**[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME], Partners to Celebrate National Rural Health Day**

*Sterling Heights, Michigan (June 30, 2016) –* **[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME]** will join the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH) and other state/national rural stakeholders in celebrating ***National Rural Health Day*** on ***Thursday, November 17, 2016***.

 NOSORH created National Rural Health Day as a way to showcase rural America; increase awareness of rural health-related issues; and promote the efforts of NOSORH, State Offices of Rural Health and others in addressing those issues. Plans call for National Rural Health Day to become an annual celebration on the third Thursday of each November.

Events recognizing National Rural Health Day and “Celebrating the Power of Rural” are being planned throughout the nation. In **[INSERT STATE NAME]**, **[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME]** is planning to mark the occasion by ***[NOTE:* This is where SORHs/rural stakeholders can add a paragraph or two about their National Rural Health Day celebration plans … and invite others to join them if appropriate!]**

 Approximately 62 million people – nearly one in five Americans – live in rural and frontier communities throughout the United States. “These small towns, farming communities and frontier areas are wonderful places to live and work; they are places where neighbors know each other and work together,” said NOSORH Director Teryl Eisinger. “The hospitals and providers serving these rural communities not only provide quality patient care, but they also help keep good jobs in rural America.”

 These communities also face unique healthcare needs. “Today more than ever, rural communities must tackle accessibility issues, a lack of healthcare providers, the needs of an aging population suffering from a greater number of chronic conditions, and larger percentages of un- and underinsured citizens,” Eisinger said. “Meanwhile, rural hospitals are threatened with declining reimbursement rates and disproportionate funding levels that makes it challenging to serve their residents.”

 State Offices of Rural Health play a key role in addressing those needs. All 50 states maintain a State Office of Rural Health, each of which shares a similar mission: to foster relationships, disseminate information and provide technical assistance that improves access to, and the quality of, health care for its rural citizens. In the past year alone, State Offices of Rural Health collectively provided technical assistance to more than 28,000 rural communities.

 In **[INSERT STATE NAME]** for example, **[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME]** supports rural citizens through programs such as ***[NOTE:* This is where SORHs/rural stakeholders can add a paragraph or two about the good work they are doing within their own states – don’t be afraid to brag about yourself!]**

 Additional information about National Rural Health Day can be found at [nosorh.org/nrhd](http://nosorh.org/nrhd/). To learn more about NOSORH, visit [www.nosorh.org](http://www.nosorh.org); to learn more about **[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME]**, visit **[INSERT ORGANIZATION WEBSITE]**.

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