



Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Overview

Christy Edwards
cedwards@hrsa.gov



Overview

- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
- Flex Grant Program

HRSA Strategic Goals



**Improve
Access to
Quality
Health Care
and Services**



**Strengthen
the Health
Workforce**



**Build Healthy
Communities**



**Improve
Health Equity**



**Strengthen
HRSA
Program
Management
& Operations**



The Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

Mission

FORHP collaborates with rural communities and partners to support programs and shape policy that will improve health in rural America.

Values

Accountable

Collaborative

Innovative

Knowledgeable

Respectful

Responsive

Driving Influences

Delivery System Reform and Rural Implications

Focus Areas	Description
Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Promote value-based payment systems<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Test new alternative payment models– Increase linkage of Medicaid, Medicare FFS, and other payments to value▪ Bring proven payment models to scale
Care Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Encourage the integration and coordination of clinical care services▪ Improve population health▪ Promote patient engagement through shared decision making
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Create transparency on cost and quality information▪ Bring electronic health information to the point of care for meaningful use



Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

What we do

- Strengthening rural health care infrastructure
- Improving the recruitment and retention of health care providers in rural areas
- Building an evidence base for programs that improve rural community health
- Providing direct health care services
- Improving the coordination of rural health activities within HRSA, HHS, and across the government.
- <http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/>



Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

What We Do

- Review Policy
- Advise the federal government on how federal health care policies and regulations may affect rural communities
- Impact on:
 - Rural hospital and financial health
 - Recruiting health care workers to work in rural areas
 - Rural access to quality health care

Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

What We Do

- Research Rural Health Issues
 - Why don't people in rural areas live as long as people in urban areas?
 - Rural and urban hospital profitability
 - Implications of Rural Ambulance Service Closures
 - What Is the Potential of Community Paramedicine to Fill Rural Healthcare Gaps?
 - <https://www.ruralhealthresearch.org/>

The Flex Program

- Quality Improvement
 - Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Program MBQIP (MBQIP)
- Financial and Operational Improvement
- Population Health Management and EMS Integration
- CAH Designation
- Integration of Innovative Models

EMS in Flex

- We think about systems of care: What can we do to help communities improve EMS for everyone?
 - Communication among health care providers
 - Time-critical diagnosis protocols
 - Improve the capacity of EMS agencies to collect and report quality data and use that data for performance improvement
 - Enhance the billing and financial systems of EMS agencies



EMS in Flex: Issues for the Future

- Recruitment and retention
- Financial issues
- Leadership
- Access to continuing education
- Systems development
- Measuring success
- Alternative models



Questions

- What are the three biggest barriers to providing care and getting patients to the hospital?
- What resources would improve EMS in your area?
- What kinds of small community projects could be implemented to ensure that all rural residents have access to emergency health care into the future?
- What is the one thing you want the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy to know about EMS?



Christy Edwards

cedwards@hrsa.gov