FORHP Announcements

April 26, 2018

What’s New

**New USDA State Fact Sheets on Rural Economy.** The Economic Research Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently updated its state-by-state report on population, income, poverty, food security, and education. The interactive map gives state-level data on these and other economic indicators, along with metro/non-metro breakouts within states. Links to county-level data are provided where available.

Funding Opportunities

**Improve Rural Youth Literacy – May 18.** The U.S. Department of Education (ED) supports innovative literacy programs for youth from birth through high school in high-needs schools and districts in the Innovative Approaches to Literacy program. ED will give priority points to applications proposing high-quality literacy programs to students in rural school districts. Eligible applicants include school districts serving populations at least 20% from low-income families, national not-for-profit organizations, or consortia of these. Research has shown that education has a life-long impact on health and well-being, even reducing risk for chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity that are prevalent in rural communities.

**Relatives as Parents Program – June 13.** The Brookdale Foundation Group will provide $15,000 seed money for state and local programs that support grandparents and other relatives raising children outside of a foster care system. Recipients must establish a collaborative network with other support systems such as family services, child care, aging, education, legal, health care, mental health and extension services. Public state agencies that receive the grant must match the funds 100 percent in cash or in-kind. Many of the services considered important for positive child welfare outcomes are limited in rural communities, and there are reports that the opioid crisis is overwhelming foster care. Earlier this year, the Agency for Children and Families issued a brief exploring special considerations for rural practice, including caseworker skills and availability, confidentiality and ethical practice, and the importance of cultural competency.

**Resources for Tribal Self Governance Negotiation – June 17.** The Indian Health Service (IHS) will award $48,000 each for five cooperative agreements to offset the cost of negotiating participation in the Tribal Self Governance Program (TSGP). The TSGP allows tribes to tailor health care programs and services to meet the needs of their
Negotiations are a tribally-driven process that requires careful planning and preparation. The IHS will also make awards up to $120,000 to five organizations for **Tribal Self Governance Planning**. The planning phase must include legal and budgetary research and internal Tribal government planning and organizational preparation relating to the administration of health care programs. **Applications for planning are also due on June 17.**

**Coordinating Research for Rural Opioid HIV Initiative – July 16 and August 15.** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) will select one public or private entity to provide scientific and technical support to its initiative on rural opioid use and infectious disease comorbidities. This interdisciplinary Coordinating Center will work with NIH’s National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to analyze community-level datasets from NIDA’s rural opioid initiative and develop evidence-based practices. The application deadline is August 15; letters of intent are due on July 16.

**Policy Updates**

Visit the [FORHP Policy page](#) to see all recent updates and send questions to ruralpolicy@hrsa.gov

**Deadline Extended: Participate in MIPS Burden Study – April 30.** The original deadline for application was March 23. CMS will conduct the 2018 Burdens Associated with Reporting Quality Measures Study to better understand the challenges clinicians face when collecting and reporting quality data for the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS). Selected applicants will receive full credit for the 2018 MIPS Improvement Activities performance category. Free technical assistance can help small and rural clinicians succeed in MIPS. Check MIPS eligibility and begin application for the study [here](#).

**Comments Requested: Services for Abuse of Vulnerable Adults – May 21.** The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force is an independent body of experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine. They seek public comment on their draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review on screening for intimate partner violence, elder abuse, and abuse of vulnerable adults. The National Advisory Committee on Rural Health & Human Services recently examined the impact of intimate partner violence in rural America and found a ripple effect spreading to other issues such as Adverse Childhood Experiences. **See the Events section below for an upcoming webinar on this issue.**

**Resources, Learning Events and Technical Assistance**
Diminishing Access to Rural Maternity Care – Thursday, April 26 at 1:00 pm ET. This webinar will describe recent examination of the loss of hospital-based obstetric care in rural areas, including the overall change in availability of care and the county-level socio-demographic correlates of losing services. It will also include information from a study published in JAMA in March 2018, describing changes in birth location and outcomes following obstetric services loss in rural areas. The original study from the University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center found that more than half of all rural counties (54 percent) lacked hospital obstetric services.

CMS: Transitioning to Advanced APMs – Monday, April 30 at 12:00 pm ET. Subject matter experts from CMS will review the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) Alternative Payment Model (APM) and answer questions on the final rule for 2018. Rural providers participating in the Quality Payment Program, especially those participating through MIPS APMs such as Medicare Accountable Care Organization Track 1, could learn about information and resources for transitioning to advanced APMs.

Agricultural Safety: Resources for SORHs – Monday, April 30 at 3:00 pm ET. The AgriSafe Network hosts this one-hour webinar to broaden understanding of the unique range of health risks for agricultural workers, including respiratory hazards, exposure to Zika and injuries. Though State Offices of Rural Health (SORHs) are the intended audience for this presentation, all are welcomed to attend.

CMS: Quality Payment Program, Year 2 – Tuesday, May 1 at 12:00 pm ET. Rural providers participating in the Quality Payment Program can get an overview of Program Year 2 at this 90-minute webinar hosted by the Philadelphia Regional Office of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

California Telehealth Resource Center (TRC) Regional Conference – May 16-18. Topics covered at this conference include: federal and state telehealth policy, mobile health, school-based telehealth, project ECHO for pain management and opioid addiction treatment, telehealth and EHR integration, and direct-to-consumer strategies. Clinician champions, coordinators, C-suite leadership, and IT professionals will among the 300 attendees at this regional conference hosted by the California TRC, one of twelve HRSA-funded Telehealth Resource Centers throughout the country.

Northeast Telehealth Resource Center Regional Conference – June 5-6. This two-day conference in Portland, Maine features regional and national telehealth leaders and seventeen breakout sessions on topics including strategies for planning and sustaining telehealth programs, telehealth for FQHCs, models for serving vulnerable populations through telehealth, a hands-on technology lab with the National Telehealth Technology Assessment Resource Center, and more.
National Rural Institute on Alcohol and Drug Abuse – June 10-14. Registration is now open for this annual conference in Menomonie, Wisconsin. The four-day agenda includes keynote presentations and meeting sessions on substance abuse treatment from a rural perspective.

Approaching Deadlines

**Deadline Extended: Participate in MIPS Burden Study** – April 30

**Submit Abstracts for National HIV Conference** – April 30

**Nominations: Advisory Council for Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria** – April 30

**Grants and Loans for Renewable Energy in Rural America** – April 30

**Highway Safety in Indian Country** – May 1

**Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health Scholarship** – May 1

**Funding to Improve Quality Payment Program Measures** – May 2

**Department of Labor Re-entry Projects** – May 4

**Funding for Inclusive Transit Systems** – May 4

**NHSC State Loan Repayment Program** – May 7

**National Health Service Corps Scholarships** – May 10

**USDA Community Connect Grants** – May 14

**CDC Funding for Opioid Overdose Prevention Research** – May 15

**Nominations for the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF)** – May 15

**Improve Rural Youth Literacy** – May 18

**Comments Requested: Services for Abuse of Vulnerable Adults** – May 21

**Comments Requested: CMS Proposal Reducing State Medicaid Reporting Burden** – May 22

**USDA Rural Health and Safety Education Grants** – May 24

**Grants for Family Planning** – May 24

**AHRQ Research Demonstration and Dissemination Grant** – May 26

**HCOP Funding for Health Professions Schools** – May 29
Nominations: Advisory Committee on HIV, Viral Hepatitis and STD Prevention – May 30
Save the Date: Rural Cancer Control Research Meeting – May 30-31
Funding for Patient-Involved Research – June 1
Grants for Distance Learning and Telemedicine Programs – June 4
CDC Funding for Diabetes, Heart Disease, and Stroke – June 11
Resources for Tribal Self Governance Planning – June 17
Resources for Tribal Self Governance Negotiation – June 17
CDC Health Promotion Research Centers – June 25
CMS Annual Call for Medicare EHR Incentive Program Measures – June 29
Rural Health Care Telecommunications Program – June 29
Guaranteed Loans for Rural Rental Housing – Ongoing through 2021
Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans – Ongoing
Funding for Rural Water and Waste Disposal Projects – Ongoing
Drinking Water and Waste Disposal for Rural and Native Alaskan Villages – Ongoing
HIT Strategies for Patient-Reported Outcome Measures – Ongoing
HIT to Improve Health Care Quality and Outcomes – Ongoing
Community Facilities Program – Ongoing
Summer Food Service Program – Ongoing