



# Office of Rural Health Policy Update

Region B Annual Meeting  
Mobile, AL August 5, 2009

Bridget Ware

Department of Health and Human Services  
Health Resources and Services Administration

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## HHS & HRSA



### Why These Are Good Times for Rural Health

- HRSA and Departmental Leadership focused on rural
- Increased Investments
- 2010 Presidents budget favorable to Rural Programs
- Health Care Reform?



Mary Wakefield, Administrator of HRSA  
Modern Healthcare's Top 25 Women for 2009

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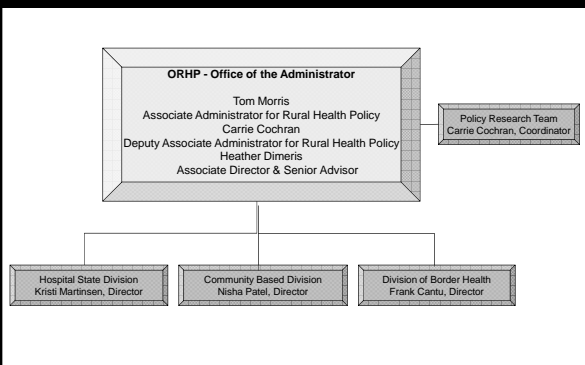
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## ORHP Organizational Chart



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**Performance Improvement  
Measurement System**



**PIMS**

- Collect Measures for SORH and Flex
- Submitted through the HRSA Electronic Handbooks (EHBs)
- Due 30 days after the end of the budget year

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**State Offices of Rural Health**



**SORH Grant**

- FY2009: Appropriation increase
- FY2010 Guidance Dates:
  - Estimated availability December 2009
  - Estimated submission February 2010

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**Small Hospital Improvement  
Program**



**SHIP Grant**

- Funds could be pooled to help CAHs on reporting
- Authorization Issue
- FY2010 Guidance Dates:
  - Estimated availability February 10
  - Estimated submission April 10

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**Completion of the CAH-HIT Grants**



- Lessons Learned:**
- Flex an Effective Model to Promote HIT
  - Use of a Common Vendor
  - Evaluation Report a Tool

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**Flex Program**

- Re-Authorization Focuses on Quality Improvement and Benchmarking
- Competing Continuation Cycle for 2010
  - Refocus program activities
- FY2010 Guidance Dates:
  - Estimated availability January 2010
  - Estimated submission March 2010

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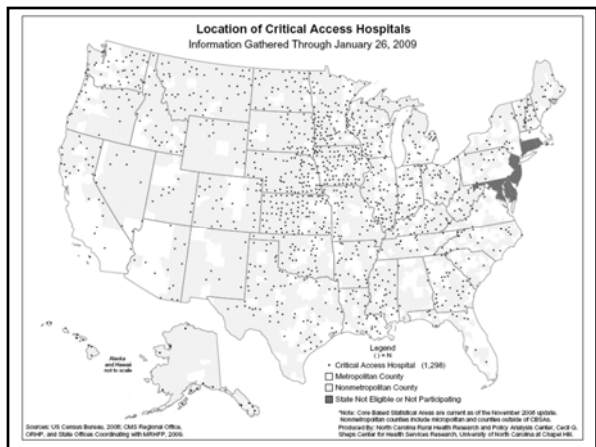
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Hospitals in Region B		
STATE	Number of Critical Access Hospitals	Number of SHIP Hospitals
Alabama	3	30
Arkansas	29	36
Florida	11	16
Georgia	34	52
Louisiana	27	36
Mississippi	27	45
North Carolina	21	26
South Carolina	5	11
Tennessee	16	37
Virginia	7	24
West Virginia	17	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>331</b>

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**CAHs- Works in Progress**

- A new focus (and one that is likely here to stay)
- Findings mostly positive
- Some concerns may arise
- Putting It In Context



East Morgan County Hospital, a CAH in Colorado

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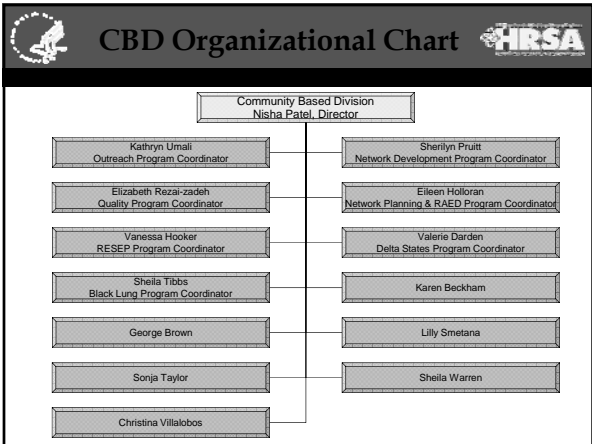
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## Community-Based Division

### Programs

- Rural Health Care Services Outreach
- Rural Health Network Development
- Rural Health Network Planning
- Delta States Rural Development Network
- Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement (Quality)
- Black Lung Clinic Program
- Radiation Exposure, Screening and Education
- Rural Access to Emergency Devices



### 2009 Focus

- Moving to a Foundation Model
  - Best Practices and Tracking
  - Sustainability
  - Economic Impact
  - Technical Assistance

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## CBD Awards, FY 2009

### Outreach

- 94 new awards with May 1st start date
- 33 in Region B
- 3 - AL, 2 - AR, 4 - FL, 3 - GA, 5 - KY, 2 - LA, 2 - MS, 1 - NC, 4 - SC, 3 - TN, 4 - VA
- Next Cycle: FY 2011 or 2012

### Delta States

- 12 awards, 9 in Region B

### Network Planning

- 18 new awards with April 1st start date
- Next Cycle: FY 2010

### RAED

- Estimate 5 new awards with Sept. 1st start date,
- 2 Region B
- Next Cycle: FY 2011

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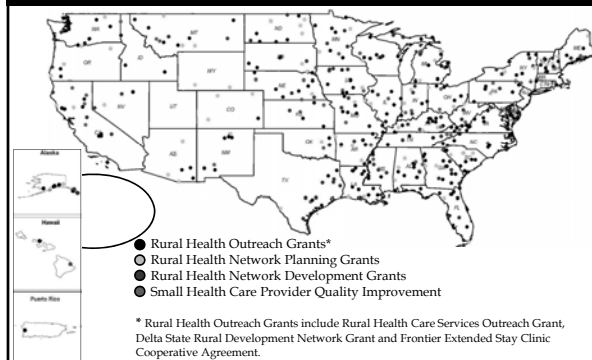
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## CBD Rural Health Grants 2005-2009




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### Future Funding Opportunities (if funds are available)...



- **FY 2010**
  - Network Planning and Quality
- **FY 2011**
  - Network Planning, Network Development, RAED and possibly Outreach
- **FY 2012**
  - Network Planning, Quality and possibly Outreach

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### Technical Assistance Workshops



- **Targeting Key States**
  - Oklahoma
  - Wyoming
  - Colorado
  - Idaho
  - Pennsylvania
  - Tennessee
- **Looking Ahead**
  - Regions Served by Historically Black Colleges and Universities
  - Border Communities
  - Tribal Communities




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### The Rural Voices Program



#### A Leadership Program for Grantees

- 30 Participants in Spring 2009
- Three-Day Meeting focusing on Key Policy Issues and Leadership Training
- Will Continue in 2009



The 2009 Rural Voices Class

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## Policy and Research



- Regulation Review
  - More than 150 Regulations Reviewed
  - Legislation
  - Reports to Congress
- Research
  - 30 Reports from the Research Centers
  - Numerous Journal Articles
  - The Rural Research Gateway




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## Key Rural Regulatory Issues



- Inpatient PPS
- Outpatient PPS
- Physician Fee Schedule
- Skilled Nursing Facility PPS
- Rehab PPS
- Psych PPS
- Long Term Care PPS
- Ambulance Fee Schedule
- Medicare Advantage
- Medicare Part D
- Rural Health Clinics
- Medicaid Waivers
- Medicare GME

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## Inpatient Hospital Payments Proposed



- FY10 Proposed IPPS Regulation
  - Comments due 6/30/09; Effective 10/1/09
- 2.1% Market Basket Update w/ quality data
  - Payment to all hospitals decrease -0.5%
  - Payments to rural hospitals decrease -1.3%
- Key Proposed Changes:
  - Expanded quality measures: 44 FY10, 50 FY11
  - Apply budget neutrality adjustment factors for Hospital Specific Rates
  - CAH provisions

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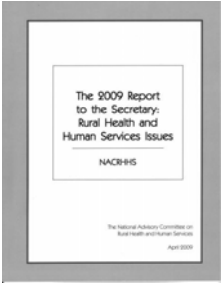
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 **National Advisory Committee on Rural Health & Human Services** 

2009 Report to the Secretary  
 ▪ To be released on July 2  
 ▪ Chapters on:  
 ▪ Viability of the Medical Home in Rural Areas  
 ▪ Workforce and Community Development  
 ▪ Serving At-Risk Children in Rural Areas

2010 Report Topics  
 ▪ Health Care Provider Integration  
 ▪ Primary Care Provider Workforce  
 ▪ Home and Community Based Care for Rural Seniors

SORH Representative – Graham Adams  
 Executive Secretary – Jennifer Chang




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 **Policy Team** 

<b>Policy Coordinator</b> ▪ Carrie Cochran	<b>Quality</b> ▪ Nancy Egbert ▪ Heather Dimeris
<b>Policy &amp; Research</b> ▪ Erica Molliver ▪ Michelle Goodman	<b>Truman Fellows</b> ▪ Laura Merritt ▪ Kai Smith
<b>Research Director</b> ▪ Joan Van Nostrand	

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 **ORHP Priorities for 2009** 

- Health Policy
  - Policy Review
  - Research
  - Health Information Technology
- Workforce
- Leadership

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### Reform May Bring Payment Changes



- How to adapt to linking payment more directly to quality?
  - Moving Toward Value-Based Purchasing
  - Paying for “Episodes of Care”
- How Does it Fit for Rural Hospitals?

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### Patient Safety Pharmacy Collaborative



- Started in 2008
- Team-based training
  - Institute for Healthcare Improvement “Model for Improvement”
  - Open to HRSA Grantees as well as CAHs, RHCs
- New Class to Start in 2009



Pharmacist in Jordan, MT

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### CMS Rural Resources



- CMS Rural Health Council
  - CMS Regional Office Rural Liaisons
  - <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/ProspMedicareFeeSvcPmtGen/downloads/RO-RH-Coordiators.pdf>
- CMS Rural Open Door Forum- Sign up at:
  - <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/OpenDoorForums>
  - Special ODF on Wage Index Reform 5/20 2-4 pm
- CMS Website Rural Health Center
  - <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/center/rural.asp>

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## Tools and Resources



### Other Opportunities and Resources from ORHP

- New Manuals
  - Mental Health Best Practices
  - FQHC-CAH Collaboration
  - Rural HIV Best Practices



- Rural Health Research Center Reports
  - <http://www.ruralhealthresearch.org/>

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## Tools and Resources



- Rural Health Research Gateway
  - Learn more about past and ongoing studies
  - <http://www.ruralhealthresearch.org/>

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## Tools and Resources



### Health Workforce Information Center

- Web site - Easy access to key information on over 50 workforce topics and 80 professions, including:
  - Events & training
  - Organizations
  - Funding
  - News and Updates
  - Resources
- HWIC Call Center
  - 1-888-332-4942
  - [info@healthworkforceinfo.org](mailto:info@healthworkforceinfo.org)



<http://healthworkforceinfo.org>

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**Tools and Resources** 

- Grants.gov - one Web site to apply for all government funding
  - All grant applications must go through Grants.gov first
- HRSA's Electronic Handbook (EHB)
  - HRSA grants specific
  - Update your users
  - Performance measures

<https://grants.hrsa.gov/webexternal/login.asp>



<http://www.Grants.gov>

**\*Register and Apply EARLY!**

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**Tools and Resources** 

Different processes for different grant types:

- Competitive (New) Awards
  - Application process is almost entirely in Grants.gov
  - External Objective Review Process
- Non-Competitive (Continuation) Awards
  - Two-step application process - first in Grants.gov and then in HRSA's EHBs
    - Separate deadlines, can't apply in EHB if you miss the Grants.gov deadline
  - Internal Staff Review
- Competitive Continuation Awards
  - Application process is almost entirely in Grants.gov
  - External Objective Review Process
  - SORH, Flex, SHIP

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**Tools and Resources** 

**The Rural Assistance Center**



- One-Stop Shopping for Rural:
  - Funding Information
  - Resource Guides
  - Best Practices

<http://raconline.org>

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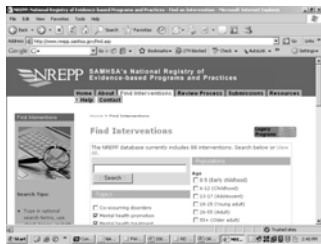
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## Tools and Resources



- **Mental Health Evidence-Based Practices Web Site**
  - Developed by the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
  - Includes filter for rural and/or frontier location



<http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/find.asp>

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## Tools and Resources



**The National Rural Recruitment & Retention Network (3R Net) states** are not-for-profit organizations helping health professionals find practice opportunities in rural areas throughout the country. Some of the health professions we serve:



- Physicians
- Dentists
- Nurse Practitioners
- Physician Assistants
- Registered Nurses
- Mental Health Professionals
- Other Health Care Professionals

<http://www.3rnet.org>

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## Tools and Resources



- **Workforce Programs – HRSA’s Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service**
  - Educational Support
    - Nursing Loan Repayment  
<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/nursing/loanrepay.htm>
    - Nursing Scholarships  
<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/nursing/scholarship/>
  - National Health Service Corps
    - Loan Repayment & Scholarships for Physicians, Dentists, Psychologists, Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants
    - Recruitment & Retention Assistance for Communities  
1-800-221-9393 or E-mail: [callcenter@hrsa.gov](mailto:callcenter@hrsa.gov)  
[http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/join\\_us/scholarships.asp](http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/join_us/scholarships.asp)

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## Tools and Resources



### Workforce Programs - HHS

- J1-Visa Waivers
  - Conrad 30 Program (Most Flexibility)
    - Work through your State's Primary Care Office or Office of Rural Health
  - HHS Program (Focused on Areas of Greatest Need)
  - Limited to RHCs and FQHCs with a HPSA Score of 14 or higher
  - For more information, call 301-594-4154; or go to <http://www.hhs.gov/ogha/exchange.html>

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## Tools and Resources



### • Technical Assistance for Rural Health Clinics

- Free quarterly TA conference calls provided by the National Association of Rural Health Clinics (NARHC)
- Past topics include billing, pandemic flu, HIT, etc.



A Rural Health Clinic in Michigan

[http://www.narhc.org/members/orhp\\_series.php](http://www.narhc.org/members/orhp_series.php)

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## Tools and Resources



### • 340B Drug Pricing Program

- Provides outpatient and ER drugs at reduced cost
- Many Disproportionate Share Hospitals (DSH) are eligible
- HRSA Pharmacy Services Support Center (PSSC) provides free consultative services about program
- HRSA Office of Pharmacy Affairs (OPA) guides application process



<http://pssc.aphanet.org/>

<http://www.hrsa.gov/opa/>

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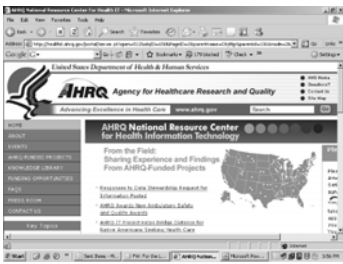
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**Tools and Resources** 

- **Health Information Technology Portal**
  - Developed by the Agency for Health Research and Quality (AHRQ)



<http://healthit.ahrq.gov>

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**Tools and Resources** 



- **A New EMS Resource**
  - Web site with background and updates on Federal EMS initiatives and programs
  - Developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) at DOT

<http://www.ems.gov/>

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**Tools and Resources** 



Committed to the future of rural communities.

- **USDA offers housing, utilities and business programs**
- **Utilities programs include economic development loans and grants for**
  - Distance Learning and Telecommunications
  - Broadband access to underserved rural areas (Community Connect Grant)
  - New pilot program on using combination grant/loan for Electronic Health Records

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>

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## Grant Reviewers



### We Need You!

- ORHP has multiple grant program reviews each year
- Reviewers with rural experience needed to be a part of our Objective Review Committee panels
- You must register with HRSA to be a reviewer
  - Register at: <https://grants.hrsa.gov/webReview/>
- Indicate "rural health" as one of your specialties in the background information section
- Tell ORHP staff which programs you are familiar with

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## Contact Information



Office of Rural Health Policy  
 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 9A-42  
 Rockville, MD 20857

301-443-0835  
<http://ruralhealth.hrsa.gov>

Bridget Ware - [bware@hrsa.gov](mailto:bware@hrsa.gov)

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