

January 15, 2021

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:

Samra Hiros, MPH

State Office of Rural Health

E-mail: Samra.Hiros@idph.iowa.gov.

Phone: (515) 423-7900



Resources:

Social Media Toolkit: COVID-19 Vaccinations: Offers sample social media messages and graphics to help share information on COVID-19 vaccination. Addresses information on the vaccines, benefits of vaccination, vaccine safety, and what to expect after vaccination. To access, see [Social Media Toolkit: COVID-19 Vaccinations](#).

Con Alma Health Foundation: Health Equity and COVID Relief: First in a [four-week series](#) exploring how philanthropic organizations are helping rural communities address the impacts of COVID-19. This week, Dolores E. Roybal, executive director of Con Alma Health Foundation, discusses how her foundation partnered with other funders to provide almost \$2 million in grants and created an advisory committee of immigrant-led, immigrant-serving organizations to address barriers limiting access to services. To read more, see [Con Alma Health Foundation: Health Equity and COVID Relief](#).

Impacts of COVID-19 on Rural Mental Health: Presentation slides from an American Farm Bureau Federation poll of 2,000 rural adults in December 2020, comparing results to a similar April 2019 poll. Addresses perceived importance of mental health, issues of stigma, impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health, barriers to care, and other mental health topics. Tracks response trends between 2019 and 2020, highlighting consistent aspects of the survey and changes in impressions and experiences. To read more, see [Impacts of COVID-19 on Rural Mental Health](#).

COVID-19 Vaccine Education Effort: Content for Healthcare Providers: Video series for healthcare providers that features physicians and nurses addressing the efficacy and safety of the new vaccines. Covers safety, availability, cost, side effects, vaccine administration, patient education, and more. To read more, see [COVID-19 Vaccine Education Effort: Content for Healthcare Providers](#). Additional links: [Partner Toolkit](#)

COVID-19 Vaccination in Rural Areas: The newest section in the Rural Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) issue guide provides resources to help communities and healthcare providers ensure access to COVID-19 vaccination in rural areas. To read more, see [COVID-19 Vaccination in Rural Areas](#).

One in Three Adults Used Telehealth during the First Six Months of the Pandemic, but Unmet Needs for Care Persisted: Examines the use of telehealth among nonelderly adults during the first 6 months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Explores overall telehealth utilization, patient satisfaction, wanting telehealth services but not receiving them, the share of patients who went without care, and reasons for not using telehealth. Includes data on race/ethnicity, type of insurance coverage, urban or rural residence, health status, and number of chronic conditions. To read more, see [One in Three Adults Used Telehealth during the First Six Months of the Pandemic, but Unmet Needs for Care Persisted](#).

Status of Human Services and Education Funding under Supplemental COVID-19

Packages: Provides an overview of COVID-19 human services and education funding programs and flexibilities. Describes the county's role in the administration of each program, the source and amount of funding, and key administrative flexibilities. To read more, see [Status of Human Services and Education Funding under Supplemental COVID-19 Packages](#).

Vaccine Hesitancy in Rural America: Provides information gathered in surveys and focus groups concerning public opinion about COVID-19 vaccination in rural areas. Features statistics on the percentages of people who intend to get the vaccine, who intend to delay vaccination until they see how well it works in other people, and who fear becoming sick with COVID-19, with breakdowns by urban, suburban, and rural locations. To read more, see [Vaccine Hesitancy in Rural America](#).

In the News:

Jan 12, 2021 -- [Tribal Elders Are Dying from the Pandemic, Causing a Cultural Crisis for American Indians](#): Covers the toll that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on American Indian and Alaska Natives as tribal elders have been disproportionately killed by the disease. Discusses the impact this has on Native language, history, and tradition, highlights efforts to protect elders as a mission of cultural survival.

Jan 11, 2021 -- [HHS Launches Web-Based Locator for COVID-19 Outpatient Treatment Sites for Monoclonal Antibodies](#): The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) maintains a web-based COVID-19 outpatient treatment locator available to assist healthcare providers and patients in finding potential locations for treatment with monoclonal antibody therapeutics. The treatment locator may help reduce the number of people who require hospitalization for COVID-19 care and reduce the strain on hospitals and staff.

Jan 8, 2021 -- [COVID-19 Vaccinations Are Off to A Slow Start — But Not in Some Rural Areas](#): Highlights rural communities that have taken the initiative to successfully distribute the first phase of COVID-19 vaccinations. Discusses how healthcare is historically difficult to access in rural areas, but some rural communities face fewer logistical hurdles and smaller numbers to vaccinate.

Jan 8, 2021 -- [PPP Reopens Jan 11](#): The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced that the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) re-opens January 11, 2021 for new borrowers and certain existing PPP borrowers. This round includes \$284 billion to help small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic address job retention and other expenses through March 31, 2021.

Jan 7, 2021 -- [Why West Virginia's Winning the Race to Get COVID-19 Vaccine into Arms](#): Describes West Virginia's success in delivering the COVID-19 vaccine, putting the state ahead

of other states in terms of distribution. Discusses how they are utilizing existing relationships with independent pharmacies to distribute the vaccine in rural and small communities.

Jan 6, 2021 -- [FCC Seeks Public Input on Administering Round 2 of COVID-19 Telehealth Program](#): The Federal Communications Commission's Wireline Competition Bureau is requesting comments on how to administer Round 2 of the COVID-19 Telehealth Program, seeking input on application evaluation metrics, how the Commission should treat applications filed during the initial funding round, and additional program improvements. Round 2 includes an additional \$249.95 million to help healthcare providers offer telehealth and connected care services. Comments are due by January 19, 2021.

Funding Opportunity:

Broad Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Funding: Funding for patient-centered comparative clinical effectiveness research that can inform clinical decision-making for a range of conditions, populations, and treatments. Special areas of emphasis for the 2021 cycle include 1) increasing access to maternal care; 2) improving care for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities growing into adulthood; and 3) improving outcomes and mitigating health effects of COVID-19. To read more, see [Broad Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute \(PCORI\) Funding](#). Letter of Intent (Required): Feb 2, 2021. Application Deadline: May 4, 2021.