



Office of Rural Health Policy Update

SORH Region C Annual Meeting
Lawrence, KS
July 8 & 9, 2009

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Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
Health Resources and Services Administration
Department of Health and Human Services



HHS & HRSA



Why These Are Good Times for Rural Health

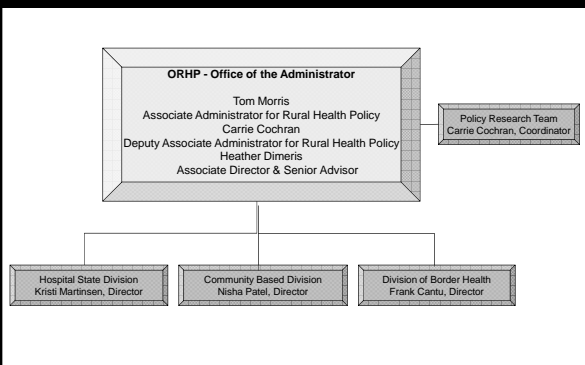
- HRSA and Departmental Leadership focused on rural
- Increased Investments
- 2010 Presidents budget favorable to Rural Programs
- Health Care Reform?



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



ORHP Organizational Chart





**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



State Offices of Rural Health



SORH Grant

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



**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



Critical Access Hospital-Health Information Technology Network



Completion of the CAH-HIT Grants



Lessons Learned:

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

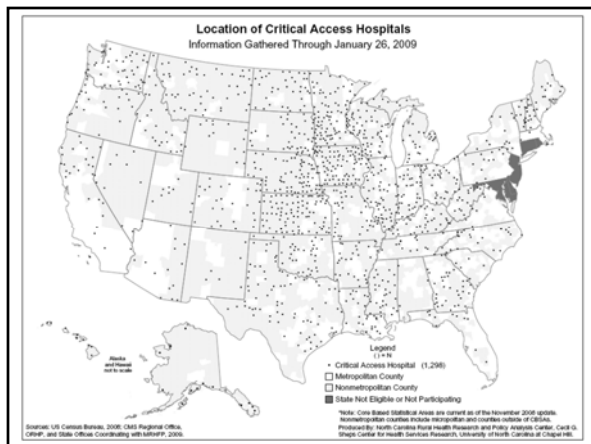


Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program



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





Hospitals in Region A



STATE	Number of Critical Access Hospitals	Number of SHIP Hospitals
Connecticut	0	0
Delaware	0	0
Maine	15	18
Massachusetts	3	10
Maryland	0	3
New Hampshire	12	13
New Jersey	0	0
New York	13	16
Pennsylvania	13	21
Rhode Island	0	0
Vermont	8	9
Total	64	90



New Research on CAHs



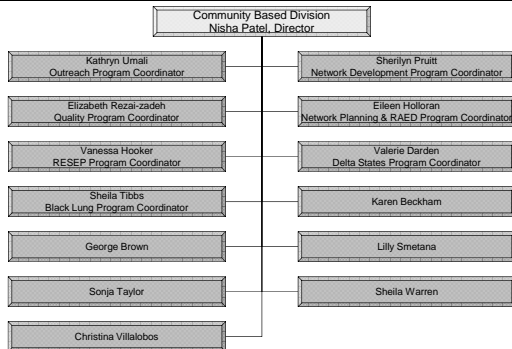
- A new focus (and one that is likely here to stay)
- Findings mostly positive
- Some concerns may arise
- Putting It In Context



East Morgan County Hospital,
a CAH in Colorado



CBD Organizational Chart



 **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

 **CBD Awards, FY 2009** 

Outreach


- 94 new awards with May 1st start date
- 14 in Region A
- 4 - PA, 2 - MD, 2 - ME, 2 - NH, 2 - VT, 1 - NY, 1 - DE
- Next Cycle: FY 2011 or 2012

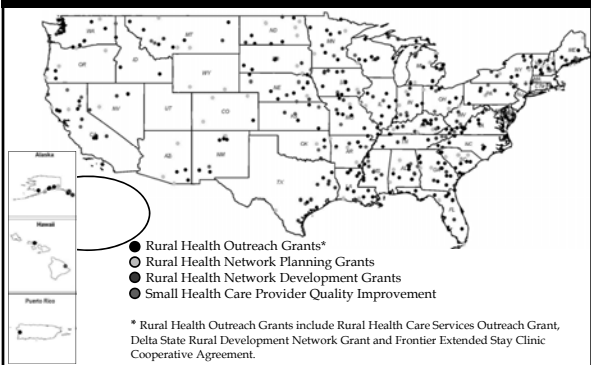
Network Planning

- 18 new awards with April 1st start date
- 4 in Region A
- 1 - ME, 1 - NH, 1 - VT, 1 - NY
- Next Cycle: FY 2010

RAED

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

 **CBD Rural Health Grants 2005-2009** 





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



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





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



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





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



Inpatient Hospital Payments Proposed



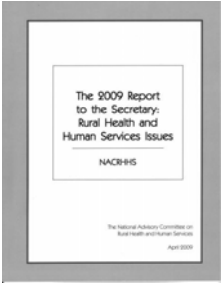
- FY10 Proposed IPPS Regulation
 - Comments due 6/30/09; Effective 10/1/09
- 2.1% Market Basket Update w/ quality data
 - Payment to all hospitals decrease -0.5%
 - Payments to rural hospitals decrease -1.3%
- Key Proposed Changes:
 - Expanded quality measures: 44 FY10, 50 FY11
 - Apply budget neutrality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



 **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



 **Policy Team** 

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

 **ORHP Priorities for 2009** 

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



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?



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



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>



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/>





Tools and Resources



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



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

<http://healthworkforceinfo.org>

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!**


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

Tools and Resources 

The Rural Assistance Center



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

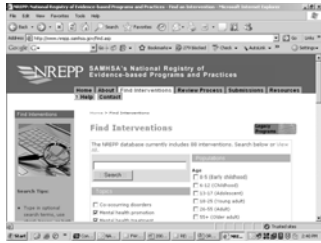
<http://raconline.org>



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>



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>



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
http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/join_us/scholarships.asp



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>



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



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

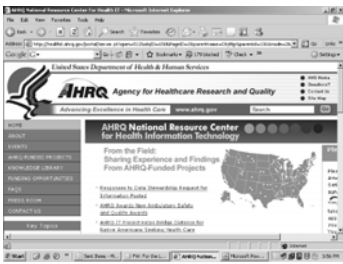


<http://pssc.aphanet.org/>


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

Tools and Resources 


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




<http://healthit.ahrq.gov>


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/>

Tools and Resources 

 **USDA Rural Development** 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/>



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



Contact Information



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