



MICHIGAN RURAL HEALTH CLINIC MONTHLY BULLETIN

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A few words from Jill

Over the past few months, our team has had the opportunity to visit clinics participating in MCRH's Diabetic Retinopathy Collaborative. MCRH is now partnering with Aspire Rural Health System to pilot autonomous AI retinal screening in rural health clinics. This technology allows clinic staff to capture and analyze retinal images during routine visits, helping patients access recommended diabetic eye exams without traveling to a specialist.

The pilot builds on workflow improvements developed through the collaborative and aims to close care gaps, improve quality measures, and protect patients' vision close to home.



[Read the full story and access the Diabetic Retinopathy Toolkit.](#)

Michigan RHCs can also [order free printed copies of the toolkit](#) for their clinics.

I invite you to continue reading for more news, resources, and opportunities available to Michigan RHCs.

Thanks,

Jill

November RHC Quality Network Quarterly Meeting Registration

Registration is now open for the next Michigan Rural Health Clinic Quality Network Quarterly Meeting. Please note that the meeting has been rescheduled from November

Wednesday, November 18, 2026

1–4 p.m. ET | Virtual

Join us for important updates, resources and opportunities to connect with staff from Michigan's Certified Rural Health Clinics.

[Register for the November Quarterly Meeting](#)

Slides and the recording from the August Quarterly Meeting are available in the MI RHC Quality Network Collective, an online space supporting connection, learning and collaboration among Michigan RHC professionals.

[Join the RHC Collective](#) | [Log in](#)

Prepare Now for Healthy Michigan Plan Work Requirements

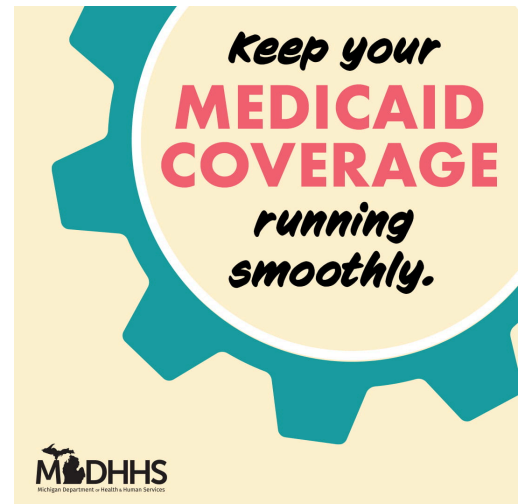
Beginning January 1, 2027, certain adults ages 19–64 who are enrolled in or applying for coverage through the Healthy Michigan Plan (Medicaid) will need to work or participate in other qualifying activities to maintain coverage. Many members may already meet the requirements through employment, education or another approved activity, while others may qualify for an exemption.

States must first attempt to verify compliance or exemption status using reliable information already available to them. However, existing data may not fully capture part-time or seasonal employment, multiple jobs, caregiving and other circumstances. This could require some members to provide additional documentation.

As MDHHS begins outreach about these changes, RHCs should prepare for questions from patients about eligibility, exemptions and verification. Clinics can help patients:

- Confirm whether they are enrolled in the Healthy Michigan Plan
- Keep their contact information current in MI Bridges
- Read and respond to MDHHS notices by the listed deadlines
- Understand where to find current eligibility and exemption information
- Connect with assistance when documentation is requested

MCRH has created a resource page for rural healthcare organizations and community partners that brings together the MDHHS Community Partner Toolkit, webinar recordings, provider information and practical guidance for supporting Healthy Michigan Plan members. Because implementation guidance may change, clinics should rely on current MDHHS materials when communicating with patients.



[Explore MCRH's Healthy Michigan Plan Work Requirement Resources](#)

[Read NARHC's guidance for Rural Health Clinics](#)

The National Kidney Foundation of Michigan is pleased to offer materials to help inform the public about the upcoming work requirements for Healthy Michigan Plan members, as well patient educational materials to raise awareness of kidney disease and how to prevent it. Please contact mchammout@nkfm.org to obtain an order form and place your request.

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'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.

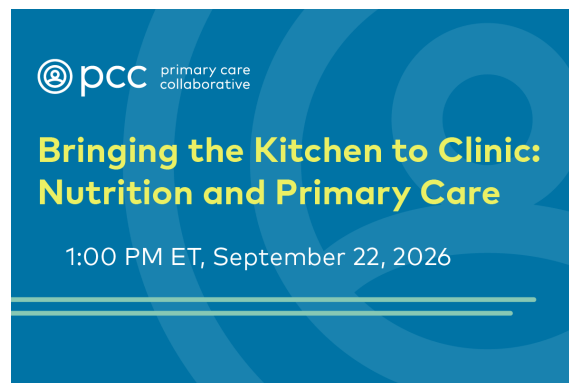
MDHHS reports that no new evidence supports changing the vaccine schedule at this time.

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](https://mcir.org/public).

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

Visit [IVaccinate.org](https://vaccinate.org) and [Michigan.gov/Immunize](https://michigan.gov/immunize) for more information on vaccines.

Integrating Nutrition into Primary Care | Webinar



On September 22, at 1 p.m. ET, the Primary Care Collaborative (PCC) will host a webinar exploring how primary care teams can partner with patients to support healthy eating and overall well-being.

Speakers will share successful approaches to implementing nutrition-based interventions, including strategies that can be used in under-resourced communities. The discussion will feature:

- Daniel Chen, Esperanza Health Center and the American College of Lifestyle Medicine's HEAL Initiative
- Brandon Wilson, Community Catalyst
- Ann Greiner, Primary Care Collaborative

[Register for the Webinar](#)

Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month Resources



September is Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) Awareness Month. AFib affects more than 50 million people worldwide and can increase a person's risk of stroke by up to five times. Rural patients may face additional barriers to accessing timely, evidence-based care.

The American Heart Association (AHA) offers resources that Rural Health Clinic teams can use to help patients recognize AFib risks and symptoms, understand treatment options and manage the condition. Materials include patient guides, risk assessments and symptom trackers, with several resources available in English and Spanish.

AHA will also host the webinar *Elevating AFib Care: A Strategic Approach to Quality and Performance Improvement* on September 23.

[Explore the Resources](#)

[Register for the Webinar](#)

Medicare Telehealth Billing Update for RHCs

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has shared updated Medicare telehealth billing information for RHC, FQHC, and IHC Providers.

MDHHS has been notified that Medicare will be covering Telehealth services with an E/M code and modifier 93 or 95 requirement only. Note current Medicaid telemedicine billing requirements remain the same with no changes. Medicaid will still require a G-code or T1015 code in conjunction with the appropriate E/M code or other qualifying visit service along with the telemedicine modifier for proper claim adjudication to occur.

To confirm the services being rendered are reimbursable via telemedicine refer to the [Telemedicine Fee Screen](#). If the telemedicine code being billed does not have a visit count of one or higher the claim will continue to be reimbursed at \$0.00 as the Clinic Reimbursement Methodology is applied when delivered via telemedicine.

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 the Partner Spotlight](#)

Apply for the Oral Health Micro-Credential Pilot



MiCHWA

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), in partnership with the Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance (MiCHWA), is accepting applications for Michigan's first Oral Health Micro-Credential! This no-cost pilot will prepare 10 certified CHWs to provide oral health education, help individuals navigate dental care, and serve as oral health advocates in their work settings.

This opportunity may be a good fit for any certified CHW working in a setting that serves patients or clients with unmet dental needs or difficulty accessing dental services. This includes medical and dental clinics, hospitals, FQHCs, rural health clinics, social service organizations, health plans, behavioral health organizations, and more.

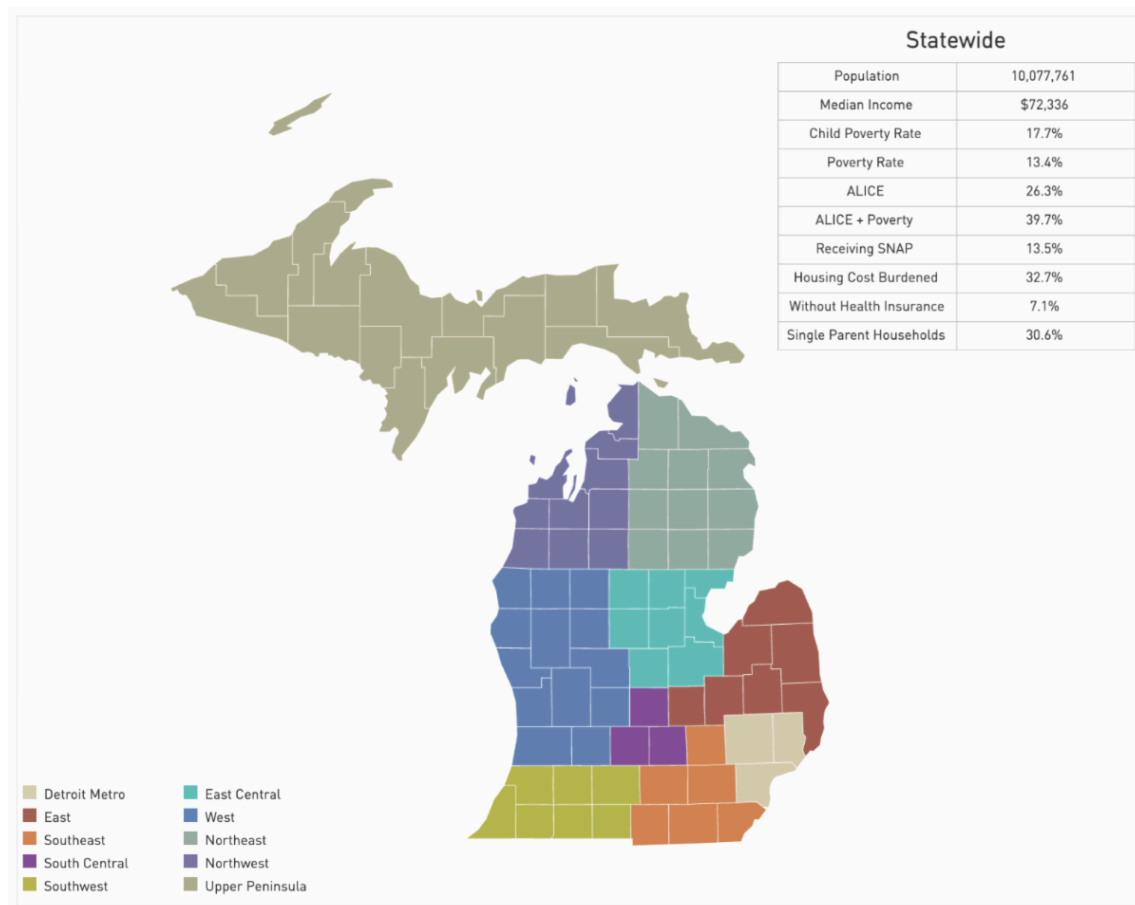
The course will cover Michigan's dental landscape, Medicaid and insurance navigation, maternal and child oral health, connections between oral health and chronic disease, trauma-informed care, referral pathways, motivational interviewing, and other practical topics.

Applicants must hold a CHW certification from an MDHHS-approved training provider and be available for the live virtual sessions held Wednesdays from 9:00–11:00 a.m., October 7 through November 18. Graduates will receive certification as oral health advocates.

Applications are due September 16. Space is limited to 10 participants, and submitting an application does not guarantee enrollment.

[View the Application](#)

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 Clinics 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

Upcoming NRHA Webinars



National Rural Health Association

The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) is offering several upcoming webinars on clinical care, workforce development, financial performance and operational sustainability. All sessions begin at 2 p.m. ET.

- **September 22:** [Building a Comprehensive Rural MS Clinic](#)
- **September 24:** [The December Cash & Revenue Push Starts NOW!](#)
- **September 25:** [Teleneurology for Rural Veterans](#)
- **September 29:** [Improving Physician Engagement, Recruitment & Retention](#)
- **October 1:** [Building Energy Resilience With \\$1.65M in Projected Savings](#)
- **October 6:** [Seven Strategies to Build an Emergency NP Workforce That Stays](#)
- **October 7:** [Finding Hidden Revenue in Self-Pay Write-Offs](#)

Build Epilepsy Awareness and Response Skills in Marquette



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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

- **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.

New Tools Support Rural Clinically Integrated Network Development



Rural
HEALTH VALUE

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.

New RHlhub Resource| Measuring ROI in Rural Health Programs



The Rural Health Information Hub (RHIhub) has added a new return on investment (ROI) module to its Rural Community Health Toolkit.

The module offers practical guidance to help rural organizations calculate ROI, demonstrate the value of their programs, strengthen support and plan for long-term sustainability. Rural Health Clinics may find it useful when evaluating community health initiatives or communicating their impact to partners and funders.

[Explore the Modules](#)

Healthy Aging Month: Supporting Older Adults in Rural Communities

September is Healthy Aging Month, an opportunity to celebrate the positive aspects of growing older and encourage adults to support their physical, mental and social well-being. The 2026 theme, "Curiosity Has No Age Limit," highlights how lifelong learning, social connection, physical activity and a sense of purpose can contribute to quality of life at every age.

Providing coordinated, person-centered care is especially important as rural residents age. Join MCRH on September 24 at Kirtland Community College in Grayling for the **Rural Michigan Palliative Care Summit**. The summit will bring together rural healthcare professionals to explore strategies for improving care for people living with serious illness across the aging continuum. **Registration has been extended through September 16.**

Additional healthy aging resources:

- [Connected Communities for Healthy Aging](#)
- [MI Coordinated Health Program](#)
- [Choosing a Falls Prevention Program That Works for Your Community](#)

[Register for the Palliative Care Summit](#)

Statewide Maternal Infant Health Data Meeting



The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Division of Maternal and Infant Health and Infant Health Epidemiology team will host the annual Statewide Maternal and Infant Health Data Meeting on October 1 from 3–5 p.m. ET.

This virtual meeting will review maternal and infant health data from across Michigan, including findings by prosperity region. Rural Health Clinic teams can use these insights to better understand regional trends and inform maternal and infant health services in their communities.

Healthcare professionals, community partners, families and other interested individuals are welcome to attend.

[Register for the Virtual Meeting](#)

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

The National Kidney Foundation of Michigan (NKFM) 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.

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](#)
- [PRIME Point-of-Care Ultrasound \(POCUS\) Scholars Program | Application Deadline: Sep 18, 2026](#)
- [CCAM-TAC Community Rides Pilot Grant Program | Application Deadline: Oct 19, 2026](#)

Other Resources:

- [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!](#)



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



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