

Mark your
Calendar!



The Branch

An Update for State Offices of Rural Health and our Partners

January 2011

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New Year Greeting from the President

January 13

Webinar: *Preparing to Engage with Legislators & Policymakers* (2:00 p.m. EST)

January 14

Webinar: *Overview of FY2011 SORH Non-competing Continuation Instructions* (3:00 p.m. EST)

January 18

Policy Committee (2:00 p.m. EST)

January 20

Flex Committee (3:00 p.m. EST)
Communications Committee (3:00 p.m. EST)

January 23

NOSORH Membership Meeting (Capitol Hilton, Washington DC; 6:00 p.m. EST)

NOSORH is an organization that speaks to the incredible diversity of our states and our issues in rural and frontier America. Our commitment to invest our expertise and to build our own knowledge base is a testament of the value and character that we each bring to this organization. This collective energy bolsters us as we tackle a new year, a new Congress and our individual state budget challenges. Remember we are a network of states that hold our hands out to each other and that we are here listening to your struggles and are here to respond with assistance.

Each New Year brings a turn-over of new directors and SORH staff to our mix. Each person holds a contribution to our organizational strength. Let's all commit to meet, greet and engage new members and continue to build our leadership into the future.

I am looking forward to meeting and renewing my work with each of you and your respective state. I am especially honored to represent the vast character of rural areas within our country from which great programs and partnerships have emerged. 2011 promises to be a great year for NOSORH as we begin this new decade together.

President



"NEW" Board and Committee Members Step Up

Thanks and congratulations to new Board members and committee leaders who will serve State Offices of Rural Health on the NOSORH Board and NOSORH committees in 2011.

- **Mark Schoenbaum** (MN) Policy Committee Co-Chair
- **Pamela Smith** (MA) new Region A Representative
- **John Eich** (WI) new Region C Representative
- **Heather Reed** (OH) Region C Representative and new Co-Chair of the HIT committee
- **Sharla Allen** (WY) new Region E Representative and new Chair of the Awards committee
- **Alison Hughes** (AZ) and **Denny Berens** (NE) return to the Board in

new roles as Leadership Liaisons

- **Karen Madden** (NY) has taken on an additional new role as Partnership Development Liaison
- **Scott Ekblad** (OR) comes back to the NOSORH Board as the State Rural Health Association Liaison
- **Kris Juliar** (MT) will return to NOSORH leadership as Workforce Committee Co-Chair
- **Patsy Whaley** (GA) is stepping up as the Educational Exchange Committee Co-Chair with Board Ex-Officio for Educational Exchange **Barbara Berger** (CT)
- **Lynette Dickson** (ND) takes on a new and challenging role as a Policy Program Monitoring Team Chair to lead the efforts to provide a

ready response for SORH regarding program and policy changes in health reform

"I so appreciate the new SORH leaders coming on to the Board. Some of our Leadership Institute graduates have taken on new positions and some of the folks who served on the Board in our early years have been recruited back. They all offer an excellent perspective on what we should be doing for SORH. We're going to make a new effort to revitalize small group work in the organization to be more meaningful. These leaders are going to play a pivotal role in shaping that." According to NOSORH Director, Teryl Eisinger.

Preparing for the NRHA Policy Institute & Future Work with National and Local Legislators

This year's crop of newly elected policy makers need to hear from State Offices of Rural Health. NOSORH can help you share the story of your good work and the needs of your rural communities to policy makers.

NOSORH's Policy Committee and Legislative Liaison are preparing talking points for SORH and their partners

in preparation for the NRHA Policy Institute. "SORH need to help new leaders understand the work they do, the impact of important rural health programs, like outreach and network grants and what the result might be back in their state if funding cuts were made." According to NOSORH, Legislative Liaison Bill Finerfrock.

Join the NOSORH webinar on January 13th to learn more about educating policy makers and telling your state story, not just during the Policy Institute but in the future and in your state with state policy makers. You can share the webinar flyer and invite your state partners by [clicking here](#).

Please visit our [News & Events](#) section to learn about these and additional upcoming events.

NOSORH Statement on Arizona Tragedy

NOSORH is shocked and saddened by the shooting in Tucson, Arizona this past Saturday that killed six innocent victims and wounded 15 others – including Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, NOSORH's 2007 Legislator of the Year.

We extend our condolences to the friends and families of those who lost their lives and our sincerest hope that Rep. Giffords and the others wounded in this tragedy make a full recovery. Our thoughts are also with all of Arizona's residents – especially our colleagues in the Arizona Office of Rural Health – during this difficult time.

Regional & Annual Meeting Planning Start up - Volunteers Welcome!

Planning is underway for all Regional Meetings and the NOSORH Annual Meeting. If you are interested in serving on a planning committee it's not too late to join, please contact [Stephanie Hansen](#).

Tentative meeting dates and locations are listed below – mark your calendar in pencil now!

- **Region A** – Bar Harbor, Maine – *June 13 - 15*
- **Region B** – Florida
- **Region C** – Indianapolis, Indiana – *August, 2011*
- **Region D** – Nevada – *May 24 - 25*
- **Region E** – Juneau, Alaska
- **Annual Meeting** – Colorado – *September 8-9*

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Results of NOSORH Members Survey and End of Year Report

Throughout the year NOSORH calls on the SORH to help us assess our work. Participants in webinars and meeting rank the accomplishment of learning objectives, their level and use of learning and provide feedback on their overall satisfaction. In addition members are asked to complete a survey to rank their interest in high priority activities, new services and educational initiatives. Thanks to all of you who help us evaluate our programs. Some general results are following:

Participants

- 819 participants
- 81% participants report that learning objectives were completely met
- 47% participants report a great deal of new learning
- 70% rate the educational programs as excellent

Percent "very satisfied" – top 3

- Regional & annual meetings (57%)
- Newsletter (57%)
- Webinars (51%)

Top 5 Educational Topics

- Medical home – what does it look like in rural America?
- Innovative models of care
- Improving health care quality
- Increasing TA to RHC
- Building RHC/FQHC collaboration

Members Ranking of high priority activities

1. Support needs of SORH, especially new and struggling
2. Measure overall impact of work of SORH
3. Four way tie
 - Promote the "power of rural"
 - Diversify the NOSORH funding base to ensure ongoing services for SORH
 - Provide comprehensive TA for SORH
 - Provide SORH resources to understand policy and program changes
4. Promote the promising practices of SORH

Congratulations Grant Writing Institute Graduates

Sixteen students successfully help us recognize the following graduates:

Institute which began in June and ended in December 2010. Throughout the Institute students learned to write better grant proposals, turn rurality into an advantage, and acquired additional writing experience. Each graduate completed 9 assignments and 18 hours of web-based training. Thanks to Denise Denton who supported the the coordination of the institute, the curricula and the work with NOSORH partners and "institudents". Please

- **Cherith Flowerday**, Colorado Rural Health Center
- **Barry Fowler**, Clark Fork Valley Hospital Foundation, Montana
- **Joyce Hospodar**, Arizona Rural Health Office
- **Mandi Jordan**, Nevada Regional Medical Center, Missouri
- **Peggy Sue Lewis**, Kentucky State Office of Rural Health
- **Joel Libby**, Florida Office of Rural Health

- **Mary Maahs Becker**, Nebraska Office of Rural Health
- **Melinda Merrell**, South Carolina Office of Rural Health
- **Lisa Nelson**, Freeman Health System, Missouri
- **Karen Pauley**, West Virginia Division of Rural Health & Recruitment
- **Karen Reed**, Virginia Office of Health Policy & Planning
- **Susan Sanders**, Citizens Memorial Hospital, Missouri
- **Mary Wilson**, South Carolina Office of Rural Health

NOSORH Board and Committees Focus on Strategy for Policy, Partnerships and High Priority Activities!

The NOSORH Board of Directors started out the New Year leadership and relevance in the era of health reform. High with its traditional board planning meeting January 6-7th. priority activities for the year include offering performance Topics of discussion included an overview of membership measures technical assistance, rolling out the Power of needs, focusing partnerships and positioning SORH for Rural Campaign and supporting new and struggling SORHs.

EMS Important Focus

The Joint Committee on Rural EMS, has developed a Chair Matt Womble encourages all SORH to learn more working paper on Community Paramedicine. The effort about the community paramedicine model and to consider was led by Matt Womble (NC) and Jim DeTienne President including enhancing EMS activities with FLEX funds. To Elect of the National Association of EMS Officials. NOSORH read the paper [click here](#) and contact [Matt Womble](#) for and NASEMSO jointly support the effort to improve more ideas on how to connect with EMS in your state. understanding of community paramedicine. Committee

SORH Comings and Goings

Congratulations to Heather Reed (OH) who has been appointed to serve in a temporary capacity as the Acting Chief of the Ohio Bureau of Community Health Services. Way to put that SORH experience to work Heather!

Best of Luck to Tracy Dolan (VT) former Director of Health Planning has just been appointed Deputy Commissioner at the Vermont Department of Health.