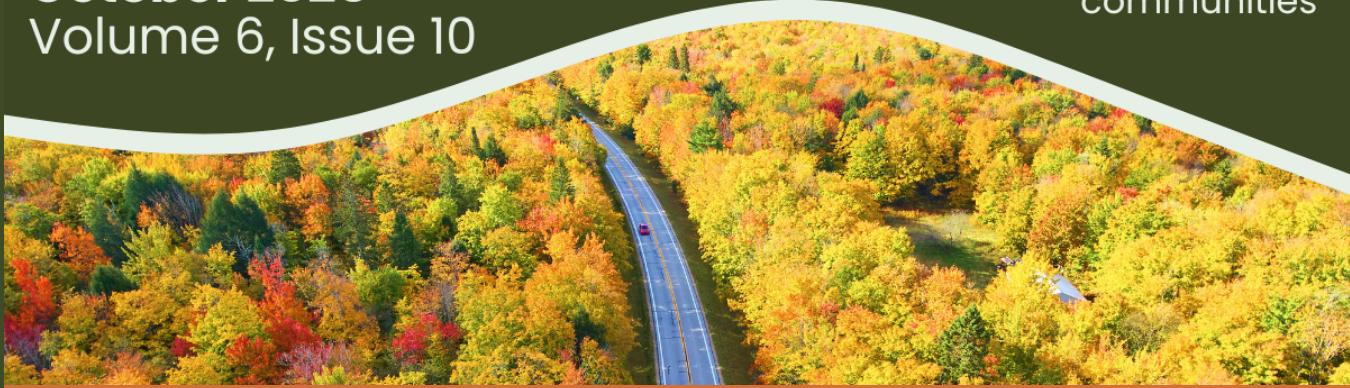


MCRH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

October 2025
Volume 6, Issue 10

OUR MISSION

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



**Celebrate the Power of Rural on
November 20th!**

National Rural Health Day

Celebrating the **Power of Rural!**®



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025

On November 20, the Michigan Center for Rural Health will join partners across the nation to celebrate **National Rural Health Day** and the **#PowerOfRural** - a day to honor the people, providers, and organizations who keep rural Michigan healthy and strong.

Rural communities are the backbone of our state, and this annual observance is a special opportunity to shine a light on their resilience, resourcefulness, and innovation. Whether it's a clinic team going above and beyond for patients, EMS professionals answering the call, or community organizations finding creative ways to connect neighbors to care - **NRHD is about celebrating all who make a difference in rural health.**

Join the Celebration

There are so many ways to participate! Explore tools and ideas to make NRHD your own:

- **Key Messages & Data Points:** Updated 2025 edition featuring new rural health stories and statistics to share
- **Ways to Celebrate:** From staff recognitions to community events, find ideas that fit your team
- **Promotional Toolkit:** Ready-to-use graphics, templates, and social media posts to help spread the word

Spotlighting Rural Stars

Since 2015, the **Community Star Recognition Program** has celebrated more than 300 people and organizations improving lives in rural areas. Stay tuned to MCRH's website and social media on November 20 when Michigan's 2025 Community Star is announced!



This November, let's come together to celebrate the extraordinary people, programs, and partnerships that make rural healthcare in Michigan something to be proud of! Share your celebration with us on social media using **#PowerOfRural #MiRuralHealth** and send your photos and stories to husealea@msu.edu to be included in our Michigan NRHD recap.

Scheurer Health Recognized Among Top 20 Critical Access Hospitals for Patient Satisfaction



Scheurer Health in Pigeon, Michigan, has been named one of the Top 20 Critical Access Hospitals for Patient Satisfaction in the nation for 2025.

Selected from 1,377 CAHs across the country, Scheurer Health earned this distinction from the **Chartis Center for Rural Health** based on outstanding performance across all ten HCAHPS domains.

The recognition was announced by the **National Rural Health Association** during its annual Critical Access Hospital Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, this September.

“Scheurer Health is proud of our entire staff who have contributed to our hospital achieving this designation,” said Ross Ramsey, MD, President & CEO of Scheurer Health. “Our results as a top 20 Critical Access Hospital in patient satisfaction acknowledge the excellent customer service our patients and the communities we serve know us for and deserve to receive when pursuing

healthcare services. We look forward to patients enjoying our great culture when they walk through our doors."

This achievement highlights not only Scheurer Health's commitment to excellence in rural healthcare but also the strength and dedication of Michigan's rural hospitals working every day to provide exceptional care close to home.

Last Chance to Support the 2025 Critical Access Hospital Conference



Registration closes Monday for the **2025 Michigan Critical Access Hospital Conference** taking place in Traverse City. This invitation only event brings together leaders from Michigan's 35 Critical Access Hospitals to explore innovative strategies, discuss key challenges, and strengthen partnerships shaping the future of rural health.

Attendees at this event are Michigan's CAH leaders: CEOs, CFOs, CNOs, and Directors of Patient Safety and Quality. Does your organization provide services or resources that align with rural health goals? Then sign up NOW to showcase your organization at this important event.

Date: November 6–7, 2025

Location: Park Place Hotel, Traverse City, MI

[Register Now](#)



Strength of Rural Spotlight Series Caregiver Incentive Project

October Edition



*Do you have a story to share? Know a rural organization or individual making a difference?
Email our team, at com.mcrhha@msu.edu and let us share your story!*

The Caregiver Incentive Project, a.k.a. "CIP" is a small non-profit located in the heart of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. CIP's mission is to improve the lives of caregivers and in turn improve the lives of the cared-for. The need for caregivers in Michigan grows every day and with the U.P.'s population, including a higher percentage of seniors, this means the need for caregivers in the U.P. is greater than throughout the rest of the state. With the need growing every day, the mission to improve the caregiving environment in our state is critical.

CIP delivers on their mission through caregiver outreach, education and support. CIP's outreach efforts include sharing what it means to be a caregiver and the difference a caregiver makes between existing and living. Education from CIP includes safe transfers, CPR, caregiver professionalism, the importance of self-care and communication skills. Support from CIP means connections to the right people, organizations, scholarships and or direct financial uplifts and membership in the caregiving community.

One thing for certain that the CIP knows is that caregiving will touch everyone's life at some time, humans either have been a caregiver, are a caregiver, will be a caregiver or will need a caregiver.

Read the Full Story

Superior Health Launches Enrollment for CMS Quality Improvement Program



Superior Health Quality Alliance believes good health requires great connections. They serve as a bridge between the important goals of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the unique needs of our local communities. Drawing on decades of experience, they are dedicated to support clinics, nursing homes and hospitals by providing premium, hands-on quality improvement assistance to help achieve health care quality and safety goals for Medicare beneficiaries.

As the CMS **Quality Innovation Network – Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO)** for the Great Lakes Region, Superior Health will provide no-cost technical assistance to eligible providers in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.

This includes support for chronic disease management, behavioral health integration, patient safety, care coordination and health care quality — all aligned with CMS national goals.

To access this assistance, complete the enrollment form to begin enrollment process or reach out to info@superiorhealthqa.org for more information.

Going Pro Talent Fund Fall Application Cycle is Now Open!



The **Going PRO Talent Fund** makes awards to employers to assist in training, developing and retaining current and newly hired employees. Training funded by the Going PRO Talent Fund must be short-term and fill a demonstrated talent need experienced by the employer. Training must lead to a credential for a skill that is transferable and recognized by industry.

We all know that healthcare organizations face significant workforce challenges. The Going Pro Talent Fund is a wonderful opportunity to enhance our healthcare workforce!

The application deadline for this cycle is Thursday, October 30th at 5:00 pm.

If you have any questions regarding the application process, please reach out to Workforce Initiative Manager, **Kyra Burkeen**.

[More Information](#)

Next Gen Nurses: Organizational Readiness in Rural Healthcare



As Gen Z nurses enter the workforce, rural healthcare organizations must adapt to meet their expectations and support their transition into practice. This session explores the generational shift reshaping nursing, highlighting the values and needs of new graduate nurses. Participants will examine structured support strategies—such as onboarding, orientation, and nurse residency programs—that foster engagement and readiness.

The session will also showcase how the Iowa Online Nurse Residency Program (IONRP) offers scalable, values-aligned solutions to help rural hospitals build organizational readiness and retain the next generation of nurses.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Recognize the unique characteristics, values, and expectations of Gen Z nurses and how these influence their transition into rural healthcare settings.

- Explore the role of structured support programs—such as onboarding, orientation, preceptorship, and nurse residency—in addressing readiness gaps and promoting engagement.
- Discover how the Iowa Online Nurse Residency Program (IONRP) provides scalable, values-aligned solutions to support new graduate nurses and enhance organizational readiness in rural healthcare.

This session will be held on Wednesday, November 5th, from 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm EST.

[Learn More & Register](#)

Upcoming Webinar | How Pay-for-Performance Indirectly Led Keweenaw Hospital to Top-Quartile ER Satisfaction Across the Aspirus System



Hosted by the National Rural Health Association, this webinar highlights how Aspirus Keweenaw Hospital in Michigan's Upper Peninsula became #1 in patient satisfaction across the Aspirus system.

On October 28 from 2–3 p.m. CST, Dr. Bryan Judge and Kim Herrmann will share how their Pay-for-Performance model aligned staff, improved communication, and strengthened accountability—leading to measurable gains in outcomes and satisfaction.

[Registration](#)

Upcoming Veterans Health Fair in Baraga



Join the Foucault-Funke American Legion, Post 444, in Baraga on November 1 from 12-4:30pm for a veteran's health fair. This event is free for veterans,

family/caregivers, active duty, delayed entry program, ROTC/JROTC.

A variety of services will be available including blood pressure screenings, referrals, and assistance with VA paperwork, and more!

[Learn More](#)

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



Members of the Michigan Critical Access Hospital Quality 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.

Health Insurance Coverage in Rural and Urban Areas in the U.S., 2023

This new brief outlines the health insurance status of people in the U.S., by residence (rural and urban) in 2023, with additional breakdowns by age

groups. The analysis is based on data from the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS), released September 2024 by the U.S. Census Bureau, providing a snapshot of coverage for a point-in-time with national data.

Key Findings:

- Uninsured rates in 2023 were higher in rural areas (8.4 percent), as compared to urban areas (7.8 percent).
- People in rural areas were less likely to hold private sources of coverage than urban Americans (61.8 percent as compared to 68.0 percent), and people in rural areas were much less likely to hold employer-sponsored insurance (ESI) compared to those living in urban areas (47.8 percent compared to 56.0 percent). In contrast, people living in rural areas were more likely (45.2 percent) than people in urban areas (36.1 percent) to hold public sources of coverage.
- Insured rates varied significantly by age group in rural and urban areas. Uninsured rates were lowest for those age 65 or older, due to near universal coverage from Medicare. Uninsured rates were highest within the 19-64 age group in all areas.
- The source of coverage varied significantly for persons living in rural areas compared to those living in urban areas. For example, ESI coverage rates were higher in urban areas relative to rural areas in all age groups. Medicaid coverage rates were higher for people younger than age 65 (children as well as those age 19-64) living in rural areas compared to urban areas.

[Read the Report](#)

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

- Updated to remove the SDOH-1 and SDOH-2 measures

MBQIP Information Guide

- Updated to remove the SDOH-1 and SDOH-2 measures as well as outdated MBQIP 2025 language

Monthly MBQIP Data Submission Deadlines

- Updated monthly with MBQIP data submission deadlines. The SDOH-1 and SDOH-2 measures have been removed from this resource.

MBQIP Measure List (updated 9/1/2025)

- This shows the MBQIP Core Measure Set and Additional Measures. This table was updated to remove the SDOH-1 and SDOH-2 measures per the 8/7/2025 email from FORHP titled "MBQIP Measures Update for SDOH 1 and SDOH 2".
- The table has also been updated to remove language on MBQIP 2025 launch date and MBQIP 2025 rollout. As of September 1, 2025, we will simply be referring to the core measure set as the MBQIP Core Measure Set and no longer MBQIP 2025 due to the official launch of the measures beginning with September 1, 2025.
- Within the table we also updated the categories under the HCAHPS measure. The HCAHPS composite measures and categories were changed within HCAHPS January 1, 2025. These new categories will be reflected in the MBQIP reports next year.

UPCOMING DEADLINES:

October 2025 Upcoming MBQIP Deadlines

October 31, 2025

Emergency Department Transfer Communication (EDTC) Q3 2025 encounters (7/1/25-9/30/25) is due October 31, 2025. Connect with Crystal Barter @ barthcry@msu.edu for submission process details.

November 3, 2025

Reporting Median time from ED arrival to ED departure (OP-18) Q2 2025 encounters (4/1/2025-6/30/2025) is due November 3, 2025. Submission is through the HQR Secure Portal-Outpatient Chart Abstracted. Previous CART users may enter abstractions into the HQR abstraction tool. [Outpatient Quality Reporting Specifications version 18.0a](#)

November 21, 2025

Critical Access Hospital Quality Inventory and Assessment is due November 21, 2025. Reach out to your [State Flex Program](#) for details.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Name: Improving Maternal Care, Strengthening Communities: How Union General Achieved Maternal Levels of Care Verification

Date: October 21, 2025

Time: 2 PM CT

Registration [here](#)

Name: eCQM Update: The Future is Digital

Date: November 13, 2025

Time: 12 Pm EST

For registration reach out amanda.saintmartin@affiliate.msu.edu

Upcoming MCRH Educational Events

Grand Rounds:

October 22, 2025, 12-1 pm EST

Psychiatry Grand Round: Rural and Urban Differences in Suicide

Speaker: Qian Huang, PhD, MA, MPA

[Register Here](#)

CME Provided for Dieticians, Physicians, Social Workers, Nurses, Community Health Workers, Advanced Practice Providers

October 30, 2025, 12-1 pm EST

Dietetics Grand Round: The Transformative Power of Teaching Kitchens to Address Nutrition Security and Population Health

Speaker: Paula Martin, MS, RDN, LDN & Kelly Wilson, RDN, DipACLN

[Register Here](#)

CME Provided for Dieticians, Nutritionists, Physicians, Social Workers, Nurses, Community Health Workers, Advanced Practice Providers

November 12, 2025, 12-1 pm EST

Pharmacy Grand Round: Office Based Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder

Speaker: Jill Covyeou PharmD

[Register Here](#)

CME Provided for Pharmacy Technicians, Physicians, Social Workers, Nurses, Community Health Workers

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](#)

[New Resource – Fact Sheet from Center for Connected Health Policy on telehealth related changes under the Proposed 2026 Physician Fee Schedule \(PFS\).](#)

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

MiTracking Program: Michigan-specific environmental, health & population data

Geographic and Demographic Correlates of Living in Manufactured Homes: Implications for 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:

Support Veteran independence as an Occupational Therapist - VA News

Sign up for Veterans Health Updates

Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center receives top scores in latest CMS hospital ratings

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

VA offers yearlong community care authorizations for 30 services - VA News

[Accelerating Federal Electronic Health Record deployment to deliver Veteran benefits - VA News](#)

[VA Research Wrap Up: New findings on loneliness, Parkinson's disease and asthma - VA News](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

[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](#)

[Utilization of Community Health Workers for Emergency Preparedness and Response \(On Demand- No CE\)](#)

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO MCRH'S 2025 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORS



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