

July 17, 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](https://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](mailto:Samra.Hiros@idph.iowa.gov).

Phone: (515) 423-7900



## Resources:

**COVID-19 Health Equity Interactive Dashboard:** Interactive map containing county- and state-level data on COVID-19 cases and deaths in the U.S. Illustrates relationships between COVID-19 outcomes and various social determinants of health, such as population density, poverty, underlying health conditions, urban/rural status, and more. To read more, see [COVID-19 Health Equity Interactive Dashboard](#).

**Federal COVID-19 Emergency Actions:** Provides an overview of telehealth-related federal policies taken in response to COVID-19, when these actions will expire, and what actions could be taken to make these changes permanent. To read more, see [Federal COVID-19 Emergency Actions](#).

**The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Access to Health Care:** Discusses the short and long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on healthcare access and affordability. Provides information on unemployment, health insurance, hospital and physician practices, and related legislative responses. Includes policy recommendations to increase and maintain access to healthcare and help sustain rural and safety-net hospitals. To read more, see [The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Access to Health Care](#).

**Rural Health Care Delivery Organizations and COVID-19: Major Challenges and Implications for Health Care Management Education and Training:** Discusses the curtailing of healthcare management education and training due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Explores ways to enhance connections between universities and rural hospitals to facilitate rural healthcare management training. To read more, see [Rural Health Care Delivery Organizations and COVID-19: Major Challenges and Implications for Health Care Management Education and Training](#).

## In The News:

July 15, 2020 -- **Rural America's Daily Rate of New Infections Climbs 150% in Last Month:** Analysis finds the number of new COVID-19 cases reported each day in rural counties has more than doubled in the last month. Rural counties with the highest rates of new infections tend to have a state or federal prison driving the increase in infections. Other rural counties with high infection rates tend to have large proportions of African American, American Indian, or Hispanic/Latino residents. To read more, see [Rural America's Daily Rate of New Infections Climbs 150% in Last Month](#).

Jul 10, 2020 -- **HHS Announces Over \$4 Billion in Additional Relief Payments to Healthcare Providers Impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic:** The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced \$3 billion in funding to hospitals serving a large percentage of vulnerable populations and \$1 billion to specialty rural hospitals, urban hospitals with certain rural Medicare designations, and hospitals in small metropolitan areas. The funding aims to provide support to those serving large rural populations facing financial devastation from the COVID-19 pandemic. To read more, see [HHS Announces Over \\$4 Billion in Additional Relief Payments to Healthcare Providers Impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic](#).

Jul 9, 2020 -- **How Is Rural Philanthropy Responding to COVID-19? Under the Radar:** Blog post highlighting rural-focused funders responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by quickly providing funding to help rural communities and organizations address their specific needs. Discusses how federal and state funding has supported rural response efforts. Emphasizes how rural funders are vital because of their role in immediate response. To read more, see [How Is Rural Philanthropy Responding to COVID-19? Under the Radar](#).

**U.S. Senate Committee Hears Telehealth Testimony:** The U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) recently held a hearing on the use of telehealth, especially lessons learned during this pandemic. During a virtual committee hearing, various telehealth leaders shared their perspectives on those lessons and the future of telehealth. A recording of the hearing can be [accessed here](#).

### **Funding for COVID-19 Response:**

[COVID-19 Tribal Telehealth Mini-grant:](#) Grants for tribes and tribal organizations to strengthen their local COVID-19 response by building capacity for the delivery of telehealth services and fulfill immediate Tribal telehealth needs.

*Application Deadline: Jul 21, 2020*

[Emergency Funding to Support Meal Programs:](#) Grants to local park and recreation agencies to sustain summer meal programs whose operations have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Application Deadline: Jul 31, 2020*