

Mark your
Calendar!



The Branch

An Update for State Offices of Rural Health and our Partners

January 2012

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



January 5

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

January 11

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

January 18

NOSORH Board (3:00 p.m. EST)

January 24

Educational Exchange
Committee (1:00 p.m. EST)

January 24

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

January 26

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

January 29

NOSORH Membership Meeting
(NRHA Policy Institute;
Washington, DC; 6:00 p.m. EST)
Capital Hilton Federal B room

January 31

Rural Health Clinic Learning
Community (2:00 p.m. EST)

February 7

TruServe Learning Community
call (2:00 p.m. EST)

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

NOSORH Partners with NRHA for the Policy Institute

NOSORH will partner with National Rural Health Association (NRHA) for their Policy Institute to be held in Washington DC, January 29 – February 1. In an effort to ensure the voice of SORH we've made plans for 3 activities:

- "Preparing to Engage Legislators and Policymakers" webinar Wednesday, January 11th at 2 PM eastern.
- A joint NOSORH membership and State Office Council meeting, Sunday January 29th at 6 PM. Additional materials to support talking points for SORH will be provided at this meeting.
- Tracking SORH and SORH partner visits to policy makers – please keep us informed of your visits by clicking [here](#) to update our list.

Watch for more information on the meeting agenda and a list of "state contacts" coming soon from NRHA. Looking forward to seeing you!

Comings and Goings: Thank You, Bill!

Thank you to [Bill Hessert](#), Communications Coordinator, who wrapped up his NOSORH duties last month. "Bill has been more than just an Independent Contractor we hired, he's been part of the NOSORH team for more than 3 years. His good work helped us grow our work and build a stronger voice for the State Offices of Rural Health" according to Director, Teryl Eisinger. During Bill's tenure he supported SORH work to write a policy platform, create SORH profiles and launch National Rural Health Day. The Communications Committee celebrated Bill's success during their December call when Hessert remarked "I've met some amazing people. I definitely plan on staying in touch and look forward to seeing what the future holds for NOSORH and the State Offices of Rural Health."



Congratulations and welcome to [Don Wood, MD](#) appointed director of the **Utah Office of Primary Care and Rural Health**.

2012 Board at Work!

Thanks to the leadership of President John Barnas, this year's 24 member Board of Directors includes 9 new Board members. Please join us in thanking and congratulating new Board members:

- Cathleen McElligott** (MA) new Region A representative
- Kathy Collison** (DE) new Region A representative
- Tina Turner** (OH) new Region C representative
- Scott Daniels** (HI) returning Region D representative
- Mary Sheridan** (ID) new Region E representative
- Kathy Wibberly** (VA) new State Rural Health Association Liaison
- Natalie Claiborne** (MT) new Educational Exchange Co-Chair
- Melinda Merrill** (SC) new Educational Exchange Co-Chair
- Kylie Nissan** (ND) new Co-Chair Communications Committee

The 2012 NOSORH Board of Directors hit the ground running in a strategic planning session held last month. The focus of the meeting was to identify trends impacting SORH and to brainstorm opportunities and activities for meeting SORH needs. Teryl Eisinger, Director provided an overview of the progress of the organization and some potential ideas to focus the work. Committee chairs also reported on their planned activities for the coming year. If you're interested in either of these reports click [here](#). The Board will continue the work started last month with a look to focus committee and policy activities. Stay tuned for more information .

2012 Meeting Dates

& Locations

Mark your calendar for the regional meetings:

Region A

Burlington, VT

June 26—28

Region B

Little Rock, AR

July 31 – August 2

Region C

Chicago, IL

August 28—29

Region D

Tucson, AZ

May 22—23

Region E (tentative)

Boise, ID

August 15—16

Annual Meeting

The NOSORH and ORHP Grantees meeting date and location is still pending. We apologize for the inconvenience and thank the North Carolina Office of Rural Health for their tenacity!

National Center for Frontier Community Reaching Out to SORHs

The National Center for Frontier Communities (NCFC) asks SORH to support their work to identify and update frontier counties based on 2010 census information. NCFC has worked with the SORH twice in the past, asking each state office to identify which counties in their state are designated as frontier. For more information, contact [Susan Wilger](#).

Contact Information

[Teryl Eisinger](#)

Director

(586) 739-9940

[Stephanie Hansen](#)

Education Coordinator

(208) 375-0407

[Jessica Burkard](#)

Special Projects Coordinator

(425) 408-0929

[Donna Pfaendtner](#)

Administrative Coordinator

(586) 336-4627

Educational Exchange Success!

We're happy to report that SORH participation, and more importantly impact, of Educational Exchange activities has increased this year. NOSORH routinely measures participation, satisfaction and 6 other factors to identify the impact of its work. Since September 2010 more SORH's are taking advantage of travel scholarships to learn from other SORH's than all of last year.

And one note on another opportunity for Educational Exchange; last November Stephanie Hansen, NOSORH's Education Coordinator, visited the Utah Office of Primary Care and Rural Health to provide their new director with an orientation and assist staff with strategic planning. NOSORH welcomes that opportunity to help SORH's. Please contact [Stephanie](#) if you'd like to request technical assistance from NOSORH.

Congratulations to Stephanie Hansen and thanks to all SORH's, our partners and the NOSORH Educational Exchange committee for a great year!

<i>Satisfaction</i>	FFY 2009	FFY 2010
Rated Excellent	58%	66%
Gained "great deal" of new knowledge	39%	48%
Shared with Staff	68%	73%
Shared with Partners	28%	53%
Tracked Issue	9%	52%

<i>Participation</i>	FFY 2009	FFY 2010
Webinars	326	509
Meetings	383	389
Institutes (cumulative total)	104	244
Travel Scholarships	3	3
Total	816	1145

NOSORH Work to Support SORH and Rural Health Clinics Continues

NOSORH's Rural Health Clinic (RHC) Technical Assistance Team has developed a list of recommendations to steer the work of NOSORH and its future partnerships. Click [here](#) to view the recommendations. If you'd like to learn more about how to work with RHCs, please join the RHC Learning Community Call on January 31 or contact [Stephanie Hansen](#).

Rural Health Clinic Learning Community Conference Calls

Who:	State Offices of Rural Health (SORH) and their invited guests
What:	Bi-monthly conference calls to discuss rural health clinic (RHC) issues
When:	Tuesday, January 31, 2012 at 2:00—3:00 PM EST
How:	Phone: 877-669-3239 Passcode: 667 195 698

TruServe Update

Nearly 30 State Offices of Rural Health have begun the enrollment process, been trained or are using the new TruServe Performance Measures tool designed by SORH, for SORH. The tool has always been available to Primary Care Offices which are co-located within the SORH and will now be available to other PCO. For more TruServe information, including an explanation of the two versions, a sample purchase justification and information on how to enroll, click [here](#).

NOSORH will hold its first meeting of a TruServe learning community for SORH and PCO using the tool of February 7th at 2 PM eastern. It will be an informal discussion among TruServe users.

NOSORH Supports SORH Partnership for Patients Activities

The Partnership for Patients Initiative brings together a diverse group of entities to tackle important patient safety issues. The initiative provides a forum to reduce errors, improve care, and save lives while reducing costs. "This is an incredible opportunity for the State Offices of Rural Health to become a key player in this vital work," says Jessica Burkard, NOSORH Special Projects, who will lead these efforts. NOSORH has developed a plan to assist the State Offices in getting involved:

- Assess the SORH's current roles and activity in quality driven projects.
- Pinpoint current obstacles and challenges for providing quality in each state.
- Identify states with highest needs to increase interest and involvement.
- Provide an educational toolkit and shared practices to disseminate between states.
- Offer tools and resources for leadership and technical assistance to support the initiative.

Jessica will be contacting each state to obtain information that will support the Partnership for Patients Initiative. Stay tuned for a webinar announcement covering the initiative, introducing the new lead on the project, and an opportunity to provide feedback and ideas on how SORHs can become more involved.