



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

Community Spotlight

The Virginia Flex Program named #1 in the country!

We are excited to announce that the Virginia Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (FLEX) has been awarded HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy's

FLEX MBQIP Award for Virginia's outstanding performance with the MBQIP program! Out of 45 states, Virginia's hospitals were the ones ranked most consistently by patients for their high quality of care.

The FLEX Program works with seven Critical Access Hospitals in Virginia to assist them with quality improvement activities using measures from the Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Projects (MBQIP). MBQIP provides the opportunity for rural hospitals to evaluate their quality data and compare outcomes with that of hospitals with similar characteristics (such as small bed size, limited resources, and health services).

If your organization would like to be featured in our VA-SORH bi-weekly newsletter, Facebook page, and website please fill out the following [Google form](#).



Updated COVID-19 Resources

Virginia Department of Health (VDH) COVID-19 Vaccination Resources



- [Vaccinate Virginia](#)- to find a vaccine near you
- Sign up for [Vaccinate Virginia Partner Updates](#)
- Become a 2021 VDH Community Ambassador
- [VDH COVID-19 Vaccine Patient Education Materials](#)
- Find out which phase of the vaccination campaign you fall in
- Contact your Local Health District

COVID-19 Communications Materials

- "About the Three COVID-19 Vaccines" Graphic ([download here](#))
 - [The Language of Vaccine Acceptance](#) by de Beaumont
 - [CDC Vaccination Communication Toolkit](#)
 - Downloadable [VDH COVID-19 Vaccine Patient Education Materials](#)
 - **NEW** PHCC Updated "Tough Q&A" with helpful messaging resources including information on the CDC's updated mask recommendation
 - [Rural Community Toolkit](#) to build vaccine confidence and promote preventive measures
 - [NRHA COVID-19 Vaccine Talking Points for Rural Leaders](#)
 - [Customizable COVID-19 Vaccine Communication Toolkit for Rural Communities](#)
 - **NEW** webinar "A Conversation with Dr. Fauci and Healthcare Providers," TONIGHT Tuesday, August 3, from 6 - 7 PM ET
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Additional COVID-19 Resources

- [CDC National Forum on COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccination Reporting Data Systems](#)
- [COVID-19 FAQs and Funding for HRSA Programs](#)
- [HRSA COVID-19 Coverage Assistance Fund \(CAF\)](#)
- [GHPC's Collection of Rural Health Strategies for COVID-19](#)
- [NRHA Rural-Relevant COVID-19 Resource Library](#)
- [CDC Statement on Vaccine Side Effects](#)
- [We Can Do This: COVID-19 Public Education Campaign launches a Spanish-language website](#)
- **NEW** [Community Health Centers Telehealth Promising Practices: Case Studies from the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Information & Resources for Providers & Healthcare Facilities

August is National Immunization Awareness month (NIAM)!

This annual observance highlights the efforts of healthcare professionals to protect patients of all ages against vaccine-preventable diseases through on-time vaccination.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all aspects of life, including patients' ability to attend important appointments and receive routine vaccinations. Many patients had to postpone or cancel appointments and still may not have had the opportunity to catch back up on needed healthcare. During NIAM, encourage your patients to schedule appointments to ensure they are up to date on annual exams and recommended vaccines. Research has consistently shown that healthcare professionals are the most trusted source of vaccine information for parents and patients.



[For More Information and Promotional Resources](#)



Coming Together Again Safely Cookout and Vaccination Clinic

Saturday, August 7, 2021 from 5 - 7 PM ET

The Coming Together Again Safely Cookout and Vaccination Clinic at Central Baptist Church in Lowesville, Virginia is a free public event. The event is being hosted by Four Oxen and the Blue Ridge Health District. In addition to delicious food, there will be a raffle for those who register for or get their COVID-19 vaccine. Spread the news!

[For More Information](#)

HRSA RHC Grants: The Case for the COVID Medical Home webinar

Thursday, August 5, 2021 from 3:30 - 4:30 PM ET

The Compliance Team has adapted their PCMH model to serve as the core infrastructure for the development and implementation of COVID related education, prevention, testing, confidence, vaccine distribution and mitigation strategies. The NEW program, COVID MEDICAL Home, is exclusive to TCT and meets the HRSA guidelines for use of the funds.



To Register



3RNet Website Training for Employers

Training Sessions: TODAY, Tuesday August 3 at 2 PM ET or Thursday, August 5 at 2 PM ET

In anticipation for the launch of the new 3RNet website, which is now scheduled for August 9th, they will be holding two training sessions this week for employers. They've drastically improved the job posting experience, added features to your dashboard, incorporated a modern mapping feature, and upped overall web performance.

To Register for 8/3 Session

To Register for 8/5 Session

Rural Telementoring Training Center

The national Rural Telementoring Training Center (RTTC), supports the delivery of effective, high-quality telementoring programs to improve rural health. See their attached flyer to learn more about resources available through the RTTC and the ways telementoring can train, support, and empower health professionals you work with in delivering care.



The RTTC encourages feedback, so please reach out to them at RTTCinfo@uthscsa.edu with any questions or suggestions you have.

For More Information

Rural Healthy People 2030: Challenges and Opportunities for the New Decade

The Southwest Rural Health Research Center at Texas A&M University with funding support from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy is conducting a survey as part of Rural Healthy People 2030 – a project designed to understand the most important health priorities for rural Americans. This once in a decade survey allows individuals who care about rural health like you to voice your opinions on important topics for the health of rural individuals in the United States.

To Access the Survey

Rural Telehealth Pilot for Seniors Said to Show Great Promise

This article highlights a digital literacy program conducted by Palmetto Care Connections (PCC) in South Carolina that provided tablets to 100 seniors from rural communities, along with training on how to use them. It describes how the training helps to connect the rural elderly population with healthcare providers via telehealth.

For More Information



Districts conduct outreach at community events in an effort to vaccinate rural Virginians

Efforts to get more residents of rural areas vaccinated include providing vaccines at festivals, bingo halls, low-income housing developments, baseball games, food banks, churches, grocery stores, and more!

State & Regional Resources & Funding Opportunities

Teaching Health Center Planning and Development; New Funding Opportunities Available!



Application Deadline: August 30, 2021

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), through the American Rescue Plan, released two new Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) announcements to support primary care residency programs in rural and underserved communities and create new community-based residency programs.

Teaching Health Center Planning and Development Program (HRSA-22-107): This funding will create new community-based residency programs to increase the primary care workforce in rural and underserved communities. Up to 50 grantees will receive a total of approximately \$25 million over two years to establish these residency programs or rural residency training tracks in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine-pediatrics, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology, general dentistry, pediatric dentistry, or geriatrics.

The technical assistance webinar is on August 5 from 2:00 - 3:00 PM ET.

[For More Information and to Apply](#)

[Register for TA Webinar](#)

Teaching Health Center Planning and Development -- Technical Assistance (HRSA-22-108): One cooperative agreement will receive a total of approximately \$5 million over three years to provide technical assistance to HRSA's Teaching Health Center Planning and Development program.

The technical assistance webinar is on August 5 from 3:30 - 5:00 PM ET.

[For More Information and to Apply](#)

[Register for TA Webinar](#)

HRSA Announces Major Effort to Strengthen and Expand Community-Based Residency Programs in Rural and Underserved Communities

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced investments to strengthen and expand community-based primary care medical and dental residency programs in rural and underserved communities. Funding from the American Rescue Plan will support and expand Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) programs, includes details on current funding available.

[For More Information](#)

Application Deadline: August 17, 2021

The Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy and the Office of the Regional Health Operations, Office of Assistant Secretary for Health, Department of Health and Human Services has announced a funding opportunity to support innovative practices in local communities that increase vaccine confidence and promote uptake of vaccines that are routinely recommended for adults and children, particularly among racial and ethnic minorities, adolescents and young adults, pregnant people, residents in rural communities, and others with low vaccination coverage rates.

[For More Information and to Apply](#)

Engaging and Empowering Vulnerable Families and Communities to Prevent Opioid Use Disorder and Overdose**Application Deadline: September 20, 2021**

Grants for projects to develop, adapt, and/or evaluate promising evidence-based models of family and community based prevention for opioid use disorder (OUD) and overdose for children and families, especially those at highest risk.

[For More Information](#)

Promoting Resilience and Mental Health Among Health Professional Workforce**Application Deadline: August 30, 2021**

The purpose of this program is to provide support to entities providing health care, health care providers associations, and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), taking into consideration the needs of rural and medically underserved communities, to establish, enhance, or expand evidence informed or evidenced-based programs or protocols to promote resilience, mental health, and wellness among their providers, other personnel, and members, collectively known as the “Health Workforce.”

[For More Information and to Apply](#)

2021 Equity and Accessibility: Transportation Planning Grant**Deadline to Submit Required Letter of Intent: August 6, 2021****Application Deadline: August 27, 2021**

Planning grants provide an opportunity for communities to consider current and future needs, engage older adults and people with disabilities in planning, and develop a written plan of action. Applicants are required to select one of two focus areas for their planning projects, as follows:

- Transportation Equity & Inclusion: Addressing the Transportation Needs and Preferences of Diverse Older Adults and People with Disabilities.
- COVID-19 Recovery: Addressing the Unique Transportation Needs and Preferences of Older Adults and People with Disabilities to Impact Social Isolation.

Grants of up to \$20,000 each will be awarded to as many as 10 communities for five months.

[For More Information and to Apply](#)

"Like" us on Facebook to receive live updates on Virginia rural health issues and important messages from our community partners on your Facebook News Feed.



[Visit the VA-SORH Facebook Page](#)

