



## Greetings from the Virginia Primary Care Office & the State Office of Rural Health

The Virginia State Office wishes you all the Happiest of Holidays & a Happy New Year!

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### COVID-19 Vaccine Updates

#### Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Resources

##### VDH COVID-19 Vaccination Response- Updates for Healthcare Professionals

Information on the COVID-19 vaccination is compiled for healthcare professionals and separated into the following six categories, Enrollment, Provider Education, Online Meetings, Long-Term Care Facilities, Patient Education, and Sites Receiving Vaccine and Ancillary Supplies.



[VDH Information for Health Care Professionals](#)

#### General COVID-19 Vaccination FAQs

This webpage offers answers to some of the most frequently asked questions related to the COVID-19 vaccine including its development and safety, distribution, side effects, etc.

[VDH COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs](#)

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#### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Resources

The CDC hosts weekly "COVID-19 Partner Update" Zoom calls every Monday at 3 PM ET. These weekly calls will resume after the holidays on January 11, 2021.

The CDC's Vaccine Inquiry Center for all healthcare providers is now available to answer vaccine questions. You may send all inquiries to: [eocevent168@cdc.gov](mailto:eocevent168@cdc.gov).

#### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Toolkit

Medical centers, clinics, and clinicians can use or adapt these ready-made materials to build confidence about COVID-19 vaccination among healthcare teams and staff. This toolkit also provides resources that can be used to educate patients and answer questions about the vaccines.

[COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Toolkit](#)

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Best Practices on Vaccine Storage and Handling

An Addendum with best practices and other resources has been added to CDC's Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit to assist COVID-19 vaccination providers with proper storage and handling of COVID-19 vaccines and aims to help providers meet the requirements of the COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Agreement. The Addendum will be updated with specific information for each COVID-19 product. You may [sign up for email updates](#) anytime the toolkit is updated.

[CDC Best Practices on Vaccine Storage and Handling](#)

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Vaccine Training Modules for HCP

A new web-on-demand module, COVID-19 Vaccine Training Module for Healthcare Providers, is now available for healthcare providers who will be administering the COVID-19 vaccine. The training includes information about COVID-19 vaccine emergency use authorizations, vaccine safety, and general information about vaccine storage, handling, administration, and reporting.

[COVID-19 Vaccine Training Modules for HCP](#)

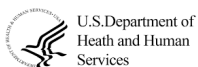
### Additional CDC materials about the vaccine recommendation process, vaccine safety, and the Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program:

- [How CDC is Making Vaccine Recommendations](#)
- [Ensuring COVID-19 Vaccines Work](#)
- [Ensuring the Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines in the United States](#) (includes material about V-SAFE, VAERS, Vaccine Safety Datalink, among other topics)
- [Frequently Asked Questions about COVID-19 Vaccination](#)
- [Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program FAQs](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting Data Systems](#)
- [EARLY RELEASE: The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' Interim Recommendation for Use of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine - United States, December 2020](#)
- [Importance of COVID-19 Vaccination for Residents of Long-term Care Facilities](#)
- [Post Vaccine Considerations for Healthcare Personnel](#)
- [Post Vaccine Considerations for Residents](#)

CDC is also pointing people to this excellent HRSA resource: [COVID-19 Claims Reimbursement to Health Care Providers and Facilities for Testing, Treatment, and Vaccine Administration for the Uninsured](#)

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## Information & Resources for Providers



### HHS Outlines New Plans and a Partnership to Reduce U.S. Pregnancy-related Deaths

On December 3rd, the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released a plan to reduce maternal deaths and disparities that put women at risk prior to, during, and following pregnancy. The U.S. Surgeon General Jerome M. Adams issued a complementary Call to Action to Improve Maternal Health - PDF outlining the critical roles everyone can play to improve maternal health.

[To Access the Press Release](#)

Call to Action

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## HHS Request for Information: Landscape Analysis To Leverage Novel Technologies for Chronic Disease Management for Aging Underserved Populations

**Deadline: tonight, December 22 by midnight ET**

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) in the Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with other federal agencies, seeks to gain a more comprehensive understanding regarding innovative solutions to chronic disease management leveraging novel technologies (e.g., artificial intelligence (AI), biosensors, apps, remote monitoring, 5G) to optimize compliance with evidence-based standards of care in disease states that cause significant morbidity and mortality in aging populations in underserved areas (e.g., low income, Medicaid-eligible, rural). OASH will review information collected in this request for information (RFI) to better inform federal government priorities and programs.

For More Information

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## Free VA-Approved Health Care and COVID-19 Training Available

The Veterans Health Administration Employee Education System (EES), a program office of the US Department of Veteran Affairs, provides no-cost, health care education and training resources. Interested learners can subscribe by health care topic to get email announcements when course specific topics are added.

In addition, they have also recently created a COVID-19 training website where any learner can take free COVID-19 specific training. This site is updated regularly with new courses and can be accessed from any device.

To Subscribe

COVID-19 Training Website

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## Virtual Syphilis Update by VDH



**Wednesday, January 13, 2021 from 8 AM to 12:45 PM ET**

The Virginia Department of Health and STD/HIV Prevention Training Center at Johns Hopkins are teaming up to bring you a free training designed to increase your knowledge regarding sexually transmitted infections! You must pre-register for this virtual event.

If you have any questions, Contact Jeanne Hoover at 443-984-3990 or 410-206-1156 or email [jhoover6@jhmi.edu](mailto:jhoover6@jhmi.edu) or Diana Prat at [diana.prat@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:diana.prat@vdh.virginia.gov).

To Register

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## HHS Report: Strengthening the Entry-Level Health Care Workforce

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) commissioned an in-depth look at the challenges and opportunities for this segment of the healthcare workforce that includes community health workers, behavioral health peer support, and home health aides. Forecasting a shortage across professions, the report identifies entry-level positions as one option for expanding

To Download the Report

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## For Hospitals and Healthcare Facilities (FQHCs, RHCs, Free Clinics, Tribal):



### Care Management Medicare Reimbursement Strategies for Rural Providers

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has established Medicare billing codes for services intended to keep beneficiaries healthy and better coordinate services to support beneficiaries at home. Several guides provide a brief overview and links to key documents to help rural healthcare professionals, practices, and hospitals understand the billing code, consider the benefit to their patients and organization, and begin billing for the code.

For More Information and to Access the Guides

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### HRSA Funds Additional RHCs to Expand COVID-19 Testing



On December 7, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) disbursed \$9.3 million to support COVID-19 testing at Rural Health Clinics (RHCs). HRSA used updated data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to identify 188 previously unsupported RHCs and calculate more than \$49,000 per site for the December 2020 payment. The terms and conditions for recipients of this round of funding remain the same as those for RHCs previously funded in May 2020. The Frequently Asked Questions document below provides more details about the program.

For More Information

FAQs

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### Rural Healthcare Provider Transition Project (RHPTP)

With the support of the Health Resources Services Administration's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP), the National Rural Health Resource Center provides selected small rural hospitals and rural health clinics technical assistance through the Rural Healthcare Provider Transition Project (RHPTP). This project is designed to help strengthen their foundation in key elements of value-based care (VBC) including but not limited to efficiency, quality, patient experience, and safety of care.

RHPTP's goal is to guide small rural hospitals and rural health clinics not currently participating in VBC to prepare for and position their organizations to be effective participants in a health system focused on value.

For more information, please contact Rhonda Barcus at (904) 321-7607 or [rhptp@ruralcenter.org](mailto:rhptp@ruralcenter.org)

For More Information

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# State & Regional Resources & Funding Opportunities

The VA-SORH *Innovative Rural Programming* Application Cycle is Open Now!



**Application Deadline: January 8, 2021 by 5 PM ET**

The Virginia State Office of Rural Health (VA-SORH) is pleased to announce that we will be offering awards for *Innovative Rural Programming* for the fiscal year 2021-2022. Awards consist of annual grants that range in value from \$1,000 to \$20,000.

Application  
Announcement

Application

Policy & Procedure  
Manual



## Northern Piedmont Community Foundation: Emergency Response Fund

The Northern Piedmont Community Foundation's Emergency Response Fund has been established to support critical needs due to the COVID-19 crisis. Nonprofit organizations providing community services to the residents of Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, and Rappahannock counties in Virginia are eligible to apply. Because this is an evolving situation, award amounts and further criteria will be added as needed.

[For More Information and to Apply](#)

## Community Opioid Intervention Pilot Projects

**Application Deadline: December 15, 2020**

The Department of Health and Human Services is offering funding that seeks to address the opioid crisis in American Indian/Alaska Native communities by developing and expanding community educations and awareness of prevention, treatment and recovery activities for opioid misuse and opioid use disorder. The intent is to increase knowledge and use of culturally appropriate interventions and to encourage an increased use of medication-assisted treatment (MAT).

[For More Information and to Apply](#)



## Community Connect Grant Program

**Application Deadline: Dec 23, 2020**

The Community Connect provides financial assistance to eligible applicants that will provide broadband service in rural, economically-challenged communities where service does not exist. Applicants are encouraged to consider projects that provide measurable results in helping rural communities build robust and sustainable economies through strategic investments in infrastructure, partnerships, and innovation.

[For More Information and to Apply](#)

**Application Deadline: January 19, 2021**

The US Department of Health and Human Services is currently accepting applications for the NWD Program. The purpose of this program is to assist students from disadvantaged backgrounds (including ethnic and racial minorities underrepresented among registered nurses) throughout the educational pipeline in becoming registered nurses. This purpose is accomplished by supporting diploma or associate degree registered nurses as they become baccalaureate-prepared registered nurses, and preparing practicing registered nurses for advanced nursing education.

[For More Information](#)

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**Value in Opioid Use Disorder Treatment Demonstration Model**

**Application Deadline: Jan 3, 2021 by 11:59 PM ET**

A 4-year demonstration program designed to increase access to opioid use disorder treatment services, improve physical and mental health outcomes for beneficiaries, and reduce Medicare program expenditures.

[For More Information and to Apply](#)

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