

MARYLAND RURAL HEALTH NEWS AND NOTES

MARYLAND STATE OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH

SUMMER 2009

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Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

John M. Colmers
Secretary, DHMH

Family Health Administration

Russell Moy, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, FHA

Joan H. Salim
Deputy Director, FHA



MARYLAND RURAL HEALTH OUTREACH GRANTS

Congratulations to the Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center (ESAHEC) and Somerset County Health Department for being awarded the federal Human Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Office of Rural Health Policy and Planning (ORHP), three year Rural Health Outreach Grant. The ESAHEC will be continuing the work of their Children's Regional Oral Health Consortium (CROC) that works towards reducing, through education, tooth decay in toddlers and very young children of the Eastern Shore. The Somerset County Health Department will support the Lower Shore's TriCounty Diabetes Alliance's efforts to assess, plan, and coordinate local resource agencies to develop a comprehensive system of care for people with diabetes and those at risk of developing diabetes. The federal grant process was very competitive with over 300 applications for 90 grantees— we were very excited to have two awardees from Maryland! See funding alerts on page five for the current one year grant being offered by HRSA's ORHP to start rural health networks that could eventually be competitive for the next cycle of Outreach Grants planned for federal fiscal year 2012. See page four for the link to the technical resources for both these grants.

SAVE THE DATE: RURAL ROUNDTABLE -SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Mark your calendar for the Statewide Rural Roundtable scheduled on Thursday, October 22, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the Annapolis Doubletree Hotel. This one-day event brings together rural leaders from around the State to discuss the burning issues affecting rural areas and how organizations can collaborate to address those issues. Topics of discussion include rural health, rural economic development and family asset building.

The Governor's Intergovernmental Commission for Agriculture (GICA) will conduct a listening session from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. regarding county zoning/planning requirements. GICA's mission is to promote the economic profitability of Maryland agriculture by ensuring that all appropriate State agencies work in a cooperative, coordinated manner with local government and industry.

The Maryland Rural Health Association is **offering scholarships** for nonprofit and government officials and staffers to attend this important one-day convening of rural health advocates, rural economic developers, and financial educators. Scholarships are available to cover roundtable registration, mileage and/or hotel. Scholarships will be distributed on a reimbursable basis. Special arrangements may be made for those who do not have travel budgets. Roundtable attendees participating in the economic development and/or financial education track are also eligible to apply. [Click here](#) for more information and an application.

For detailed information regarding this must-attend event and to register, [click here](#).

NACRHHS's 2009 Report to the Secretary: Rural Health and Human Services Issues

The National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services released the 2009 Report to the Secretary detailing their year-long effort to examine key health and human service issues affecting rural communities. The report focuses on three vital areas affecting rural communities:

- *Workforce and Community Development
- *Creating Viable Patient-Centered Medical Homes in Rural Areas
- *Serving At-Risk Children in Rural Areas

The information presented in the Report stems from secondary research collected, as well as primary research gathered during site visits to rural North Carolina and rural Minnesota. To view the full report, go to http://www.ruralhealth.hrsa.gov/reports/2009_NAC.pdf. You may also request a printed copy by logging on to <http://ask.hrsa.gov/index.cfm> or calling 1-888-ASK-HRSA (1-888-275-4772).

Rural Resources & Publications

DEVELOPING A STRONG PRIMARY CARE WORKFORCE

On April 20, 2009, the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation convened a small meeting in Washington, DC that focused on the future of the nation's primary care workforce. Among those in attendance were individuals from four organizations with expertise in primary care and prevention. The participants expressed their concern that most of the health care reform discussion has focused on financial issues, with too little attention on the workforce that will provide health care. They unanimously agreed that if health care reform is to achieve the goal of providing access and improving health, then significant changes will be needed in both the educational and reimbursement systems. The group articulated seven recommendations that should be implemented to advance the health of the nation. The full document can be found at the Macy Foundation's website, <http://www.macyfoundation.org/>.

Organization: The Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation

GRANT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP REPORT OUT

The Office of Rural Health Policy has been conducting Grant Technical Assistance Workshops over the past year to encourage organizations to apply for community-based program grants (Quality, Network Development, Network Planning, and Outreach). During their TA workshops, they talk about ORHP funding opportunities, grants.gov, and share grant writing tips. They also invite a current or former grantee to talk about their experience writing and implementing a grant. For information from the most recent workshop conducted last week in Mississippi, go to: www.regonline.com/FRHGW_MVSU

*Organization: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration
Office of Rural Health Policy*

Rural Resources & Publications continued

IMPACT OF THE RECESSION ON RURAL AMERICA: RISING UNEMPLOYMENT LEADING TO MORE UNINSURED IN 2009

This brief presents the results of state and county analysis of unemployment rates nationally in urban and rural (non-metropolitan) areas over the period 2007-February 2009 and discusses the impact of rising unemployment on uninsurance in rural areas and their combined impact on the need for health care reform.

For the full policy brief, [click here](#).

Organization: RUPRI Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis

MAY 2009: PPOs DRIVING GROWTH IN RURAL MEDICARE ADVANTAGE ENROLLMENT

A changing landscape is emerging for rural Medicare Advantage (MA) enrollment in 2009 as rapid growth in preferred provider organization (PPO) plan enrollment is coupled with a decline in the growth rate of enrollment in private fee-for-service (PFFS) plans. Enrollment in MA plans has continued to climb in 2009, but it has been impacted by the slowed rate of growth in PFFS plans, which cover over half of MA enrollees in rural areas. The growth in PPO enrollment in recent months is likely tied to changes in policy that have encouraged the growth of new PPO plans, enrollment in existing PPO plans, and expansions of the service areas of existing plans.

For a copy of the brief, [click here](#).

Organization: Rural Policy Research Institute Center

SUMMARIES OF RURAL AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

A valuable resource from the National Rural Health Association's Annual Conference is now available for the rural health community at-large. The document provides a comprehensive summary of the investment the federal government is making in rural areas, rural health in particular, through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

To obtain the document on rural health provisions, [click here](#).

For a full summary of rural provisions, including sections for Arts, Services for Children and Families, Energy, Education, Health, Environmental Infrastructure, Housing, Job Training & Unemployment Insurance, Public Safety, Small Business and Transportation, please [click here](#).

Organization: National Rural Health Association (NRHA)

SATISFACTION WITH PRACTICE AND DECISION TO RELOCATE: AN EXAMINATION OF RURAL PHYSICIANS

This report examines physician satisfaction as it relates to various aspects of practice and its association with decisions to continue or discontinue practicing in a rural location.

For the full report, [click here](#).

Organization: NORC Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis

Rural Resources & Publications continued

SEBELIUS: “HARD TIMES IN THE HEARTLAND: HEALTH CARE IN RURAL AMERICA”

Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius released a new report, *Hard Times in the Heartland: Health Care in Rural America*, outlining the health care challenges facing rural communities. The report was developed by HHS staff from across the Department and was released on the same day Director of the White House Office of Health Reform Nancy-Ann DeParle, HRSA Administrator Mary Wakefield, and Representative Mike Ross held a meeting with Americans from rural communities as part of the ongoing series of White House Health Care Stakeholder Discussions.

For full report, click [here](#).

Organization: HealthReform.gov

SUICIDE PREVENTION TOOLKIT FOR RURAL PRIMARY CARE

This resource contains the information and tools needed to implement state-of-the-art suicide prevention practices in rural primary care settings. For details on the toolkit, log on to, click [here](#).

Organization: Suicide Prevention Resource Center

Rural Health Funding Alerts

RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (RCDI)

Agency: Rural Housing Service, USDA

Purpose: The Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) program provides technical assistance and training funds to qualified intermediary organizations to develop their capacity to undertake housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in rural areas.

Eligibility: Qualified organizations can be public or private (including tribal organizations) that have been legally organized for at least three years and have experience working with eligible recipients. Recipients of assistance from the intermediary can be non-profit organizations, low-income communities, or federally recognized tribes. The recipients can be nonprofit organizations, low-income communities, or federally recognized tribes, based on the definitions in the Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA). Recipients must be located in eligible rural areas, as defined in the NOFA.

Funding: The \$6,256,000 in RCDI grant funds are available to intermediaries and have a dollar for dollar matching fund requirement, intended to double the impact of the grants. Matching funds must be in the form of cash or confirmed funding commitments and be at least equal to the grant amount. In-kind contributions cannot be used as matching funds. The respective minimum and maximum grant amount per intermediary is \$50,000 and \$300,000.

Deadline: September 24, 2009

Inquiries: Delaware/Maryland USDA Rural Development State Office, 302-857-3625

Link: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-15128.pdf>.

Rural Health Funding Alerts continued

RURAL HEALTH NETWORK DEVELOPMENT PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM

Agency: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

Purpose: To (1) achieve efficiencies, (2) expand access to, coordinate and improve the quality of essential health care services, and (3) strengthen the rural health care system as a whole. This program brings together key parts of a rural health care delivery system so they can work together to establish or improve local capacity and coordination of care, particularly those entities that may not have collaborated in the past.

The Network Planning Grant Program supports one year of planning activities that assist rural entities in the development of an integrated health care network if the proposed participants in the network do not have a history of collaborative efforts and a 3-year grant would be inappropriate.

Eligibility: Eligible Maryland Counties include Allegany, Caroline, Dorchester, Garrett, Kent, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, and Worcester.

Funding: The Network Planning Grant funding cycle is from March 1, 2010 through February 28, 2011 and will be funded with the Federal Fiscal Year 2010 appropriation, pending availability of funds. Applicants can request a one-year project period. The maximum award request for the year is \$85,000. The approximate amount of funding anticipated is \$1,150,000. It is anticipated that 20 awards will be made. Awards will be announced in February 2010 for a March 1, 2010 project start date.

Funding preference will be given to those communities in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or those who serve a Medically Underserved Population (MUP) as well as having a focus in primary care, and wellness and prevention strategies.

Application Process: If you are interested in applying, you will need to register in grants.gov. There is a TA Conference call for prospective grantees scheduled on August 18, 2009. Please contact Mary Collier, mcollier@hrsa.gov to register for the call.

Deadline: September 14, 2009

Inquiries: Eileen Holloran, Program Coordinator

Office of Rural Health Policy

eholloran@hrsa.gov

Telephone: 301-443-7529

Fax: 301-443-2803

Link: <http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=CkVlKnLbCK2xrfHT5L2r6G50ZqLXrk3NGQX7G1bnGxTtdQnFSQvS!1656926990?oppld=48597&mode=VIEW>

Rural Health Funding Alerts continued

WORKER TRAINING AND PLACEMENT IN HIGH GROWTH EMERGING INDUSTRY SECTORS

Agency: Employment and Training Administration

Purpose: Funding for projects that provide workers with training that will prepare them to enter and advance in the health care sector, as well as other high growth and emerging industries. The absence of qualified workers in this diverse sector threatens the quality and availability of medical care, and the economic stability and growth potential of local communities in rural, urban, and suburban areas.

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is particularly interested in receiving applications that focus on one or more of the following health care sub-sectors and occupational categories:

- Nursing
- Allied Health
- Long-Term Care
- Health Information Technology

Eligibility: Eligible applicants are public entities or private nonprofit entities. Applicants must be legal entities and may include local Workforce Investment Boards and their One Stop Systems, tribal organizations, education and training providers, labor organizations, health care providers, and faith-based and community organizations. The applicant must be the fiscal agent for the grant. An organization may not submit multiple applications in response to this Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA). However, an organization that submits an application for this SGA is not precluded from participating as a partner in applications submitted by other applicants in response to this SGA.

Geographic Coverage: Nationwide

Funding: ETA expects to allot approximately \$125 million of the designated funds for projects in the health care sector. However, the Department reserves the right to change this amount depending on the quantity and quality of applications submitted.

Application Process: The *Federal Register* notice ([click here for notice](#)) SGA contains all of the information and links to forms needed to apply for grant funding.

Applicants may apply online through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>); however, due to the expected increase in system activity resulting from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, applicants are encouraged to use an alternate method to submit grant applications during this heightened period of demand. While not mandatory, DOL encourages the submission of applications through professional overnight delivery service.

A pre-recorded Webinar will be on-line (<http://www.workforce3one.org>) and accessible for viewing on August 12, 2009 by 3 p.m. Eastern Time, and will be available for viewing anytime after that date. While a review of this webinar is encouraged it is not mandatory.

Deadline: The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is October 5, 2009. Applications must be received no later than 4 p.m. Eastern Time.

Inquiries: Ariam Ferro, Grants Management Specialist, Division of Federal Assistance, at (202) 693-3968 (This is not a toll-free number). Applicants should e-mail all technical questions to Ferro.Ariam@dol.gov and must specifically reference SGA/DFA PY 09-01, and along with question(s), include a contact name, fax and phone number.

Link: <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&flag2006=false&opId=48679>.

REMINDER: LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

ARRA AND NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES CORPS

The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (Recovery Act) provides approximately \$200 million additional funding for the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Program (LRP). NHSC is administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an Agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, charged with increasing access to health care for those who are medically underserved. Beginning in June 2009 through September 2010, or as funding permits, NHSC LRP awards will be available on a first come, first served basis, opening new opportunities for areas in high-need sites located in Health Professional Shortage Areas with lower HPSA scores. For the first time, primary health care clinicians interested in NHSC's loan repayment program do not need to be employed at the site at the time of application. Most applications will be processed within eight weeks of receipt of a completed application (i.e., all application supporting documentation received).

The NHSC LRP telephone conference calls for applicants who have questions about applying during the open and continuous application cycle will occur on Thursday afternoons from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm on the following dates:

To join any of these conference calls, dial 1-888-889-0974 (toll free) and enter participant pass code 8360318.

August 20, 2009	October 29, 2009
September 10, 2009	November 19, 2009
October 1, 2009	December 10, 2009

An application may be downloaded at <http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/applications/rraa.asp>. Please contact Liz Vaidya, Director, Primary Care Office at 410-767-5695 or evaidya@dhhm.state.md.us to determine if an NHSC placement is appropriate and to verify the accuracy of data requirements prior to submitting the application directly to NHSC.

For more information, log on to: www.nhsc.hrsa.gov (Official NHSC Web site), www.nhscjobs.hrsa.gov (NHSC Job Opportunities), and http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/join_us/lrp.asp (NHSC eligible disciplines).

LOAN ASSISTANCE REPAYMENT PROGRAM STILL ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2009

Applications are still being accepted for the 2009 **Maryland State Loan Assistance Repayment Program (LARP)**. The deadline for submission of applications is **August 26, 2009**.

The Maryland LARP is a collaborative effort among State and federal entities that offers physicians an opportunity to practice their profession in a community that lacks adequate primary care and/or mental health care services, while also paying off their educational loans.

The amount of loan assistance repayment provided varies in accord with the number of years of service a physician agrees to provide. LARP awards may not exceed a total of \$120,000. Award amount for physicians: up to \$25,000 per year for a two-year commitment; up to \$28,350 per year for a three-year commitment; or up to \$30,000 per year for a four-year commitment.

Eligible primary care practitioners include those who are specialty board certified or have completed a residency in *family practice, osteopathic general practice, obstetrics/gynecology, internal medicine, general pediatrics, or general psychiatry* and who are employed in a non-profit setting.

For information about the **LARP** application process, please contact Judy Gerahty, Workforce Development Coordinator, at 410-767-5046 or jgerahty@dhhm.state.md.us. For a **LARP** application form, click http://www.fha.state.md.us/ohpp/pco_larp.cfm.



Maryland State Office of Rural Health

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The mission of the Maryland State Office of Rural Health (SORH) is to improve the health of rural Marylanders through collaboration, networking, outreach, education, research, advocacy, and the development of special programs.

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Calendar of Events

August 3-5

Rural America: A Behavioral Health & Safety Conference
 AgriWellness Inc.
 Sioux Falls, South Dakota
[Click here for details](#)

August 10-12

Health Resources and Services Administration's National Meeting
 Department of Health and Human Services
 Washington, D.C.
[Click here for details](#)

Aug 31 - Sep 2

ORHP Grantee Partnership Meeting
 Office of Rural Health Policy
 Washington, DC
[Click here for details](#)

September 9-11

Medication Use in Rural America
 National Rural Health Association
 Kansas City, MO
[Click here for details](#)

September 10-11

MACHC 2009 Annual Meeting and Conference
 Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers
 Ellicott City, Maryland
[Click here for details](#)

October 22

The Statewide Rural Roundtable
 The Maryland CASH Campaign, the State Office of Rural Health,
 the Maryland Rural Health Association
 Annapolis, MD
[Click here for details](#)

November 18-19

NOSORH Annual Meeting
 National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health
 Austin, TX
[Click here for details](#)

December 9-11

Rural Multiracial and Multicultural Health Conference
 National Rural Health Association
 Memphis, Tennessee
[Click here for details](#)

January 25-27, 2010

Rural Health Policy Institute
 Washington, DC
 Early registration deadline: Dec. 23
[Click here for details](#)