RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION

RURAL HEALTH
RESOURCE GUIDE

CMS CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

CDC

HRSA Health Resources & Services Administration

Supporting rural communities, hospitals, and practitioners.

This resource guide provides an overview of federal programs, federally funded initiatives, and relevant public health resources to support rural health care transformation efforts. It is designed to assist Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program recipients and their partners in strategic planning, program development, implementation, and long-term sustainability. It serves as a practical reference for organizations seeking to identify resources and partnerships that align with their rural health transformation goals.

The intended audience is State Rural Health Transformation Program staff to increase awareness of existing federally supported and Independent public health coalitions and resources. The inclusion of resources in this guide is not intended as a recommendation or endorsement of any resources or products by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources Service Administration, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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Updated July 2026

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Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service (CMS)

CMS is the federal agency that provides health coverage to more than 160 million people through Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and the Health Insurance Marketplace. CMS works in partnership with the entire health care community to improve quality, access to care and outcomes in the health care system.

Office of Rural Health Transformation

Within CMS, the Office of Rural Health Transformation's mission is to lead the national charge in transforming rural healthcare, leveraging American innovation and sustainable payment models to build resilient infrastructure and ensure unwavering access to high-quality care for every citizen in rural America, helping to Make America Healthy Again.

The Office of Rural Health Transformation provides for oversight, technical assistance and support for State recipients of the Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program. Through innovative system-wide change, the RHT Program invests in the rural healthcare delivery ecosystem for future generations. CMS's RHT Program frequently asked questions for State partners regarding program awards can be found here. Additional information about RHT Program goals, structure, use of funds, eligibility, and other awardee details can be found on the CMS RHT Program website.

Health Resources and Services Administration

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) programs provide health care to people who are geographically isolated and economically or medically vulnerable. This includes programs that deliver health services to people with HIV, pregnant women, mothers and their families, those with low incomes, residents of rural areas, American Indians and Alaska Natives, and those otherwise unable to access high-quality health care. HRSA programs also support health infrastructure, including

through training of health professionals and distributing them to areas where they are needed most, providing financial support to health care providers, and advancing telehealth. In addition, HRSA oversees programs for providing discounts on prescription drugs to safety net providers, facilitating organ, bone marrow, and cord blood transplantation, compensating individuals injured by vaccination, and maintaining data on health care malpractice payments.

The sections within this guide include information about the relevant State or community level funding that could complement RHT Program activities. The HRSA Data Warehouse Fact Sheets highlight the funded programs within each State.

Federal Office Rural Health Policy

Within HRSA, the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) is charged with advising the HHS Secretary on how rural health care is affected by current policies as well as proposed statutory, regulatory, administrative, and budgetary changes in the Medicare, Medicaid and other key HHS programs.

FORHP works to strengthen health care delivery systems in rural communities by supporting access to high-quality, coordinated care for the approximately 61 million Americans who live in rural areas. Through grant funding, technical assistance, research, and policy analysis, FORHP helps rural providers, hospitals, and community-based organizations improve health outcomes and address the unique challenges facing rural populations. The office also collaborates with federal partners, States, and national organizations to advance innovative solutions that enhance access to care and improve health outcomes.

One component of FORHP's work is funding the State Offices of Rural Health (SORH) Program. The SORH serves as primary focal point for rural health within each State, sharing information and resources with rural providers and serving as a voice for rural communities at the State level. Many SORHs are actively engaged and in some cases leading RHT Program efforts. If the RHT Program leads haven't yet connected in with the SORH in their State, they are a great resource for sharing information about rural health issues and connecting rural health providers within the State. Contact info for State SORH.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CDC is the nation's leading science-based, data-driven, service organization that protects the public's health. CDC works 24/7 to protect America from health, safety and security threats, both foreign and in the U.S.

CDC Office of Rural Health

CDC's Office of Rural Health (ORH) advances the best available rural public health science and evidence-based practices through a coordinated, transparent, and strategic approach across CDC and in partnership with rural-serving organizations and public health systems. The Office developed and leads implementation of CDC's Rural Public Health Strategic Plan, which guides the agency's rural-focused programs and research. The plan outlines key priorities and objectives for improving the public health system in rural areas and outcomes that illustrate what CDC hopes to achieve.

Rural Health Safety Net

While there are other types of facilities in rural areas, these are some key federally designated health care provider types that make up a key part of the rural safety net. There are links to show where the sites are located.

The State Offices of Rural Health are great connectors to the Rural Health Clinics, Critical Access Hospitals, and Rural Emergency Hospitals within a State.

- **Rural Health Clinics (RHCs):** Certified to receive special Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement, these clinics must be in rural, underserved areas and staffed by NPs, PAs, or certified nurse midwives.
    - HRSA Data Warehouse Build Your Own Map – search for *Facilities, Providers,* Sites of *Services/Clinicians* at *Rural Health Clinics*
- **Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs):** Small, rural hospitals with 25 or fewer beds, focusing on emergency and acute care.
    - Critical Access Hospital Locations List | Flex Monitoring Team

- **Rural Emergency Hospitals (REHs):** A new facility designation that allows rural hospitals to convert to an emergency-only model, reducing inpatient capacity to stay open.
    - Rural Emergency Hospitals - Sheps Center

The Primary Care Association is a great connector for Health Centers within a State.

- Health Centers: HRSA's health centers provide comprehensive primary care, mental health, and dental services in underserved rural or urban areas. One in five rural residents gets their health care from health center. The health centers get grants from HRSA to offset the cost of the uninsured. Many health center grantees have multiple access points and while the grantee may be in an urban area they may have rural locations.
    - Quick Maps - Health Center Grantees and Service Delivery Sites

Improving Rural Health Service Delivery

The programs and resources highlighted in this guide are free and accessible to rural communities. Note – see rural CDC resources in the Appendix.

Rural Health Information Hub (RHI Hub)

As an information clearinghouse on rural health issues, RHI Hub provides access to a wide range of resources on relevant topics (see Topic Guides and Models and Innovations Hub). RHI Hub is funded by funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy at HRSA.

There are also Evidence-Based Toolkits related to RHT Program topics that may be useful to assist States in implementing initiatives:

- Making Rural America Healthy Again
    - Rural Community Health
    - Chronic Disease Management
    - Early Childhood Health Promotion
    - Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

    - Aging in Place
    - Mental Health
    - Maternal Health
    - Substance Use Disorders Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery
- Sustainable Access
    - Emergency Preparedness
- Workforce Development
    - Community Paramedicine
- Tech Innovation
    - Telehealth

1. Rural Health Value
   A national initiative funded by FORHP at HRSA that provides technical assistance to support rural healthcare organizations, payers, and communities transition from volume-based to value-based health care and payment models.

2. 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 at HRSA. Gateway efficiently puts new findings and information in the hands of our subscribers, including policymakers, educators, public health employees, hospital staff, and more. The Rural Health Research Gateway also has contact information for all the researchers, who are often subject matter experts in their State and on specific rural health issues.

   For example, the North Carolina Center has a heavy focus on rural hospital financial viability. Researchers from NORC/East Tennessee have published widely on rural hospital bypass. The University of Washington center has a heavy focus on rural workforce issues. The researchers can be a resource to CMS project officers and to States.

3. Georgia Health Policy Center
   This entity works supports community-based grantees from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy and has subject matter expertise in most of the community health focus areas that are in the transformation proposals. They also have tools for sustaining community health projects.

4. Rural Health Clinic (RHC) TA Center
   This entity provides an ongoing series of webinars to support rural health clinics on regulatory, clinical and operational issues. Past webinars are archived and accessible to the public.

5. National Rural Health Association
   This national organization represents hospitals, clinics, community health stakeholders and researchers. They have projects underway for community health workers, rural hospital financial technical assistance through a USDA grant and a rural aging initiative through a partnership with the John A. Hartford Foundation. Programming efforts include:

   a. The State Rural Health Associations are a resource for connecting with key rural health partners at the State level across the country.

   b. The Rural Community Health Worker Training Academy work spans training programs along the Southwestern part of the United States and other regions across the country in support of various training curriculums and partnerships for CHWs.

   c. The Rural Community Health Initiative program supports innovations in rural communities beyond the four walls of a hospital to support innovation and sustainability.

   d. The National Rural Age-Friendly Initiative is a collaboration between The John A. Hartford Foundation and the National Rural Health Association to develop resources, partnerships, and strategies to build age-friendly care for the one in five older adults living in rural geographies.

   e. The National Rural Oral Health Initiative is the combined effort of the National Rural Health Association and the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health to improve oral health disparities amongst rural Americans. The efforts of the combined organizations focus on Policy, Communications, Education, and Research; to help spread awareness and prioritize person centered care across the board.

   f. The Rural Medical Education Group is a special interest group of NRHA committed to advancing the training of physicians for rural practice through network development and policy.

   g. The Rural Hospital Technical Assistance is a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through which NRHA provides several types of assistance to rural hospitals selected in collaboration with

USDA. TA services are provided under contract with NRHA by selected contractors who specialize in various types of services tailored for rural hospitals.

Supporting Rural Hospitals

Statewide Hospital Programs

FORHP funds statewide programs that support hospital capacity building, run through the State Offices of Rural Health. State RHT staff can connect with State Flex Program leads to learn more about rural hospital issues and data and get connected in with rural hospitals, as needed.

- The Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program supports Critical Access Hospitals to improve rural health care quality, hospital financial and operations, emergency medical services, and the health of rural populations. The 45 States with CAHs receive funds (States without CAHs do not receive funds – NJ, MD, CT, RI, DE).
- The Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program supports small rural hospitals (those 49 beds or fewer as well as Critical Access Hospitals) with funding to improve operations (4 States (those without eligible hospitals) do not receive funds – NJ, CT, RI, DE).

Programs with Direct Support of Hospitals

There are several direct hospital technical assistance programs available for hospitals. Some are National and some are regional. The FORHP Rural Hospital and Rural Health Clinic Technical Assistance Finder assists hospitals and clinics in determining which programs are available to them. FORHP can work with CMS Project Officers to share more information on which hospitals have been supported and how to best then share that information with the state in a way that protects the privacy of the hospital or clinic.

Nationwide Programs

1. Rural Emergency Hospital (REH) Technical Assistance Center (TAC)

- Provides resources and 1:1 TA to ensure rural hospitals and the communities they serve have the information and resources needed to make informed decisions about Rural Emergency Hospital conversion.
- Helps hospitals and communities understand community health needs and how to keep needed health care local.
- TA includes market assessment, REH exploration, and post-conversion REH assistance.
- Rural hospitals nationwide are eligible.

2. Rural Hospital Stabilization Program

- Supports 8-10 rural hospitals per year to enhance and/or expand service lines.
- Helps hospitals retain health care services locally and increase service volume and revenue that will enhance hospitals' financial viability.
- Hospitals receive TA for 15-24 months.
- TA includes financial consultation, market assessment, service line assessment, financial support for new or expanded services, and quality consultation.
- Rural hospitals nationwide are eligible.

3. Targeted Technical Assistance for Rural Hospitals Program

- Supports 4-6 rural hospitals per year to help maintain access to healthcare services in rural areas.
- Helps hospitals and communities understand community health needs and how to keep needed health care local.
- Hospitals receive TA for 24 months.
- TA includes financial consultation, market assessment, quality consultation and virtual education.
- Rural hospitals nationwide are eligible.

4. Rural Healthcare Provider Transition Project

- Supports 4-6 rural hospitals/rural health clinics per year in strengthening their foundation in key elements of value-based care: quality, efficiency, patient experience and patient safety.
- Hospitals/clinics receive TA for 24 months.

- TA includes financial consultation, quality consultation, value-based care guidance and virtual education.
- Rural hospitals and RHCs nationwide are eligible.

Regional Programs

1. Delta Region Community Health Systems Development (DRCHSD) Program | National Rural Health Resource Center

   - Supports 10 rural hospitals/rural health clinics per year health care organizations in rural communities in the Mississippi Delta region.
   - Hospitals/clinics receive TA for 36 months.
   - TA includes financial consultation, quality consultation, financial support for new or expanded services, market assessment, peer learning and virtual education.
   - Rural hospitals and RHCs in the Mississippi Delta region are eligible.

2. Appalachian Region Health Care Support Program

   - Supports 6 rural hospitals/rural health clinics per year health care organizations in rural communities in the Appalachian region.
   - Hospitals/clinics receive TA for 12-18 months.
   - TA includes financial consultation, quality consultation, and financial support for new or expanded services.
   - Rural hospitals and RHCs in the Appalachian region are eligible.

Resources for Rural Hospitals

These resources could be useful for informing strategies for hospital sustainability around quality, finance, and operations. These resources are developed from the expertise in supporting CAH improvement efforts through the State Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program work.

1. National Rural Health Resource Center/Technical Assistance Services Center
   This federally funded entity provides technical assistance to the 45 States that are part of the Rural Hospital Flexibility Program and has toolkits and other resources related to Critical Access Hospital Improvement work.

2. Rural Quality Improvement Technical Assistance Center
   Resources for hospitals quality issues related to using data, measurement and improvement. As Transformation Plans focus on improving quality, building on this work may help with showing clinical impact.

3. Sustaining Rural Labor and Delivery Programs
   A FORHP funded resource to ensure hospitals have the most accurate and complete financial analysis when evaluating the sustainability of labor and delivery programs.

4. Critical Access Hospital Research and Data

   a. Policy briefs related to issues and successful interventions on hospital quality, finances, operations, EMS and population health – through the Flex Monitoring Team.

   b. CAHs and State Flex Program directors use a data system that helps CAHs use data to develop strategies to improve performance. FORHP can work with CMS Project Officers to identify to share data.

5. Rural Hospital Financial Distress Index: Relative Risk in 2025
   The Financial Distress Index (FDI) uses historical data about hospital financial performance, government reimbursement, organizational characteristics, and market characteristics to predict the probability of rural hospital financial distress within two years. The model assigns every rural hospital to one of four financial risk categories: highest, mid-highest, mid-lowest, or lowest. This infographic shows a U.S. map of the number and percent of rural hospitals within each state at highest relative financial distress risk in 2025. FORHP can work with CMS Project Officers to identify the best way to gain access to this information at an individual hospital level through a process that protects the privacy of the individual hospital.

Enhancing Maternal and Child Health

Programs to States and communities

Why these matter – these are existing programs that support efforts for maternal and child health at the State and community level. State RHT Program leads can connect in

with these existing experts to enhance and complement the work of RHT Program. Many of the links below will have information for contact info at the State level, but please email forhp@hrsa.gov if you are not finding what you need and we can determine what additional info can be provided.

1. Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant
   In all 59 States and jurisdictions, State departments of health determine their priorities and best approaches to improving health care services and systems for women and mothers.

2. Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Services (MIECHV)
   Through voluntary home visiting services, uses proven methods to support pregnant women and parents with young children who live in communities that face greater risks and barriers to achieving positive maternal and child health outcomes.

3. Healthy Start
   Through a community-based approach, improves a woman's health before, during, and after pregnancy and aims to ensure their babies are healthy and reach their first birthday.

4. State Maternal Health Innovation Program
   States collaborate with maternal health experts to address health disparities and improve outcomes, with a particular emphasis on preventing severe maternal illness and death.

5. Integrated Maternal Health Services
   Creates and test models that integrate clinical care, behavioral health care, and social services for women who are underserved.

6. Pediatric Mental Health Care Access Program
   Helps pediatric health professionals with consultation, training, resources, and referrals to effectively add behavioral health to routine checkups. Find the Teleconsultation Phone Line available free of charge for practicing providers in your State.

7. Screening and Treatment for Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders
   Expands health care providers' ability to screen, assess, treat, and refer pregnant and postpartum women for depression and related disorders.

8. Rural Maternity and Obstetrics Management Strategies Program
   Funds networks to coordinate the continuum of care, leveraging telehealth and specialty care and improving financial sustainability of maternal health services. A

website (which will be further populated) houses resources to help build networks, implement innovative strategies, and use data to improve maternal health outcomes in rural communities. FORHP is happy to share internal initial evaluation findings with CMS Project Officers who have States with a significant focus on rural maternal health projects.

9. National Maternal Mental Health Hotline (1-833-TLC-MAMA)
   Provides 24/7, free, confidential support before, during, and after pregnancy.

10. Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) Initiative
    State-based teams support safe maternal care to reduce severe maternal illness and deaths in hospitals, community-based organizations, and outpatient clinical settings.

11. Sustaining Rural Labor and Delivery Programs
    A FORHP funded resource to ensure hospitals have the most accurate and complete financial analysis when evaluating the sustainability of labor and delivery programs.

12. Hospital Based State by State OB Chartbook
    Report on the availability of hospital based obstetric services across the US from 2010-2023 to provide national, State and county specific information in changes in obstetric care access.

Increasing Access to Primary care

Health Centers serve 1 in 5 people living in rural communities (9.9M patients in rural areas). In 2024, HRSA provided more than $1.9 billion in ongoing Health Center Program funding to over 560 health centers in rural areas.

To locate a health center in your area, please visit: Find a Health Center.

Through HRSA's Health Center Program, additional State, regional and national level resource can complement and collaborate around RHPT goals.

1. Primary Care Associations
   Primary Care Associations are State and regional nonprofit organizations. They work with health centers to best meet the needs of the community health centers serve. They help health centers adapt to changes in the health care environment. They train and help health centers to:
   - Increase access to primary care
   - Fast-track value-based care delivery
   - Foster a health center workforce
   - Enhance emergency preparedness and response
   - Advance clinical quality and performance

2. National Technical Assistance Programs
   National Technical Assistance Programs (NTAPs) develop, deliver, coordinate, and evaluate technical assistance (TA) for existing and potential Health Center Program grantees and Look-alikes. NTAPs assist health centers in improving fiscal health, engaging in effective workforce development, using health information technology, and providing health care services. This often includes learning collaboratives, webinars, live training, learning modules, online articles, newsletters, toolkits, and fact sheets.

3. Health Center Controlled Networks
   Health Center Controlled Networks (HCCNs) work with PCAs and NTAPs. They provide specialized training and technical assistance to leverage economies of scale, including group purchasing power, shared training, and data analytics to support quality measurement and improvement. HCCNs helped accelerate the adoption of electronic health records among health centers, with more than 98 percent of health centers currently using them across all sites and for all providers. More recent efforts have supported health centers in adopting integrated care models, using health IT for patient engagement, and tracking data to demonstrate the achievement of value-based care.

4. Health Center Resource Clearinghouse
   Provides training resources and technical assistance tools to support operational excellence for health centers. Resources aligned with RHT Program initiatives:
   - Value-Based Health Care | Health Center Resource Clearinghouse
   - Workforce | Health Center Resource Clearinghouse

- HIT/Data | Health Center Resource Clearinghouse

5. Chronic Disease Director (National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, NACDD)
   Member organization of State and Territorial Health Department Chronic Disease Directors and their staff who protect the health of the public through primary and secondary prevention efforts and work upstream on root causes of chronic conditions. In addition, NACDD unites 7,000 chronic disease professionals across the United States working in State, tribal, and territorial health departments, nonprofits, academia, and the private industry to promote health and to reduce the burden of chronic disease.

Advancing Telehealth

The Office for the Advancement of Telehealth works to improve access to quality health care and enhance outcomes through telehealth services. These are links to very useful resources and experts to help support telehealth use, services, equipment and licensing.

1. Multi-Discipline Licensure Resource Project
   A centralized occupational licensure compact hub that highlights how multiple health professions use interstate compacts to improve licensure portability.

2. Provider Bridge
   A tool that helps health care providers navigate State licensure requirements.

3. Telehealth.HHS.gov
   A resource is for patients, providers, and policymakers that delivers trusted information on telehealth best practices, policy and regulatory updates, reimbursement guidance, funding opportunities, and upcoming events.

4. National Telehealth Policy Resource Center
   A national center focused on telehealth policy, offering guidance on federal and State policies, regulations, and emerging issues that affect telehealth implementation.

5. National Telehealth Technology Resource Center
   A national center focused on telehealth technology, providing guidance on telehealth platforms, cybersecurity, interoperability, and emerging technologies.

6. Regional Telehealth Resource Centers
   A network that provides expert and customized telehealth technical assistance including individual consultations, trainings, webinars, and presentations to support telehealth adoption.

7. Telehealth Centers of Excellence
   Centers that advance innovation and evidence-based telehealth practices by developing and disseminating resources in collaboration with health care organizations, researchers, providers, and other stakeholders.

8. Telehealth Broadband Project
   A resource that shares lessons learned from the Telehealth Broadband Pilot Program, including broadband mapping tools, speed test data, and technical assistance resources to support reliable connectivity for telehealth.

Strengthening the Rural Health Workforce

Education and Training Grant Programs

These grants provide support to awardees to establish training and development programs.

1. Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program (THCGME)
   Focuses on getting physicians to underserved and rural areas by supporting residency programs in community-based primary care settings.

2. Rural Residency Planning and Development Program
   Funds the establishment of new residency programs in various medical fields, aiming to reduce physician shortages in rural areas. Sites interested in this program can connect with Rural Graduate Medical Education TA Providers to get assistance in the application process. Several States have proposed creating rural residency programs. FORHP and RuralGME can share with CMS project officers a list of rural hospitals that are eligible for Medicare support once they reach accreditation.

3. Behavioral Health Workforce Development Programs
   Improves access to behavioral health and substance use services in rural and

underserved areas by focusing on community-based training, utilizing health support workers, and integrating behavioral health into primary care.

Resources

1. Area Health Education Centers
   Improves access to health care through academic-community partnerships and provides clinical training experience in rural and underserved communities.

2. Health Workforce Data, Tools, and Dashboards
   Access data and information on Health Workforce programs, including loan and scholarship awards, and grant funding for rural health professions training.

3. HRSA Health Workforce Connector
   Free online database and search tool that connects clinicians to job opportunities, training, and NHSC or Nurse Corps-approved sites in underserved and rural communities.

4. Virtual Job Fairs
   Free online events linking primary care trainees and clinicians with job opportunities, including those in rural areas. During the job fair, you can learn about medical, nursing, dental, and behavioral health job openings directly from health care facilities. Sign up to receive notifications from our virtual job fairs team.

5. 3RNET
   The National Rural Recruitment & Retention Network is a national non-profit organization that serves as a web-based recruitment tool that connects healthcare professionals with job opportunities in rural and underserved communities, while also assisting employers in recruiting and retaining health professionals. States focusing on these issues may benefit from leveraging 3RNet's experience, tools and resources.

Supporting Behavioral Health

Grant Programs

- The Rural Community Opioids Response Program funds a variety of grant programs each year to prevent, treat and support recovery for opioid use disorders, substance use disorders and behavioral health needs.

- CDC's Overdose to Action Resources supports jurisdictions in implementing prevention activities and in collecting accurate, comprehensive, and timely data on nonfatal and fatal overdoses and in using those data to enhance programmatic and surveillance efforts. Resources on best practices for planning, implementing and evaluation of opioid use prevention and treatment.

Resources

- Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) Technical Assistance Center: Through JBS International, this program provides a variety of support to the roughly 900 grantees of the Rural Community Opioids Response program. They have expertise in SUD treatment, prevention and recovery.

- Through the RCORP program, HRSA administers the Centers of Excellence program focusing on recovery housing, hub and spoke model dissemination and abuse of synthetic substances. These entities are funded to provide their expertise to the public.

- CDC's Suicide Prevention Resource for Action details the strategies with the best available evidence to reduce suicide. The Prevention Resource can help States and communities prioritize suicide prevention activities most likely to have an impact. The programs, practices, and policies in the Prevention Resource can be tailored to the needs of rural populations and communities.

- Safe States addresses injury, violence and behavioral health topics and collaborates with federal, State and public health organizations to advance healthy communities.

Appendix A: Additional Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Resources

The resources listed in this Appendix include additional links to CDC resources for further reference. Please note, this is not a comprehensive list of resources available at CDC.

1. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
   CDC works to improve the health of rural communities by advancing the best rural public health science and practices through a coordinated, transparent, and strategic approach.

Mapping Tools

- **Rural Health Mapping Tool** integrates several measures of health and prosperity into a single tool, providing a more detailed picture of the well-being of rural communities. With this tool, users can observe the data for their county, State, and the country for a range of health and other factors, including the leading causes of death, sociodemographic factors, and physical environment. This resource was funded by CDC, in partnership with NORC

- **CDC's Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke** is an online mapping tool that allows users to examine the burden of heart disease in communities across the US. The Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke training video teaches users how to explore rural-urban patterns in communities.

- **CDC's National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network** provides information from a nationwide network of health and environmental data to drive actions and improve health. Its Data Explorer has county classification as a two-category and six-category rural-urban scale.

- **Chronic Disease Indicators Tool** provides standardized State-level estimates for key chronic disease measures to help explore patterns and compare trends across

communities. It provides accessible visualizations and downloadable data to support planning, communication, and decision-making in rural and urban public health settings.

Data

- **CDC's WONDER (Wide-ranging Online Data for Epidemiologic Research)** is a menu-driven system that makes a wide array of CDC's information resources available to public health professionals and the public.
- **CDC's Health, United States Program** presents an overview of national health trends organized around four subject areas: health status and determinants, utilization of health resources, healthcare resources, and healthcare expenditures and payers.
- **CDC's Open Data** is a centralized data portal where users can find, filter, and visualize public health datasets of various topics. With an account, users can save and customize visualizations, access data relevant to their role, and engage with interactive tools.
- **CDC's PLACES: Local Data for Better Health** is a data platform that provides model-based estimates for chronic disease measures at the county, place, and census tract level to support local public health planning. Users can access the data through an online portal to explore community health metrics and download datasets for rural-focused analysis.
- **CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties** is a standardized system for categorizing counties to support consistent comparisons between rural and urban populations in public health analyses. Users can access classification definitions and supporting data directly through the CDC website for use in research and reporting.
- **CDC's Rural Health Science Tips Sheets** helps ensure research findings are accurate, relevant, and actionable for promoting health in both rural and urban communities.
- **CDC's Tribal Public Health Data** is a resource hub that provides information on accessing CDC data, along with tools, training, and technical assistance to support tribal health efforts. Users can access guidance documents, data request tools, and partner resources through the online portal to support public health research, planning, and decision-making for American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

Program, Guidance, and Communication Resources

Accessible Care

Occupational Health

- **CDC's Total Worker Health** promotes a holistic approach to worker wellbeing that integrates traditional occupational safety with broader health strategies. Users will find program guidance, research, and practical tools available for employers and public health practitioners.
- **Health Worker Mental Health** initiative highlights mental health challenges among healthcare workers and offers organizational strategies and additional tools to foster supportive work environments.
- **School Employee Wellness** helps school districts create supportive environments for employee wellbeing through policies, programs, and system-level approaches.

School Based Programs

- CDC's **Healthy Schools** page supports schools in implementing evidence-based policies and practices that promote student and staff health. Users can explore topics ranging from nutrition and physical activity to chronic disease management.
- **Adolescent School Health** provides data, tools, and evidence-based strategies to support adolescent health across school and community settings, with a focus on behaviors, environments, and policies that shape youth well-being. Users will find topic pages on mental health, protective factors, school-based approaches, and related data sources.
- **School Health Services** outlines the roles of school nurses and other qualified professionals in delivering preventive care, chronic disease management, emergency response, and care coordination for students. Users can explore guidance on managing chronic conditions, engaging families, and strengthening school health infrastructure.

Disease Prevention

Cancer Prevention and Treatment

- **National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR)** is a CDC program that collects data on cancer incidence, treatment, and outcomes across the United States. Users can learn about the program and access resources through the CDC website, including tools that support cancer data collection and reporting.

Diabetes

- **CDC's National Diabetes Prevention Program** is a nationwide initiative that helps prevent or delay type 2 diabetes through evidence-based lifestyle change programs focused on healthy eating, physical activity, and behavior change. Users can access program information, eligibility criteria, and resources through the online portal, including tools to find local or virtual programs and educational materials for participants and organizations.

Heart Disease

- **CDC's Heart Disease Prevention** page provides guidance on reducing cardiovascular risk through lifestyle changes, clinical management, and evidence-based public health strategies. Users will find prevention tips, risk factor information, and links to related cardiovascular health resources such as data tools and educational campaigns.

- **Million Hearts' Tools and Protocols** is a resource hub that provides evidence-based tools, treatment protocols, and action guides to support cardiovascular disease prevention and improve patient outcomes. Users can access and download resources through the online portal, including standardized clinical protocols, quality improvement tools, and practical guides to help healthcare providers educate, monitor, and manage heart health.

Obesity Prevention

- **CDC's Obesity Prevention** page summarizes actions individuals, communities, schools, and health systems can take to address obesity using evidence-based approaches. Users can find interventions, implementation guidance, detailed resources and data available on this site.

- **High Obesity Program (HOP)** CDC's HOP is a 5-year cooperative agreement to fund 16 land-grant universities to work with community extension services. HOP works in primarily rural areas where 40% or more of adults have obesity.

- **School based approaches**: This page provides guidance for supporting healthy eating, physical activity, and chronic disease prevention in K – 12 school settings. Resources are tailored for school administrators, educators, and public health partners with additional school health tools available throughout the CDC Healthy Schools webpages.

Overdose Prevention

- **CDC's Overdose Prevention** site offers national surveillance data, evidence-based prevention strategies, clinical tools, and community resources focused on reducing overdose deaths.

Smoking and Tobacco Prevention

- **CDC's Smoking and Tobacco Use** site provides comprehensive information on commercial tobacco products, health impacts, quitting support, and population-level prevention strategies. Users can find educational materials, data, policy resources, and cessation tools.

Stroke Prevention

- **CDC's Stroke Prevention** page outlines risk factors, prevention behaviors, and clinical recommendations to reduce stroke risk in communities. Users can find educational materials and links to supporting data and additional resources.

Health Promotion

Physical Activity

- **Active People, Healthy Nation** is a nationwide initiative aimed at increasing physical activity across the United States to improve health outcomes and quality of life. Users can access the online portal to explore evidence-based strategies, data, tools, and resources that support communities, organizations, and individuals in promoting physical activity and building more active healthy environments.

Population Health

Maternal Health

- **Perinatal Quality Collaboratives** – PQCs work at the State level to improve the quality of care for mothers and babies. State PQCs can be found here.
- **CDC's Hear Her Campaign** is a national maternal health initiative that raises awareness of urgent pregnancy-related warning signs and promotes communication between patients and providers to help prevent pregnancy-related deaths. Users can access campaign information, educational materials, and shareable resources through the online portal.
- CDC's **Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies Toolkit** offers guidance and resources for safe infant and young child feeding during emergencies, particularly for vulnerable populations. Users can access practical tools and recommendations online to support preparedness and response efforts.

Mental and Behavioral Health

- **CDC's Mental and Behavioral Health** page outlines foundational mental health concepts, risk and protective factors, and strategies for fostering mental well-being in communities. Users can find data, practical guidance and more information available through linked subpages.
- **Emotional Well-Being** hub provides science-informed information on building resilience, supporting wellbeing, and strengthening community and interpersonal connection.

Tribal Affairs

- **CDC's Tribal Affairs and Strategic Alliances** provides an overview of tribal public health authorities and national, regional, and urban organizations that support American Indian and Alaska Native communities through health services, data capacity, advocacy, and coordination.

Workforce

Community Health Workers

- **CDC's Resources for Community Health Workers** is a resource hub that provides tools and materials to support community health workers in managing chronic

diseases and improving population health. Users can access training materials, guides, and program resources through the CDC website.

Training

- **CDC Rural Public Health Training Plan Courses** are designed to help health professionals better understand rural public health systems and deepen knowledge of the experiences of rural communities. The training plan offers free continuing education units (CEUs) and a certificate of completion.

- **CDC's Project Firstline** offers easy-to-use, accurate, and free infection control training resources in multiple formats to align with healthcare workers' learning needs and preferences. Its flexible, practical tools help strengthen infection prevention practices and supports safer patient care in rural settings.

- Understanding and Preventing Burnout among Public Health Workers. In this online training, public health supervisors can learn strategies to prioritize employee health and well-being and prevent burnout. The training is modular, so public health supervisors can fit it into their busy schedules. Each module takes about 15-30 minutes. Modules are organized into three units, for a total of 3.5 hours. Continuing education credit is available at no cost. This training is for 1) Managers and supervisors in State, tribal, local, and territorial health departments and 2) Senior leaders, managers, and supervisors in public health-serving organizations.

Appendix B: Additional Federal Resources

1. **U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)**
   USDA has a broad suite of rural infrastructure and development programs aimed at supporting economic growth, quality of life, and essential services in rural communities. Most of these are administered through USDA Rural Development.

   - USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants helps rural communities use technology to connect. Can be used to purchase audio, video and computer equipment, educational programming, broadband. Contact representatives to learn more.

   - USDA Business and Industry Guaranteed Loans can be used to support expanding facilities, purchasing medical equipment, or debt refinancing.

   - USDA Community Facilities Programs provide grants and loans to support rural hospital construction and renovation projects. Health care organizations can contact their State Rural Development office to learn more.

2. **U.S. Department of Treasury**
   The Community Development Financial Institutions Fund funds financial institutions that take a market-based approach to supporting economically disadvantaged communities. Organizations interested in exploring options for a loan can find more information on Certified CFDIs available for their communities.

3. **National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)**
   The **Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program**, administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) within the U.S. Department of Commerce, is the largest federal broadband funding initiative aimed at expanding high-speed internet access across the United States. It provides resources to States, territories, and eligible entities to improve broadband infrastructure, increase access in underserved and unserved areas, and promote digital equity and adoption, supporting economic development, education, healthcare access, and job opportunities.

   - See the final plans for each State to see who you can connect with in your State.

4. **Employment and Training Administration (ETA)**

a. Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) is an **industry-driven, quality workforce development system** within the U.S. Department of Labor. Apprentices earn wages as they complete structured on-the-job learning and related instruction, while employers develop their workforce and apprentices earn nationally recognized credentials.

b. One-Stop Career Center programs. The Fundamentals of Health Care model is relevant to RHT Program.
Health care providers can use the "Find Local Help" tool to locate your nearest American Job Center and learn about specific training support available in their community.

   The actual availability of tuition assistance or book funding varies by **State and local workforce area**, since local workforce boards and agencies administer the ETA/WIOA funds and often set priorities and eligibility criteria. CareerOneStop's website includes a local center finder tool to locate services in your area.

Appendix C: Additional Public Health Resources

Public Health Coalitions

These organizations may have partial or no federal funding. The inclusion of these resources is not an endorsement by US Department of Health and Human Services.

These organizations have contacts in most to all States that can partner with Rural Health Transformation teams to achieve their initiatives and State goals.

Chronic Disease Director (National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, NACDD)

- https://chronicdisease.org/contact/

Cooperative Extension Service (nutrition, chronic disease prevention, physical activity)

- https://extension.org/find-cooperative-extension-in-your-state/

State Associations of County and City Health Officials (SACCHO)

- https://www.naccho.org/membership/saccho

State Epidemiologist

- https://libraries.cste.org/state-epi-2/

State Health Official

- https://www.astho.org/members/member-directory/

State Immunization Program

- https://www.immunizationmanagers.org/about-aim/program-manager-directory/

NORC's Recovery Ecosystem Index Map - NORC at the University of Chicago, East Tennessee State University, and Fletcher Group, Inc. developed the Recovery Ecosystem Index mapping tool to better understand the strength of recovery ecosystems in communities nationwide. This tool helps users assess important elements of the recovery ecosystem in their communities and leverage data to inform community efforts to support individuals in recovery.

***State Strategies for Efficiently Allocating Health Resources* (Milbank Memorial Fund)**: This report describes the historical approaches to resource allocation, introduces area-level vulnerability and resilience indices (ALVRIs), and provides considerations for decision makers in States that are using an ALVRI, such as State health officials, Medicaid directors, hospital and health system administrators, and other State agency and department directors.