What’s New

New Reports and Recommendations for Rural Health Policy. Two new briefs from the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services are now viewable online. During its September 2018 meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, the Committee took an in-depth look at two pertinent topics: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and oral health care services. The Committee examined the factors and impacts of these conditions in rural areas and sent its findings and recommendations to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Funding Opportunities

Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples – February 1. The Seventh Generation Fund makes awards ranging from $600 to $10,000 for the native communities. The programs for this fund target environmental protection, the well-being of women, and community empowerment. The first grant proposal deadline is February 1, with additional deadlines of May 10 and October 11. There is no deadline for mini-grants of up to $500 for projects that support the Seventh Generation Fund’s priorities of community empowerment and cultural vitality.

USDA Healthy Food Financing Initiative – February 14. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will make awards ranging from $25,000 to $250,000 to help retailers provide fresh food for low-income and underserved areas of the country. Rural and native communities have been identified as priority for this funding, particularly if they have not been reached by other federal food financing programs.

Two Loan Repayment Programs for National Health Service Corps – February 21. The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) provides financial assistance to health care professionals in exchange for a commitment to work at approved sites in rural and underserved areas. Application cycles are currently open for two NHSC programs: The Loan Repayment Program awards up to $50,000 toward student loans in exchange for a two-year commitment. The Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program provides up to $75,000 in exchange for a three-year commitment and expands eligibility to health care professionals and sites delivering substance use disorder treatment services.

Veteran Nurses in Primary Care Training Program – March 8. Accredited schools of nursing and health facilities, separately or in partnership, are eligible for a total investment of $4.5 million to recruit and train nursing students and current registered nurses to practice in community-based primary care teams. The program, which is administered through the Health Resources and Services Administration, expands on a current investment specifically targeting nursing students who are veterans committed to working in medically underserved communities.

AMAF Community Health Grants for Diabetes/Hypertension – March 8. The American Medical Association Foundation (AMAF) will support innovative programs targeting the prevention and
reduction of type 2 diabetes and hypertension, two conditions with higher prevalence in rural areas. Community-based organizations serving vulnerable and underserved populations may be eligible for awards up to $60,000, renewable for three years.

**Licensure Portability Program for Telehealth** – March 11. Through the Office for the Advancement of Telehealth, the Health Resources and Services Administration will invest $500,000 for two awards. Telehealth has great potential to expand access and improve the quality of rural healthcare. The program supports licensure for telehealth across state lines, allowing for health care delivery through video conferencing, the internet, store-and-forward imaging, streaming media, and terrestrial and wireless communications. Eligibility includes public or private entities, but is limited to state licensure boards.

**Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program** – March 11. HRSA’s Maternal and Child Health Bureau will make three awards of up to $445,000 to support integration of mental health into pediatric primary care through telehealth. Eligible applicants are states, political subdivisions of states, and tribes and tribal organizations. Telehealth-supported mental and behavioral health care for children was one of the recommendations in a recent policy brief on adverse childhood experiences from the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services to the Secretary of HHS.

**New Access Points for Health Centers** – March 12. Public, private and nonprofit entities – including tribes, tribal organizations, faith-based organizations and community-based organizations – may apply to become a new, full-time, permanent service delivery site providing comprehensive primary health care services to underserved populations. HRSA’s Health Center Program will make 75 grants of up to $650,000 per year.

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**Rural Health Research**

Assessing the Unintended Consequences of Health Policy on Rural Populations and Places. In this brief, the RUPRI Health Panel explores the unintended consequences of policy actions that have affected, or had the potential to affect, rural places in ways counteractive to policy intent. Two realities drive the need for this analysis: 1) rural healthcare systems are grappling with unintended consequences of previously implemented policies because the full impact of such policies was neither considered nor predicted, and 2) because policymakers have recognized the need to evaluate new programs and policies to take into account rural implications for health care. The brief includes a framework for health policy evaluation that considers potential and unintended rural impacts.

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**Policy Updates**

No policy updates this week.

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**Resources, Learning Events and Technical Assistance**

**Tackling the Opioid Epidemic: Where to Begin** – Thursday, January 17 at 3:00 pm ET. The National Rural Health Association will host this one-hour webinar to help attendees understand the background of the opioid epidemic and identify strategies that can be employed at the community level.
Rural Hospital Closures: What's at Stake – Tuesday, January 22 at 1:00 pm ET. Dr. Katy Kozhimannil of the Rural Health Research Center and Betsy McKay of the Wall Street Journal will provide an overview of rural hospital closures, now totaling 95 since January 2010. They'll explain the geographic and economic factors contributing to the trend and the impact of the closures on their surrounding communities.

Resources for Human Trafficking Response - Tuesday, January 22 at 2:00 pm ET. Hosted by the American Hospital Association, in collaboration with National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center and HEAL Trafficking, this hour-long webinar will provide key resources for hospitals and health systems to respond to human trafficking. Participants will hear from leading human trafficking response programs, learn about the new ICD-10 codes for human trafficking, and how organizations can prepare and create systems to address the issue. According to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, rural areas have several economic risk factors for human trafficking, including persistent rates of poverty, decreasing workforce participation rates and high demand for low-skilled manual labor.

National Drugs & Alcohol Facts Week – January 22-27. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) created this week specifically to teach kids the difference between myth and facts about substance use. NIDA provides everything educators and communities need to explain science-backed facts, host their own events, and connect through social media. For more resources beyond the week, visit the Rural Health Information Hub for research, topic guides and promising models for preventing teen substance use in rural communities.

Rural Residency Programs – Accreditation and Financing – January 22 and 28. The Rural Residency Planning and Development Technical Assistance Center at RuralGME.org was funded by HRSA to support potential Rural Residency Planning and Development applicants and future grantees by sharing resources regarding graduate medical education (GME) and training for medical practice in rural areas. At the first session of this two-part series on rural residency programs, attendees will learn about the process for achieving accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). The second session will review common costs and expenses and identify revenue sources for a sustainable residency program.

Occupational Therapy’s Role in Pain Management – Wednesday, January 23 at 1:00 pm ET. The University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences will host this one-hour online session for practitioners of occupational therapy. Attendees will participate in case-based clinical discussions focused on pain management for patients under treatment of opioid use disorder. Because many physically demanding occupations are in rural areas, the injury rate is higher and these injuries often require treatment with opioids to mitigate pain.

AgriSafe: Using Future Search to Bring Stakeholders Together – Wednesday, January 23 at 1:00 pm ET. In December 2018, the STAND (Stakeholder Team up for Action in New York Dairy) Workshop brought together diverse agricultural stakeholders to begin addressing the issue of toxic stress among farmers. Using Future Search methodologies, the group worked together to understand historical perspectives of the issue as well as current trends. The workshop concluded with the development of common ground goals for the future and action items supporting those goals. The AgriSafe Network will hold this one-hour webinar to discuss the Future Search method and process, and the outcomes of this workshop.

Oral Health for Older Adults – Wednesday, January 23 at 3:00 pm ET. On average, rural populations are older than populations in other parts of the country, and oral health is an integral part of health and well-being for older adults. In this hour-long webinar, the Administration for Community Living and the Office of Women’s Health will share publicly available tools for communities that would enable them to start or enhance oral health program for older adults,
including a searchable database of vetted, low-cost, community-based oral health services and a step-by-step guide on how to develop and operate cost-effective, sustainable oral health programs for older adults.

**Approaching Deadlines**

- **Rural Residency Planning and Development Program** – Letters of Intent January 17
- **New Medicare ACO “Pathways to Success” Announced** – Letters of Intent January 18
- **Environmental Public Health Internship Program** – January 18
- **Awards for Addressing Social Determinants of Health in Rural Communities** – January 25
- **Comments Requested: Proposed Drug Pricing Changes for Medicare Advantage (MA) and Part D Plans** – January 25
- **Support for Enrollment of Children in Medicaid and CHIP** – January 28
- **Funding for Integrating Behavioral Health and Primary Care** – January 28
- **DOJ Grants for Culturally-Specific Sexual Assault Services** – Letters of Intent January 30
- **AAP Community Access to Child Health (CATCH)** – January 31
- **USDA Rural Energy for America Program** – January 31
- **Environmental Cleanup Through Brownfields Grants** – January 31
- **Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples** – February 1
- **NIH High-Priority Research on Aging** – February 1
- **Funding for Patient-Centered Outcomes Research** – Letters of Intent February 1
- **Tribal College Extension Special Emphasis** – February 1
- **Comments Requested: Screening for Hepatitis B in Pregnant Women** – February 4
- **NIH Researching HIT for Health Disparities** – Letters of Intent February 4
- **Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program** – February 6
- **Research Fellowships for American Voices Project** – Second Round February 7
- **RWJF: Health and Climate Solutions** – February 8
- **Comments Requested: Changing Privacy Regulations in HIPAA** – February 12
Rural Veterans Health Access Program – February 12
Grants for Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) – February 12
DOJ Grants for Culturally-Specific Sexual Assault Services – February 13
USDA Healthy Food Financing Initiative – February 14
Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence and Stalking Program – February 14
Environmental Justice Small Grants Program – February 15
Comments Requested: Proposed Changes to the Medicare Advantage Risk Adjustment Model – February 19
Two Loan Repayment Programs for National Health Service Corps – February 21
Rural Health Innovation and Transformation Technical Assistance – February 22
Public Safety and Victim Services in Tribal Communities – February 26
NIH Researching HIT for Health Disparities – March 4
Advanced Nursing Education Nurse Practitioner Residency Program – March 4
Rural Residency Planning and Development Program – March 4
AMAF Community Health Grants for Diabetes/Hypertension – March 8
Veteran Nurses in Primary Care Training Program – March 8
Licensure Portability Program for Telehealth – March 11
New Access Points for Health Centers – March 12
Increasing Access to HIV Primary Health Care Services – March 22
Rural Health and Economic Development Analysis – March 27
Rural Primary Care SBIRT for Maternal Opioid Use – March 29
National Indian Health Board Health Policy Fellowships – March 30
Indian Health Service Loan Repayment Program – Ongoing through August 2019
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