



MICHIGAN RURAL HEALTH CLINIC MONTHLY BULLETIN

Volume 8 | Issue 7
July 2026

A few words from Jill

Welcome to the July edition of the Michigan Rural Health Clinic Newsletter. Inside, you'll find funding opportunities, educational events, rural health news, and practical resources selected to support your clinic and keep you informed of developments affecting rural health care.

Before you dive in, be sure to register for the [Michigan Rural Health Clinic Quality Network Quarterly Meeting on August 27 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. ET](#). This virtual meeting will feature updates on the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP), a presentation from Health Services Associates covering timely Rural Health Clinic regulatory and compliance topics, and opportunities to connect with colleagues from across the state.



Thank you for the important work you do to improve access to high-quality care in Michigan's rural communities. We hope you find this month's newsletter informative, and we look forward to connecting with you on August 27.

Thanks,

Jill

Rural Health Transformation Program Funding Opportunities Now Available

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has released several new Grant Funding Opportunities (GFOs) through Michigan's Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP). These opportunities fall under the **Workforce for Wellness** pillar and are intended to support rural healthcare workforce recruitment, training, retention, and development.

Applications are due **August 4, 2026**, and the award period will run from **October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027**.

Current funding opportunities include:

Maternal Health Provider Training

- \$5 million available
- Approximately 12 awards anticipated
- Awards ranging from \$200,000 to \$1 million

University-Led Master of Social Work Award Program

- \$7 million available
- Limited to universities, but rural healthcare organizations may want to explore potential partnership opportunities

Rural Health Provider Recruitment and Retention Fund

- \$14.7 million available
- Approximately 20 awards anticipated
- Awards ranging from \$200,000 to \$1 million

This opportunity includes three priority areas:

- **Healthcare Provider Recruitment**
Potential activities include provider incentive programs, rural-focused recruitment campaigns, employer branding, workforce pipeline development, partnerships with health profession training programs, signing bonuses, relocation assistance, and housing support for newly recruited rural providers.
- **Healthcare Provider Training**
Potential activities include apprenticeship and “grow your own” programs, on-the-job training, continuing education, skills expansion, licensure support, innovative staffing models, virtual care team integration, telehealth-supported care, hub-and-spoke models, regional workforce collaborations, shared staffing models, and expansion of rural residency programs.
- **Healthcare Provider Retention**
Projects must focus on reducing burnout and improving the rural practice environment. Examples include clinician wellness and mental health support, burnout prevention, leadership development, mentorship, provider relief programs, peer networking and support, team-based care models, collaborative pharmacy practice, integrated behavioral health, and compensation review or restructuring.

Limited License Master of Social Work Supervision Stipend

- \$2.5 million available
- Approximately 10 awards anticipated
- Awards ranging from \$100,000 to \$1 million

Bachelor of Social Work to Clinical Master of Social Work Stipend Program

- \$5 million available
- Limited to universities, but rural organizations may want to consider potential partnership opportunities

Pre-Application Conference

MDHHS will hold a pre-application conference on **July 15, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.** The session will provide instruction on using the EGrAMS system and is expected to last approximately two hours. The webinar can be accessed [here](#), and a recording will also be posted in EGrAMS following the session.

For complete details, review the GFO materials or visit the [MDHHS EGrAMS system](#) and select opportunities listed under the **Policy and Planning** category.

Rural organizations are encouraged to review these opportunities closely and consider where current workforce priorities, existing partnerships, or planned initiatives may align with the available funding.

2026 RURAL MICHIGAN PALLIATIVE CARE SUMMIT

September 24, 2026 | Grayling, MI



Registration is open for the Rural Michigan Palliative Care Summit, taking place September 24 at Kirtland Community College. This one-day event will bring together rural healthcare professionals to explore practical strategies for expanding access to palliative care, improving care coordination, and supporting patients with serious illness.

Sessions will cover payment and sustainability, interdisciplinary care, dementia, communication, and community-based models. MCRH is applying to receive CME, SW and CHW credits, 4-6 credits depending on approval.

[Learn More](#)

[Register](#)

Funding Opportunity | Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement Program



The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has released the **Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement Program** funding opportunity. This grant is offered only once every four years and may be of interest to eligible Rural Health Clinics and other rural providers.

Key details:

- Application deadline: **August 6, 2026**
- Project start: **September 1, 2026**
- Award: **\$250,000 per year for four years**
- Eligible applicants must be rural, nonprofit or public organizations that have not previously received this award.

The program supports rural primary care organizations in improving quality, care coordination, chronic disease management, behavioral health integration, and other community-identified clinical priorities. Funding also helps strengthen quality improvement infrastructure, data and technology use, and financial sustainability through enhanced billing and coding practices. Projects must use an evidence-based or promising practice model and demonstrate measurable improvements in patient outcomes over the four-year project period.

Check out more funding opportunities in the Resources section at the end of this newsletter!

[Learn More](#)

Kidney Grand Rounds | Slowing CKD Progression: Medication Optimization in the Primary Care Setting



Join the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan and Michigan State University on **July 15 from 12:15–1:15 p.m. ET** for a Grand Rounds webinar on medication optimization for chronic kidney disease. This practical session will review evidence-based therapies, treatment targets, and dosing considerations to help primary care teams slow CKD progression.

[Register](#)

[More Kidney Education](#)

Free Specialized CNE Training Opportunity for Rural Nurses Serving Agricultural Communities



AgriSafe Nurse Scholar

Self-Paced, Online, and On-Demand

The AgriSafe Nurse Scholar program delivers 20+ hours of continuing nursing education contact hours, led by experts in agricultural health and safety. This fully online, self-paced, and ANCC-accredited program is designed to equip nurses with the specialized knowledge and tools needed to address the unique healthcare challenges faced by individuals living and working in agricultural communities.

SPONSORED BY:   

 For more information, scan the QR code or visit: agrisafe.org/nurse-scholar/



JOIN A NETWORK OF OVER 640 NURSE SCHOLAR PROGRAM GRADUATES!

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Online and self-paced
- Expert instructors
- Quarterly online networking meetings

AgriSafe Network is proud to recognize the commitment and essential service of nurses working in rural communities. To support this important work, AgriSafe is offering a limited number of full scholarships for qualifying nurses to enroll in the AgriSafe Nurse Scholar Program, completely free of charge (a \$500 value).

This self-paced, online continuing nursing education program

provides 20+ hours of specialized training focused on the unique health, safety, and environmental challenges faced by agricultural workers and their families. Scholarships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, and space is limited.

Applications are open through July 16, 2026.

[Apply Now](#)

Power of Communications Series for Rural Setting

From Public Health Prepared, this 4-part program explores the power of communications for public health practitioners working in rural settings. Sessions explored how to navigate conflict and communication issues with teams, partners, and the media. The program consists of four separate on-demand components.

- **Power of Communications #1: Navigating Conflict and Communication Issues with Teams and Partners in Rural Settings** (On Demand-CE): recorded webinar, 90 min. to complete (1.5 contact hours)
- **Power of Communications #2: Navigating Conflict and Communication Issues with Partners and the Public in Rural Settings** (On Demand-CE): recorded webinar, 60 min. to complete (1 contact hour)
- **Power of Communications #3: Rural Communication & Media Relations - Building Trust Before the Crisis** (On Demand-CE): recorded webinar, 60 min. to complete (1 contact hour)



PHP

- Power of Communications #4: **From Reactive to Ready - Building Your Rural Media Protocol & Crisis Playbook** (On Demand-CE): recorded webinar, 105 min. to complete (1.75 contact hours)

[Register](#)

Healthy Kids Dental Plan Changes Beginning October 1



The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is transitioning the Healthy Kids Dental (HKD) program to a single dental plan. Beginning **October 1, 2026**, all HKD beneficiaries will be covered by **Delta Dental of Michigan**. Coverage through **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan** will end on **September 30, 2026**.

Key dates:

- **July 1, 2026:** No new enrollments into the Blue Cross Blue Shield HKD plan.
- **October 1, 2026:** Current Blue Cross Blue Shield HKD members will be automatically enrolled in Delta Dental.

Patients will receive notifications from MDHHS, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and Delta Dental before the transition. Rural Health Clinic providers should be aware of this change and encourage patients with questions to contact their dental plan or Michigan ENROLLS at **1-800-975-7630**.

[Learn More](#)

Workforce Updates & Resources

HPSA Changes & Updates

On July 1st, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced the availability of the complete lists of all geographic areas, population groups, and facilities designated as primary care, mental health, and/or dental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).

HPSA designations that are currently proposed for withdrawal will remain in this status until they are re-evaluated in preparation for the publication of the HPSA Federal Register notice on or before July 1, 2027. Lists are available on the HRSA [shortage areas topic page](#) and are current as of April 30, 2026.

[Learn More](#)

New Rural Healthcare Workforce Research

The Rural Health Research Center at the University of Washington has published a brief on rural healthcare workforce challenges. Interviews conducted in early 2025 with 21 rural clinical education leaders suggested that graduate and undergraduate health professions education programs are expanding faster than rural clinical education capacity, leading to intense competition for limited clinical placements.

[Read the Full Brief](#)

Resource from the Michigan League for Public Policy: 2026 KIDS COUNT Data Book

2026 KIDS COUNT® DATA BOOK

MICHIGAN

	OVERALL SCORE	OVERALL RANK
	527 WORSE	34
 ECONOMIC WELL-BEING	549 WORSE	32
 EDUCATION	248 WORSE	42
 HEALTH	662 STABLE	21
 FAMILY & COMMUNITY	651 BETTER	27

NOTE: RANKINGS SHOW HOW STATES COMPARE. SCORES RANGE FROM 0 (WORST) TO 1000 (BEST) AND REFLECT CHILD WELL-BEING RELATIVE TO A 2016 BASELINE. CHANGES OVER TIME INDICATE PROGRESS OR DECLINE. SCORES ARE NOT PERCENTAGES OR A FINISH LINE; HIGHER SCORES INDICATE BETTER OUTCOMES.

THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

The Michigan League for Public Policy recently released findings from the [2026 KIDS COUNT Data Book](#), an annual report measuring child well-being across all 50 states.

Michigan ranks **34th overall** in child well-being, with its strongest performance in child health. The report notes that **96% of Michigan children have health insurance coverage**, highlighting the important role of healthcare access in supporting children's health. The state's lowest ranking was in education, driven largely by low fourth-grade reading proficiency and preschool enrollment.

Rural Health Clinics play a vital role in ensuring children and families have access to preventive care and other essential health services. We encourage you to explore the data to better understand child well-being trends in Michigan and your community.

Expanding Food Access in Rural Communities



Kids' Food Basket

A new story from Rapid Growth Media, highlights how **Glenn Public School** in **Allegan County** are partnering to connect rural families with nutritious food through the **Kids' Food Basket** program. The collaboration demonstrates how trusted local relationships are helping improve food access while overcoming challenges unique to rural communities, including transportation, distance, and the reluctance many families feel about asking for help.

[Keep Reading](#)

New Webinar: Telehealth Basics

[Region V](#) for Kids and [Virtual Connections](#) invite you to a one-hour, *Telehealth Basics Showcase* on 15 September 2026 at 1:00pm ET. During the webinar, the Virtual Connections Team will introduce a novel approach and free programs to develop the digital literacy and telehealth competency of rural and underserved communities. See the attached announcement for additional details. If available, consider registering and attending the showcase.

This is an open-invitation event: please share the invitation with your network and any professional contacts who may be interested.

[Register](#)

[Shareable Flyer](#)

Connecting the Dots: Reframing Aging Across the Age-Friendly Ecosystem



The National Center to Reframe Aging is hosting a free webinar, **Connecting the Dots: Reframing Aging Across the Age-Friendly Ecosystem**, on **Wednesday, July 22, 2026, from 2:00–3:00 p.m. ET**. Participants will learn practical strategies for using age-inclusive communication to strengthen age-friendly initiatives across healthcare and community settings, with examples relevant to rural health leaders and organizations.

[Learn More & Register](#)

Updated Rural Healthy Aging Toolkit



RHIfhub recently updated their **Rural Healthy Aging Toolkit** featuring evidence-based models, implementation strategies, and practical resources to help rural communities promote healthy aging, build age-friendly communities, and improve the well-being of older adults.

[Access the Toolkit](#)

New Report Explores Coordinating Health and Community Care in Rural, Frontier, and Tribal Communities

USAgings's Aging and Disability Business Institute and Center of Excellence to Align Health and Social Care recently released *Voices From the Field: Insights on Coordinating Health and Community Care in Rural, Frontier, and Tribal Communities*. The report highlights trends, challenges, and promising practices for strengthening partnerships between health care and community-based organizations to improve care coordination and health outcomes in rural, frontier, and Tribal communities.

Upcoming NRHA Webinars



National Rural Health Association

The National Rural Health Association is offering two upcoming webinars focused on timely issues affecting rural healthcare organizations. Explore the sessions below and register if interested.

2026 CMS Price Transparency Compliance Gaps That Will Trigger Enforcement and What Hospitals Must Fix Now

Wednesday, July 15 | 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET | [Register](#)

- Learn about CMS's increased enforcement of hospital price transparency requirements, common compliance gaps, and practical steps rural hospitals can take to reduce compliance risk.

93% of Stroke Patients Stayed Local: How a Rural Hub-and-Spoke Model Reduced Transfers and Improved Outcomes

Tuesday, July 28 | 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET | [Register](#)

- Discover how a statewide rural stroke collaborative improved care coordination, reduced unnecessary transfers, and enabled more than 93% of stroke patients to receive care at their local hospitals. The session will highlight strategies that can strengthen neurological care access in rural communities.

ACCESS (Advancing Chronic Care with Effective, Scalable Solutions) Model

[ACCESS: A New Resource to Support Medicare Beneficiaries with Chronic Conditions](#). On July 5, the CMS Innovation Center begins the ACCESS (Advancing Chronic Care with Effective, Scalable Solutions) Model, a 10-year pilot program designed to expand access to technology-supported care for Traditional Medicare beneficiaries with chronic conditions. Visit **[ACCESS for Primary Care Providers and Referring Clinicians](#)** for more information on beneficiary eligibility, billing guidance, and tools to stay informed about patients' progress.

Contact ACCESSModelTeam@cms.hhs.gov with questions.

RHC Resource Center

Publications & News

[Changes in Neighborhood Foodscapes From 2003 to 2023 by Area Rurality in the United States](#)

[Telemedicine Use Among Office-Based Physicians in 2021 and 2024](#)

[Strengthening Dermatologic Training for Frontline Primary Care](#)
[3RNET's Guide to Loan Repayment Programs](#)

[Public Health: Rural Health Services Research—2nd Edition](#)

Funding

[Rural Health Network Advancement Program](#)

Application Deadline: Jul 24, 2026

[Medical Forensic Access Initiative](#)

Application Deadline: Jul 27, 2026

[Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students \(SDS\)](#)

Application Deadline: Jul 28, 2026

[Scaling Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs](#)

Letter of Intent (Optional): Jul 6, 2026

Application Deadline: Jul 29, 2026

[Screening and Treatment for Maternal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders \(MMHSUD\)](#)

Application Deadline: Jul 17, 2026



Share the RHC Newsletter

This newsletter is designed for Rural Health Clinics in mind, but we know the value doesn't stop at your inbox.

If you find these updates helpful, consider forwarding the newsletter to others on your team or in your network who work in or support Rural Health Clinics. Whether it's a provider in your primary care clinic, a biller or coder managing RHC claims, or a colleague interested in rural health - sharing is a simple way to strengthen connections and keep everyone informed.

Know someone who should be added to the list? They can [subscribe here](#) or reach out to us directly.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO MCRH'S 2026 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORS



CPAs / ADVISORS



Stay updated by visiting the Michigan Center for Rural Health's website and following us on social media.

[Learn More](#)



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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!