



# RURAL HEALTH CONNECT

Improving the Health of Rural Communities

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## Statewide Updates & News

### [Utah Department of Health: Immunization Coverage Report](#)

The Utah Department of Health has released the 2020 Immunization Coverage Report. You can download the report by clicking the above link.

### [HHS Expands Access to Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder](#)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has published [Practice Guidelines for the Administration of Buprenorphine for Treating Opioid Use Disorder - PDF\\*](#) to expand access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) by exempting physicians from certain certification requirements needed to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment.

### [2021 Nurse Corps Loan Repayment Program Application Cycle](#)

Nurse Corps LRP offers funding to registered nurses (RNs), advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), and nursing faculty for payment of their qualifying educational loans. ***SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATIONS BY FEBRUARY 25, 2021.***

## OPCRH Program Updates

### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- Thanks to everyone that participated in our State Office of Rural Health (SORH) Listening Sessions last December. We submitted our application to HRSA on January 29, and the feedback you shared during the sessions and in the related survey were valuable resources for our planning. In the survey, you said that you want to receive information on educational/learning opportunities, policy updates, rural health research, and funding opportunities; we will be implementing new ways to share these items, so stay tuned! "Addressing Social Determinants of Health" received the most responses among areas to convene working groups; where other groups focused on this exist, we will look to have a seat at those tables and will share relevant information with you. Finally, Population Health was the most requested area of technical assistance, and we are already exploring ways that we might engage in this area. Thanks again for your feedback to help guide our future work. Please reach out at any time to discuss these or other ways in which we can support your efforts to improve access to quality health care in Utah!
- The **Behavioral Health Workforce Reinvestment Initiative** is a new

program funded by the state of Utah that provides educational loan repayment assistance to behavioral healthcare professionals who locate or continue to practice in underserved areas. Participation in the program requires a three-year service commitment to the state of Utah at an approved **site**. The provider's site is required to match 10% of the award amount. **Provider's** applications can be found online at <https://TINYURL.COM/BHWLRPPROVIDERAPP>. Sites can apply online at <https://TINYURL.COM/BHWLRPSITEAPP>. For more details, contact Robbin Williams ([robbinwilliams@utah.gov](mailto:robbinwilliams@utah.gov)) or visit <https://ruralhealth.health.utah.gov/behavioral-health-workforce-loan-repayment-program/>. Applications submitted by February 26 will be reviewed as part of the first cohort.

### HEALTH SYSTEM SUPPORT TEAM

- The Utah Department of Health, Office of Primary Care and Rural Health is accepting applications for the Rural Veterans Health Access Program (RVHAP) sub-grants. Applications are due ***February 8, 2021***. The Rural Veterans Health Access Program (RVHAP) grant is designed to improve coordination of care between the VA and critical access hospitals (CAH), rural hospitals, and rural clinics to increase access to care, reduce barriers, and provide additional health care resources for veterans living in rural areas throughout Utah. For any questions, please email [opcrh@utah.gov](mailto:opcrh@utah.gov) or [coltongordon@utah.gov](mailto:coltongordon@utah.gov). To apply, [please follow the link here](#).

## Webinars & Upcoming Events

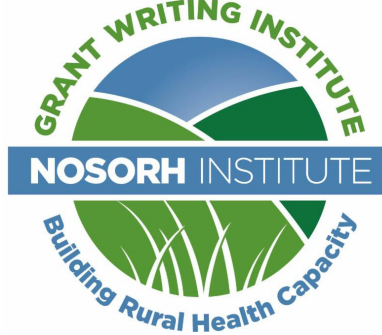


## Nurses Role in Transitional Care: Uncovering the Unknowns of Being at Home with your Patient

The University of Utah's Nurse Education, Practice, Quality, and Retention Team (NEPQR) is hosting a webinar to cover the following objectives:

- Components of Transitional Care.
- Latest on 'How Well are Our Patients Upon Discharge?'
- Screening for Social Determinants of Health
- Billing and Coding

For more information, please download the [attachment here](#).



## NOSORH GRANT WRITING INSTITUTE

Registration is now open for the NOSORH Grant Writing Institute (GWI). GWI features a series of nine online learning sessions covering every aspect of grant writing with a unique rural health focus. The series is intended for beginners seeking to gain the skills to research and draft winning proposals from various agencies.

Registration deadline is February 26th. Group discounts are available. Sign up 4 students and get the 5th one free. Click here to [REGISTER NOW!](#)



## Barriers to Health Care Access for Rural Medicare Beneficiaries: Recommendations from Rural Health Clinics

\*PUBLICATION\*

Access to health care is essential for maintaining good health, but people in rural areas often face specific barriers to access, including in primary care. To date, there is limited information outlining specific barriers that are encountered by safety net providers in serving rural Medicare beneficiaries, including rural health clinics (RHCs) that were designed to increase access for rural residents. This policy brief presents findings from an online survey of RHCs describing barriers for Medicare patients in accessing health care services, and recommendations for how to improve access to care for Medicare beneficiaries in rural areas.

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

Funding Opportunities

[Evidence Based Telehealth Network Program](#)

Toolkit Highlight



# Free Telehealth Certification Courses

The Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center is offering multiple telehealth certification courses for free. You can find the resources by following the link [here](#).



## Connections for Community Care Project

Funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP), this project will provide Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) across the nation with easy access to and technical assistance (TA) for comprehensive, community-centric COVID-19 onsite testing and is *available at no cost*.

National Organization of State Office of Rural Health (NOSORH) will work with State Offices of Rural Health (SORH) to develop and implement strategies to enhance local, state, and national collaboration as well as provide targeted, individualized, community-centric technical assistance (TA) to participating RHCs.

Accessing additional information or getting started with the program is as simple as sending an email expressing interest to [rhccovidtestinginfo@nosorh.org](mailto:rhccovidtestinginfo@nosorh.org).



## 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.](#)

## 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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## [CONTACT 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

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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 801-230-6570, [coltongordon@utah.gov](mailto:coltongordon@utah.gov)

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