

# Registration is Now Open for the 2025 Michigan Rural Health Conference!

April 24-25, 2025 at Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort



Make sure to register for the 28th Annual Michigan Rural Health Conference at Soaring Eagle Resort on April 24-25, 2025. Join us for this annual event, where a diverse group of rural healthcare professionals come together to engage in cutting-edge discussions, educational sessions, and networking opportunities.

Don't forget our room block closes April 1 st, 2025. Find all related information below.

Registration Information

Draft Agenda

# Billing & Coding Bootcamp



Join us for a two-day, in-person Billing & Coding Bootcamp designed for Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), and other rural health providers. This intensive training will focus on clinical documentation, coding, and billing to ensure compliance, optimize reimbursement, and prepare participants for optional certification.

#### **Billing & Coding Bootcamp**

- Dates: May 12-13, 2025
- Day 1: 12:00 pm 4:00 pm
- Day 2: 9:00 am 4:00 pm
- Location: Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort, Mount Pleasant, MI 6800
   Soaring Eagle Blvd, Mt Pleasant, MI 48858
- Registration Fee: \$50 (valued at \$499)
- CEUs: 11 CEUs approved by ArchProCoding & AAPC
- Limited Spots Available

#### Who Should Attend?

- Coding, billing, and revenue cycle staff
- Facility and financial managers
- Quality reporting professionals
- Clinical providers (MD, DO, NP, PA, RN)

More Information

Register

# RHC Practice Management Webinar Series



A 12-month program designed to help Rural Health Clinics achieve compliance, optimize operations, and improve patient care. Led by experts from Health Service Associates, session topics include, RHC certification, billing and reimbursement, federal regulations, emergency preparedness, and performance improvement.

- ✓ Live, interactive sessions with Q&A
- ✓ Access recordings and materials anytime
- ✓ Full series available for \$250

More Information

Register

### Five Michigan Rural Hospitals Recognized Among 2025 Top 100 Rural & Community Hospitals



The Michigan Center for Rural Health is proud to announce that five Michigan

rural hospitals have been recognized as 2025 Top 100 Rural & Community Hospitals by The Chartis Center for Rural Health. This prestigious distinction highlights their commitment to delivering high-quality care and achieving operational excellence in rural healthcare.

The annual Top 100 award program, developed by Chartis, evaluates rural hospitals nationwide using the Chartis Rural Hospital Performance INDEX®. Recognizing the top performers, this program serves as a benchmark for excellence and provides a roadmap for hospitals striving to enhance financial and operational performance while maintaining a strong commitment to the communities they serve.

Now in its tenth year, the Top 100 Rural & Community Hospitals list celebrates institutions that demonstrate exceptional financial stability, quality patient outcomes, and a dedication to improving rural healthcare.

This year, the following Michigan hospitals have been honored as 2025 Top 100 Rural & Community Hospitals:

- Munson Healthcare Cadillac Hospital Cadillac, MI
- Munson Healthcare Manistee Hospital Manistee, MI
- MyMichigan Medical Center Alpena Alpena, MI
- MyMichigan Medical Center Sault Sault Sainte Marie, MI
- MyMichigan Medical Center Tawas Tawas City, MI

MCRH congratulates these outstanding hospitals on their well-deserved recognition and continued dedication to rural healthcare excellence.

### March is Kidney Month!



This month, the Michigan Center for Rural Health proudly recognizes its partnership with the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan (NKFM) in raising awareness and improving access to resources for chronic kidney disease (CKD) in rural communities. With over a million adults in Michigan affected by CKD, early detection and proactive management are essential to reducing its impact.

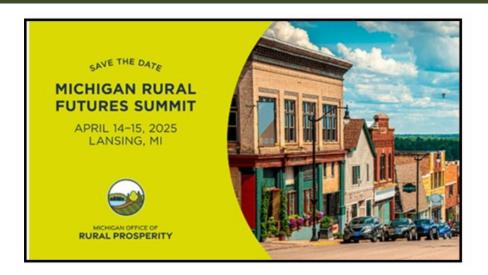
Through this partnership, MCRH and NKFM have developed a comprehensive Managing Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD): Resources for Rural Providers

Toolkit. This resource equips rural healthcare providers with essential tools, evidence-based guidelines, workflow strategies, and patient education materials to enhance CKD screening, diagnosis, and engagement.

The toolkit also features videos of rural providers who participated in a CKD Learning Collaborative, which helped increase awareness of the importance of early detection and management of CKD.

**Additional Information** 

### Michigan Rural Futures Summit 2025



Join the Michigan Office of Rural Prosperity on April 14-15, 2025, for this two-day convening focused on shaping the future of rural Michigan. The Rural Futures Summit 2025 will bring together key stakeholders to discuss pressing challenges, share innovative solutions, and collaborate on strategies that strengthen rural communities.

#### Who Should Attend?

This event is open to state and local leaders, policymakers, community organizations, and frontline agencies committed to supporting rural Michigan. Whether you're involved in decision-making or hands-on program implementation, this summit offers valuable insights and networking opportunities.

No cost to attend but space is limited!

Information and Registration

# Rural Communities Receive Funding from MIHI to Expand Digital Access



The Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI) awarded nearly \$10.6M to 13 organizations who will serve as regional hubs providing digital skills training, device distribution programs, online accessibility, access to affordable broadband service and other activities.

The rural selected organizations, listed by prosperity regions, are:

- Region 1c: Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District(\$857,909)
- Region 2: Grow Benzie(\$857,870)
- Region 3: Northwest Michigan Consortium(\$446,023)
- Region 4a: Mid-Michigan Community Action Agency (\$857,909)
- Region 4b: West Michigan Works!(\$857,908)
- Region 5: Central Michigan University (\$854,304)

MIHI is committed to addressing any gaps in coverage through a third round of applications in the near future. The 13 hub organizations were awarded as subgrantees for the MITTEN program to support implementation of the Michigan Digital Equity Plan.

This funding is provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Digital Equity Act.

Additional Information

## Elevating Rural Healthcare: MI CAH Leaders' Commitment to Professional Growth & Patient Safety



In the ever-evolving healthcare landscape, a steadfast commitment to patient safety and continuous improvement is fundamental to achieving excellence. As part of its dedication to advancing quality care, the Michigan Center for Rural Health has taken significant steps to equip healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to uphold these vital standards. One of its recent initiatives includes facilitating the IHI Open School Basic Certificate in Quality and Safety for Critical Access Hospital (CAH) quality leaders.

Patient Safety was March 9-15, and this year's theme, *Moving the Needle*, MCRH emphasizes the importance of fostering a culture of safety, learning, and measurable progress in healthcare. The IHI Open School Basic Certificate in Quality and Safety provides healthcare leaders with a robust foundation in key areas, including Improvement Capability, Patient Safety, Leadership, Person- and Family-Centered Care, and the Triple Aim for Populations. By strengthening these core competencies, CAH leaders are better equipped to drive meaningful change and enhance patient outcomes within their organizations.

In recognition of their dedication to professional development and their commitment to improving patient safety, MCRH proudly commends the following CAH leaders for their achievements and contributions to advancing quality care:

Allison Holbrook, Population Health Manager, Helen Newberry Joy Hospital Victoria Durr, Infection Prevention Coordinator, Scheurer Health Carianne Garcia, Nursing Supervisor, UMH- Sparrow Clinton Cynthia Bonk, Quality Assurance and Improvement Manager, Sheridan Community Hospital

**Traci Payne**, Patient Safety/Quality Coordinator, Bronson South Haven **Chelsea Hoover**, Bronson South Haven

**Alicia Truemner**, Quality Improvement & Customer Experience Coordinator, Scheurer Health

Tisha Tillery, Director of Quality Improvement, Harbor Beach Community Hospital

Nicole Hedeen, Director of Quality, Aspire Rural Health System

# State of Rural Healthcare Report Released



Wipfli's third annual *State of Rural Healthcare Report* is now available. Leaders from rural hospitals and clinics nationwide shared their perspectives, outlooks, and concerns. Responses were aggregated and compared to data collected

over the years.

Here are some of the results:

- 96% of rural healthcare leaders are optimistic about their organization's financial viability.
- 78% said they are "not likely at all" to merge with another organization.
- 41% said financial concerns/reimbursements are a significant challenge.
- 65% said cybersecurity is a top concern up from ~50% in prior years.
- 81% have increased their investment in cybersecurity technologies in the past 12 months.
- 32% use Al tools.

Read the Full Report

# Mastering De-Escalation in Healthcare: From Recognition to Resolution



High-pressure situations are common in healthcare, making de-escalation skills essential for maintaining a safe and supportive environment. This webinar will equip healthcare professionals with the knowledge and tools to effectively manage challenging interactions with patients, visitors, and staff. Participants will explore legal obligations for workplace safety, proactive strategies to prevent workplace violence, and practical de-escalation techniques. Expert-led discussions and case studies will provide valuable insights into fostering a culture of safety and implementing an effective post-incident response plan.

Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your conflict resolution skills and contribute to a safer healthcare environment!

Additional Information & Registration

Expansion of Rx Kids: Eastern Upper Peninusla



Rx Kids, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at supporting maternal and infant health, has expanded into Michigan's Eastern Upper Peninsula, including Alger, Chippewa, Luce, Mackinac, and Schoolcraft counties. This program provides all expectant mothers in these counties with a \$1,500 no-strings-attached cash payment during pregnancy, followed by \$500 per month for the first six months of the baby's life. By addressing financial stress and promoting early childhood well-being, Rx Kids seeks to create healthier beginnings for families across these rural communities.

Congratulations to the Chippewa County Health Department and LMAS District Health Department for championing this incredible program in the Upper Peninsula!

More Information on Rx Kids

### CMS Reminds Hospitals about Price Transparency and Enforcement



The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) alerted hospitals that the agency is planning a more systematic monitoring and enforcement approach to non-compliance with the Hospital Price Transparency requirements and, consistent with current policies, non-compliance will be addressed with swift enforcement. CMS posted a list of enforcement actions to date as well as a

Hospital Price Transparency Enforcement Activities and Outcomes dataset with information related to enforcement actions taken by CMS.

All hospitals, including Critical Access Hospitals and Rural Emergency Hospitals, and hospital-based departments, which may include some Rural Health Clinics, are required to post their standard charges prominently on a publicly available website.

A reminder that the Pricing Transparency and Enforcement Executive Order (EO) 13877, issued on February 25, 2025, will take effect 90 days from its issuance.

## 2025 Michigan State Loan Repayment Program Application Cycle Runs Through April



The Michigan State Loan Repayment Program (MSLRP) helps employers recruit and retain primary medical, dental, and mental healthcare providers by providing loan repayment to those entering into MSLRP service obligations. MSLRP service obligations require participants to provide full-time primary healthcare services in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) at not-for-profit health clinics for two years.

MSLRP will assist those selected by providing up to \$300,000 in tax-free funds to repay their educational debt over a period of up to ten years. Participants will enter into consecutive two-year MSLRP service obligations requiring them to remain employed for a minimum of 40 hours per week for no less than 45 weeks per year at eligible nonprofit practice sites providing primary healthcare services to ambulatory populations.

The FY26 MSLRP Application Period begins February 3, 2025 and continues through April 30, 2025 for two-year contracts starting October 1, 2025. Northern Obstetric Service Providers, Genesee County Applicants, and Inpatient Pediatric Providers including only Psychiatrists, Physician Assistants, and Nurse Practitioners remain the program's top priority this year. Additional eligibility information can be found here.

Additional Information Regarding MSLRP

### Navigating Medicare Advantage: Strategies for Rural Healthcare Providers

If you missed this week's Medicare Advantage webinar, presented by our colleagues at Hall Render, we covered key strategies for successfully navigating Medicare Advantage plans. Below, you'll find links to the presentation slides and the recording of this insightful session.

#### **Key Topics Covered:**

- Playbook for Success Essential strategies for adapting to the evolving Medicare Advantage landscape.
- Contracting & Negotiation Best practices for contract discussions, public communication, and managing out-of-network situations.
- Network Adequacy in Rural Areas Approaches to addressing network adequacy challenges in rural settings.
- Out-of-Network Care Considerations Steps to take when negotiations reach an impasse.

Check out the materials below to gain valuable insights and actionable strategies!

PowerPoint

Video

# Round 3 Rural Readiness Grant Recipients Announced



The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) Office of Rural Prosperity has awarded \$1.3 million in Round 3 Rural Readiness Grant Program funding. With over 100 Letters of Intent requesting \$4.4 million, this round was highly competitive.

Grants support business development, broadband expansion, housing, workforce training, and health in rural communities. Funded projects include

workforce development initiatives and broadband expansion to improve access to jobs, education, and healthcare.

The next funding round (Round 4) opens for Letters of Intent in late spring. More details to come at Michigan.gov/LEO.

Complete List of Funded Projects

# NURSES Grant: Seeking Partners for the Spring 2025 Semester



The primary goal of the NURSES Grant is to provide community-based outpatient clinical experiences to BSN students. This initiative addresses the nursing shortage in rural Michigan by offering comprehensive student support. The grant covers mileage and lodging for clinical rotations and provides additional funding for paid internships. We are excited to welcome Rural Health Clinics to participate in this impactful program, developed in collaboration with the Michigan Primary Care Association.

If you are interested in learning more about the NURSES Grant opportunities, please contact Kyra Burkeen, Workforce Initiative Manager, at kyra.burkeen@affiliate.msu.edu

NURSES Grant Internship Information

Additional Details on the NURSES Grant

# New Resource: MI 2025 Telehealth Reimbursement Guide



The Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center recently released its 2025

reimbursement guide, specific to MI. The guide can be found below. Please reach out to info@umtrc.org with any questions.

2025 Reimbursement Guide

### MBQIP Upcoming Deadlines, Reporting Reminders, and Resources



MCRH continues to provide monthly Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Project (MBQIP) updates that will help improve the quality of care provided in Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs).

#### **MBQIP Reporting Updates**

#### MBQIP 2025 Assistance

Not sure where to start with reporting the <u>new MBQIP 2025 core measures</u>? The Data Submission Guides are a great place to start! These guides are designed to meet hospitals where they are at in their reporting journey, such as:

- Rural relevancy and buy-in
- Measure specifications
- Data collection and hospital implementation
- Data submission
- Understanding outcomes and quality improvement

#### March 2025 Upcoming MBQIP Deadlines

#### April 2, 2025

 Reporting Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) Q4 2024 encounters (10/1/24-12/31/24) is due April 2, 2025. Submission is through the HQR Secure Portal-Vendor. Quality Assurance Guidelines V.18.0.

#### April 30, 2025

• Emergency Department Transfer Communication (EDTC) Q1 2025 encounters (01/01/2025- 3/31/2025) is due April 30, 2025. Connect with Crystal Barter @ barthcry@msu.edu for submission process details.

#### May 1, 2025

 Reporting Median time from ED arrival to ED departure (OP-18) Q4 2024, October 1 – December 31 is due May, 1, 2025. Submission is through the HQR Secure Portal-Outpatient. The CMS Abstraction & Reporting Tool (CART) Outpatient is being integrated into the Hospital Quality and Reporting (HQR) platform. Hospitals will use the HQR platform for abstractions similar to how hospitals used CART. Per the CART website, hospitals will use HQR for OP-18 abstractions for Q4 2024 encounter data due May 1, 2025.

#### May 15, 2025

- Patient left without being seen (OP-22) CY 2024 data is due May 15,
   2025. Submission is through the HQR via HARP log in.
- Influenza Vaccination coverage among health care professionals (HCP/IMM-3) Q4 2024-Q1 2025 is due May 15, 2025. Submission is though NHSN.
- Social Drivers of Health Screening (SDoH-1) Calendar year 2024 is due
   May 15, 2025. Submission through HQR Secure Portal.
- Screen Positive Rate for Social Drivers of Health Screening (SDoH-2)
   Calendar year 2024 is due May 15, 2025. Submission trough HQR Secure Portal.
- Hospital Commitment to Health Equity (HCHE) for Calendar year 2024 is due May 15, 2025. Submission through HQR Secure Portal.

MBQIP Data Submission Deadlines are on the RQITA Resource Center website under Data Reporting, linked below.

Data Reporting | Telligen

For more on MBQIP, please contact Amanda St. Martin, Hospital Programs Manager, at amanda.saintmartin@affiliate.msu.edu.



# Strength of Rural Spotlight Series

Kiersten's Ride - Turning Tragedy into Help, Hope, & Healing

March Edition

Full Length Spotlight Story on Kiersten's Ride

Each month, the Michigan Center for Rural Health (MCRH) highlights individuals and organizations making a difference in rural communities through the Strength of Rural Spotlight Series.

Do you have a story to share? Know a rural organization or individual making a difference? Email Laura Mispelon, Social Drivers of Health Manager, at laura.mispelon@affiliate.msu.edu, and let us share your story!

For March, MCRH is proud to recognize Kiersten's Ride, a nonprofit organization dedicated to suicide prevention, education, and support in Northern Michigan. Founded in memory of 17-year-old Kiersten Clavier, who died by suicide in 2012, Kiersten's Ride was created to turn grief into action. The organization provides evidence-based suicide prevention training, including ASIST, safeTALK, and Yellow Ribbon Youth Prevention programs, equipping individuals with the tools to recognize warning signs, intervene, and offer support.

At its core, Kiersten's Ride embodies help, hope, and healing, ensuring that no one in Northern Michigan faces their struggles

alone. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the organization continues to expand its outreach, making communities safer and stronger in the fight against suicide.

### **Upcoming MCRH Educational Events**

#### **Grand Rounds:**

#### April 2, 2025, 12-1 PM EST

Geriatrics Grand Rounds: **Understanding the Grief of Older Adults** Speaker: Linda Keilman, DNP, MSN, GNP-BC, DEGN, FNAP, FAANP Register Here

CE is provided for social workers, nurses, and community health workers. Physicians and other health professional may use the certificate to self-claim contact hours.

#### April 9, 2025, 12-1 PM EST

Special Topics Grand Rounds: Introduction to Advance Care Planning - Level Setting

Speaker: Amy Bailey, LMSW, Advance Care Planning Specialist Register Here

CE is provided for social workers, nurses, and community health workers. Physicians and other health professionals may use the certificate to self-claim contact hours.

#### April 15, 2025, 12-1 PM EST

Dietetics Grand Rounds: Bias in Obesity

Speaker: Amy Bailey, LMSW, Advance Care Planning Specialist Register Here

CE Provided for Social Workers, Nurses, and Community Health Workers, Registered Dietitians,& Dietetic Technicians. Physicians and other health professionals may use the certificate to self-claim contact hours. This program meets the criteria for State of Michigan Implicit Bias Continuing Education Credit.

#### April 30, 2025, 12-1 PM EST

Pharmacy Grand Rounds: MASH It, Not NASH It

Speaker: Tracey Mersfelder, PharmD

Register Here

CE is provided for social workers, nurses, and community health workers. Physicians and other health professionals may use the certificate to self-claim contact hours.

#### ECHO:

Infectious Diseases Project ECHO: Sepsis

Date: April 16th, 2025, 12-1 PM EST

Speaker: Dr. Peter Gulick, DO

Register Here CME Provided

Diabetes Project ECHO- Diagnosis: A Leveling

Date: April 22, 2025, 12-1 pm EST

Speaker: Dr. Kim Pfotenhauer, DO, BC-ADM

Registration coming soon - Check out our website: for updates!

**CME** Provided

EMS:

April 15, 2025, 9 AM - 5 PM EST

EMS Workshop: Certified Ambulance Documentation Specialist Course

Presenter: Page, Wolfberg, and Wirth

Register Here CE Provided

### **ADDITIONAL NEWS & RESOURCES:**

#### **RURAL EMERGENCY HOSPITALS:**

Thinking of Converting to REH? Key Observations from Financial Modeling

<u>Updated Guidance for Rural Emergency Hospitals (REHs)</u>

#### CYBERSECURITY:

AHA Helps Secure New Cybersecurity Resources from Microsoft and Google to Assist Rural Hospitals

Information on Microsoft Cybersecurity Program for Rural Hospitals // SIGN UP

#### **TELEHEALTH:**

Expanding Dental Care to Children Through Telehealth

Building Michigan's State Broadband Plan

VIDEO: How Broadband Access Positively Impacts the Growing American Workforce

#### **HOSPITAL PROGRAMS:**

CMS Updates Hospital Policies for Fiscal Year 2025 and Finalizes a New Payment Model for Select Surgeries

#### **PRIMARY CARE:**

CMS Enhancing Coverage of Preventive Services Under the Affordable Care Act

CMS Finalizes New Model to Improve Access to Kidney Transplants

<u>Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Funding: Improving Mental and Behavioral Health – Letters of Intent January 14</u>

CMS Announces New Lower Drug Prices for 2026 / Negotiated Pricing Fact Sheet

CMS Innovation in Behavioral Health Model

New Changes to Behavioral Health Intensive Outpatient Program Coverage in Medicare

Medicare Advantage Plan Growth in Rural America: Availability of Supplemental Benefits

#### SOCIAL DRIVERS OF HEALTH:

Physician Engagement in Addressing Health-Related Social Needs and Burnout

A Toolkit for Developing Local Multisector Plans for Aging in Rural Areas

HHS Launches New "Food as Medicine" Resources

A Healthy Mouth for Every Body - A Look At The Connection Between Oral Health and Overall Health

Engaging Policymakers for Healthier Communities | County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

The U.S. Playbook to Address Social Determinants of Health

#### SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER:

<u>Take 10! Transforming Care for Women with Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) and Their Families</u> Webinar Series

Opioid Settlement Resource Center - The Michigan Association of Counties (micounties.org)

Opioid Settlement Overview Table

Recovery-Ready Workplace Toolkit for Businesses

<u>Rural Communities Opioid Response Program – Pathways</u>

#### **WORKFORCE:**

HRSA Nurse Faculty Loan Program - February 24

Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program for Paraprofessionals

Statewide Investment Helps Youth Explore Future Careers In Michigan

Mental Health in the Rural Workplace

Mobilizing Health Care Workforce via Telehealth

MiCHWA's Advocacy Day

Navigating Workplace Violence: Safety Strategies for Managing Agitation and Aggression

#### **VETERANS:**

Sign up for Veterans Health Updates

View an online copy of the new 2025 VA benefits booklet

2025 VA Standardized Episode of Care (SEOC) Important Update Effective January 15, 2025. Plus, the new 2025 VA Fee Schedule is now available

Medicare enrollment for Veterans

VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP)(if not eligible for VA Dental)

Questions about VA healthcare? Attend the Veterans Healthcare Workgroup Monthly Meeting on the Second Monday of Every Month at 1 PM EST (Zoom Link)

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

National Poison Prevention Week | Poison Help

Michigan Pediatric Readiness Conference

Obstetric Care Access at Rural Hospitals in the United States

Local Data for Equitable Communities Grant Program

Rural Residency Planning and Development (RRPD) program

New Map Shows Rural Emergency Hospitals

The team at Rural Health Value released a new resource, Introduction to Rural Clinically Integrated Networks (CINs), that defines CINs, describes common CIN characteristics, and explores the unique value-based care advantages a rural CIN may bring to its members.

# A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO MCRH'S 2025 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORS





CPAS/ADVISORS









Is your organization interested in becoming a 2025 MCRH Organizational Sponsor?

Please message com.mcrhaa@msu.edu for more information on this branding opportunity.

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