

COVID-19 Update for Rural Hospitals and Health Systems

View stories from the field and important resources

The AHA remains committed to helping rural hospitals and health systems successfully navigate the global pandemic facing our nation. We recognize the challenges you are facing and AHA continues working with Congress to quickly pass legislation to help alleviate burden on providers, fast-track federal assistance dollars and increase the availability of needed resources during these times. We also continue to urge the Administration to distribute emergency funds swiftly, and provide further flexibilities so that hospitals can respond to patient care needs.

We also remain inspired by the stories of front-line workers on the ground risking their lives to care for patients and communities in bold new ways. Below are some case studies, additional resources and funding opportunities to help you and your counterparts in rural areas.

Case Studies



- A [case study](#) on how **Marshall Medical Center** in Placerville, Calif., is preparing for a potential patient surge related to the COVID-19 pandemic and educating patients and communities about "bending the curve" and slowing the progression of the disease.

A [case study](#) on how **Wilson Medical Center** in Neodesha, Kan., is implementing creative care alternatives to address COVID-19.

For the full compendium of resources, view AHA's updated [Rural Health Services webpage](#).

Additional Resources

Podcast: Margaret Mary Health CEO on how the hospital is responding to COVID-19. On this podcast, Tim Putnam, CEO of Margaret Mary Health, discusses how COVID-19 impacted this community and how his hospital responded. [Listen here](#).

Q&A with two rural health care CEOs on managing COVID-19 in their communities
In this Q&A column, Rex McKinney, president and CEO at Decatur County Memorial Hospital in

Greensburg, Ind., and Mary Ellen Pratt, CEO at St. James Parish Hospital in Litcher, La., share their insights on managing COVID-19 in their communities. View the Q&A column [here](#).

Webinar replay available on rural hospitals' efforts to manage COVID-19

The AHA April 14 hosted a webinar with speakers from two rural hospitals sharing their real-time experiences and practices that show promise for delivering care to COVID-19 patients. View a replay of the webinar [here](#).

Webinar replay: Alliance for Health Policy rural health leaders discuss COVID-19

The Alliance for Health Policy's April 22 webinar featuring rural health experts discussing the COVID-19 crisis is now available for replay. Panelists discussed how rural hospitals and health care entities are responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, with insights from Scott Graham, CEO of Three Rivers & North Valley Hospitals in Washington state, Jacob Warren, director at the Center for Rural Health and Health Disparities at Mercer University, and Mike Brumage, medical director at Cabin Creek Health Systems. View the replay [here](#).

Legislative and Regulatory Updates

Webinar tomorrow: AHA Advocacy Alliance for Rural Hospitals' federal update on COVID-19

AHA's Advocacy Alliance for Rural Hospitals May 1 at 2 p.m. ET will host a federal update for rural hospitals on which AHA leaders Travis Robey, senior associate director of federal relations and Erika Rogan, senior associate director of payment policy, will discuss COVID-19-related issues specific to rural hospitals and health systems. They will focus on AHA's legislative and regulatory efforts to support rural hospitals during the ongoing pandemic, including a discussion of our priorities for the next COVID-19 relief package and an overview of the bills and regulatory action already taken to help rural providers. Among the issues they will discuss will be AHA's efforts to make improvements to the Medicare Accelerated and Advance Payment Programs; the Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program loan program; telehealth rules; ongoing efforts to address equipment shortages; and the likelihood of other rural legislative priorities being considered this Congress. View more information and register [here](#).

AHA-supported bill would extend COVID-19 telehealth expansion to additional providers

Reps. Cynthia Axne, D-Iowa, Troy Balderson, R-Ohio, and French Hill, R-Ark., April 24 introduced the Emergency COVID Telehealth Response Act, legislation that would extend the Department of Health and Human Services' waiver authority for telehealth services to include physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech language pathologists and certain other providers during the COVID-19 emergency. The agency last month used its waiver authority to broaden access to telehealth services for Medicare beneficiaries during the emergency.

Funding Opportunities

The Health Resources and Services Administration is accepting applications for new funding opportunities:

- Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention Simulation Education Training Program, which expands the use of simulation-based technology and observational learning opportunities for nursing students, is making available approximately \$2 million for fiscal year 2020 to fund four cooperative agreements. [Apply](#) by **June 1**.
- Nursing Workforce Diversity-Eldercare Enhancement (NWD-E2) Program will issue two awards from a \$1 million FY 2020 pool to programs that help provide advanced geriatric education and training opportunities for underprivileged nursing students [Apply](#) by **June 4**.
- Advanced Nursing Education Nurse Practitioner Residency Integration Program, which prepares new primary care or behavioral health nurse practitioners to work in integrated, community-based settings, is making available for five FY 2020 awards approximately \$5 million. [Apply](#) by **June 8**.

The National Health Service Corps understands the COVID-19 outbreak has a direct impact on academic institutions and students, so:

- [The NHSC Scholarship Program](#) application deadline has been extended to **May 15**
- [The NHSC Loan Repayment Programs](#) deadline has been extended to **May 21**.

For additional information or questions, please contact John Supplitt at jsupplitt@aha.org.



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