

Mark your Calendar!



The Branch

An Update for State Offices of Rural Health and our Partners

September 2011

Website: www.nosorh.org Wikispaces: nosorh.wikispaces.com



September 1

Joint Committee on Rural Emergency Care (3:00 p.m. EDT)

September 7-8

[NOSORH Annual Meeting](#) (Denver, Colorado)

September 8-9

Rural EMS Learning Session (Denver, Colorado)

September 13

Development Committee (2:00 p.m. EDT)

September 20

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

September 22

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

September 27

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

October 4-5

New SORH Staff Meeting (Rockville, Maryland)

November 17

[National Rural Health Day](#)

See You Next Week in Denver!

We are looking forward to seeing everyone next week in Denver for the **2011 NOSORH Annual Meeting** on September 7 & 8 and the **Rural EMS Learning Session** on September 8 & 9. This year's gathering promises to be an exciting gathering focused on building connections with rural communities and stakeholders; strengthening the capacity of your SORH; and celebrating the Power of Rural!



Be sure to check out our list of [Things to Do in/around Denver](#) if you're looking for suggestions about places to visit and eat while in Colorado. And watch your inbox later this week for an email with any last-minute details.

National Rural Health Day: "And We Are Live!"



As of today, the [National Rural Health Day website](#) is up and running! The website can now serve as your "one-stop shop" for National Rural Health Day resources, for sharing/submitted community success stories, and for tips on how you can celebrate National Rural Health Day. Be sure to visit often between now and November 17 – as with any other website, information

will be added and updated regularly!

We'd like to begin assembling a list of "famous rural faces" – legislators, celebrities, sports figures, businesspeople that grew up or live in rural communities and can be encouraged to be rural champions that we could highlight in the future. Feel free to send your ideas to NOSORH Communications Coordinator [Bill Hessert](#).

It was certainly exciting to hear some of the National Rural Health Day planning already underway during the *How Are*

SORHs and Their Partners Planning to Celebrate National Rural Health Day? Webinar on August 22. If you weren't able to participate or would like some information from that call, the Webinar recording and supporting PowerPoint presentation are now available in the [Past Webinar Materials](#) section of the NOSORH website. Also, please remember we want to know what everyone is planning for National Rural Health Day – please share your plans by filling out your state's portion of the [Google Docs spreadsheet](#) we've created to keep track of things!

Slate of 2011 Officers Presented; Election Procedures Outlined

In accordance with NOSORH's bylaws, the Nominating Committee is pleased to submit the following slate of NOSORH officer candidates for 2011-2012:

President: John Barnas (Michigan)
President-Elect: Scott Ekblad (Oregon)
Past President: Karen Madden (New York)
Secretary: Alisa Druzba (New Hampshire)
Treasurer: Charles Owens (Georgia)

Thanks to these candidates for being willing to step up and serve NOSORH in this capacity. And thanks to Nominating

Committee Chair **Mark Schoenbaum** (Minnesota) and members of the committee – **Barbara Berger** (Connecticut), **Keith Clark** (Nevada), **Bob Duehmig** (Oregon), **John Eich** (Wisconsin) and **Sarah Roberts** (Kansas) – for their hard work and for such an impressive slate of new executive committee members.

The election of officers will take place Thursday, September 8 during the NOSORH Annual Meeting in Denver. SORH Directors were emailed additional information and proxy instructions earlier this year.

Annual Membership Survey Reminder

Thanks to the 24 states that have already responded to our annual membership survey. If you haven't done so already, please [click here](#) to respond by September 2. Responses will be shared at the Annual Meeting and will be used by the NOSORH Board, staff and committees to plan future activities. Thank you!

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

TruServ Now Available to SORHs

TruServ – the performance measure tool created by the University of North Dakota's Center for Rural Health – is now available to State Offices of Rural Health! Enrolling is easy; just [click here](#) and you'll be on your way to using tried and tested, top-shelf performance measures tool developed specifically for you!

You can also visit the [Past Webinar Materials](#) section of the NOSORH website to access a recording of the July 28 Webinar introducing SORHs to TruServ. Also check out the August 26 email from Mark Barclay for more information on helping your state obtain approval to use the tool.

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NOSORH Planning to Reach Out to Congress, "Super Committee"

As part of the recent negotiations made to raise the debt ceiling, Congress and President Obama agreed to reduce projected federal deficits by up to \$1.5 trillion over the next ten years. Responsibility for creating the deficit reduction plan has been given to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction – a "Super Committee" of twelve members of Congress evenly divided between party lines (Democrat and Republican) and congressional chambers (House and Senate).

The "Super Committee" has been charged with assembling and submitting its plan by Thanksgiving.

Everything is on the table; the super committee is not constrained as to their recommendations. If the group is unable to make recommendations and congressional action doesn't occur by that time, a mandatory trigger could cut all types of spending across the board – entitlements, discretionary and even more non-discretionary funding, Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare – to achieve the savings.

NOSORH has already reached out to SORH directors in states with representation on the Super Committee to encourage them to attend congressional town hall meetings,

invite members of the Super Committee to site visits in rural communities or reach out in other ways to educate members on the impact of rural health programs on communities. NOSORH Legislative Liaison Bill Finerfrock and the Policy Committee are also working on a strategy to help SORHs and their partners reach out to the Super Committee and other members of Congress – details of that strategy will be shared during the NOSORH Annual Meeting.

Feel free to contact [Teryl Eisinger](#) if you have any questions or suggestions to share with the Policy Committee.

Sandi Durick Announces NRHA Presidential Bid



[Sandi Durick](#), director of the **South Dakota Office of Rural Health (SDORH)**, has announced her bid to become

president-elect of the National Rural Health Association (NRHA).

Sandi has more than 30 years of experience administering public health programs in South Dakota, including 12 years with SDORH. During her four years as SDORH director, Sandi has focused on building the state's healthcare workforce; developing a statewide trauma system; and implementing a statewide mobile simulation education program for pre-hospital and rural hospital emergency services healthcare providers.

A former ORHP Rural Health Fellow, Sandi currently serves on the NRHA Board of Trustees and has been the organization's treasurer for the past five years. As NRHA President, Sandi intends to provide opportunities for developing strategies addressing rural health issues; promote efficiency in operating and managing NRHA and continue stabilizing and improving the financial position of the association.

Best of luck on your candidacy, Sandi!

Regional Meetings an Overwhelming Success!

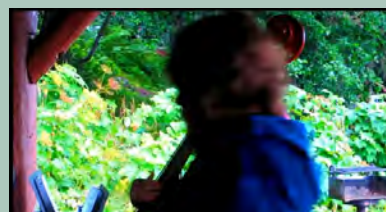
The summer of 2011 is quickly drawing to a close ... which means the 2011 ORHP Regional Meeting season has drawn to a close as well!

This year's meetings again gave attendees the chance to strengthen relationships with colleagues in their respective regions. Each meeting provided its fair share of unique educational opportunities as well; be

sure to visit the [Past Events](#) section of the NOSORH website to peruse this year's presentations. You can also [click here](#) to enjoy a video from the ORHP Region E meeting created by [Aaron Ortiz](#), workforce specialist for the North Dakota Center for Rural Health.

Our thanks to the Alaska, Florida, Indiana, Maine and Nevada state offices of rural health for making the 2011

regional meetings such a tremendous success!



Hello, Goodbye

NOSORH is delighted to welcome [Neil MacKinnon](#), who was recently appointed Walter H. Pearce Endowed Chair and **Director of the Arizona Center for Rural Health** (formerly the Arizona Rural Health Office).

MacKinnon comes to the Center from Dalhousie University College of Pharmacy (Halifax, Nova Scotia), where he was professor and associate director of research. He has published more than 200 articles and made more than 250 presentations related to his research on improving the quality and safety of the medication-use system.

He also has considerable healthcare experience, having providing direct patient care as a community and hospital pharmacist. MacKinnon has worked closely with several healthcare groups, including the Health Council of Canada; he has also served as president of the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists.

Unfortunately, it is also time to say "good-bye and good luck" to another one of our colleagues. [Barbara Berger](#) retired as director of the **Connecticut Office of Rural Health** effective August 24.

"I would like to thank everyone who works so willingly for the rural areas of our country," Barbara says. "I have such respect and fondness for all the people I've met and had the privilege to work with since coming to work in rural public health. I have never worked with finer people and will miss you all."

Thank you, Barbara, for being such an outstanding advocate for rural health and for serving NOSORH in so many ways through the years. Even though we know our paths will cross again, we'll still miss you!