

# RURAL HEALTH CONNECT

Improving the Health of Rural Communities

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- What's New
- Upcoming Events
  - 2019 ANNUAL PRIMARY CARE CONFERENCE
- OPCRH Program Updates:
  - Health Systems Support
  - Workforce Development
- Statewide Announcements
  - Mental Health Awareness
- Webinar Opportunities
  - The Changing Burden of Diabetes in Rural and Urban America
- Funding Opportunities
  - COMING SOON
- Announcements/Reports from:
  - RHHub
  - HRSA
  - 3RNet



## What's New

### New Data Shows More Utahns Becoming Obese

A new report from the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) shows while the percentage of Utah adults who were at an unhealthy weight has remained fairly stable over the past decade, at about 58%, there has been a substantial shift in the proportion of Utahns who are obese. Among Utah adults at an unhealthy weight, the percentage who were obese rose from 32.8% in 1999 to a striking 41.7% in 2017. This represents a nearly 30% increase of adults who moved to a higher risk level of unhealthy weight. Utah youth face the same rising proportion of obesity as adults.

For more information, please follow the link [here](#).

# Pairing music with medication offers potential therapeutic strategy to manage pain

Past studies have explored the therapeutic effect of music, particularly compositions by Mozart, for patients with epilepsy. Researchers at University of Utah Health found pairing music with one of four pain medications offered a promising complementary strategy to treat pain. In particular, the ibuprofen-music pair improved analgesic outcomes in an inflammation pain mouse model by more than 90 percent, while the cannabidiol-music and galanin analog NAX 5055-music pairings significantly reduced inflammation by 70 percent. The results of the study are available online on March 27 in the journal *Frontiers in Neurology*.

For more information, please follow the link [here](#).

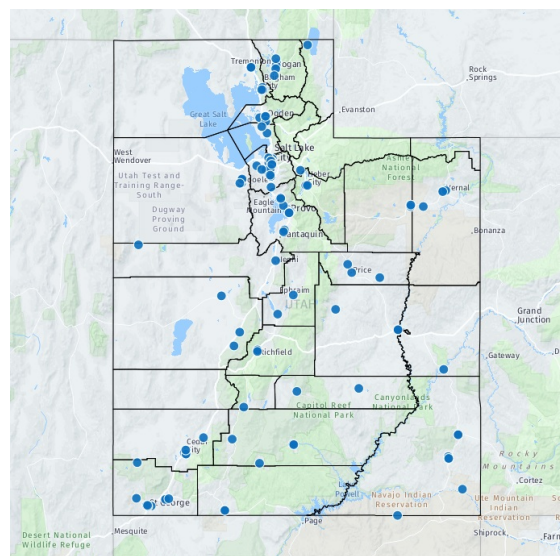
## 5 strategies rural hospitals are using to bolster their workforce

The ability to provide rural residents with high-quality health care is contingent upon an adequate supply of providers. However, the shortage and maldistribution of physicians and other health care providers persists in rural America, despite ongoing federal and state efforts to increase the supply of providers practicing in these communities. In order to meet the needs of rural residents, hospitals and health systems must think innovatively about delivery models, community partnerships, telehealth, care teams and recruitment. Below are examples from the field on how rural hospitals and health systems are strategically and efficiently rethinking workforce planning and development to deliver high-quality care to their communities.

For more information, please follow the link [here](#).

## OPCRH Office Highlight

Each month the OPCRH team is highlighting a map or project in our office. This month, we're highlighting the NHSC Site Map. The interactive map displays all approved NHSC sites throughout the state according to the HRSA Data Warehouse. To access this map, please follow the link [here](#).



# Upcoming Events

## 2019 ANNUAL PRIMARY CARE CONFERENCE

The Association for Utah Community Health's (AUCH) annual Primary Care Conference provides health center staff and board members an opportunity to discover innovative strategies and promising practices to improve healthcare delivery.

For more information. Please follow this [link](#)



## OPCRH Program Updates

### HEALTH SYSTEMS SUPPORT

SHIP eligible hospitals final progress reports and payments are due by May 3.

If you are a rural hospital Quality Manager, CNO, or CEO, please remember to register for the **FLEX Summit**, [here](#). For this year, presentations, panels and workshops will center around topics like:

- Population Health Management
- Quality reporting and improvement
- Resources and funding opportunities to support community health programs, etc.

We hope to see you there!

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

NHSC New Site Application cycle is open until May 31.

SPCGP Application cycle is open until May 13. Applications are available on our website.

Rural Physician Loan Repayment Program is accepting applications. Please visit our website.

## *Development Specialist*

Are you interested in helping to increase healthcare access in rural communities? We are hiring a *Workforce Development Specialist* to assist with projects and activities that help expand access to primary care services by bringing healthcare providers to rural and underserved communities.

Watch for the job announcement on [statejobs.utah.gov](http://statejobs.utah.gov) in the coming weeks to learn more and apply.



## Statewide Announcements

### Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and it's celebrating its 70th year since being established in 1949! Mental Health Awareness month has reached millions of people with the goal of building public understanding and recognition of brain and behavioral health and its importance to overall health and wellness.

To celebrate, the University of Utah Department of Psychiatry is celebrating its 70th Anniversary with a research showcase and talks by Department faculty which will be held on Thursday, May 31, in Park City. The event, "70 Years of Healthy Minds: Current Research on Brain and Behavioral Health," will feature the actual scientists who are participating in the cutting edge research. Bring your questions and your curiosity. The event is free and open to the public, however space is limited. Please [RSVP](#) so we may accommodate all who wish to attend.

## Webinars

### The Changing Burden of Diabetes in Rural and Urban America

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of death in the U.S. However, past scholarly work suggests that the burden of disease varies considerably between residents in rural and urban settings. The purpose of this webinar, presented by Dr. Timothy

Callaghan and Dr. Alva Ferdinand, is to provide an up-to-date, in-depth look at how the burden of diabetes has changed over time. We'll look at diabetes-related mortality in and out of the hospital, complications of the disease, and progress toward Healthy People 2020 goals.

For further information on the webinar, please follow the link [here](#).

## Funding Opportunities

### COMING SOON!

The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) will be releasing a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for a new Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) initiative called RCORP-Medication-Assisted Treatment Expansion.

Please check our website for updated funding opportunities. You can find the table by following the link [here](#).

## National Organizations

[Human Services to Support Rural Health](#)

[Oral Health in Rural Communities](#)

[Overdose Data to Action \(RFA-CE19-1904\)](#)

[HRSA US Fact Sheet by State](#)

[Rural Health Care Professional Job Posting](#)



### Find Us

3760 South Highland Drive  
Suite 361C  
SLC, UT 84106

### Call Us

Office: 801-273-6677  
Fax: 801-273-6512

### Email Us



The OPCRH provides support to our stakeholders and clients in the form of hands-on support, economic impact analysis, research, community health needs assessments, and healthcare workforce needs assessment. We also provide technical assistance and pertinent information on student loan repayment programs and grant opportunities

If you would like to be a part of our newsletter in the future and/or would like to submit a success story, announcement, or communicate any other information to us or your rural health partners, please contact Colton Gordon Program Specialist 801-273-6618, [coltongordon@utah.gov](mailto:coltongordon@utah.gov)

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