

April 16, 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:

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Resources:

COVID-19 Vaccination among American Indian and Alaska Native People: Details the COVID-19 vaccination rollout for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. Discusses barriers to healthcare, COVID-19 outcomes, and current vaccination rates of AI/AN populations. To read more, see [COVID-19 Vaccination among American Indian and Alaska Native People](#).

COVID-19 Vaccination Toolkit for Health Departments and Other Public Health Partners: Information and resources to help public health partners educate their communities and promote COVID-19 vaccination. Includes digital and print communication materials. Also provides resources for sharing information about COVID-19 vaccines in real time. To read more, see [COVID-19 Vaccination Toolkit for Health Departments and Other Public Health Partners](#).

COVID-19: Efforts to Increase Vaccine Availability and Perspectives on Initial Implementation: Examines the federal government's efforts related to COVID-19 vaccines between October 2020 and April 2021, including vaccine development and vaccination program implementation. Describes challenges to vaccine implementation and steps taken by the government in response. To read more see [COVID-19: Efforts to Increase Vaccine Availability and Perspectives on Initial Implementation](#) and [Full Report](#).

Notes from the Field: COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing Program — Spirit Lake Tribe, North Dakota, September–November 2020: Reports on how the CDC helped the Spirit Lake Tribe build a tribally managed program to address increasing COVID-19 cases through comprehensive case investigations, case notification, contact tracing, contact testing, and contact management. Describes the work of Spirit Lake community members who served as investigators and contact tracers, providing culturally appropriate advice about the need to isolate or quarantine. Discusses housing challenges that impacted isolation and quarantine efforts. To read more, see [Notes from the Field: COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing Program — Spirit Lake Tribe, North Dakota, September–November 2020](#).

In the News:

Apr 14, 2021 -- [New COVID Cases Increase 10% in Rural Counties](#): Analyzes new COVID-19 infection rates between April 4-10, 2021, finding an increase in both new infections and COVID-related deaths in rural counties. Discusses how surges in Michigan and northwest Texas contributed to the increase in cases. Includes an interactive county map of new infections and graphs detailing weekly infection and death rates dating back to June 2020.

Apr 12, 2021 -- [Native Health Providers Drive Alaska's Vaccination Success Story](#): Describes how Alaska ranks among the top states for COVID-19 vaccine distribution due to the role that

tribal health organizations have played. Discusses how the virus has disproportionately impacted Native communities and threatened indigenous culture, highlights unique efforts by tribal health providers to provide vaccinations and curb the pandemic.

Apr 9, 2021 -- [In Rural Areas with Healthcare Shortages, These Doctors Are Answering the Call](#): Describes how the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) helps fill healthcare workforce shortages in rural communities and focuses on recruiting physicians from underrepresented groups. Discusses socioeconomic and health disparities present in rural communities, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural healthcare, and the challenges of recruiting rural physicians.

Apr 9, 2021 -- [What Are Foundations Doing to Help Understand and Diminish the Barriers to People Getting Available COVID-19 Vaccines?](#) Blog post discusses COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among rural residents and highlights efforts to understand and address related concerns and increase availability of vaccines. Describes the role that funders play in COVID-19 vaccine campaigns and how these actions could be emulated to mobilize other response efforts.