

MCRH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

September 2026
Volume 8, Issue 9

OUR MISSION

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



Michigan Center for Rural Health Transition Plan

For 26 years John Barnas has led Michigan Center for Rural Health (MCRH) operations. John started at MCRH in November 1994 and was named the Executive Director in February 2000. He has been the driving force in the decades' long expansive growth at the Center ever since. In January 2027, John will take a step back from the MCRH helm.

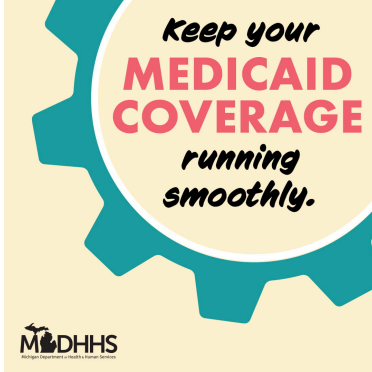


A transition plan developed by the MCRH Board of Directors and MCRH leadership team will move to the next step effectively in October 2026. Crystal Barter will become MCRH's Incoming Executive Director working beside John through the final quarter of the year. Effective January 2027, John will stay on in a part-time Strategic Advisor position as Crystal assumes the Executive Director role.

More on the MCRH changes can be found on our [website](#).

Helping Healthy Michigan Plan Members Prepare for Work Requirements

Beginning January 1, 2027, some adults ages 19–64 who apply for Healthy Michigan Plan coverage will need to meet work requirements or qualify for an exemption. For current members, the requirements will be checked at



renewals beginning March 1, 2027. Many people may already meet the requirements through work, school or another approved activity. MDHHS will use information it already has to verify eligibility when possible, but some members may be asked for more information.

Rural healthcare teams and community organizations can help people prepare by encouraging them to confirm their coverage, keep their contact information current in MI Bridges, and read and respond to MDHHS notices by the listed deadlines. When someone receives a request for documentation, connecting them with assistance can help them respond.

In addition, the Michigan Non-Profit Association (MNA) launched a Statewide Network to help nonprofits guide Michiganders through federal Medicaid overhaul.

MCRH has gathered the MDHHS Community Partner Toolkit, webinar recordings and guidance for healthcare teams in one resource page. As implementation guidance develops, use current MDHHS materials when sharing eligibility, exemption or reporting information with patients and community members.

The 2026 3RNet Academy Registration is Now Open!



Registration for the 2026 3RNet Academy is now open! The 3RNET Academy 2026: Strategic Marketing for Recruitment is a six-part webinar series designed for healthcare HR professionals and recruitment leaders in rural and underserved communities. Grounded in the Recruiting for Retention framework developed by 3RNET, this year's focus equips participants with modern marketing strategies to attract mission-aligned healthcare providers in a competitive workforce environment.

The Michigan Center for Rural Health is covering the cost of the academy for all of our partners in rural Michigan!

Questions? Reach out to Kyra for answers!

[Learn More and Register](#)

Michigan Health Council Updates & Events



2026 Michigan Healthcare Workforce Summit: Building What's Next

The Michigan Healthcare Workforce Summit: Building What's Next will bring together healthcare leaders, educators, employers, policymakers, workforce professionals, Tribes, and community partners to identify Michigan's most pressing workforce challenges and develop practical strategies to address them.

Michigan's healthcare workforce is at a pivotal moment. While significant progress has been made to strengthen the talent pipeline, critical gaps remain that require bold thinking, cross-sector collaboration, and innovative solutions.

[Learn More and Register](#)

The 2026 Healthcare Workforce Index

The Michigan Healthcare Workforce Index is a comprehensive index that assesses the “health” of 36 healthcare occupations **and occupational categories** in Michigan. Combining data from Lightcast, the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), MHC Insight was able to systematically rank healthcare occupations on four inputs - growth, wage, shortage, and turnover - to determine how each occupation is faring in our economy.

The Index is designed to help Michigan stakeholders move from reviewing workforce data to developing an effective workforce strategy.

[Read more about the Workforce Index findings.](#)



This National Rural Health Day, November 19, holds special meaning for MCRH. We're celebrating our 35th anniversary and our role as Michigan's State Office of Rural Health, alongside the people and partnerships that make rural communities stronger.

Last year, Michigan's Community Star, Kari Granz, was recognized for her work with the Thumb Community Health Partnership. From helping young people explore healthcare careers to connecting neighbors with mental health resources, Kari shows what's possible when people come together to care for their communities.



We look forward to sharing the story of Michigan's **2026 Community Star** when this year's selection is announced on National Rural Health Day. Until then, explore ways to celebrate the people who power rural health.



Strength of Rural Spotlight Series

September 2026 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, MCRH is proud to highlight Life EMS Ambulance's Behavioral Health Transportation program. The program provides a more compassionate and appropriate way to transport individuals from emergency departments to inpatient behavioral health care.

Using specially designed vehicles and trained staff, Life EMS has completed more than 11,000 successful transports throughout Michigan, including the Upper

Peninsula. The program also helps EMS and law enforcement remain available to respond to emergencies in their local communities.

[Read the Full Story](#)

Celebrating Quality In Rural MI: 2026 CMS Star Ratings

Celebrating Quality in Rural Michigan: 2026 CMS Star Ratings

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently released the **2026 CMS Overall Hospital Quality Star Ratings**, providing an opportunity to recognize hospitals across the country that are demonstrating a strong commitment to quality, patient experience, safety, and clinical outcomes.

The CMS Star Ratings program assigns hospitals between one and five stars, with **five stars representing the highest overall rating**. While star ratings are one way to look at hospital quality, they also provide an opportunity to celebrate the work hospitals are doing to improve care and outcomes for the communities they serve.

Celebrating Michigan's Rural Hospitals

Michigan's rural hospitals continue to demonstrate that high-quality care is happening in communities throughout the state. In the 2026 ratings, **10 rural Prospective Payment System (PPS) hospitals and nine Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) received CMS Star Ratings**.

For rural hospitals, earning a CMS Star Rating can be particularly noteworthy. Many Critical Access Hospitals do not receive an Overall Hospital Quality Star Rating because their lower patient volumes and limited eligibility for individual measures may prevent them from meeting the minimum reporting requirements.

Rural PPS Hospitals

Congratulations to the following Michigan rural PPS hospitals recognized in the 2026 CMS Star Ratings:

5 Stars

- MyMichigan Medical Center Alpena
- MyMichigan West Branch

4 Stars

- Munson Healthcare Cadillac Hospital
- Munson Healthcare Otsego Memorial Hospital (Gaylord)
- ProMedica Charles Virginia Hickman Hospital
- U of M Sparrow Carson Hospital
- MyMichigan Alma
- Oaklawn Hospital
- Munson Healthcare Manistee Hospital
- Corewell Health Greenville Hospital

Critical Access Hospitals

We also want to recognize the nine Michigan Critical Access Hospitals that received a CMS Star Rating this year:

5 Stars

- Bronson Lakeview Hospital
- Corewell Health Gerber Hospital
- McLaren Thumb Region

4 Stars

- Aspire Rural Health System – Hills & Dales
- MyMichigan Standish

3 Stars

- Corewell Health Pennock Hospital
- U of M Sparrow Clinton Hospital
- OSF St. Francis Hospital
- MyMichigan Tawas

A Celebration of Rural Quality

These ratings represent more than a number. Behind every star are healthcare professionals, leaders, quality teams, board members, and community partners working every day to provide safe, effective, patient-centered care.

For Michigan's rural hospitals, quality improvement often happens while navigating unique challenges including smaller patient volumes, workforce limitations, and fewer resources. The hospitals recognized this year demonstrate what is possible when rural healthcare teams remain focused on improving outcomes and the patient experience.

Congratulations to all 19 Michigan rural hospitals receiving a 2026 CMS Star Rating!

Your commitment to quality and to the communities you serve deserve recognition.



RECOVERY HOUSING FORUM
September 22, 2026 | 4-7pm

MICHIGAN CENTER
for
RURAL HEALTH

NORTHERN MICHIGAN
NMORC
OPIOID RESPONSE CONSORTIUM

The Northern Michigan Opioid Response Consortium (NMORC) is committed to strengthening recovery housing across our region by providing technical assistance, training, and resources to support recovery home operators. We invite

you to join us for the **NMORC Recovery Housing Forum** on **September 22 from 4:00–7:00 p.m.** to connect with recovery housing professionals, learn best practices, and collaborate to enhance recovery support throughout Northern Michigan.

[Learn More](#)

[Register](#)

Rural Maternity Care: A Look at Access in Michigan

Rural Maternity Care: A Look at Access in Michigan

Access to maternity care continues to be an important rural health issue, particularly as rural hospitals face ongoing workforce, financial, and service-line challenges.

A new analysis from KFF, “**Availability of Rural Hospitals Providing Inpatient Maternity Care in Medicaid**,” takes a closer look at where Medicaid enrollees can access hospital-based maternity care and what could happen if additional rural hospitals close their obstetric services.

The findings reinforce just how important rural hospitals are to maternity care access. In 2023, 943 rural hospitals nationally provided inpatient maternity care to Medicaid enrollees, 39% of all hospitals providing this care to Medicaid patients. Also noted, rural hospitals providing inpatient maternity care were on average 43 minutes from the nearest in-state hospital providing the same services, compared with just 13 minutes for urban hospitals.

What does this look like in Michigan?

Michigan reflects the national story. According to KFF's analysis, 31 rural Michigan hospitals provided inpatient maternity care to Medicaid enrollees in 2023, compared with 46 urban hospitals. That means rural hospitals accounted for approximately 40% of Michigan hospitals providing inpatient maternity care to Medicaid enrollees.

This is particularly important in a state where rural communities can face significant geographic barriers to care. Previous research examining rural maternity care in Michigan has identified areas of higher geographic risk, including portions of the Upper Peninsula and northeast Lower Peninsula, where women may need to travel substantial distances for maternity-related services.

Why this matters for Rural Michigan

Maternity care is an important example of the difficult decisions rural hospitals are being asked to navigate. The report highlights a broader concern for rural communities: when a rural hospital stops providing maternity services, the impact is not simply the loss of a service line. It can mean longer travel times for patients, greater challenges for families, and additional pressure on the remaining hospitals providing obstetric care.

Take a look: KFF's [*Availability of Rural Hospitals Providing Inpatient Maternity Care in Medicaid*](#) provides state-level data and an interactive look at rural maternity care access across the country.

Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan Community Listening Sessions

The Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan is pleased to invite Tribal community members to participate in a **45-minute virtual listening session** to share perspectives on the health needs, priorities, and experiences of their Tribal communities.

The goal of this session is to **better understand community needs and priorities** and to **inform future programs and initiatives** that best support your community. Your voice and experiences are vital to this process.



Details:

- Dates and Times: Tuesday, October 6 at 10am, 12pm or 2pm or Thursday, October 8 at 10am, 12pm, or 2pm (Please choose one)
- Format: Virtual, 45 minutes
- Compensation: \$25 gift card for your time
- Participants: Each session is limited to 10 participants; spots will be filled in the order registrations are received

To register for a session, please use one of the following links:

- [Tuesday, October 6, 10am](#)
- [Tuesday, October 6, 12pm](#)
- [Thursday, October 6, 2pm](#)
- [Thursday, October 8, 10am](#)
- [Thursday, October 8, 12pm](#)
- [Thursday, October 8, 2pm](#)

For question, please reach out to [Chelby Archambeau](#), Program Coordinator (Health Education & Chronic Disease Department).

Michigan's Childhood Vaccine Recommendations Remain Unchanged

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has confirmed that the state's childhood vaccine recommendations, school requirements and exemption processes remain unchanged.

Michigan healthcare providers should continue following the evidence-based immunization schedule developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, as outlined in the state's [Standing Recommendation](#).



MDHHS reports that no new evidence supports changing the vaccine schedule at this time.

With Michigan experiencing increases in measles, whooping cough and other vaccine-preventable diseases, Rural Health Clinics can help families review immunization records and catch up on recommended vaccines. Families may also request records through their [local health department](#) or [MCIR.org/Public](#).

[Read the full MDHHS announcement](#) published August 17, 2026.

Visit [IVaccinate.org](#) and [Michigan.gov/Immunize](#) for more information on vaccines.

New Finding Your Way Social Systems Navigation Manual Supports Stronger Connections Across Rural Communities

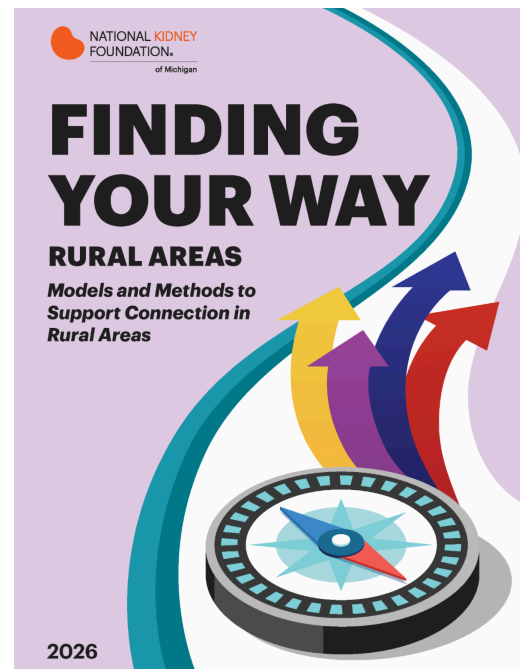
The National Kidney Foundation of Michigan (NKF) has released *Finding Your Way: Rural Areas*, a new guide designed to help organizations strengthen communication, collaboration and access to resources across rural Michigan.

Rather than serving as a traditional resource directory, the guide provides adaptable models and practical strategies that communities can use to build stronger systems of support. Topics include cross-sector collaboration, asset mapping, emergency preparedness, regional and digital hubs, volunteer recruitment and communication best practices.

The guide also highlights the diversity of Michigan's rural regions and emphasizes the importance of tailoring strategies to each community's geography, culture, resources and existing relationships. It includes information from MCRH about statewide rural health networks and initiatives.

Rural Health Clinics can use the guide to identify new ways to connect patients with services, strengthen community partnerships and address gaps in local support systems.

[Download and share *Finding Your Way: Rural Areas*](#)



Build Epilepsy Awareness and Response Skills in Marquette



The Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan, in partnership with the Northern Michigan University Center for Rural Health, will host two free community events at the NMU Northern Center in Marquette:

- September 23, 6–9 p.m.: An advance screening of *Under the Lights*, a coming-of-age film about a teenager living with epilepsy, followed by an opportunity to connect with others in the epilepsy community. Advance registration is required. [View and share the screening flyer](#)
- September 24, 6–9 p.m.: Community-Wide Seizure Recognition and First Aid Training covering common seizure types, warning signs and safe response practices. Participants will receive certification valid for two years. [View and share the training flyer](#)

Rural Health Clinic teams are encouraged to attend and share these opportunities with patients, families and community partners. Registration is available through EpilepsyMichigan.org

Partner Spotlight: Gibson Family Health Center



Our partners at the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan (NKFM) recently highlighted Helen Newberry Joy Hospital's Gibson Family Health Center and its work to improve chronic kidney disease (CKD) detection and care in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Gibson Family Health Center was one of six Rural Health Clinics that participated in the CKD Learning Collaborative launched by NKFM and MCRH in September 2025. Through the collaborative, clinic teams received expert education, practical tools, individualized support and patient education resources to strengthen CKD screening, diagnosis and care.

The spotlight shares how the Gibson Family Health Center team addressed technical and workflow challenges to help identify kidney disease earlier and better support patients in its rural community.

[Read NKFM's partner spotlight](#)

Healthy Aging Month | Supporting Older Adults in Rural Communities

September is Healthy Aging Month. This year's theme, "Curiosity Has No Age Limit," celebrates the connections, activities and sense of purpose that enrich life at every age.

For older adults in rural communities, staying connected and active can depend on access to transportation, local programs and support at home. Healthcare and community organizations can help by building partnerships around those needs.

Minnesota's [Connected Communities for Healthy Aging](#) offers one example, bringing local partners together to connect older adults with services, activities and technology support. Here in Michigan, MCRH's [Cultivating Comfort palliative care initiative](#) works with four rural communities to develop care shaped by local needs, helping people living with serious illness and their families find support closer to home.

Organizations looking for additional ways to support older adults can explore [MI Coordinated Health](#) for eligible people with Medicare and Medicaid, or the National Council on Aging's guide to [choosing a falls prevention program](#) that fits their community.



New Tools Support Rural Clinically Integrated Network Development



Rural Health Value has released two resources to help rural healthcare leaders explore and strengthen clinically integrated networks (CINs). These networks can help independent providers coordinate care, improve quality and pursue value-based contracting opportunities together.

- [Collaboration to Contracting: A Guide to Rural Clinically Integrated Networks](#) offers a practical roadmap covering governance, care delivery, data

infrastructure, legal considerations, financial sustainability and payer contracting.

- [Rural Clinically Integrated Network Readiness Assessment Tool](#) helps organizations evaluate their readiness, identify opportunities and begin strategic conversations about CIN participation.

The resources were developed through a cooperative agreement with the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy.

Improving Food Access for Expecting Moms: Michigan's Special Delivery Study

The University of Michigan Department of Family Medicine is currently enrolling participants for **Special Delivery**, a large-scale clinical trial led by Principal Investigator Dr. Tammy Chang (HUM00190614). The study aims to expand access to healthy food for low-income young moms across Michigan by utilizing convenient grocery delivery options.

With a goal of enrolling nearly 600 young pregnant women statewide, the study team is actively seeking referrals from perinatal and maternal health advocates.



Learn more about this study or help spread the word by sharing recruitment details directly with clients or local professional networks. Printed recruitment materials (flyers, FAQs, and postcards) can be requested for your office, and the research team is offering 30-minute virtual informational/Q&A sessions for interested organizations and staff.

- [Learn More & Watch the Overview](#)
- [Direct Enrollment Link](#)
- **Call/Text:** 734-237-3233
- **Email:** um.special.delivery@gmail.com

New Resource: Updated Grant Writing Toolkit Released



The University of North Dakota Center for Rural Health has released an updated grant writing toolkit to help rural communities and organizations navigate the grant writing process. The toolkit offers resources to support the development and submission of rural health grant proposals, with information on grant writing,

assessing community needs, proposal development, sustainability, funding opportunities, and more.

[View the Toolkit](#)

Two Training Modules Build Practical Skills for Rural Public Health

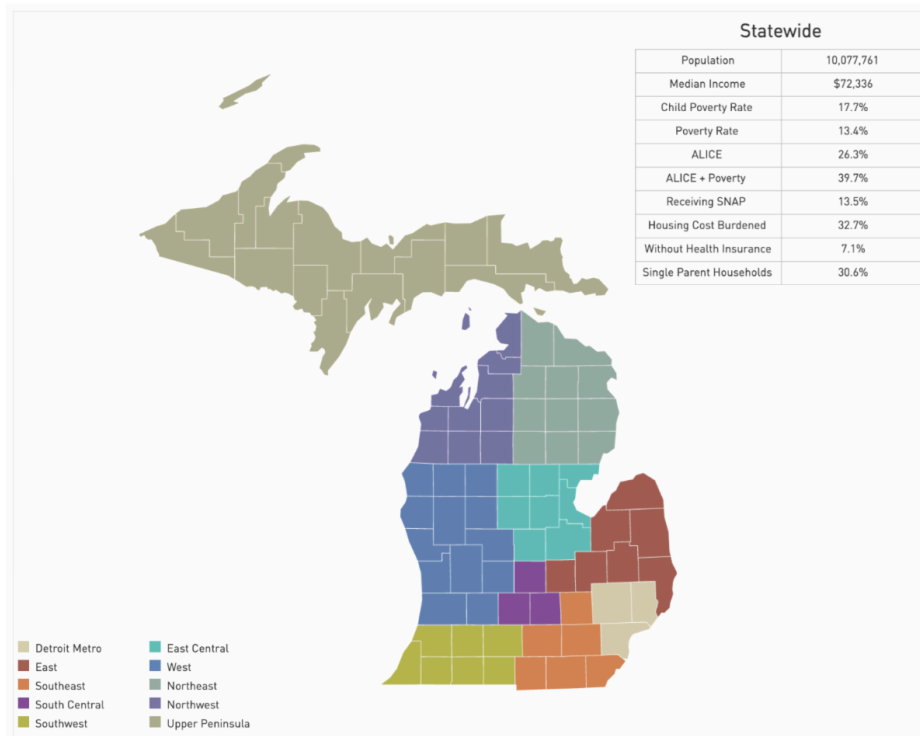


The NORC Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis has released two training modules designed to help rural public health professionals apply policy and data skills in their everyday work.

[Practical Approaches to Rural Public Health Policy](#) walks through a six-step process, from identifying an issue and building support to implementing a policy and adjusting it based on lessons learned. [Practical Data Skills for Rural Public Health](#) covers how to collect, analyze, interpret, and communicate data to support local decisions. Both modules include real-world rural public health examples.

Continuing education credits are available through August 28, 2029. Find the courses on CDC TRAIN: [policy module](#) and [data module](#).

Updated Michigan Poverty and Well-Being Map Available



Poverty Solutions at the University of Michigan has released its updated Michigan Poverty and Well-Being Map. The interactive tool provides statewide, regional and county-level data on income, poverty, health insurance coverage, housing costs, food insecurity and other measures of economic well-being.

The latest analysis found that nearly 40% of Michiganders struggle to afford basic needs. This includes approximately 13% of residents living below the federal poverty line and more than 26% of working households whose incomes exceed the poverty line but do not cover their local cost of living.

Rural health organizations can use the map and accompanying regional fact sheets to better understand the economic conditions affecting their patients, identify local needs and inform community partnerships and service planning.

[Explore the Michigan Poverty and Well-Being Map](#)

Hospital Cost Report Training

Forvis Mazars will offer a virtual Hospital Cost Report Training program October 20–22, 2026. The training will provide an in-depth overview of the Medicare cost report, its primary worksheets, the settlement process, and key reimbursement topics, which include Medicare Advantage, Medicare bad debt, the prospective payment system, and the wage index.

The program is designed for CFOs, controllers, reimbursement managers, accounting staff, and other hospital finance professionals. Participants may earn up to 18 CPE credits.

Dates: October 20–22, 2026

Time: 9:30 a.m.–3:50 p.m. ET

Cost: \$850 per attendee; discounts are available for Forvis Mazars clients and organizations registering multiple attendees.

If you have any questions please contact Jeff.nagy@affiliate.msu.edu

Learn More and Register

New Resource: Rural Mobile Healthcare Toolkit



Rural Mobile Healthcare Toolkit The Rural Health Information Hub and the NORC Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis have released a new Rural Mobile Healthcare Toolkit. This free guide helps groups improve access to healthcare in small towns by bringing services directly to people. It provides helpful tools, ways to set up programs, and examples of successful projects in rural areas.

Explore the Toolkit

IHI Open School



Expand Your Expertise in Quality and Patient Safety with Free Access to IHI Open School

Members of the Michigan Critical Access Hospital Quality Network, RHC Network, and Population Health Network have a special opportunity to deepen their knowledge of patient safety and quality improvement through the [Institute for Healthcare Improvement \(IHI\) Open School](#).

Through the Michigan Center for Rural Health free spots are available for members to complete a curated series of online learning modules and earn the Basic Certificate in Quality and Safety. These self-paced, interactive courses build foundational skills that strengthen quality improvement work in rural healthcare settings, making them an excellent fit for both new and experienced team members.

MCRH encourages hospital quality leaders to take advantage of this opportunity to stay current with best practices that drive improved outcomes for patients. This

program offers practical, applicable tools for day-to-day improvement efforts while also providing nationally recognized certification.

Participants who complete the required modules will earn the IHI Basic Certificate in Quality and Safety, a credential that demonstrates commitment to excellence in patient care.

To learn more or reserve your free spot, contact Amanda St. Martin, Hospital Programs Manager, at amanda.saintmartin@affiliate.msu.edu.

MBQIP Upcoming Deadlines, Reporting Reminders, and Resources



MBQIP Data Submission Deadlines

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).

Resource Updates for Critical Access Hospitals that reflect the new MBQIP Core Measure Set

[MBQIP Navigator](#)

[MBQIP Information Guide](#)

[Monthly MBQIP Data Submission Deadlines](#)

Data Submission Guides

These guides provide detailed instructions for submitting MBQIP measure data. They include measure details, linked trainings and step-by-step data submission instructions for the measure:

- [Hybrid-Hospital Wide Readmissions Data Submission Guide](#)
- [Safe Use of Opioids-Concurrent Prescribing Data Submission Guide](#)
- [CAH Quality Infrastructure Submission Guide](#)
- [MBQIP Navigator](#)

Upcoming Deadlines

The Hybrid Hospital-Wide Readmission measure deadline is **October 1, 2026**. This measure is being reported for the first time as an MBQIP Core Measure. You

should begin preparing now for the upcoming Hybrid Hospital-Wide Readmission measure submission deadline. Use the checklist below to ensure your systems and accesses are ready to submit.

Reporting Readiness Checklist

- Confirm Health IT certification to the 2015 Edition Cures Update criteria. You can verify your edition on the Certified Health IT Product List.
- Work with your Health IT Department or EHR Vendor to Validate your QRDA Category I files against the most current requirements, including the CMS QRDA I HQR Implementation Guide and associated Schematron and sample files.
- Log into the HQR Portal to confirm your HARP account is active and associated with your organization. A new dashboard feature will display current, upcoming, and closed submission periods. This is a helpful resource for your organization to confirm and track to upcoming submission deadlines.

Test Before You Submit

Under the Data Submissions tab on the HQR Portal, you'll see the Test and Production options. Upload under the Test option first to confirm your QRDA I file(s) are accepted by the system before submitting in Production.

Critical Access Hospital (CAH) Quality Inventory and Assessment is due **November 20, 2026**. Collected the data for the assessment will be submitted via a FMT-administered Qualtrics platform. This Assessment allows the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy to learn more about CAH service lines offered, quality improvement (QI) infrastructure and activities, and related quality measures. The Assessment will be an opportunity to gather a wealth of information that will help our state's Flex Program improve how we support safe and high-quality care in CAHs. More information about the Assessment can be found **here**. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda St. Martin @ amanda.saintmartin@affiliate.msu.edu

Upcoming MCRH Educational Events

Grand Rounds:

October 6, 2026, 12-1 pm EST

Behavioral Health Grand Rounds:

Assessments in Behavioral Healthcare

Speaker: Genevieve Groover, MSW

SW CEs available

[Register](#)

October 8, 2026, 12-1pm EST

Veterans Series Grand Rounds:

Understanding Veteran Culture and Mental Health Considerations

Speaker: Adam McGuire, PhD

CHW, Nursing, SW, Physicians, Advanced Practice Providers, CEs available

[Register](#)

Project ECHO:

September 23, 2026, 12-1 pm EST

Infectious Disease ECHO

Beyond Lyme Disease: other tickborne illnesses

CME is available for medical professionals: Physicians, Physician Assistants, APP, DNP, Registered Nurses

[Register](#)

October 21, 2026, 12-1 pm EST

Infectious Disease ECHO

An Overview of Herpes Viruses

Speaker: Dr. Peter Gulick, DO

CME is available for medical professionals: Physicians, Physician Assistants, APP, DNP, Registered Nurses

[Register](#)

Other Education Opportunities:

ASTHO has many great on demand programs! [Check out their offerings](#)

National Farm Safety and Health Week with AgriSafe - [FREE Webinars](#)

Sept. 21–25

MCRH in Action

A snapshot of where MCRH staff have traveled and the work they've been doing across Michigan.

General

- [Crystal Barter](#) and [Jill Oesterle](#) traveled to Pittsburgh, PA to attend and present at the 2026 NOSORH Annual Meeting, learning from and sharing with other State Offices around the Country.

Behavioral Health

- [Gennie Groover](#) provided a presentation on the ASAM Criteria 4th Edition changes to Alcona Health Center's Behavioral Health Team.

Hospital Programs

- [Jeff Nagy](#) was onsite at Munson Charlevoix Hospital and Schoolcraft Memorial Hospital for Session 1 of Lean Greenbelt Training. Along the way he stopped in for visits at Mackinac Straits Health System and OSF HealthCare St. Francis Hospital & Medical Group in Escanaba. Jeff also traveled to Atlanta for the FORHP Outreach reverse site visit for the grant funded Transitional Care work at Beacon Allegan and Dowagiac, as well as MyMichigan Medical Centers at Gladwin, Tawas and Standish.

Improving Veterans Access to Healthcare

- [Jeanne Marriott](#) attended a Veteran Town Hall & PACT Act Veteran Resource Fair.
- Jeanne Marriott and [Joyce Fetrow](#) attended MISSION: YOU MATTER event at the Landing Zone. This event was geared towards supporting veterans and providing resources to combat Veteran Suicide.

Northern Michigan Opioid Response Consortium

- Jeanne Marriott and Joyce Fetrow attended Project Connect event in Cheboygan. This event was supported with NMORC and IREACH resources and information.
- Gennie Groover, Jeanne Marriott, Dave McGreaham and Joyce Fetrow facilitated the NMORC Quarterly Meeting that provided news and presentations on substance use prevention, treatment, recovery and workforce. More than 30 partners attended either in person or online.

Palliative Care

- [Amanda St. Martin](#) and [Aleah Huse](#) visited the Beacon Health System Three Rivers Homecare & Hospice team as part of MCRH's community-based palliative care development program. The visit gave the team an opportunity to review its updated action plan and discuss ways to strengthen support and coordinated care for people facing serious illness in the community

Workforce

- [Kyra Burkeen](#) traveled to Raleigh, North Carolina, to attend the 3RNET Conference, where she heard from other State Offices of Rural Health and learned about best practices in rural healthcare recruitment, retention, and workforce development.



ADDITIONAL NEWS & RESOURCES:

PALLIATIVE CARE:

[Supporting Rural Older Adults in Home and Community-Based Settings: Perspectives from Area Agencies on Aging Palliative Care In U.S. Hospitals: 2026 Snapshot](#)

[State Innovations in Improving Access to Care for Adults with Complex Needs in Rural Communities](#)

["If I Have Any Problems, I Just Want to See My Doctor": Perspectives on a Proposed Collaborative RUral PALLiative Care Intervention \(RuPal\)](#)

[Dementia DataHub](#)

[Feasibility and Acceptability of a Rural Palliative Care Intervention for Patients with Heart Failure \(RuPAL-HF\)](#)

PRIMARY CARE:

[CMS Pauses Plans for RHC Self-Attestation Process | NARHC Update](#)

[Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule & Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments HCPCS Codes, Waived Tests & Reasonable Charge Payments: October 2026 Quarterly Update](#)

[Revenue Cycle for Independent RHCs Masterclass](#)

[Migration and Aging Across the Rural-Urban Continuum](#)

- [National Association of Rural Health Clinics - New ACADEMY Course - A Front Office Guide! Check it out!](#)

[ColoSense™ Colorectal Cancer Screening Test: HETS Update Coming in January](#)

SOCIAL DRIVERS OF HEALTH:

[Statewide Lead Filter Support Program](#)

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER:

[Substance Use in Nonmetropolitan Counties](#)

VETERANS:

[Early Alert is a free wellness service offering connection and resources for anyone who as ever served in the military!](#)

[Sign up for Veterans Health Updates](#)

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

[Federal EHR helps catch lung cancer earlier for Veterans - VA News](#)

[Why the VA's Disability System Is Really Worker's Compensation | Military.com](#)

[Veteran Suicide Prevention: The Power of Connection](#)

EMS:

[McLaren Oakland EMS Symposium 2026 - Info](#)

[McLaren Oakland EMS Symposium 2026 - Registration](#)

[2026 UP EMS Conference](#)

[MiREMS - Career Survival Training](#)

[EMS Winterfest](#)

[Ambulance Revenue Cycle Management](#)

[Corewell Health EMS Symposium, 10/9](#)

- [Protecting the Wellbeing of Disaster Responders - 9/22](#)

[Mandated Reporters - 9/30](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

[Training and Services to End Violence and Abuse Against Individuals with Disabilities and Deaf People | Application Deadline: Sep 25, 2026](#)

[Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program \(REDL and REDG\) | Application Deadline: Sep 30, 2026](#)

[CCAM-TAC Community Rides Pilot Grant Program | Application Deadline: Oct 19, 2026](#)

[NIH Connecting the Community for Maternal Health Challenge: Research Capacity Building in Maternity Care](#)

[Deserts – first phase open until September 23.](#)

[AmeriCorps State and National Grants | Application Deadline: Jan 13, 2027](#)

[2026 Autism Spectrum Disorder \(ASD\) Training Series](#)

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR 2026
MCRH ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORS!**



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