

## Mark your Calendar!



### August 5

Workforce Committee  
(Noon EDT)

Workshop: *Putting Program  
Evaluation into Practice for  
SORHs* (Mobile, AL)

### August 5-7

Region B Meeting (Mobile,  
AL)

### August 6

Joint Committee on Rural  
Emergency Care (Noon  
EDT)

### August 11

Performance Measures  
Committee (1:00 p.m. EDT)  
Development Committee  
(3:00 p.m. EDT)

### August 13

Webinar: *Creative Models  
for Improving Rural Mental  
Health* (2:00 p.m. EDT)

### August 18

Policy Committee (2:00  
p.m. EDT)  
Workshop: *Rural Health  
Workforce: Strategies in  
the Age of Health Reform*  
(Laramie, WY)

### August 19-20

Region E Meeting (Laramie,  
WY)

### August 24

Education Exchange  
Committee (2:00 p.m. EDT)  
HIT Committee (Noon EDT)

### August 25

Communications  
Committee (3:00 p.m. EDT)

### August 25-26

SORH/EMS Learning Session  
(Park City, UT)

### August 27

FLEX Committee (3:00 p.m.  
EDT)

### August 30

NOSORH Membership  
Meeting (6:00 p.m. EDT;  
Washington, DC)

# The Branch

An Update for State Offices of Rural Health and our Partners

July 2009

Website: <http://www.nosorh.org/> Wiki space: <http://nosorh.wikispaces.com/>



## “Eldridge Group” Explores Collaboration

*Representatives from a variety of organizations including SORH, the federal Office of Rural Health Policy, USDA Rural Development, Cooperative Extension Service, the National Rural Health Association, the National Association of Counties, the National Association of Development Officials met at NOSORH’s “Building Vital Rural Communities” workshop in Lawrence, Kansas July 7<sup>th</sup>. In addition to selecting their name the group agreed to continue to work together and established a common goal of developing sustainable strategies that integrate quality health care, and rural community and economic development. Information presented by our good partner, Dr. Gerald Doekson of Rural Health Works was a key focus of the meeting. [Click here](#) to download workshop presentations from the NOSORH Website. Special thanks to Jane Faubion and Chris Tilden for their hospitality and all the other partners that are making this happen.*



## NOSORH Seeks Education Coordinator

Betty King has done a wonderful job over the past several years helping NOSORH develop its education exchange program. Unfortunately for us, Betty will be stepping down as of August 31 to work on other rural health-specific projects.

For that reason, NOSORH is now accepting applications for a full-time, telecommuting Education Coordinator.

This person will oversee and provide staff support for the organization’s peer-to-peer learning programs; educational Webinars; NOSORH Leadership Institute; various NOSORH committees; regional/national meetings; and other activities that facilitate the professional and leadership development of SORHs. Interested candidates should submit a

cover letter (including salary requirements), resume and three references to [Donna Pfaendtner](#) no later than August 4. A detailed position description is available in the [News & Events](#) section on the NOSORH Web site.

We’ll be sure to give Betty a proper sendoff next month!

## Wyoming: An Education Exchange Success Story

The Wyoming Office of Rural Health (WORH) recently found itself in a quandary; new staff and a new organizational chart found the office struggling to deliver and promote its programs as efficiently as possible.

That’s when the office decided to take advantage of NOSORH’s Education Exchange program, which mentors and provides assistance to SORHs seeking to enhance their organizational capacity. One of the Education Exchange program’s biggest strengths is its ability to “match” SORHs seeking information or assistance in a particular area with SORHs that have developed an expertise in that area. In

this case, travel scholarships available through the program enabled Pat Carr, director of the Alaska State Office of Rural Health, to visit WORH and work with them on maximizing their new organizational structure. After two days of interviews with staff members and WORH partner organizations, Pat prepared a Report of Observations and Recommendations. WORH then reviewed the report and assigned a priority status to each recommendation.

Improving marketing and communications was a major focal point in Pat’s report. Sharla Allen, WORH manager and a participant in

NOSORH’s inaugural Leadership Institute, is now developing a strategic communications plan that will serve as her capstone project for the Institute and ultimately enhance WORH’s visibility.

WORH’s experience is just one of the Education Exchange Program’s most recent success stories. Please visit the [Education Exchange](#) section of the NOSORH Web site if your office is interested in sharing your expertise with another SORH or wishes to take advantage of a peer-to-peer learning experience that enhances the capacity of your office.

**A Recommendation from Our President...** NRHA’s weekly Grassroots Team phone calls are another great way to keep apprised of what’s going on in Washington. By joining the NRHA Grassroots Team, you can receive news updates and help one of our key partners enhance their efforts – and ours – to improve rural health. Send a blank email to [join-grassroots@lists.wisc.edu](mailto:join-grassroots@lists.wisc.edu) to join the Team; you will then receive activation information in reply. -Lynette Dickson

## Congratulations to the Newest Regional Representatives

NOSORH is delighted to welcome two new regional representatives to the Board of Directors: [Barbara Berger](#) (Connecticut Office of Rural Health) who began her term as a Region A Representative earlier this month; and [Corie Kaiser](#) (Oklahoma Office of Rural Health) who will begin her term as a Region D Representative in January 2010. Thanks to both of you for being willing to serve NOSORH in this capacity!

## NOSORH Planning August Webinar

“Creative Models for Improving Rural Mental Health” will be the topic of the next NOSORH Education Exchange Webinar at 2:00 p.m. EDT on August 13.

In addition to learning about the NOSORH-supported “Workforce Development for Rural Mental Health: Student and Internship Models from the States” project, Webinar participants will explore processes for training students by using telehealth technology and hear lessons learned from using a patient-driven model to deliver behavioral telehealth services.

## Contact Information

[Teryl Eisinger](#)

Director  
(586) 739-9940

[Betty King](#)

Program Specialist  
(520) 319-0113

[Bill Hessert](#)

Communications Coordinator  
(814) 308-8697 (new #)

[Donna Pfaendtner](#)

Administrative Coordinator  
(586) 336-4627

## Upcoming Workshops Address Evaluation, Workforce, EMS, HIT Concerns

NOSORH will host several meetings and workshops of interest for its members in the coming months:

• **August 5 (Mobile, AL) – Putting Program Evaluation into Practice for SORHs.** This informative morning workshop will teach participants how to define the scope of their program evaluation; identify the resources needed to conduct a program evaluation; track progress; and implement findings from their program evaluation. Those attending will be asked to share examples of program evaluation in their SORHs and any “real world” challenges they faced. [Click here](#) for additional information.

• **August 18 (Laramie, WY) – Rural Health Workforce: Strategies in the Age of Health Reform.** A one-day conference exploring workforce as a key challenge in health reform and opportunities for workforce improvement as the result of economic stimulus funding. SORH, Department of Labor, Workforce Investment, AHEC and community college representatives should plan to attend. [Click here](#) for an invitation and agenda; [click here](#) to register.

• **August 25-26 (Park City, UT) – SORH/EMS Learning Session.** For the third consecutive year, the Joint Committee on Emergency Care – a joint effort of NOSORH and the National Association of State EMS

officials – will hold a rural EMS learning session. Among other topics, the day and a half-long workshop will address leadership development in EMS; the changing role of state EMS; issues related to rural EMS and trauma; and current EMS-related research. [Click here](#) for an invitation and agenda; [click here](#) to register.

• **November 17 (Austin, TX) – “Improving HIT for Rural America”** One-day HIT workshop for SORHs and their partners. SORH members, state Department of Information Technology representatives, network leaders and HIT experts and implementers are encouraged to attend.

## SORHs Represented at State Rural Health Association Meeting

Thanks to Kris Sparks (Washington Office of Rural Health), NOSORH’s State Rural Health Association (SRHA) liaison, for representing SORHs at the National Rural Health Association’s SRHA Skill Building Workshop July 22-24 in Park City, Utah. Kris reports that, just like state offices, there is a lot of diversity among state associations. There are also many SRHAs that would like to work more closely with SORHs. Feel free to contact [Kris](#) if you would like to be part of NOSORH’s ongoing efforts to reach out and partner with SRHAs.



## NOSORH Looking for SORHs Working with Rural Health Clinics

Does your SORH currently provide technical assistance to Rural Health Centers (RHCs) located in your state? Would you be interested in allowing NOSORH to document best practices and identify key elements of your program so we can help other SORHs

offer similar programs in their states? If so, we want to hear from you! NOSORH is planning a project to build the technical assistance capacity of SORH to work with RHCs. SORHs that currently provide such support and are interested in participating in the

project should send a description of your current RHC offerings and the name of someone from your staff who can serve as the primary liaison for the project to [Teryl Eisinger](#).

## Optimize Opportunities at ORHP DC Meeting!

While you’re in DC consider the possibility, if feasible, to visit with any Congressional Staff who might be working during the August recess. While their bosses are out the staff may welcome the opportunity to hear more about what’s happening in rural parts of your state. Watch your email for some talking points from us next month...and don’t forget the NOSORH Membership Meeting Sunday evening 6 PM. Stay tuned for a specific meeting location.

We also will have SORH and NOSORH information on display throughout the meeting. If you would like to include any information with the display, please bring it with you or ship it in advance to NOSORH.

Contact [Donna Pfaendtner](#) for more information. Talking points for possible Hill visits will soon be available on the [NOSORH Web site](#).

## Award Nominations Being Accepted

The Awards Committee is accepting NOSORH Awards nominations for 2009. [Award Descriptions](#) and a [List of Previous Award Winners](#) are both available in the Awards Committee section of the NOSORH Web site.

Please download a copy of the [2009 NOSORH Awards Nomination Form](#) if you would like to nominate an individual or SORH; all nominations should be submitted by September 11, 2009. Contact [Alison Hughes](#) for more information.

## Legislative Update: Good News on Appropriations

The U.S. House of Representatives’ Labor/Health and Human Services/Education Appropriations bill for FY2010 released on July 20 brought some welcome news. The bill includes \$9.7 million for SORHs and includes the same language as last year’s appropriation, essentially waiving the spending cap.

[Click here](#) to obtain a copy of the appropriations bill; the SORH appropriations information can be found on page 37, lines 15-18. For more information, please contact NOSORH Legislative Liaison [Bill Finerfrock](#).