

Announcements from the
Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

August 30, 2018

Funding Opportunities

[SAMHSA Rural Opioids Technical Assistance Grants](#) – September 20. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) will make 15 awards with total funding of \$8.25 million to develop and disseminate training and technical assistance for opioid use disorder efforts in rural communities. Successful applicants will be current USDA Cooperative Extensions grantees with a focus on opioids that will provide research-based knowledge to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of families, communities and agriculture enterprises.

[Johns Hopkins American Indian Scholars Program](#) – November 1. American Indian and Alaska Native scholars, health leaders, health professionals, and paraprofessionals serving tribal communities can apply for financial support to attend training at Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health. The scholarship covers travel to and from Baltimore, hotel accommodation in a room shared with another student, course materials including books, and full academic credit tuition for one 5-day course. A Bachelor's degree is required, with a minimum GPA of 2.75. [The Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health works in partnership with tribal communities](#), which are mostly rural, to design culturally-appropriate public health programs.

[Rural Health Network Development Planning Program](#) – November 30. Public or private nonprofit organizations forming a consortium of three or more health providers in a rural community may be eligible to apply for [funding administered by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy](#) at the Health Resources and Services Administration. The purpose of the Network Planning program (a one-year planning grant) is to strengthen the rural health care system through community-level networks that can align resources and strategies, achieve economies of scale and efficiencies, and address challenges more effectively as a group than as single providers.

[Prepare for the Small Rural Hospital Transition Project](#). Nine rural hospitals will be selected to receive on-site technical assistance for the transition to value-based care and Alternative Payment Models. Applicants may select either a financial operational assessment or quality improvement project. A preview of the 2018 application is now available. Preview questions in advance of the application period opening September 26th and get helpful hints for submitting a successful application.

Rural Health Research

[Rural Caregiving Challenges, Interventions and Resources](#). Two policy briefs released this week come from the University of Minnesota RUPRI Health Panel, part of the HRSA-supported Rural Health Research Gateway. The first brief, Perspectives on Rural Caregiving Challenges and Interventions, presents findings from key informant interviews describing challenges and opportunities related to supporting informal caregivers in rural areas. The second brief, Resources for Caregiving in Rural Communities, describes resources that are being used across the country to support caregivers in rural communities.

Policy Updates

Visit the [FORHP Policy page](#) to see all recent updates and send questions to ruralpolicy@hrsa.gov

Comments Requested: Reducing Regulatory Burden for Care Coordination – October 26

HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) has published a request for information (RFI) seeking input on ways in which it might modify or add new [safe harbors to the anti-kickback statute](#) and exceptions to the beneficiary inducements civil monetary penalty (CMP) definition of “remuneration.” Specifically, OIG is looking for information on how to address any regulatory provisions that may act as barriers to coordinated care or value-based care. This RFI is a companion to a recent CMS RFI on the [Physician Self-Referral Law](#) (also known as the “Stark Law”). Rural providers and stakeholders may share their thoughts on a variety of questions about the impact of the anti-kickback statute and beneficiary engagement, such as whether there should be an increase in the “nominal value” from no more than \$15 per item or \$75 in the aggregate per patient on an annual basis in an effort to promote care coordination and value-based care.

Resources, Learning Events and Technical Assistance

USDA Research on Food Security in American Households – Wednesday, September 5 at 11:00 am ET

The Economic Research Service (ERS) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) plays a leading role in Federal research on food security and food security measurement in U.S. households and communities. In this hour-long webinar, the ERS will provide an overview of USDA's annual report on the prevalence and severity of food insecurity in U.S. households in 2017. According to the nonprofit organization Feeding America, [rates of food insecurity among rural households are generally higher than urban households](#).

Insuring Rural America: Challenges and Opportunities – Monday, September 17 at 1:00 pm ET

This hour-long webinar hosted by the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) Health Panel will take participants through a series of policy considerations in three main categories: policies related to rural insurance risk, policies related to provider networks, and policies related to rural payment rates and structures. The discussion will focus on the real-world challenges in these areas and what the suggested policies can do to address them.

Grant Writing Institute 2018: Beyond the Basics. The National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH) has an on demand online learning sessions on grant writing for rural health funding. The series is designed for individuals looking for education beyond the introductory or beginning level. Past participation in NOSORH's Grant Writing Institute is not required.

Roots of Health Inequity. Developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) this course provides an online learning environment from which to explore root causes of inequity in the distribution of disease, illness, and death. Rural residents are more likely to experience some of the contributing [social factors that impact health](#).

Rural Focused Virtual Job Fair – Wednesday, November 28 at 7:00 pm ET. HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce will host a Rural Focused Virtual Job Fair a free, interactive event held online to allow primary care providers a chance to talk about their NHSC- or NURSE Corps-approved site, the community they serve and currently available positions in rural areas. [Registration closes on Wednesday November 7th](#).

Resource of the Week

Medicare Telehealth Payment Eligibility Analyzer. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) provides this tool through its Data Warehouse, allowing providers to check if an address is eligible for Medicare payment for telehealth services. Further information about the

types of services, eligible providers and facilities that may be reimbursed can be found at the [Center for Connected Health Policy](#) or by contacting [your local Telehealth Resource Center](#).

Approaching Deadlines

[Call for Grant Reviewers](#) – Immediate and Ongoing

[Comments Requested: Updates to CMS Home Health Payments and Policy](#) – August 31

[Seeking Nominations for Rural Health Champions in WV](#) – September 3

[Comments Requested: New Medicare Advantage Demonstration](#) – September 4

[Call for Applications: New Demonstration for Medicare Advantage Physicians](#) – September 6

[Comments Requested: FCC Telehealth Pilot Program](#) – September 10

[Comments Requested: CMS Updates Medicare Clinician Payments and Policy](#) – September 10

[Department of Labor YouthBuild Program](#) – September 18

[Rural Cancer Research](#) – September 19

[SAMHSA Rural Opioids Technical Assistance Grants](#) – September 20

[MCHB Challenge: Preventing Childhood Obesity](#) – September 24

[CMS Proposes Medicare Outpatient Payment and Policy Changes](#) – September 24

[AHRQ Health Services Research Projects](#) – October 5

[AHRQ Small Research Grant Program](#) – October 16

[Comments Requested: New Plans for Medicare Shared Savings Program ACOs](#) – October 16

[Comments Requested: Reducing Regulatory Burden for Care Coordination](#) – October 26

[Guaranteed Loans for Rural Rental Housing](#) – Ongoing through 2021

[Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans](#) – Ongoing

[Funding for Rural Water and Waste Disposal Projects](#) – Ongoing

[Drinking Water and Waste Disposal for Rural and Native Alaskan Villages](#) – Ongoing

[HIT Strategies for Patient-Reported Outcome Measures](#) – Ongoing

[HIT to Improve Health Care Quality and Outcomes](#) – Ongoing

[Community Facilities Program](#) – Ongoing

[Summer Food Service Program](#) – Ongoing

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