, treat, and refer services for behavioral health conditions. The program goal is to increase the number of trained physician assistants who choose to practice in **rural** areas after graduation.

Application Deadline: March 15, 2024

Rural Emergency Medical Services Training Grant

Grants to recruit and train emergency medical services personnel in **rural** areas with a focus on addressing substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health conditions.

Application Deadline: March 20, 2024

Behavioral Health Integration Evidence Based Telehealth Network Program

Funding to support evidence-based projects that utilize telehealth technologies through telehealth networks to integrate behavioral health services into primary care settings in **rural** and underserved areas.

Application Deadline: March 22, 2024

American Hospital Association Next Generation Leaders Fellowship

A fellowship program designed to empower healthcare leaders to bring about lasting change in the hospital and health systems in which they serve. **Rural** applicants are encouraged.

Application Deadline: March 29, 2024

Rural Health Care Telecommunications (Telecom) Program

Assistance to healthcare providers for eligible expenses related to telecommunications and voice services for the use of telemedicine and telehealth.

Application Deadline: April 1, 2024

Rural Health Care Program – Healthcare Connect Fund

Provides assistance to healthcare providers for eligible expenses related to broadband connectivity at a flat discounted rate of 65%. Participants can apply as a member of a consortium or a stand-alone entity.

Application Deadline: April 1, 2024

State Maternal Health Innovation

Funding to reduce maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity in states, including for populations experiencing disparities in maternal health outcomes.

Application Deadline: April 2, 2024

Technology Development to Reduce Health Disparities (R01 Clinical Trial Optional)

Funding to develop and translate medical technologies aimed at reducing disparities in healthcare access and health outcomes. Medical technologies should be effective, affordable, culturally acceptable, and deliverable to those who need them. Priority health disparity populations include racial and ethnic minorities, socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals, sexual and gender minorities, and medically underserved populations in **rural** and urban areas.

Application Deadline: May 2, 2024

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Research on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Risks for Abuse and Injury Among Vulnerable Children and Youth

Notice of Special Interest to fund research on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and risks for abuse and injury among vulnerable children and youth. Emphasis is placed on disparity populations related to abuse and neglect prior to the pandemic, as well as

populations that have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus. Disparity populations include LGBT youth and children seen at **rural** emergency departments.

Application Deadline: May 8, 2024

[AHRQ Safety Program for Telemedicine](#)

Free learning cohorts of healthcare professionals who use telemedicine as a care delivery model. The 2024 cohort will begin in June 2024 and will focus on appropriate antibiotic use while maintaining patient satisfaction and reducing potential side effects in patients seen via telemedicine. Providers and practices from **rural** communities are encouraged to apply.

Application Deadline: May 23, 2024

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Research on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Risks for Abuse and Injury Among Vulnerable Children and Youth](#)

Notice of Special Interest to fund research on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and risks for abuse and injury among vulnerable children and youth. Emphasis is placed on disparity populations related to abuse and neglect prior to the pandemic, as well as populations that have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus. Disparity populations include American Indians, Alaska Natives, LGBT youth, and children seen at **rural** emergency departments.

Application Deadline: May 31, 2024

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Dissemination and Implementation Research to Advance Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Health Preventive Interventions in School Settings](#)

Notice of Special Interest for dissemination and implementation research to support innovative approaches to overcoming barriers to the adoption, adaptation, integration, scale-up, and sustainability of evidence-based interventions to support children's mental, emotional, and behavioral health in school settings. Health disparity populations, including individuals living in **rural** areas, are a priority.

Application Deadline: June 5, 2024

[AHRQ Health Services Research Projects](#)

Support for specified health services 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: July 8, 2024

[AHRQ Small Research Grant Program](#)

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 8, 2024

[Virginia Conrad 30 J-1 Visa Waiver Program](#)

Offers a J-1 Visa waiver to foreign physicians who commit to serving for 3 years in an underserved area of Virginia, allowing them to remain in the United States.

Application Deadline: August 31, 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

[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

[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

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Telehealth Strategies for Individuals with HIV and Substance Use Disorders](#)

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Application Deadline: September 7, 2024

[Innovative Mental Health Services Research Not Involving Clinical Trials](#)

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

Health Care Models for Persons with Multiple Chronic Conditions from Populations that Experience Health Disparities: Advancing Health Care towards Health Equity (R01 - Clinical Trials Optional)

Funding for research to study the effective adaptation, integration, and implementation of recommended guidelines of care of persons with multiple chronic conditions from populations that experience health disparities.

Application Deadline: September 7, 2024

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

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): Research to Improve Pre-Pregnancy Care and Enhance Healthy Birth Intervals

Notice of Special Interest for research that assesses the social and behavioral processes that facilitate or hinder the achievement of healthy interbirth intervals and to identify public health interventions that promote healthy birth outcomes.

Application Deadline: September 8, 2024

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

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

[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 disparity populations and how work functions as a social determinant of health.

Application Deadline: September 8, 2024

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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.

Application Deadline: September 8, 2024

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Disparities Affecting Healthcare Utilization and Health Outcomes Among Childhood Cancer Survivors](#)

Notice of Special Interest for research to understand and address the full spectrum of factors that contribute to disparities in survivorship care, healthcare utilization, and health outcomes among childhood cancer survivors. Proposed projects must include populations commonly experiencing disparities based on race or ethnicity, sex, sexual or gender

minority status, insurance status, **rural** residence, socioeconomic disadvantage, or other demonstrated differences.

Application Deadline: October 9, 2024

Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program

Funding for community-driven projects that address climate challenges and reduce pollution while strengthening disadvantaged communities.

Application Deadline; November 21, 2024

Stimulating Research to Understand and Address Hunger, Food, and Nutrition Insecurity

Notice of Special Interest for research on interventions that address nutrition security and the mechanisms of food insecurity on a variety of health outcomes. Priority populations include racial/ethnic minority populations, lower income populations, and **rural** and remote populations including tribal communities and insular areas.

Application Deadline: November 29, 2024

For ongoing funding opportunities, [visit our website](#)

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