



SORH COVID19 Learning Community Notes

Call Date: March 26, 2020

National Organization of
State Offices of Rural Health

Rural Challenges and Concerns

Vacation areas with summer homes – people coming from populated areas and going to their rural summer homes to ride out but not following the quarantine guidelines of the state they're going to. Some islands in ME have closed to allowing summer residents.

Identified Rural Strategies

Handmade face masks

Sewing groups have been developing masks across the country – is it allowable?

ID – (pointed to WAMMI ECHO), no data on whether it's helpful just yet

RI – some hospitals gave sewing groups sterile equipment; liability is on the hospital for accepting/distributing handmade masks.

WA – nurses petitioning against this, why? Misunderstanding...they cover the n95, not replace it

CT – ProjectN95.com is a resource for those interested in making them

NC – requesting donated face masks, Duke looking at process of disinfecting

Rural Health Infrastructure Capacity Monitoring

NC – Daily reporting to system, working with regional healthcare coalitions to monitor hospital beds, etc.; undergoing the process to include other safety net providers and should be live next week

LA – monitoring of beds, etc. with a daily report – highly telemed focused right now; includes total beds, new cases, total cases, number of ventilators, etc. – all mapped out; surveyed RHCs on the haves and needs

ME - # of beds, ventilators, inventory stock, facilitating with licensing when RHCs go to telemed

NH – Hospital Association is leading the effort, office provides supporting data and information

AZ – Governor E.O. calls out requirement for hospitals to input data regularly into EMResources platform*

ID – Governor's office of Management and Budget leading this effort.

Workforce Capacity

NH – Fire & EMS best practices: someone has a tool to track the workforce – who has been tested, who is on quarantine, a countdown to when they can return, etc. Multiple asked if this was a possible tool for hospitals?

MT – Training up CHWs to do more screening

SC – using their CPs to do this

ND – anyone else looking at retired physicians? Several say yes; OH looking at specific telemed options as these are at-risk population



OH – using students in phone centers, distribution centers, etc.

In several states, temporary licenses are being offered to 4th year medical students and nurses that have graduated but not yet passed their examinations

AZ – if the test has to be taken in person, they'll get a temp license for now. Individual agencies can waive the licensing fees

Collaborative Opportunities

CO – email to RHCs, identify what they need; highlighting those rural counties with no hospital or FQHC. Foundations are wanting to help and need to know how they can fill existing gaps for rural communities.

Needed Rural Resources

SC – grants to support RHCs? Not SBA loans.

Tool for hospitals to monitor their workforce, if they've been tested and when they are able to return to work

Concerns regarding federally funded programs

RI/LA – time is shifted to federal emergency funds (no FTE billed to the grant), will raise the amount of carryforward – just giving a heads up to our federal partners!

Budgets have been frozen in many states, unallocated funds are being taken. Concerns on SORH budget