

November 13, 2020

Rural Health Information during COVID-19

Dear Rural Stakeholders,

To continue to have consistent and efficient communication to provide rural health stakeholders with the information needed during this global pandemic, here are updates from the rural health programs at the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH).

As mentioned previously, for critical information relating to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), we recommend that you regularly monitor information on the [Iowa Department of Public Health COVID-19 Page](#). In addition, discover the latest resources, maps and information about the coronavirus (COVID-19) on coronavirus.iowa.gov.

For additional resources and updates, see the following pages. Please reach out for technical assistance and for any questions you may have.

We are an ongoing resource for you.

Best,

Rural Health Programs

Iowa Department of Public Health

For questions, contact:

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Update:

One of Iowa's rural nurses was recognized as part of the WHO's Year of the Nurse and Midwife — and in advance of National Rural Health Day, November 19, 2020 — HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy published this story on rural registered nurses that included an interview with our very own Charlotte Halverson.

Here is the story link:

Here is the 2-part rural nurse story links:

Landing page: <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/rural-monitor/>

Part one: <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/rural-monitor/rural-nurses/> with Halverson's interview.

Part two: <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/rural-monitor/nursing-preparedness/>

Resources:

AHRQ ECHO National Nursing Home COVID-19 Action Network: Offers training for nursing facilities at training centers around the U.S. to implement evidence-based best practices focused on the prevention of COVID-19 from entering and spreading in nursing homes, including early detection, safe and appropriate care, and in reducing social isolation for residents, families, and staff. Eligible nursing facilities may receive federal funding to support the implementation and adoption of quality improvement practices and measures through the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund (PRF). To read more, see [AHRQ ECHO National Nursing Home COVID-19 Action Network](#).

CMS Nursing Home Resource Center: Provides information for nursing home providers and CMS partners on regulations and guidance, training and resources, technical information, payment policy, and recent COVID-19 data and related policies. Includes resources and guidance for people in nursing home and their caregivers. To read more, see [CMS Nursing Home Resource Center](#).

Deaths From COVID-19 in Rural, Micropolitan, and Metropolitan Areas: A County-Level Comparison: Presents a study on the difference in rates of mortality from COVID-19 in rural versus urban areas. Discusses the factors that predict COVID-19 mortality, such as elderly populations and limited access to healthcare, among others. Breaks down data in rural, metropolitan, and micropolitan counties and highlights COVID-19 cases, hospital beds, and unemployment rate, among other mortality measures in those counties. To read more, see [Deaths From COVID-19 in Rural, Micropolitan, and Metropolitan Areas: A County-Level Comparison](#).

Notes from the Field: Development of an Enhanced Community-Focused COVID-19 Surveillance Program — Hopi Tribe, June–July 2020: Describes a collaboration between the Hopi Tribe Department of Health and Human Services, Hopi Health Care Center, and CDC to provide house-to-house COVID-19 surveillance and education in a rural, low-resource setting using community health representatives and volunteers. To read more, see [Notes from the Field: Development of an Enhanced Community-Focused COVID-19 Surveillance Program — Hopi Tribe, June–July 2020](#).

Strategies for the Delivery of Behavioral Health Crisis Services in Rural and Frontier Areas of the U.S.: Report highlights the challenges of providing behavioral health crisis services to rural and frontier communities. Details the barriers to crisis service delivery such as lack of transportation, travel distance, and broadband access, among others. Includes a discussion on the effect of COVID-19 pandemic rural crisis service delivery. To read more, see [Strategies for the Delivery of Behavioral Health Crisis Services in Rural and Frontier Areas of the U.S.](#)

In the News:

Nov 9, 2020 -- [Cultural Traditions Carry American Indians, Alaska Natives Through COVID-19 — and Create Risks:](#) Highlights efforts by the Navajo Nation to combat the spread of COVID-19 in their communities, describes how a combination of health education, curfews, and moving cultural practices to the digital world has decreased cases. Discusses the impact of the pandemic on disparities present in Native American communities.

Nov 9, 2020 -- [Rural Hospitals Are Dying. This One Saved Itself—and Its Community:](#) Features a struggling rural hospital in South Georgia and the CEO that helped turn it around with the help of a seasoned CEO from another rural hospital. After implementing a swing bed program and taking in patients from out of town, the rural hospital improved financially, allowing the hospital to prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nov 4, 2020 -- [Despite COVID-19 Disruptions, Randle Library Works to Help Isolated Veterans:](#) Highlights the Veteran Connection Café, opened by a library in rural Washington in 2019 to provide healthcare and benefit services to veterans. The café closed during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the library continued to offer services by providing veterans with a Chromebook and access to Wi-Fi.