



# Policy Research Division – Who We Are and What We Do

November 5, 2019

**Sarah Heppner**  
**Director – Policy Research Division**  
Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP)

**Vision: Healthy Communities, Healthy People**



# FORHP's Section 711 Authority



## OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH POLICY

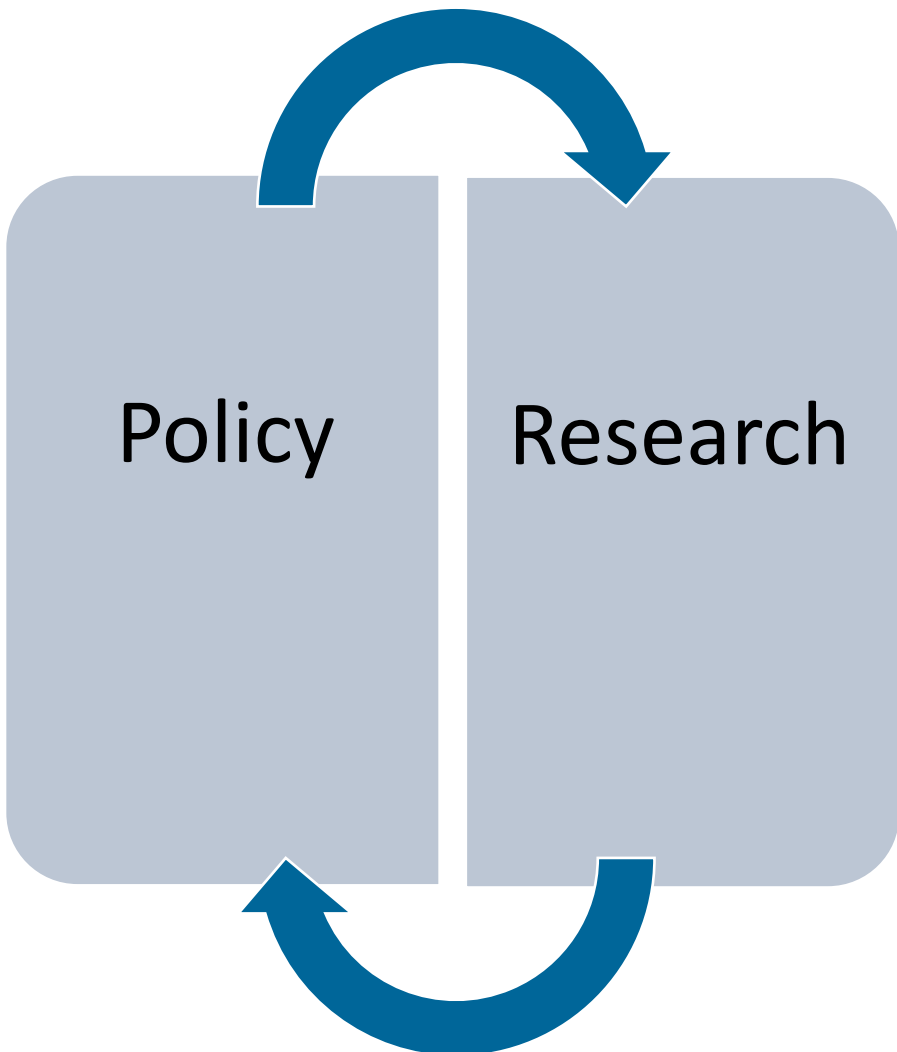
SEC. 711. [42 U.S.C. 912] (a) There shall be established in the Department of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the "Department") an Office of Rural Health Policy (in this section referred to as the "Office"). The Office shall be headed by a Director, who shall advise the Secretary on the effects of current policies and proposed statutory, regulatory, administrative, and budgetary changes in the programs established under titles XVIII and XIX on the financial viability of small rural hospitals, the ability of rural areas (and rural hospitals in particular) to attract and retain physicians and other health professionals, and access to (and the quality of) health care in rural areas.

(b) In addition to advising the Secretary with respect to the matters specified in subsection (a), the Director, through the Office, shall—

- (1) oversee compliance with the requirements of section 1102(b) of this Act and section 4403 of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987<sup>[21]</sup> (as such section pertains to rural health issues),
- (2) establish and maintain a clearinghouse for collecting and disseminating information on—
  - (A) rural health care issues, including rural mental health, rural infant mortality prevention, and rural occupational safety and preventive health promotion,
  - (B) research findings relating to rural health care, and
  - (C) innovative approaches to the delivery of health care in rural area, including programs providing community-based mental health services, pre-natal and infant care services, and rural occupational safety and preventive health education and promotion,
- (3) coordinate the activities within the Department that relate to rural health care,
- (4) provide information to the Secretary and others in the Department with respect to the activities, of other Federal departments and agencies, that relate to rural health care, including activities relating to rural mental health, rural infant mortality, and rural occupational safety and preventive health promotion, and
- (5) administer grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts to provide technical assistance and other activities as necessary to support activities related to improving health care in rural areas.

<sup>[21]</sup> See Vol. II, P.L. 100-203, §4403.





...and also program development

# PRD's Policy Role

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- Inpatient
- Outpatient
- Medicare Advantage
- Health Reform
- Veterans Health
- Mental/Behavioral Health
- Value-Based Care
- Physician/Clinician Payment
- Post Acute Care
- Workforce
- Medicaid Waivers
- Rural Definitions
- Substance Abuse
- Oral Health
- Human/Social Services
- Drugs/340B
- ESRD/DME
- Ambulance/EMS
- Telehealth
- Hospital Closures/Financial Viability
- Data/Research Methods



# PRD's Research Portfolio

## Current Research Centers & Areas of Expertise

### Maine Rural Health Research Center

Health Insurance and the Uninsured, Long Term Services and Supports, Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), Mental Health, Substance Abuse



### North Dakota and NORC Rural Health Reform Policy Research Center

Health Policy, Health Services, Frontier health, Workforce



### North Carolina Rural Health Research and Policy Analysis Center

Medicare, Medicaid and S-CHIP, Healthcare Financing, Health Policy



### RUPRI Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis

Health Policy, Medicare, Medicare Advantage (MA), Health Insurance and the Uninsured, Health Services



### Rural and Underserved Health Research Center

Substance Use Treatment, Primary Care, Emergency Department Access



### Rural Telehealth Research Center

Telehealth, Health Information Technology, Technology



### Rural and Minority Health Research Center

Health Disparities, Minority Health, Health Services



### Southwest Rural Health Research Center

Health Insurance, Maternal and Child Health, Aging, Diabetes, Substance Abuse



### University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center

Quality Measurement and Improvement, Women's Health, Perinatal Care, Aging, Disability, Social Determinants of Health

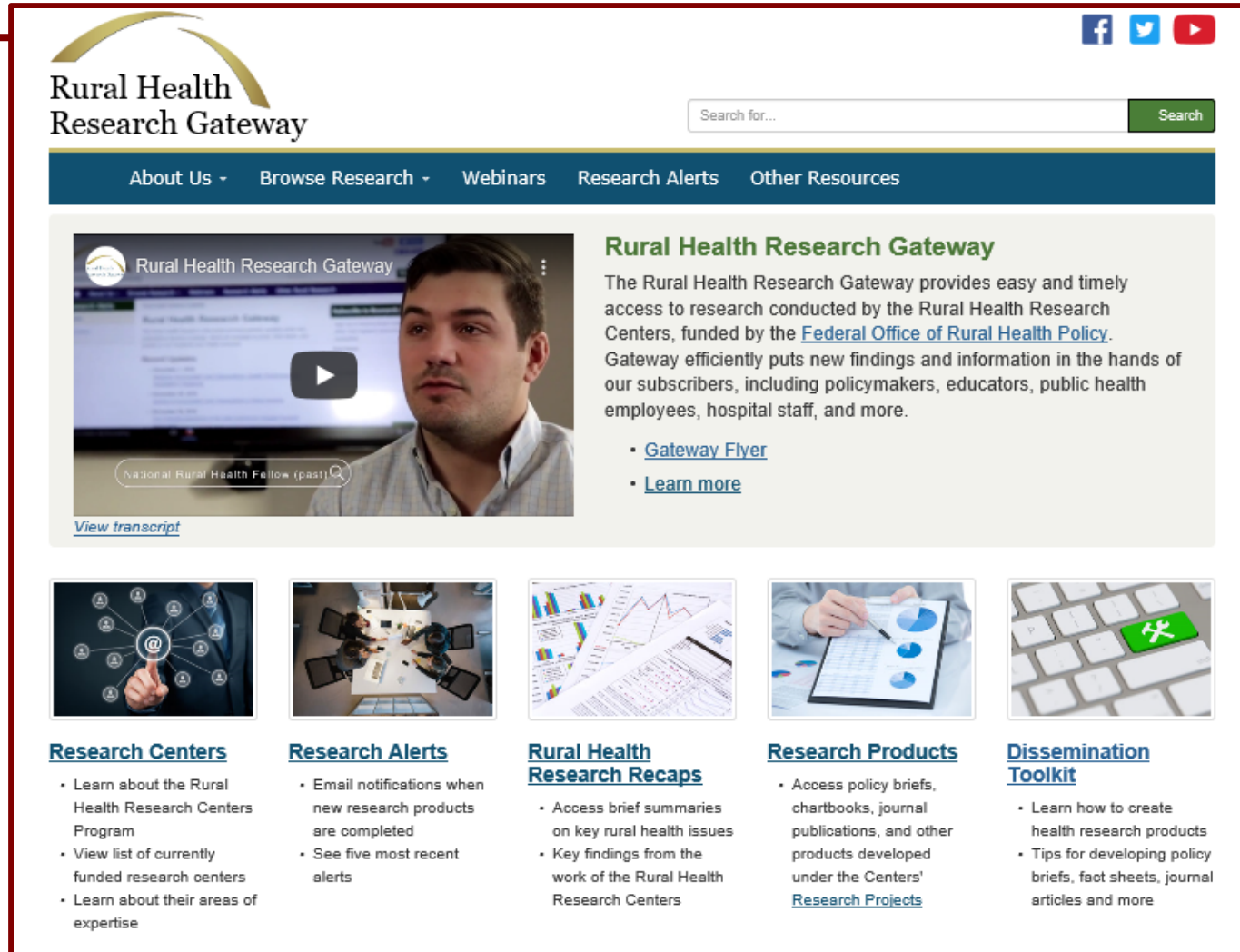


### WWAMI Rural Health Research Center

Workforce, Health Services



# PRD's Research Portfolio



**Rural Health Research Gateway**

Search for...  [Search](#)

[About Us](#) - [Browse Research](#) - [Webinars](#) - [Research Alerts](#) - [Other Resources](#)

**Rural Health Research Gateway**

The Rural Health Research Gateway provides easy and timely access to research conducted by the Rural Health Research Centers, funded by the [Federal Office of Rural Health Policy](#). Gateway efficiently puts new findings and information in the hands of our subscribers, including policymakers, educators, public health employees, hospital staff, and more.

- [Gateway Flyer](#)
- [Learn more](#)

[View transcript](#)

**Research Centers**

- Learn about the Rural Health Research Centers Program
- View list of currently funded research centers
- Learn about their areas of expertise

**Research Alerts**

- Email notifications when new research products are completed
- See five most recent alerts

**Rural Health Research Recaps**

- Access brief summaries on key rural health issues
- Key findings from the work of the Rural Health Research Centers

**Research Products**

- Access policy briefs, chartbooks, journal publications, and other products developed under the Centers' [Research Projects](#)

**Dissemination Toolkit**

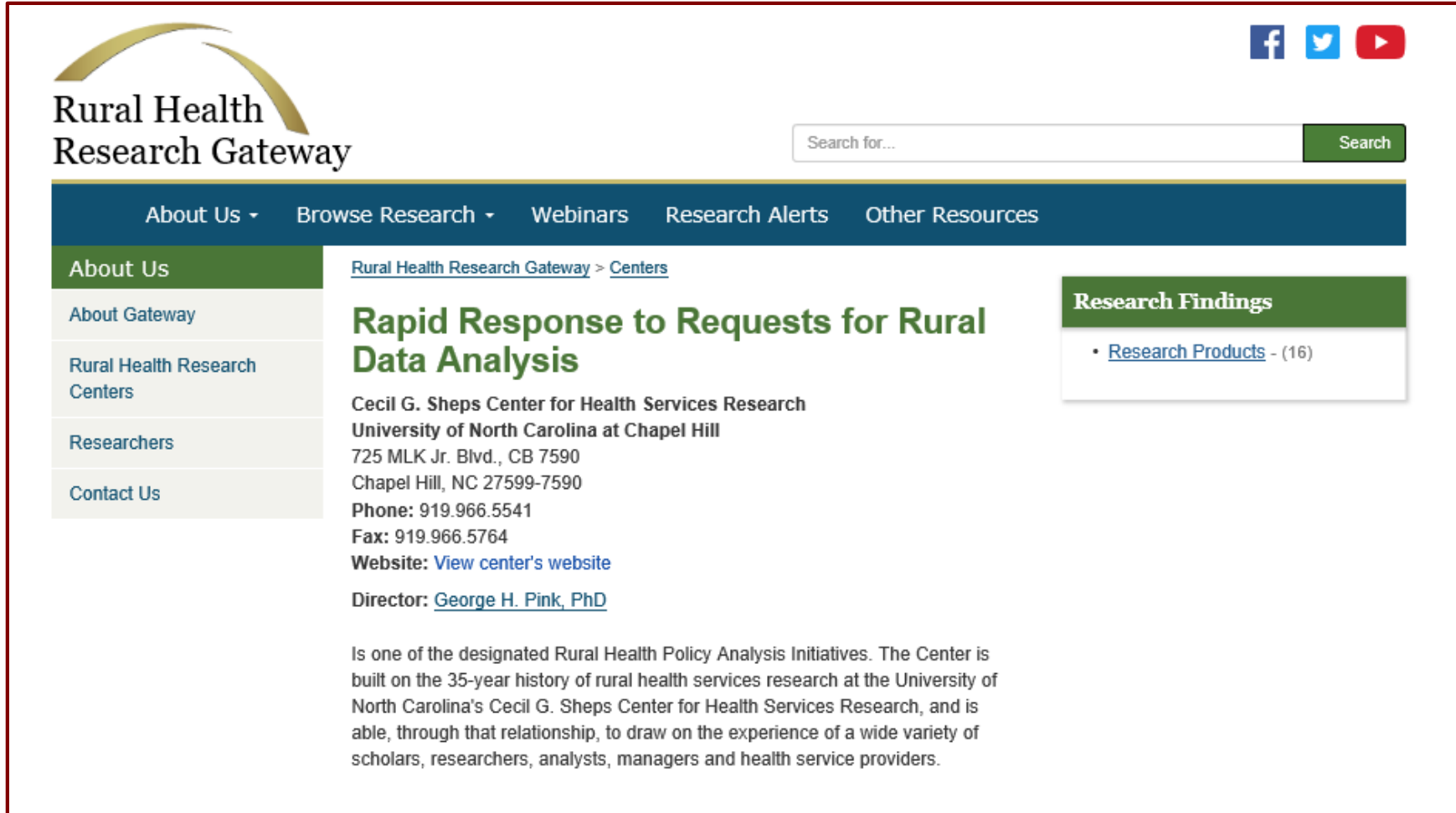
- Learn how to create health research products
- Tips for developing policy briefs, fact sheets, journal articles and more



[www.ruralhealthresearch.org](http://www.ruralhealthresearch.org)



# PRD's Research Portfolio



The screenshot displays the Rural Health Research Gateway website. At the top left is the logo, and at the top right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. A search bar is located in the top right. A dark blue navigation bar contains the following menu items: About Us, Browse Research, Webinars, Research Alerts, and Other Resources. The left sidebar has a green 'About Us' header and links for 'About Gateway', 'Rural Health Research Centers', 'Researchers', and 'Contact Us'. The main content area features a breadcrumb trail 'Rural Health Research Gateway > Centers' and a green header for the article 'Rapid Response to Requests for Rural Data Analysis'. The article text provides contact information for the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, including address, phone, fax, website, and director. A 'Research Findings' sidebar on the right lists 'Research Products - (16)'.

**Rural Health Research Gateway**

Search for... Search

About Us ▾ Browse Research ▾ Webinars Research Alerts Other Resources

About Us

About Gateway

Rural Health Research Centers

Researchers

Contact Us

Rural Health Research Gateway > Centers

## Rapid Response to Requests for Rural Data Analysis

Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
725 MLK Jr. Blvd., CB 7590  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7590  
Phone: 919.966.5541  
Fax: 919.966.5764  
Website: [View center's website](#)  
Director: [George H. Pink, PhD](#)

Is one of the designated Rural Health Policy Analysis Initiatives. The Center is built on the 35-year history of rural health services research at the University of North Carolina's Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, and is able, through that relationship, to draw on the experience of a wide variety of scholars, researchers, analysts, managers and health service providers.

Research Findings

- [Research Products](#) - (16)



# PRD's Research Portfolio



## Rural Health & Economic Development Analysis

**Purpose:** Assist rural communities with expanding the public and policymaker awareness of the importance of the economic impacts of the rural health care sectors on rural, state and national economies

**Awardee:** University of Kentucky

**Highlights:** The awardee will quantify the impact of rural health care, and conduct analyses of the link between the health of the economy in a rural community and the health outcomes of the residents of those communities





# PRD's Research Portfolio

## Rural Policy Analysis & Applications

Navigation tabs: About Health Policy, Panel Members, Panel Documents, Presentations, Comment Letters

### Health Policy

#### The Rural Health Care Landscape Today

The well-known challenges that confront our nation's health care system are compounded in rural America by disproportionately ill and disabled rural citizens, higher poverty rates, lower-income adults, and lower levels of insurance coverage. The rural health care system, in turn, is burdened by under-financed primary care, geographically isolated rural providers, and general health care access challenges.

Despite persistent rural challenges, public policies during the past 3 decades have helped build and stabilize rural health care services. New payments have increased revenue for physicians practicing in shortage areas; rural-specific hospital and clinic designations and payments have addressed place-specific delivery challenges; and federal and state programs have provided technical assistance and grants to rural hospitals, funded installation of rural telemedicine equipment, and promoted rural health professions education.

Many of the current rural-specific payment policies are not likely to be sustained over the long-term, however, and can hinder innovations in delivery that can lead to a sustainable rural place-based delivery system for the future. The RUPRI Health Panel envisions a high performance rural health care system built on the foundations of affordability, accessibility, community focus, high quality, and patient centeredness. These foundations are supported by a robust primary care system that rewards clinical quality, population-based care, and efficient resource utilization.

#### RUPRI Rural Health Panel

RUPRI Rural Health Panel has developed a unique role in providing policy relevant analysis of rural health services delivery to nonprofessional audiences. Since 1993 the Panel has built a particular expertise linking policy suggestions to broader conceptual frameworks. The Panel has received support from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, the US Department of Agriculture, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Leona M and Harry B Helmsley Charitable Trust.

*The RUPRI Health Panel envisions rural health care that is affordable and accessible for rural residents through a sustainable health system that delivers high quality, high value services. A high performance rural health system, informed by the needs of each unique rural community, will lead to greater community health and well.*

AREAS OF WORK

- Analytic & Academic Programs
- Health Policy
- International
- National Policy Programs
- Next Generation
- Poverty & Human Services Policy
- Rural Cultural Wealth Lab
- State Policy

Rural Health Research Gateway

Search for... Search

Navigation: About Us, Browse Research, Webinars, Research Alerts, Other Resources

Left sidebar: About Us, About Gateway, Rural Health Research Centers, Researchers, Contact Us

Breadcrumbs: Rural Health Research Gateway > Centers > RUPRI Health Panel: Rural Policy Analysis and Applications

### RUPRI Health Panel: Rural Policy Analysis and Applications

#### Products

Listed by publication date. You can also view these publications [alphabetically](#).

For a complete list of publications from the Center, which may include older publications and publications funded by other sources, please see the [Center's website](#).

#### 2018

- [Assessing the Unintended Consequences of Health Policy on Rural Populations and Places](#)  
 Report  
 RUPRI Health Panel: Rural Policy Analysis and Applications  
 Date: 12/2018  
 This paper explores the unintended consequences of health policy through an analysis of policy actions that have affected, or had the potential to affect, rural people, places, and/or providers in ways counteractive to policy intent.
- [Insuring Rural America: Health Insurance Challenges and Opportunities](#)  
 Policy Brief  
 RUPRI Health Panel: Rural Policy Analysis and Applications

Right sidebar: Projects (Completed - (2)), Research Findings (Research Products - (11))

**Purpose:** Support research and analysis of key policy issues affecting rural communities that informs policy makers



# PRD's Information Dissemination/TA Portfolio



# Rural Health Information Hub

- Online Library
- Topic & State Guides
- Rural Data Visualizations
- Case Studies & Conversations
- Tools for Success

## RESOURCE & REFERRAL SERVICE

Need help finding information? RHIhub can provide free assistance customized to your needs.

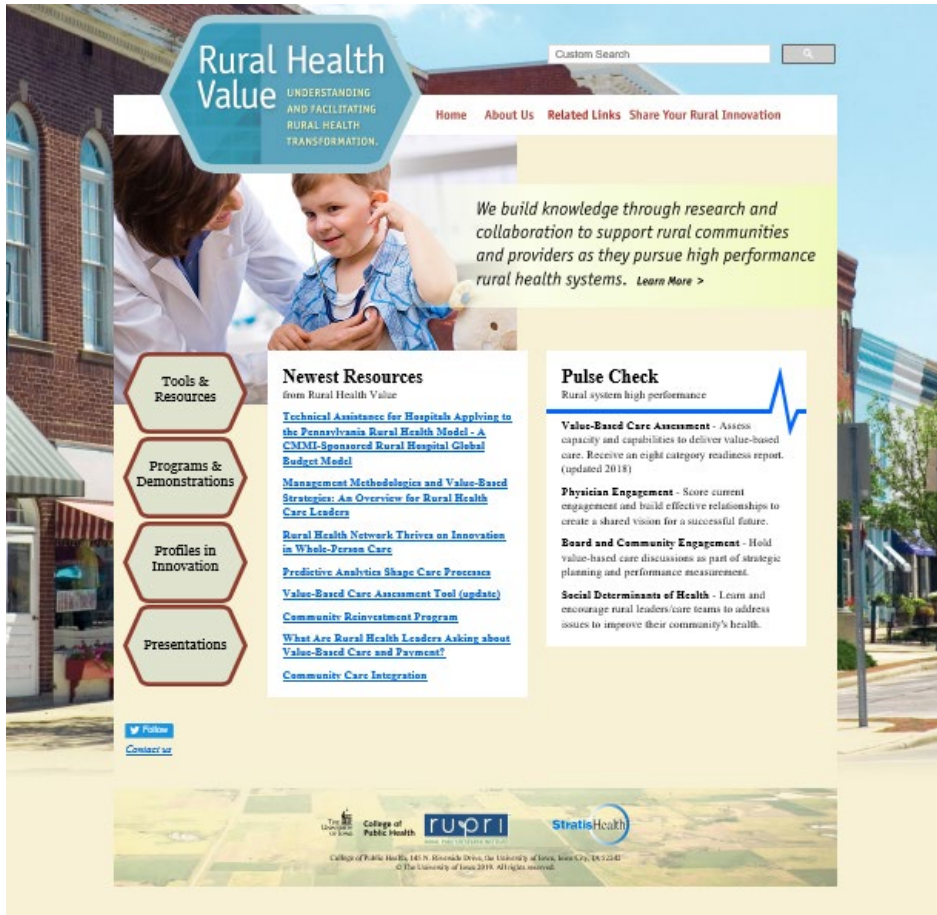
1-800-270-1898

[info@ruralhealthinfo.org](mailto:info@ruralhealthinfo.org)

The screenshot shows the RHIhub website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Updates & Alerts', 'About RHIhub', and 'Contact Us', along with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. A search bar is located on the right side of the navigation bar. Below the navigation bar, there is a main header with the RHIhub logo and the tagline 'Your First Stop for Rural Health Information'. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Get Rural Updates & Alerts' with a keyboard icon and a 'Subscribe' button; 'Find Rural Data' with a map of the United States and a 'Subscribe' button; 'Funding Opportunities' with a dollar sign icon; 'Am I Rural?' with a map of the United States and various rural health organization acronyms; 'What Works in Rural' with a 'Success' sign icon; 'Key Rural Health Issues' with a building icon; 'RHIhub Toolkit' with a ribbon icon; 'The RURAL MONITOR' with a photo of children; and 'News Headlines' with a list of news items. The website is designed with a clean, professional layout and a color scheme of maroon, white, and blue.



# Rural Health Value



- Tools & Resources
- Programs & Demonstrations
- Profiles in Innovation
- Presentations
- Share Your Rural Innovation

<https://ruralhealthvalue.public-health.uiowa.edu/>

# Rural Health Clinic TA

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**Purpose:** Identify key policy, regulatory and clinical challenges facing Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) as well as informing them and other rural stakeholders about key RHC issues

**Awardee:** Capital Associates, Inc.



# NRHA



NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

[www.ruralhealthweb.org](http://www.ruralhealthweb.org)

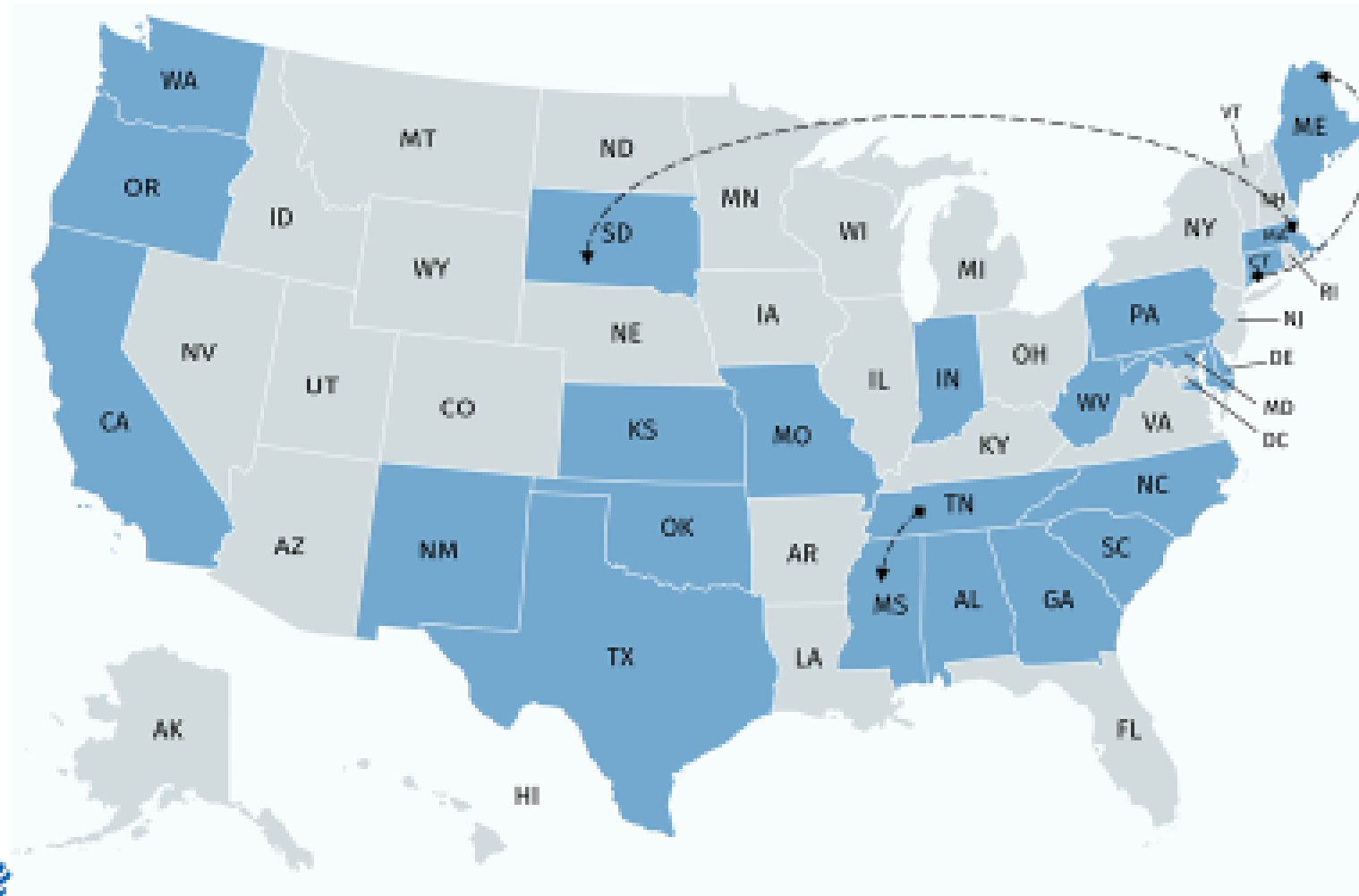
- NRHA is an important partner to FORHP:
  - Educate rural stakeholders
  - Facilitate partnerships and collaborations
  - Provide support to State Rural Health Associations
  - Address key rural health challenges through programs such as:
    - ✓ 3RNet
    - ✓ Agrisafe
    - ✓ Community Health Worker trainings

# PRD's Workforce Portfolio



# RRPD Awardees and Rural Training Sites

## Expanding Rural Residency Programs



The RRPD Program recipients span across 21 states with some partnering with out-of-state rural training sites:

- Massachusetts General Hospital and IHS Rosebud Service Unit in South Dakota
- Meharry Medical College and A.E. Henry Community Health Services Center in the Mississippi Delta
- Quinnipiac University and Northern Maine Medical Center in Fort Kent, ME

