

Spring Newsletter

2025



J-1 Conrad 30 Slots Filled

As of this issue, all J-1 Conrad 30 Slots for the 2025 Cycle have been filled. Any facility interested in hiring a J-1 physician who is designated in a Health Professional Shortage Area or a Medically Underserved Area/Population can utilize the Northern Border Regional Commission J-1 Program. Anyone with questions can feel free to reach out to me.

NHSC Loan Repayment Programs Accepting Applications!

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Programs are open now! The application cycle is open through May 1, 2025 at 7:30 PM ET.

Clinicians providing primary medical, oral health, behavioral health care services, or evidence-based substance use disorder treatment at an NHSC-approved site can receive up to \$100,000 to help pay off their student loans. For [more information and how to apply](#).

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Upcoming Events

NRHA Annual Conference May 20—23, 2025
Atlanta, GA



Nurse Corps Loan Repayment Program Accepting Applications! New England Rural Health Association Conference 2025

The Nurse Corps Loan Repayment Program is open now through April 17, 2025 at 7:30 PM ET. This program can assist nurses with decreasing their nursing education debt by 60% with two years of service.

[For more eligibility information and to apply.](#)

Please share with any nurses at your facility that you think may be eligible.

The Rural Medical Access Program Accepting Applications Now!

The Rural Medical Access Program (RMAP) is accepting applications now through May 5, 2025 at 4:00 PM. The RMAP program promotes obstetrical and prenatal care in federally designated Medically Underserved Areas/Populations and Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas of Maine through assistance with insurance premiums for eligible obstetricians and family or general practice physicians.

To be eligible, the physicians must be practicing in Maine, have performed deliveries and/or provided prenatal care and have malpractice insurance for prenatal care and/or obstetrical services, all for at least the period of July 1, 2024—December 31, 2024.

For more eligibility and other information on the program, please see the memo on our website. If you would like to [apply](#).

The New England Rural Health Association is asking for speaking proposals for their 2025 conference. The conference is themed “Rural Health in a Changing World” and will take place at the Mystic Marriot in Groton, Connecticut on November 4th and 5th 2025.

The submission deadline is May 16, 2025. Proposals will be reviewed by the NERHA Conference Committee, and selections will be announced in mid-June. If selected, discounted registration will be available for up to two presenters per session.

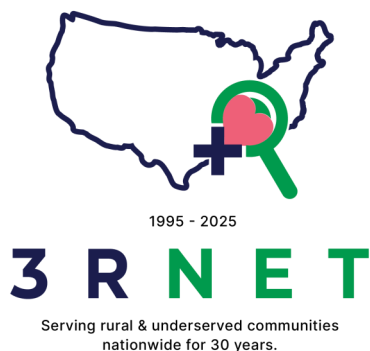
[To learn more and to submit a proposal.](#)

In addition, Early Bird Registration for the conference is now open! Professionals can save up to \$75 when you register by July 31, 2025. The conference will include engaging workshops, expert panels, and valuable networking opportunities designed to support rural health professionals like you.

If you would like to [learn more about the conference and to register](#). If you have questions about either the call for proposals or the conference in general, please feel free to reach out to admin@newenglandrha.org.



3RNET Corner



Is your facility enrolled to post job opportunities on 3RNET.org? If not, here are some benefits for your facility that this resource offers:

- The RHPCP does not charge rural facilities to enroll on 3RNET to post their jobs
- 3RNET holds monthly website trainings to show you new features and strategies for recruiting to rural
- Free resources on recruiting and retention in rural areas
- Every October—December, 3RNET offers the ‘3RNET Academy’ which is a biweekly webinar series with various recruitment and retention strategies. The RHPCP sponsors this academy so all enrolled facilities in Maine can attend for free
- Weekly referrals of candidates interested in coming to Maine sent directly to you

If you are interested in enrolling in 3RNET, please visit www.3rnet.org and click on register employer in the upper right corner. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Utilizing Motivational Interviewing in Rural Hospitals

The RHPCP in collaboration with the Health Education & Training Institute (HETIMaine) are announcing an educational program to help Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) improve the health of patients with chronic illnesses that can also improve staff retention.

‘Using Motivational Interviewing (MI) in Rural Hospitals’ is a free educational series that will be offered in May 2025 through the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (HRSA Award # 2 U2WR33288). Participating trainees will learn simple language and processes that can be used in any clinical location. MI offers a different way to talk to patients with chronic illnesses and implementation requires no program expense.

The training series will be held virtually on Zoom and taught by Stephen Andrew, CEO, HETI. The training is a total of 12 hours and the dates and times are listed below:

- May 8, 9AM—12 PM
- May 15, 9 AM—12 PM
- May 27, 9 AM—12 PM
- May 30, 9 AM—12 PM

If you would like to register, please email heti@hetimaine.org and mary.powell@maine.gov.



Reducing Hospital Acquired Infections through Oral Health Interventions

Nicole Breton, Director, Rural Health and Primary Care, and Kate Christiansen, Health Program Manager, Maine Oral Health Program have been travelling to a few selected Critical Access Hospitals in a pilot project to train hospitals in decreasing their Hospital Acquired Infections.

The training describes the rationale for integrating oral health into overall health, identify nursing and oral health care interventions to assist patients in maintaining optimum oral health status and preventing Non-Ventilated Hospital Acquired Pneumonia and describes the economic and quality effects that not caring for a patient's oral health can lead to.

Upcoming Free ICD-11 Training

The RHPCP in association with Stroudwater Associates are presenting 'The Importance of Coding Specificity: Strengthening your Organization today for ICD-11 and Beyond'. This free training is sponsored through HRSA Grant # 2 H3HRH00027-22-00.

This training is geared towards Revenue Cycle/ Business Office Management, Coding professionals, Compliance Officers, IT/EMR Specialists, and Healthcare Administrators.

Some of the learning objectives of this training are listed below:

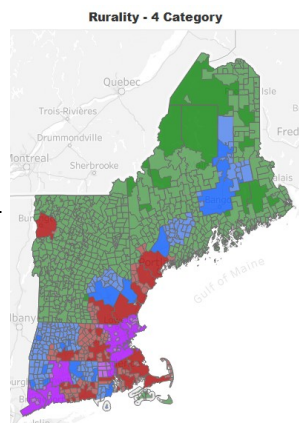
- Understand the impact of coding specificity on claim approvals and reimbursement

- Identify common denial trends related to nonspecific coding and documentation gaps
- Explore ICD-11's improvements in coding precision and how they compare to ICD-10
- Implement strategies today to enhance coding accuracy, provider documentation, and appeals processes in preparation for ICD-11
- Develop best practices to train and prepare coding teams for ICD-11 Implementation while improving current workflows.

The training will take place on April 17, 2025 from 11:00 AM—12:00 PM ET. If you would like to [register](#).

New England Rural Data Analysis Dashboard

The Rural Analysis Dashboard was specifically developed to illustrate the health disparities between rural and urban areas in New England. This innovative mapping tool, which was developed by the New England Rural Health Association (NERHA) with funding from the six New England State Offices of Rural Health.



The dashboard offers access to nearly 200 rural health data elements across categories such as demographics, insurance status, maternity services, and more. There is also the ability to download data and generate PDF reports which makes it valuable to health care professionals, advocates, researchers, and students alike.

[Find the dashboard!](#)



Workforce Outreach

Recently, the RHPCP has participated in multiple career fairs to promote the health care workforce.

The first of these events was on March 13th and 14th where the RHPCP together with Tallo attended the Skills USA State Tournament in Bangor. While there, we assisted students in enrolling on the Tallo platform so that they could interact with facilities in Maine and explore the many different career pathways for getting into the healthcare profession. We also provided information on different federal and state loan repayment programs and information on the 3RNET website where they can search for job opportunities in rural Maine in the future.

Secondly, on March 26th, staff of the RHPCP and staff of the Maine CDC Oral Health Program attended the University of Maine at Augusta Graduate Career Fair. While there, we provided information on the different Oral Health Professions that exist. We also provided information on different federal and state loan repayment programs and the 3RNET website.

Maine Health Access Foundation (MeHAF) Discretionary Grants Program

The discretionary Grants program provides small scale project-based funding for organizations to explore new or different approaches to their current work that strongly align with the goals of the Discretionary Grants Program and MeHAF's overall mission and goal areas.

Applicants must propose a specific project, either expanding upon work already being done or to more deeply explore a specific aspect of an organization's work, and it must be completed with tangible outcomes within one year.

Visit [MeHAF's Website](#) for more information on this and their other grant programs.

If you have questions, please contact Program and Grants associate Emily Berrill at eberrill@mehaf.org or (207) 620-8266 ext. 118



Resources

- The Rural Recruitment and Retention Network ([3RNET](#))
 - Recruitment and retention resources
 - Free Job Board
 - Annual 3RNET Recruitment and Retention Academy
- HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy ([FORHP](#))
 - [The Targeted Technical Assistance for Rural Hospitals Program \(TTAP\)](#)
 - The [Rural Healthcare Provider Transition Project \(RHPTP\)](#)
 - The [Rural Hospital Stabilization Pilot Program](#)
- The Maine Health Access Foundation ([MeHAF](#))
 - [Responsive Grants Programs](#)
 - [Discretionary Grant Program](#)
 - [Meeting Support Program](#)
 - Reports and Research
- The National Rural Health Association ([NRHA](#))
- The New England Rural Health Association ([NERHA](#))
 - The [Rural Northern Border Region Healthcare Support Technical Assistance Center \(NBR-TAC\)](#)
 - The [Rural Grant Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Program](#)
 - The [New England Rural Health Association Rural Data Analysis Dashboard](#)
- The [Rural Health and Primary Care Program Website](#)
 - Funding Opportunity Announcements
 - Rural Health Updates
 - State Workforce Program Updates
 - Upcoming Webinars and Events
 - Other Rural Health Resources
- The [Rural Health Information Hub \(RHInhub\)](#)
 - Find Funding Opportunities
 - Rural Data
 - An online library
 - Articles on Rural Health Issues
- [The Rural Health Research Gateway](#)
 - Anything related to Rural Health Research
 - Webinars
- The United States Department of Agriculture ([USDA](#))



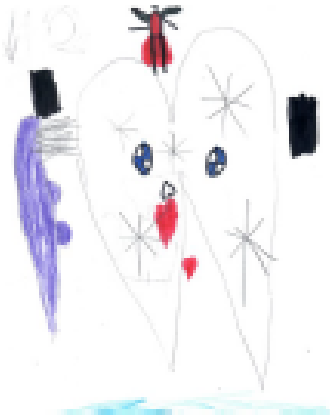
Maine CDC School Oral Health Program Poster Contest Winners Announced

Each year, the Maine CDC School Oral Health Program celebrates Children's Oral Health Month in February by hosting a Poster Contest. The instructions and rules are sent out to all School Oral Health Program Schools.

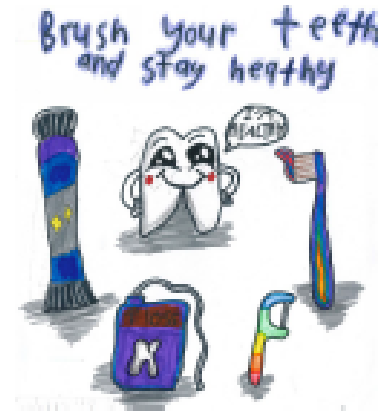
All of the students submitted their best work, then the voting process starts. The voting link is sent out to Maine CDC Staff, Medical Care Development Staff, and other partners throughout the state.

The following images are the selected winners from this year.

Pre-K and Kindergarten



Grades 3 and 4



Grades 1 and 2



Grades 5 and 6



Comments or Questions?

Feel free to email us at erica.dyer@maine.gov

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