

National Rural Health Day 2020 Key Messages & Data Points

Rural America is fueling an innovative rural health infrastructure:

- Over 1,300 Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) and more than 300 rural prospective payment system hospitals support the acute care landscape of rural communities.ⁱ
- Nearly 4,500 rural health clinics, and over 3,300 rural health center or health center look-alikes provide the backbone of the primary care infrastructure in rural Americaⁱⁱ.
- Independent Rural Health Clinics, whether not-for-profit or for-profit, are a part of the rural health safety-net, with 86% offering free or reduced cost care; and 97% accepting new Medicaid or state CHIP patients.ⁱⁱⁱ
- 50% of rural local health departments (LHDs) report operating school-based health clinics; and are more likely than urban LHDs to provide an array of services, including: child and adult immunizations, maternal and children's health services, behavioral and mental healthcare, and home health care.^{iv}
- 72% of Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) working with their state's Medicare Flex program saw improvement in at least one quality domain.^v
- Rural Health Care Services Outreach grantees provided direct services to nearly 2 million rural residents in 2018.^{vi}

Rural America is a great place for mission-minded health professionals to provide individualized care:

- Rural children are more likely to volunteer in the community, school or church and have greater odds of having a mentor for advice or guidance, compared to urban children.^{vii}
- Graduates of osteopathic medical schools, rural schools, and schools with a rural mission are more likely to choose rural primary care practice. All schools can improve by adopting rural missions and supporting those missions through programs and curricula that encourage rural practice.^{viii}
- Nearly 38% of participants in federal pipeline programs are from a rural background, but only 21% of participating sites offer opportunities for students to learn and grow in rural areas.^{ix}
- Compared to urban nurse practitioners, rural NPs report being more satisfied with their jobs, practicing to the fullest extent of their license and anticipate staying in their jobs much longer.^x

Rural America offers a beautiful and challenging landscape, requiring unique approaches

- More than 57 million^{xi} Americans live, work and play in rural communities, spread across 72% of the total U.S. land area but only making up 19% of the U.S. population^{xii}.
- Rural communities face a disproportionate shortage of qualified health care providers, leading to approximately 68% of health professional shortage areas (HPSAs) in rural and frontier communities of the U.S. states and territories^{xiii}.
- The median annual household income of rural residents (\$46,000) is lower than urban residents (\$62,000); with 17% of rural residents living at or below the poverty line, compared to 14% in urban.^{xiv}
- In addition, 15.8% of rural residents report being food insecure, compared to 14.5% of urban residents.^{xv}
- Rural minorities (brown, indigenous and people of color [BIPOC] and LatinX communities) have even higher rates of poverty and obesity, as well as lower educational attainment, than rural White and urban children.^{xvi}

4. SORH: Your partners to grow communication, education, collaboration and innovation in rural health:

- State Offices of Rural Health (SORH) are the only statewide organizations designed to work at the local level, linking federal and state resources to rural and frontier community needs.
- These partners are a true part of your state: 37 SORH are part of a state health department, 10 are part of a state institution of higher learning, and 3 are non-profit organizations.
- SORH provided over 67,000 instances of technical assistance to over 23,000 rural stakeholders in 2018^{xvii}
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, SORH distributed nearly \$150 million to 1,771 rural hospitals, ensuring continued access to care for millions of Americans.
- How to find your partner: Learn more about the SORH by visiting www.nosorh.org

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- ^{xi} Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (2018). Defining rural population. Accessed 9/11/19 from <https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/about-us/definition/index.html>
- ^{xii} Schroeder, S. (2018). Rural communities: Age, income, and health status. Accessed 9/16/19 from <https://www.ruralhealthresearch.org/assets/2200-8536/rural-communities-age-income-health-status-recap.pdf>
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- ^{xiv} Schroeder, S. (2018). Rural communities: Age, income, and health status. Accessed 9/16/19 from <https://www.ruralhealthresearch.org/assets/2200-8536/rural-communities-age-income-health-status-recap.pdf>
- ^{xv} Schroeder, S. (2018). Rural communities: Age, income, and health status. Accessed 9/16/19 from <https://www.ruralhealthresearch.org/assets/2200-8536/rural-communities-age-income-health-status-recap.pdf>
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