

November 20, 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:

The National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health or NOSORH released the **2020 Community Stars Book**, accessible [here](#), as part of the efforts to celebrate National Rural Health Day! There are still plenty of [activities](#) occurring now through Saturday.

Iowa's 2020 Community Star is Dr. Subhash Sahai, Medical Director of Van Diest Medical Center in Webster City, Iowa. See page 20 in the Community Stars Book, to learn about Dr. Sahai's inspiring story and impact! Happy National Rural Health week and thanks for all that you do for rural health in Iowa and beyond!

Resources:

Community Health Center Telehealth Utilization in Rural and Urban States During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Analyzes community health centers' utilization of telehealth services by state for the week prior to October 16, 2020. Compares the percentage of health center visits conducted virtually to the proportion of the population of each state that lives in rural areas. To read more, see [Community Health Center Telehealth Utilization in Rural and Urban States During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

COVID-19 Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool: Provides county-by-county data on the risk level related to COVID-19 of attending an event, given the event size and location. Covers events from 10 to 5,000 potential attendees. To read more, see [COVID-19 Event Risk Assessment Planning Tool](#).

In the News:

Nov 17, 2020 -- [New Rural COVID Infections Top 195,000 in One Week](#): Analyzes new COVID-19 infection rates from November 8-14, 2020. Finds the weekly number of infections in rural counties reached 195,795, meeting a new record for the eighth consecutive week. 86% of rural counties are in the red-zone and more than a quarter of those counties have infection rates that exceed 500 cases per 100,000 residents.

Nov 12, 2020 -- [Rural Hospitals Brace for Increased Coronavirus Cases](#): As COVID-19 accelerates its spread across rural America, hospital administrators in rural Kentucky and Nebraska discuss how their facilities are impacted. Faced with staffing shortages, bed shortages, funding issues, and increasing volumes of COVID-positive patients, rural hospitals are struggling to keep up.