

MCRH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

June 2025

Volume 6, Issue 6

OUR MISSION

To coordinate, plan, and advocate for improved health for Michigan's rural residents and communities



The Northern Michigan Opioid Response Consortium (NMORC), a program of MCRH, will host its annual **Rural Michigan Opioid & Substance Use Summit** at Treetops Resort in Gaylord, MI on July 17, 2025. This event unites rural partners across Michigan to address substance use through shared learning, collaboration, and innovation.

This year's summit includes:

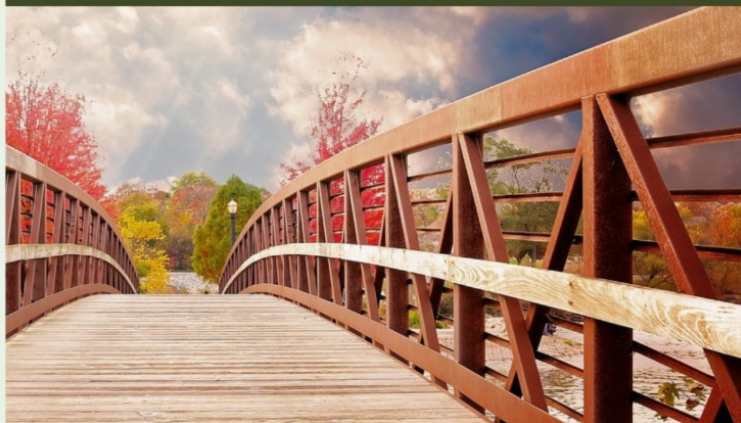
- Keynote: Building Systems to Support Recovery with Michael Meit, ETSU Center for Rural Health and Research
- Hot Topics & Ask the Clinician Panel featuring providers from across Northern Michigan
- Substance Use and Pregnancy session with Dr. Julia Riddle
- Harm Reduction in Michigan presented by MDHHS
- Recovery Community Flash Presentations from local leaders
- Opioid Settlement Funds: County-Level Insights
- Voices of lived experience, networking lunch, and the Rural Recovery Hero Award

Why Sponsor or Exhibit?

Get your organization's resources in front of rural health and behavioral health professionals from across the state and help support this important gathering.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER!

Building Systems to Support Individuals in Recovery



Michael Meit

DIRECTOR

ETSU CENTER FOR RURAL HEALTH AND RESEARCH

[Summit Agenda](#)

[Additional Information & Registration](#)

Billing & Coding Education



The **Critical Access Hospital Billing & Coding Bootcamp** is an interactive workshop that will equip participants with essential documentation, coding, and billing

The **Healthcare Provider Billing and Coding Workshop** is a hands-on, 3-hour in-person workshop designed to strengthen clinical documentation, billing compliance,

skills—while reinforcing how these practices support compliance, reporting, and facility-wide revenue goals. Ideal for coders, billers, quality staff, and financial leaders in CAHs.

Details:

Dates: August 7–8, 2025

Times:

- Day 1: 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM
- Day 2: 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort, Mt. Pleasant, MI

Fee: \$50 (Includes lunch on Day 1)

CEUs: 11 CEUs approved by ArchProCoding & AAPC

Optional Certification: CAH-CBS Credential Exam

Register

and coding skills. Ideal for **MDs, DOs, NPs, PAs, and RNs**, this training will explore Medicare, Medicaid, and commercial payer strategies to help maximize reimbursement and support facility-wide goals.

Details:

Date: August 8, 2025 | **Time:** 1:00–4:00 PM

Location: Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort, Mt. Pleasant, MI

Fee: \$25 | **CEUs:** 3 CME credits available

Register

Additional Information

Registration Deadline: July 31, 2025

Hotel Block Closes: July 16, 2025

Questions? Contact Jeff Nagy at Jeff.Nagy@affiliate.msu.edu.

Rural Readiness Grant Program Now Open – Letters of Intent Due on June 30th!



The Office of Rural Prosperity (ORP) has officially launched Round 4 of the Rural Readiness Grant Program, a key opportunity for rural communities and organizations to boost their capacity, strengthen local partnerships, and advance high-impact development initiatives.

Grants of up to \$50,000 are available to support planning, collaboration, and capacity-building efforts that align with long-term community and economic goals. These competitive, reimbursement-based grants are designed to uplift underserved rural areas through strategic investments in readiness initiatives.

Key Dates to Remember:

- Letter of Intent Due: Monday, June 30, 2025, by 3:00 p.m. EDT
- Invitations to Apply Issued: Week of August 11, 2025
- Full Applications Due: Monday, September 15, 2025, by 3:00 p.m. EDT
- Award Announcements: Week of November 17, 2025

For more information, visit the Rural Readiness Grant Program Website or contact LEO-ORP@michigan.gov with any questions. Don't miss this opportunity to build momentum in your rural community!

Additional Information



Strength of Rural Spotlight Series

Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Collaborative: Intergenerational Program: Stories & Crafts with Seniors and Tots

June Edition



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

This month, we're proud to feature Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Collaborative and their innovative intergenerational program Stories and Crafts with Seniors and Tots.

The Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Collaborative works to identify local service gaps and create programs that help every child succeed. One such program is **Stories & Crafts with Seniors and Tots**, a monthly intergenerational story time at the Manistique Senior Citizens Center. The Delta-Schoolcraft Great Start Collaborative identified a gap in early childhood engagement and responded with a creative, community-centered solution.

Held every third Wednesday, the event brings together children ages 0–5 and local older adults for themed stories, crafts, and snacks. The program was launched through a partnership between the Senior Center and Schoolcraft Family Liaison Monica Powell. Rural communities thrive when generations come together and in Schoolcraft County, that's exactly what's happening.

The next story time is **August 20**. To learn more or get involved, visit greatstart.org.

[Read the Full Story](#)

GVSU Expands Behavioral Health Training for Rural PAs with New HRSA Grant



Grand Valley State University's Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) program has been awarded a new HRSA grant titled *"Addressing Behavioral Health Conditions in Rural Primary Care Through Enhanced Preceptor, Faculty, and Student Training and Experiential Learning."* This initiative aims to grow the pipeline of PAs prepared to deliver high-quality behavioral health care in rural communities.

Building on the success of GVSU's rural northern Michigan campus—originally funded by HRSA in 2012—the new grant will support enhanced training for PA faculty and rural clinical preceptors, along with expanded student experiential learning. Key program components include:

- A 3-month integrated behavioral health clinical rotation for PA students in rural primary care settings

- Preceptor training through UMass Chan Medical School's Primary Care Behavioral Health Certificate (36 CME credits)
- Additional courses such as MOUD training and attendance at the Michigan Rural Health Conference
- Stipends of \$2,250 per student for preceptors, along with technology support (iPad provided for student/preceptor use)

Preceptors will host two students per year for 12-week rotations that span care across the lifespan and include at least ten behavioral health encounters weekly. Evaluations are completed mid- and end-of-rotation.

This comprehensive effort not only strengthens the rural primary care workforce but also builds long-term partnerships between education and practice sites, expanding access to behavioral health services across Michigan.

For more information or to express interest in precepting, please contact GVSU Senior Affiliate Faculty member, [Amanda Reddy](#).

[More Information](#)

Now Open: 2025 Investing in the Health of the Upper Peninsula Grant Opportunity



The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation, in partnership with the Superior Health Foundation and the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, has recently announced the 2025 *Investing in the Health of the Upper Peninsula* Request for Proposal (RFP). This funding opportunity is designed to support programs that improve health outcomes across Michigan's Upper Peninsula, with a special emphasis on meeting the needs of the region's aging population.

Grant funding of up to \$50,000 is available for projects lasting 12 to 24 months. Priority areas include access to care, workforce development, chronic disease prevention, caregiving, social isolation, health literacy, and capacity building through data analysis.

Applicants must submit a concept paper by **July 11, 2025, at 11:59 PM (ET)** to be considered for full proposal submission. Selected applicants will be invited to submit full proposals by **September 12, 2025**.

[More Information](#)

New Resource: CDC's Suicide Prevention Communication Campaign Playbook



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a new resource for planning suicide prevention campaigns. The playbook includes:

- **Key Audience:** Tools for identifying specific populations at higher risk and their networks of influence.
- **Campaign Development:** Steps to design effective strategies, craft meaningful messages, and promote behavior change.
- **Behavior Models:** Insights into frameworks like the Health Belief Model and Social Cognitive Theory.
- **Messaging Best Practices:** Strategies to emphasize hope and resilience and use culturally relevant language.
- **Evaluation:** Tools to measure campaign impact and improve future efforts.

The latest data from the CDC show that **rural residents are at a higher risk for suicide** than urban residents and that rates of suicide almost doubled between 2000-2020 in rural areas.

[More Information](#)

New Webinar: Introduction to Treating Patients with Buprenorphine for PCPs

This virtual training, hosted by OPEN, is designed to equip providers with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively manage and treat patients with OUD using Buprenorphine.

- **Upcoming Dates:**
 - Monday, Sept. 8, 9 am – 1 pm
 - Monday, Nov. 10, 8 am – 12 pm

- **Financial Incentives:**
 - BCBSM will provide a \$250 incentive to any primary care provider attending this training for the first time (limited to first 250 registrants).
 - **MHC-Employed Providers:** To minimize the impact on productivity, if the training is scheduled during the provider's established hours, MHC-employed providers can block and charge their time to the HRSA MAT Access II. For details, email SUDsupport@mhc.net.
- **CME:**
 - These activities have been approved for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*.
 - Meets DEA training requirements.

Register Today

Going Pro Talent Fund: Congratulations Rural Healthcare Awardees!



The Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity - Workforce Development awards funds to employers through Michigan's workforce system, commonly known as **Michigan Works! Agencies** (MWA). The Going PRO Talent Fund makes awards to employers to assist in training, developing and retaining current and newly hired employees. Congratulations to our rural health partners who were awarded funds:

- Bronson Healthcare
- Kalkaska Memorial Health Center
- Munson Medical Center
- Corewell Health
- Alcona Citizens for Health Alpena
- Thunder Bay Community Health Service, Inc.
- Upper Great Lakes Family Health

The Going Pro Talent Fund opens application cycles twice a year, in the spring and fall. If you are interested in applying or have any questions, contact Workforce Initiative Manager, **Kyra Burkeen**, and she can help you get started.

CMS Finalizes New Standards to Strengthen Obstetrical Care in Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals



In response to persistent gaps in maternal health outcomes and the need for consistent, high-quality obstetrical care across diverse healthcare settings, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) finalized a sweeping rule in November 2024 titled *“Health and Safety Standards for Obstetrical Services in Hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals.”* The updated Conditions of Participation (CoPs) establish new federal requirements aimed at improving maternal and infant outcomes, ensuring safer and more coordinated care, and reducing disparities—particularly in rural and underserved communities.

The new rule applies to acute care hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) that provide obstetrical services or emergency care. Requirements will roll out in phases from mid-2025 through 2027, with additional interpretive guidance from CMS anticipated to assist in implementation. If deficiencies are found during a survey, facilities will first be required to submit a Plan of Correction before further action is taken.

Key Provisions of the Rule:

Emergency Services Readiness

Starting July 1, 2025, hospitals and CAHs with emergency departments must ensure staff are prepared to respond to obstetrical emergencies. Facilities are expected to adopt evidence-based protocols, maintain essential medications and equipment, and offer annual staff training informed by internal quality improvement data. Every emergency care area must also be equipped with a reliable system for patients to alert staff.

Patient Transfer Policies

Starting July 1, 2025, all hospitals must have written protocols in place for safely transferring patients within or outside the facility. Training on these procedures must occur annually for relevant staff. While CMS does not mandate written policies for accepting incoming transfers, it encourages

hospitals to consider them as a best practice.

Organization and Oversight of OB Services

Beginning January 1, 2026, facilities offering obstetrical services must ensure those services are organized in accordance with recognized clinical standards and integrated with other departments, such as surgery or anesthesia. OB services must be supervised by experienced clinical leaders, such as nurse practitioners, midwives, or physicians, and providers must have clearly defined clinical privileges.

Standards for Safe Care Delivery

Also effective January 1, 2026, hospitals must align their obstetrical services with the needs of their patient population and the hospital's capacity. This includes having protocols for emergency situations, appropriate monitoring equipment (e.g., fetal dopplers, cardiac monitors), and immediate access to supplies like hemorrhage carts or crash carts. CMS allows flexibility, with the expectation that each facility's equipment and resources reflect its service volume and complexity.

Staff Training Requirements

Starting January 1, 2027, OB staff must receive role-specific training at hire and at least every two years thereafter. These sessions must reflect quality improvement findings and focus on practices that enhance the safety and cultural responsiveness of obstetrical care. Hospitals have flexibility in training methods but are expected to regularly assess their effectiveness.

Integration with Quality Programs

Also by January 1, 2027, CMS will require OB services to be more fully integrated into each hospital's Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) program. Facilities must analyze obstetrical outcomes, identify disparities, and implement at least one measurable improvement project each year. Hospitals located in areas with a Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC) must also incorporate publicly available MMRC data into their QAPI efforts.

Next Steps

Facilities are encouraged to begin reviewing their current operations, engaging clinical leaders, and updating policies and procedures ahead of the phased deadlines. Leveraging educational resources like the Obstetric Readiness Learning Series can support successful implementation and enhance care for all mothers and newborns.

[More Information](#)

**Educational Opportunity: Obstetric
Readiness for EMS and EDs in Rural
Communities**



ALLIANCE FOR INNOVATION
ON MATERNAL HEALTH

To support rural providers in preparing for the CMS changes, the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) is launching a five-part Learning Series on Obstetric Readiness beginning June 25th. This free Zoom-based series is specifically geared toward emergency medical services (EMS) and emergency department (ED) teams in rural and under-resourced communities.

Hosted by the Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) and funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)'s Maternal and Child Health Bureau, the series highlights opportunities for collaboration between EMS, hospitals, and community partners. Topics include the use of telehealth, mobile care units, and community resource networks to improve care for pregnant and postpartum patients.

Each session is 75 minutes long, with the first focusing on rural obstetric care challenges and community-based solutions. This learning opportunity builds on previous AIM work, including the [AIM Obstetric Emergency Readiness Resource Kit](#).

[More Information](#)

Upcoming Webinar: Supporting Family Caregivers of Older Adults



Family caregivers are essential in supporting the growing older adult population, especially in rural areas. Yet caregiving often comes with emotional,

financial, and logistical challenges that can impact both the caregiver and the person receiving care.

Join the American Society on Aging for a free webinar:
Tuesday, June 24, 2025 at 1:00 PM

Topic: *Supporting Family Caregivers of Older Adults Through Technology & Community Resources*

This session will explore how technology and local resources can help ease caregiver burdens, improve caregiver well-being, and strengthen the quality of care. Participants will walk away with practical tools and strategies to better support family caregivers in their communities.

Registration Today

Explore Advocacy in Michigan: Apply for the Virtual Boot Camp



The Michigan League for Public Policy is offering a **free, virtual Advocacy Boot Camp** on **Thursday, July 17, 2025**—an opportunity for individuals across the state to learn the basics of advocacy and how to make their voices heard on issues that matter to them and their communities.

This session is a great fit for those who are newer to advocacy or simply curious about how to get involved. Participants will explore foundational skills, connect with others from across the state, and begin to think about how they can contribute to positive change in Michigan.

Details:

- Date: Thursday, July 17, 2025
- Location: Virtual

- Cost: Free (limited to 50 participants)
- Application Deadline: Friday, June 27, 2025

If you're interested in advocacy or community leadership, this is a great place to start.

[Apply Now](#)

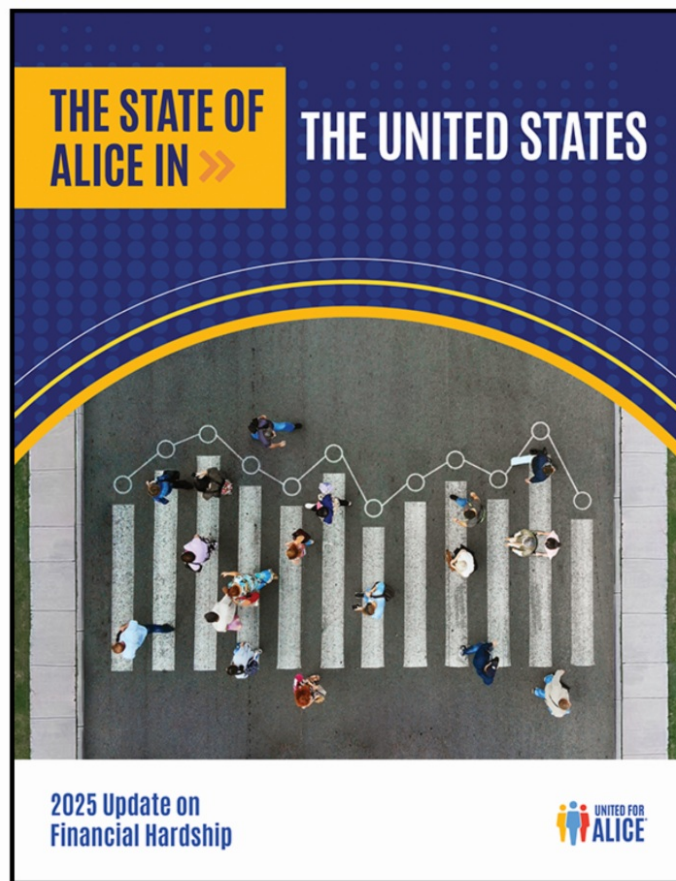
Funding Opportunity for Community-based Organizations Working in Drowning Prevention



The CDC Foundation is accepting proposals from eligible community-serving organizations interested in working collaboratively with local schools or school systems to expand access to basic swimming and water safety skills training among children aged 5 to 17 years. Eligible applicants will operate in Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, **Michigan**, New York, Oklahoma and Texas.

[More Information](#)

Financial Hardship by State: ALICE



United for ALICE recently released its 2025 report, revealing that 41% of Michigan households struggled to afford basic needs in 2023. While 14% lived below the federal poverty line, an additional 27% were classified as ALICE, working households that earn too much for assistance but not enough to meet rising costs for essentials like housing, food, and child care.

Rural communities are especially affected. Nationally, 44% of rural households are below the ALICE Threshold, with many working in low-wage essential jobs such as caregiving, retail, and food service. Older adults in rural areas are at greater risk as well, with over half of 65+ households experiencing financial hardship.

[Read the Report](#)

2025 National Shortage Designation Update in September - HPSA Updates & Rescore Process



Per federal regulations, Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) designations, including Maternity Care Target Areas (MCTAs) scores, are required to be updated every three years. As part of the Shortage Designation Modernization Project, the next National Shortage Designation Update (NSDU) is tentatively scheduled on *September 23, 2025*.

How to request a HPSA update or rescore:

- The Primary Care Office (PCO) must be contacted to request a shortage designation as the only entity that can submit a designation request to the federal government (HRSA) in Michigan. Requests are **free** and can be made by anyone in the community.
- Auto-Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) facilities can submit rescore requests through the Auto-HPSA Portal at any time using “**An Auto-HPSA Point of Contact**” link under the “Partners” tab [here](#).
- Automatically designated facility HPSAs, per federal statute and regulations, include:
 - Federally Qualified Health centers/Look-alike (FQHC).
 - Indian Health Service, Tribal Clinic, and Urban Indian Health Clinic (ITU).
 - CMS-certified Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) meeting NHSC site criteria.

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 new MBQIP 2025 core measures new MBQIP 2025 core measures? 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 MBQIP

Data Submission Deadlines

June 2025 Upcoming MBQIP Deadlines

July 9, 2025

- Reporting Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) Q1 2025 encounters (1/1/25-3/31/25) is due **July 9, 2025**. Submission is through the HQR Secure Portal-Vendor. **Quality Assurance Guidelines V.19.0**

July 31, 2025

- Emergency Department Transfer Communication (EDTC) Q2 2025 encounters (4/1/25-6/31/25) is due **July 31, 2025**. Connect with Crystal Barter at barthcry@msu.edu for submission process details.

New Releases!

MBQIP 2025 Core Set Information Guide

MBQIP 2025 Submission Deadlines

MBQIP Measures List

MBQIP Education

In May MCRH Hosted a MBQIP Hospital Wide All Cause Readmission Webinar. For a link to the video, please reach out to Amanda St. Martin at amanda.saintmartin@affiliate.msu.edu

Don't miss this opportunity to strengthen your hospital's quality reporting efforts!

Upcoming MCRH Educational Events

EMS:

June 24, 2025, 6-7pm EST

EMS Webinar Series: Endocrine Emergencies

Speaker: Shelly Szymanski, Paramedic, EMSIC

[Register Here](#)

CME Provided

ADDITIONAL NEWS & RESOURCES:

RURAL EMERGENCY HOSPITALS:

[Thinking of Converting to REH? Key Observations from Financial Modeling](#)

[Updated Guidance for Rural Emergency Hospitals \(REHs\)](#)

PALLIATIVE CARE:

[Access to Outpatient Palliative Care: Insights from Michigan](#)

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:

[Michigan Value Collaboration Rural Health Workgroup July Meeting](#)

[The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\) Rural Emergency Hospital Specifications Manual version 3.0](#)

PRIMARY CARE:

[CMS Enhancing Coverage of Preventive Services Under the Affordable Care Act](#)

[CMS Finalizes New Model to Improve Access to Kidney Transplants](#)

[Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute \(PCORI\) Funding: Improving Mental and Behavioral Health – Letters of Intent January 14](#)

[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:

[Updated Michigan Overdose Data to Action Dashboard](#)

[HHS Launches New "Food as Medicine" Resources](#)

[The U.S. Playbook to Address Social Determinants of Health](#)

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER:

[Take 10! Transforming Care for Women with Substance Use Disorders \(SUDs\) and Their Families Webinar Series](#)

[Opioid Settlement Resource Center - The Michigan Association of Counties \(micounties.org\)](#)

[Opioid Settlement Overview Table](#)

[Recovery-Ready Workplace Toolkit for Businesses](#)

[Rural Communities Opioid Response Program – Pathways](#)

WORKFORCE:

[Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program for Paraprofessionals](#)

[Statewide Investment Helps Youth Explore Future Careers In Michigan](#)

[Mental Health in the Rural Workplace](#)

[Navigating Workplace Violence: Safety Strategies for Managing Agitation and Aggression](#)

VETERANS:

[Sign up for Veterans Health Updates](#)

[Sign up for the VA Office of Rural Health \(ORH\) quarterly newsletter](#)

[View an online copy of the new 2025 VA benefits booklet](#)

[VA continues partnership with Oracle Health to deploy Federal Electronic Health Record - VA News](#)

[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](#)

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Michigan Center For Rural Health | 909 Wilson Road B-218 W Fee Hall Michigan State University |
East Lansing, MI 48824 US

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