

Announcements from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

February 28, 2019

What's New

[New Data Show Growth in Rural Population](#). The Economic Research Service (ERS) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports an uptick in population for the first time in nearly a decade. In 2016-17, the rural population increased by 0.1 percent, adding 33,000 people. This annual report from the ERS also includes geographic variations in population trends and a breakdown by race and ethnicity.

Funding Opportunities

[NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program](#) – **March 28**. Eligible nurses working full time in a [Critical Shortage Facility](#) may receive 60% repayment of their unpaid nursing education debt in exchange for a two-year commitment to stay and practice in rural and other underserved areas. Participants may be eligible to work a third year and receive an additional 25% of the qualifying loan balance.

[CDC Research Grants to Identify Effective Strategies for Opioid Overdose Prevention](#) – **April 8**. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will make 13 grants for total investment of \$30 million for research that will identify effective strategies for state, community, and systems-level implementation to prevent fatal and nonfatal opioid overdose. The funding is meant to evaluate the effectiveness of new and existing strategies in states and local communities. Eligible applicants include state, local and tribal governments, independent school districts, private institutions of higher education, and small businesses.

[NIH Grants to Translate Research Into Clinical Practice](#) – **April 15**. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) seeks to improve the coordination between research and the health care delivery system with its Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA). Domestic nonprofit organizations and institutions of higher education are eligible to apply, including, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and institutions serving Hispanic, Tribal, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Native Pacific Islander and Asian American populations. The NIH clearly states an interest in developing “a pool of highly talented scientists from varied backgrounds to include professional, educational, age, cultural, gender, etc., as well as diversity in ethnicity, race and under-represented minority status.” Successful applicants will form CTSA hubs that engage patients, clinicians and local communities in their research while continuously working to improve the cycle of learning between research and clinical practice.

[HHS Grants to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy](#) – **April 15**. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) will make 30 awards of up to \$500,000 each to replicate programs that have been proven effective to reduce teenage pregnancy and the behavioral risk factors underlying it. Eligible applicants include state, local and tribal governments; nonprofit and for-profit organizations; community- and faith-based organizations; institutions of research and higher education; as well as small, minority, and women-owned businesses. Approved projects will

identify population segments within their community for which teenage pregnancy and contributing risk factors remain high and implement evidence-based strategies. Last year, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings found that while national teen birth rates have been declining for more than a decade, [teen pregnancy in rural counties is still nearly twice the rate](#) of teens in suburban counties. [Childbearing by teenage mothers has significant impact on rates of infant mortality](#) and is an important indicator of maternal and child health.

[SAMHSA Grants Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health](#) – April 19. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) will make 15 awards of up to \$800,000 each for projects that address developmental needs of children from birth to age eight. Eligible applicants are public and private nonprofit entities, including tribal organizations, that can disseminate effective and innovative early childhood mental health practices and services. A recent report from the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services examined the [long-term health effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences](#) for rural, tribal and other at-risk populations.

[NIH Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health](#) – May 14. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) will support exploratory developmental research to improve Native American health, including secondary analysis of existing data, conduct of pilot and feasibility studies, and assessment of measures developed and/or adapted for use in Native American communities. Eligible applicants include state, local and tribal governments, small businesses, institutions of higher learning, and ethnic minority-serving organizations.

Policy Updates

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

No policy updates this week.

Learning Events and Technical Assistance

[Finding and Using Health Statistics on the Web](#) – Thursday, February 28 at 12:00 pm ET. During this hour-long webinar hosted by the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, participants will get a hands-on course for websites holding local, state, and national health data sets and statistics.

[Adverse Childhood Experiences and CMS' Integrated Care for Kids](#) – Thursday, February 28 at 2:00 pm ET. Three national organizations will present a public health perspective on [Adverse Childhood Experiences](#). The hour-long event, hosted by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation, will introduce the [new Integrated Care for Kids Model](#) from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

[Information on Proposed Rulemaking for Interoperability](#) – Thursday, February 28 at 2:00 pm ET. The HHS Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) will host its first informational webinar to provide details on the recently [proposed rule for interoperability of health information](#) and to answer general questions. The proposed rule is

designed to increase innovation and competition by giving patients and their healthcare providers (including rural providers) secure access to health information and online tools. CMS's efforts to improve interoperability and enhance patient's access to essential health information align with the ONC proposed rule. (See their March 5 event below.)

[SAMHSA Supports that Empower People in Treatment and Recovery](#) – Thursday, February 28 at 2:00 pm ET. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) will hold this hour-long event with national experts discussing [peer recovery support](#), particularly for parents balancing treatment and recovery with the needs of their children.

[CMS Interoperability and Patient Access Proposed Rule Listening Session](#) — March 5 at 2pm ET. On February 11, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the [Interoperability and Patient Access proposed rule](#) outlining opportunities to make patient data more useful and transferable through open, secure, standardized, and machine-readable formats, while reducing restrictive burdens on health care providers. The proposed rule solicits comments on policies that would affect hospitals, including rural hospitals like critical access hospitals. CMS Administrator Seema Verma opens this listening session, followed by an overview by CMS experts. Learn about the provisions that impact you and get answers to your clarifying questions to help formulate comments for formal submission.

[Save the Dates: Virtual Job Fairs for SUD Clinicians and Employers](#) – through March 7. HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce will hold a series of virtual job fairs to match employers and clinicians treating substance use disorder (SUD). Virtual job fairs are free, interactive events held online allowing sites approved by the National Health Service Corps and/or NURSE Corps a chance to discuss their site, the populations they serve, and currently available positions. Clinicians and trainees in medical, nursing, dental, and mental/behavioral health can learn about hundreds of opportunities in rural and medically underserved communities.

[Addressing the Burden of COPD in Rural America](#) – Thursday, March 14 at 2:00 pm ET. In 2018, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed [significantly higher estimates in rural areas](#) of adult prevalence, Medicare hospitalizations, and deaths from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a respiratory condition that makes breathing difficult. In this hour-long presentation, members of the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services will discuss their report and recommendations on rural-urban disparities for COPD, and shed light on a patient's perspective living with the disease.

Resource of the Week

[Tackling HPV Cancers.](#) The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine can prevent 30,000 Americans from getting cancer each year, but data from 2017 show that fewer than half of adolescents completed the HPV vaccination series. [In rural communities, adolescents are less likely than their urban peers to be aware of the HPV vaccine](#) and its importance in cancer prevention. Monday, March 4th is International HPV Awareness Day and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) asks you to join the #EndHPVCancers Twitter Chat on that day at 3:00 pm ET. And to help others understand the risks and ways to prevent HPV, share resources from the [HHS HPV Promotional Toolkit](#), the [National HPV Roundtable](#), and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).
