

RURAL HEALTH CONNECT

Improving the Health of Rural Communities

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What's New

Full Medicaid Expansion in Utah

The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) received approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to implement full Medicaid expansion in the state. The expansion will extend Medicaid eligibility to Utah adults whose annual income is up to 138% of the federal poverty level (\$16,753 for an individual or \$34,638 for a family of

four). The federal government will cover 90% of the costs of these services, with the state covering the remaining 10%. Enrollment and coverage for the newly eligible individuals will begin January 1.

This announcement, along with a smaller-scale expansion implemented last April, means up to 120,000 Utah adults who didn't qualify for Medicaid at the beginning of 2019 now qualify.

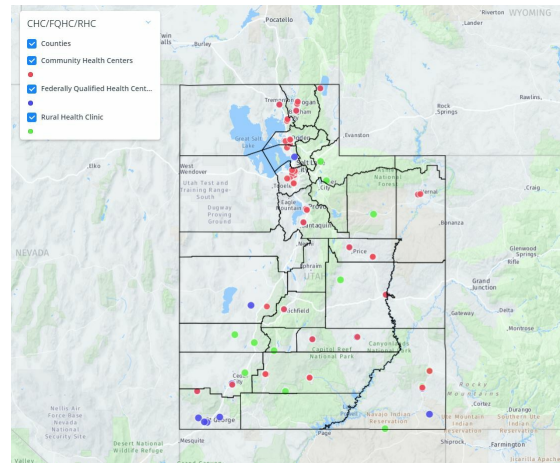
For more information and how to apply, please follow the link [here](#).

Utah Hospital Association 100th Anniversary

The Utah Hospital Association (UHA) will be marking its 100th year as an Association in 2020. The UHA Centennial Committee, led by UHA Board Member Blair Kent, has been meeting to advise staff on activities and events related to celebrating this milestone in Utah's healthcare history.

OPCRH Office Highlight:

Each month the OPCRH team highlights a map or project in our office. This month, we're highlighting our Health Centers (CHC, RHC, FQHC, and VA) Map for the State of Utah! We are proud to partner with our local community health centers and all the great work they do.



Upcoming Events

Utah AIDS Education and Training Center Program (AETC)



"HIV Prevention in Primary Care"

This conference is designed for primary care providers in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, OB/Gyn, Adolescent Medicine, Pediatrics, and Pharmacy working in the Mountain West and beyond who are interested in attending a comprehensive medical conference to learn how to provide HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) through pharmacotherapy within their practice.

"Transgender Medicine Pre-Conference"

This pre-conference is geared toward primary care providers who are interested in learning more about multi-disciplinary care for transgender/gender-non conforming patients. Visit the registration link below for more information and topics covered!

[For more information on the Conference and Pre-Conference, please see the attached Save the Date Flyer here.](#)

April 2-3, 2020 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Viridian Event Center
8030 S 1825 W
West Jordan, Utah 84088

Rural Health Association Conference

"Building Partnerships for Rural Well-Being"

The well-being of communities and individuals is complex and requires collaboration through effective partnerships that address multiple factors that affect health such as, social, financial, and environmental. Rural communities have unique challenges, yet great opportunities, to foster partnerships and collaborations for improved health and well-being.

Hospitals, clinics, and providers often need community resources to support their patients to improve health. Some examples include: pre-diabetes and diabetes education, opioid dependency resources, access to fresh fruits and vegetables, or physical activity and social connections. This conference will address how to connect community resources, engage the community at large, and develop effective partnerships.

*April 10, 2020
St. George, Utah*

[For more information and registration, please click here.](#)



OPCRH Program Updates

HEALTH SYSTEMS SUPPORT

- The OPCRH team is establishing the *Utah Rural Veteran Coalition (URVC)* to collaborate on care coordination and share resources for Utah's rural veterans. If you would like more information on the URVC, please email opcrh@utah.gov.
- **Save the Date: April 9, 2020.** OPCRH is sponsoring a workshop for **Rural Health Clinics** and will cover survey preparedness, billing, and coding. This is in conjunction with the RHAU conference on April 10 in St. George, Utah.
- **Save the Date: June 11-12, 2020** the OPCRH is hosting our annual **FLEX Summit** at Ruby's Inn in Bryce Canyon, UT.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- The legislative session begins this month, which means we are watching for funding for our three state funded programs: **Health Care Workforce Financial Assistance, State Primary Care Grants, and Rural Physician's Loan Repayment.** Keep an eye out for announcements regarding funding and application cycles over the next few months! If you have any questions on the amendment, please contact **Robbin Williams**, at robbinwilliams@utah.gov
- The OPCRH is establishing a **Health Workforce Coalition** to develop a coordinated approach to addressing health workforce issues in rural and underserved Utah. The coalition will focus on the root causes of health workforce shortages, identify emerging issues affecting Utah's health workforce, and share successful models and opportunities to scale them. Members may include government, health industry, education institutions, and associated organizations. We are still in the process of reaching out to potentially interested stakeholders. If you would like to participate or learn more about this initiative, please contact **Ashley Moretz, Workforce Development Specialist**, at amoretz@utah.gov

Utah Department of Health Announces Recipients of Medical Cannabis Pharmacy Licenses

The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) announced the companies to which it intends to award 14 medical cannabis pharmacy licenses. The companies were selected from more than 130 applications submitted through a competitive bidding process. More than 60 different companies submitted applications.

The following businesses will be issued licenses:

- Beehive's Own (two licenses), Salt Lake City and location TBD but will be in Box Elder, Morgan, or Rich County
- Bloom Medicinals, Cedar City
- Columbia Care, Springville
- Curaleaf, Lindon
- Deseret Wellness (two licenses), Park City and Provo
- Dragonfly Wellness, Salt Lake City
- Justice Grown Utah (two licenses), Salt Lake City and St. George
- Pure UT, Vernal
- True North of Utah (two licenses), Logan and Ogden
- Wholesome Therapy, West Bountiful

Eight of the locations may open as early as March 2020 and six may open as early as July 2020. Some of the companies to whom the Department intends to award licenses do not yet have ownership of their proposed locations and in some cases, their proposed locations may change. Their operating plans are pending Department approval and their owners must still pass criminal background checks. The UDOH will make announcements regarding when each location may open at a later date.

License applications were evaluated and scored by an evaluation committee based on several criteria, including: experience in the medical cannabis or other highly regulated industries, disciplinary action or investigation in other jurisdictions, an operating plan that will best ensure the safety and security of cardholders and the community, the extent to which an applicant can reduce the cost of medical cannabis, connections to the local community, and a strategic plan that has a high likelihood of success.

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

Utah State Legislative Session Begins January 27

The Utah State Legislature is set to begin later this month and UHA's Government Relations Committee, led by chair Mike Clark, has already been at work identifying healthcare issues expected to be addressed in this year's session.

Issues UHA is watching include Medicaid funding, mental health legislation and funding, transparency and surprise billing, among many others.



PROTECT YOURSELF. DON'T VAPE THC.

More than 90% of Utahns affected by the severe lung illness outbreak reported vaping THC cartridges.

The risks of vaping THC cartridges include severe lung damage and death.



Webinars

Rural Hospital CEO Certification

Let the world know you know how to run a rural hospital with excellence. Regardless of how successful you already are, the changing world of rural health care demands our CEOs have diversified skill sets while also being regarded as leaders in their communities. This program is designed and developed for you by tenured successful rural hospital CEOs with the support of NRHA.

The first class will be held **February 10, 2020.**



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

Preparing to Engage with Legislators and Policymakers

WHAT:

- Understand the environment on Capitol Hill
- Discuss SORH legislative priorities for 2020
- Learn how to “orient” new congressional members (and resources available)
- Discuss strategies and tips for conducting a Hill visit with state partners

WHO:

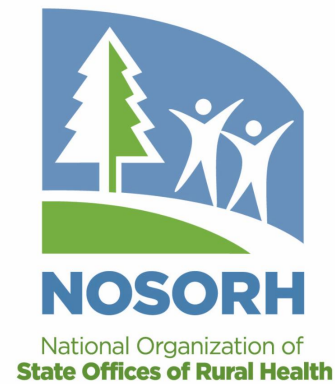
- Andrew Coats, Legislative Liaison, NOSORH Counsel to Hall Render
- Lisa Davis, Director - Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health
- Scott Daniels, Director - Hawaii Office of Rural Health

January 16, 3pm ET

[For more information and how to register, please follow the link here.](#)

How to Win the Tyranny of Small Numbers: Coalitions, Collaborations, and Networks

This one hour webinar will discuss how payors view rural, low volume providers and identify barriers and solutions for rural providers in the current value-based climate. Speaker Shannon Calhoun will also explore collaborations, coalitions and networks as a way to engage in better payor relations and negotiations. There will be designated time at the end of the presentation for Q&A. Mrs. Calhoun is a distinguished healthcare executive with 24 years of experience in the industry. Mrs. Calhoun has spent the past five years in network and business development in value-based healthcare transformation and



alternative payment models with an emphasis on Practice Transformation and Collaborative Accountable Care Organizations. Much of Shannon's work focuses on programs that better position providers for healthcare payment and delivery reform with the goal of creating sustainable solutions for both the network and the network's healthcare members.

When: January 14, 12 p.m. CST

[To register, please follow the link here.](#)

Addressing Revenue Cycle Management Challenges in Rural Hospitals



Key elements of this one hour webinar include the critical role each department plays in the revenue cycle, identifying RCM champions, and addressing over and under payments. Time for Q&A will be available following the presentation. Sylvia Alcalá, MA, RHIA, CDIP, CCS, CPC-I will be the guest presenter. Ms. Alcalá is an approved ICD-10 trainer and AAPC approved instructor with more than 30 years of experience as a leader in HIM. Ms. Alcalá is an adjunct coding instructor at Texas State University and the Director of HIM at Connally Memorial Medical Center. In addition to having served as president of the ALAMO Health Information Association (AAHIMA) she has also served on the AHIMA committee for accrediting coding exam questions. If you have questions or wish to submit a question prior to the webinar, please email: cavila@tamu.edu.

[To register, please follow the link here.](#)

What's at Stakes as Rural America Loses Its Hospitals



This webinar will provide a fresh overview of the trend, and explain the forces driving closures and what they mean for health. Reporters will gain

crucial context and insights that will deepen their coverage of imperiled health centers and the communities who rely on them.

When: January 22, 10-11 a.m. PT/ 1-2 p.m. ET.

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

Dissemination of Rural Health Research: A Toolkit

The emphasis of knowledge translation is to ensure health providers, consumers, researchers, advocates, and policymakers are aware of, can access, and are able to use health research findings to inform decision-making. Differences among audiences make it imperative to know when and how to utilize various modes of dissemination for health research.

This toolkit aims to assist researchers with step four in the knowledge translation process, reaching their target audiences. By developing appropriate, timely, accessible, and applicable products, researchers have the opportunity to inform step five, a change in policy or practice. This toolkit provides descriptions for multiple modes of dissemination and includes discussions of the purpose of each product, which product is appropriate given the topic and audience, and how to develop each. Effective examples are also provided.

[To access the toolkit, please follow the link here.](#)

Rural Suicide Prevention Toolkit

The Rural Suicide Prevention Toolkit compiles evidence-based and promising models and resources to support organizations implementing suicide prevention programs in rural communities across the United States.

The modules in the toolkit contain resources and information focused on developing, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining rural suicide prevention



programs. There are more resources on general community health strategies available in the [Rural Community Health Toolkit](#).

[To access the toolkit, please follow the link here.](#)

Utah Medical Cannabis Program 4-Hr Required Course



This course introduces the endocannabinoid system and its interaction with the components of the cannabis plant, and addresses administration, therapeutic use, drug metabolism, physiologic and cognitive effects, potential risks, and drug interactions.

The use of marijuana in obstetric patients, pediatric patients, adolescent patients, and elderly patients is discussed in detail. In addition, the health effects of marijuana and cannabinoids in epilepsy are reviewed. Important considerations for patients with ischemic heart disease, hepatic disease, psychotic illness, and those with a history of drug dependence are provided.

This course also informs the reader about the legal and medical considerations in the recommendation of medical marijuana, and addresses the parts of H.B. 3001, including the Utah Medical Cannabis Act, that would be of interest to a Utah healthcare provider.

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

Funding Opportunities

Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS) Program



The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is accepting applications for the fiscal year 2020 [Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students \(SDS\) Program](#). The application cycle closes on March 3, 2020.

The SDS program increases the diversity of the health workforce by funding eligible academic institutions that are training health profession students. The institutions then make scholarships available to students from disadvantaged backgrounds who have financial need.

Eligible applicants are accredited schools of allopathic and osteopathic medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, podiatric medicine, optometry, veterinary medicine, public health, chiropractic, and allied health; schools offering a graduate program in behavioral and mental health practice; and programs for physician assistant training. Students should contact their financial aid office to find out if their school participates.

HRSA has \$48,200,000 available to make approximately 79 awards in FY 2020. No student may receive SDS funds greater than \$40,000 per academic year.

[For more information and to apply, please click here.](#)

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](#)



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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

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