

October 16, 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:

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## Resources:

**Characteristics Associated with Adults Remembering to Wash Hands in Multiple Situations Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, October 2019 and June 2020:** Reports on adults' remembering to wash their hands in six situations: before eating at home; before eating at a restaurant; before preparing food at home; after using the bathroom at home; after using the bathroom in public; and after coughing, sneezing, or blowing their nose. Based on survey data from prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (October 2019) and during the pandemic (June 2020). Includes data for metropolitan and nonmetro areas. To read more, see [Characteristics Associated with Adults Remembering to Wash Hands in Multiple Situations Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, October 2019 and June 2020](#).

**Federal and State Policy Changes Since COVID-19:** Video recording of a presentation on federal and state telehealth policy changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Discusses Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) policies related to geographic and site location for the patient, provider location and type, and telehealth delivery modality. Addresses common issues related to reimbursement and payment codes, Medicare billing guidance for Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics, and notes post-COVID policy questions and issues. Transcript available by clicking the dots above the Subscribe tab, then selecting Open Transcript. To read more, see [Federal and State Policy Changes Since COVID-19](#).

**Tele-ICUs for COVID-19: A Look at National Prevalence and Characteristics of Hospitals Providing Teleintensive Care:** Discusses a study on the prevalence of intensive care unit telemedicine (tele-ICUs) in hospitals across the U.S. during the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically in rural and Critical Access Hospitals. Compares hospitals by region, ICU beds, and emergency visits, among other measures. To read more, see [Tele-ICUs for COVID-19: A Look at National Prevalence and Characteristics of Hospitals Providing Teleintensive Care](#).

**VA Video Connect for Clinical Care in Older Adults in a Rural State During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Cross-Sectional Study:** Highlights a study on the ability of older veterans to use the VA Video Connect (VVC) app for telehealth services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Breaks down data by race, age, and rural versus urban location, among other factors. To read more, see [VA Video Connect for Clinical Care in Older Adults in a Rural State During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Cross-Sectional Study](#).

## In the News:

Oct 14, 2020 -- [New COVID Cases Jump 16% in Rural Counties, Setting New Record:](#) Analyzes new cases of COVID-19 infections between October 4-10, 2020, includes an interactive map of all U.S. counties' case rates. Findings show 61 percent of rural counties are

on the red-zone list, having 100 or more new cases per 100,000 population, setting a new record of infections in rural America.

Oct 8, 2020 -- [CMS Announces New Repayment Terms for Medicare Loans Made to Providers During COVID-19](#): The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced amended terms for payments issued under the Accelerated and Advance Payment (AAP) Program during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. Repayment will begin one year from the loan's issuance date, after which Medicare will automatically recoup 25 percent of Medicare payments for eleven months, and 50 percent for an additional six months.

### **Webinar Opportunity:**

[NIH: Telehealth for Rural Cancer Care During COVID-19](#) – **Friday, October 30 at 11:00 am CST.** The National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will hold an hour-long discussion on [sustained cancer control for rural populations](#) during the pandemic. The session is part of the Healthcare Teams (HTC) Cyber Discussions Series.

### **Recording:**

Community Health Center, Inc. hosts Mark Masselli and Margaret Flinter who speak with Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Anthony Fauci on COVID-19: What's Working, What's Not, and His Advice For America's Youth. To access recording, click [here](#)