

Partnerships for Rural Health Issues

Collaborative Project Between
Alabama Office of Rural Health
&
NOSORH

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Overview

- Background
- Activities
- Outcomes
- Lessons Learned

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Background

- 2007 legislative session established the Alabama Rural Action Commission (ARAC)
- Divided state into eight regional commissions
- Each commission further divided into health, economic development, workforce and education committees.
- Volunteer Committees
- NO funding

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ARAC Mission

- Increase quality of life in Alabama's rural areas by working with citizens to identify and prioritize issues affecting:
 - Health care
 - Education
 - Economic development
 - Workforce development

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Alabama Regional Action Commission (ARAC)

- MAP



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Project Activities

- Step 1: Identify/prioritize health issues
- Step 2: Provide consultation on community engagement
- Step 3: Develop Community Health Resource Guide to assist regions
- Step 4: Grow the seeds

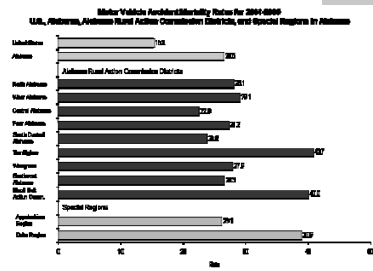
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Step 1: Identify and Prioritize Health Issues

- Difficult to identify priorities without baseline healthcare data
- Health status indicator data compiled for all **eight** regional commissions.
- Workshops presenting data were conducted by the Alabama OPCRH.
- Health Status Indicator Reports and Health Related Factors compiled for all 67 counties

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Examples of Health Status Indicator Report Findings



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Step 1: Lessons Learned

- ARAC committees organized on the regional level and **not the local level** --- challenges for planning.
- Health chairs are volunteers and include doctors, nursing instructors etc. Commitment by health chairs and community volunteers vary.
- Lack of clear objectives, time and funding.
- Most successful ARAC Region – lead by CEO of Mercedes. Approached with measurable outcomes and action plans. Other regions are struggling to define steps on community health engagement

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Step 2: Community Engagement – Technical Assistance from Oklahoma

- Chairs of ARAC health and economic committees attended presentation by Val Schott and Gerald Doeksen.
- Val Schott reviewed the community engagement process including development of the health resource guide and health inventory.
- Gerald Doeksen presented the Rural Health Works model as a planning tool and model for integrating health care and economic development issues.
- Consultation helped define action steps of ARAC health committees.

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More Lessons Learned

What can ARAC Health Committees Do?

- Develop **Health Councils** to work on issues locally:
 - Recruitment & Retention
 - Grow your own doctors
 - Community health issues
- Support local health care providers
- Frame community Healthcare as an **economic as well as quality of life issue.**
- Develop a **healthcare resource directory**
- Support wellness programs – KIDCHECK

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Step 3: Develop Alabama Community Health Resource Guide

- Identify health related issues to generate local support
- Integrate issues of rural health care into economic development and community planning
- Assist communities with grant writing
- Provide baseline health data for evaluation of community programs

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Step 4: Growing the Seeds

- **Develop Rural Health Works Regional Centers to support ARAC regions** — collaboration between ARAC, Alabama Rural Health Association, Alabama Center for Economic Development, Auburn University Center for Government, UAB/Huntsville Regional Medical Campus.
- **Develop Community Health Resource Directory**
- **Technical Assistance workshops on Grants to ARAC:** Sept. 16th Rural Health Outreach Grant Workshop
- **Distribute the Alabama Community Health Resource Guide**

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Reports/Publications

- Available at:
 - www.adph.org/ruralhealth
 - www.arhaonline.org

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Questions

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