Az CRH Highlights

The Arizona Rural & Public Health Policy Forum will be held in-person and virtually on February 1, 2022. Registration is now open!
Arizona Rural & Public Health Policy Forum
(Held in-person and virtually)

February 1, 2022
11:30 am - 5:30 pm

At Desert Willow Conference Center
4340 E. Cotton Center Boulevard, Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ

Contact Rebecca Ruiz for more information: raruiz@arizona.edu

Click to Register

Join our next AzCRH Webinar on Jan. 20!

Mobilizing Partners: Advancing Health Equity and Addressing Disparities (AHEAD) in Arizona

Dr. Mona Arora will guide participants to:

- Identify AzCRH-led initiatives to support rural health care and public health partners in addressing COVID-19 driven inequities.
- Describe lessons learned from two years of COVID response.
- Understand the importance of adopting a health equity lens to inform continued COVID-19 response and recovery.

Click to Register
Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center in Safford Becomes a Critical Care Hospital

Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center in Safford, Arizona started out the new year as a Critical Access Hospital (CAH) bringing the total number of CAHs in Arizona to 16. AzFlex is excited to continue to work with Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center with Quality Improvement, Finance and Operations and EMS/Trauma.

Pfizer–BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Now Available for Children Ages 5–11 Years, Boosters for Age 12+

Spread the Word About Vaccine Boosters. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services released new resources – posters, flyers, videos, and talking points – to help promote the extra protection from COVID-19 boosters. All vaccinated individuals aged 12+ are eligible for a booster. Search by zip code to find nearby locations providing adult and pediatric
vaccines and boosters for COVID-19 and the flu at vaccines.gov.

COVID19 vaccine booster shots are now available for everyone age 12+.
Find free vaccines near you: vaccines.gov
Or Text your ZIP code to 438829 | Call 1-800-232-0233

There’s still time to get a flu vaccine if you haven’t yet this season. You can get a flu vaccine at the same time as a COVID-19 vaccine. Find your flu vaccine.

Click for more information

Az CRH NEWS

Dec 17, 2021 : Dr. Ronald Weinstein, telemedicine innovator at University of Arizona, dies at 83
Nov 17, 2021 : President Biden’s Proclamation for National Rural Health Day
Nov 02, 2021 : Indian Country ECHO Launches New Website
Oct 31, 2021 : Changing Hospitals' Not-For-Profit Status "Important Decision for a Community"
Oct 24, 2021 : It’s been nearly a year. Why aren’t more Arizonans vaccinated?
Oct 24, 2021 : Obamacare enrollment in Arizona rose by 40,000, with more gains likely
Oct 22, 2021 : Reframing Public Health Crisis Resilience: Dr. Mona Arora
Sep 09, 2021 : Moonshot, Upshot, Hot Spot, Bullshot

UPCOMING RURAL EVENTS

Jan 15 2022 : Dump the Drugs - Yavapai County
Jan 20 2022 : AzCRH Webinar: Mobilizing Partners: Advancing Health Equity and Addressing Disparities (AHEAD) in Arizona
Feb 1 2022 : 2022 Arizona Rural & Public Health Policy Forum
Feb 6 2022 : 2022 Rural Health Care Leadership Conference
Feb 6 2022 : 35th Annual Rural Health Care Leadership Conference
Apr 1 2022 : 18th Annual American Indian Disability Summit
Apr 20 2022 : 2022 12th Annual Statewide Symposium in Support of Service Members, Veterans & Their Families
Oct 24 2022 : 2022 NARHC Fall Institute

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

HRSA Rural Public Health Workforce Training Network Program – applications due March 18. HRSA anticipates awards for more than 30 community-based organizations that will join an effort to train and place public health professionals in rural and tribal areas. Eligible applicants include minority-serving institutions of higher education, Critical Access Hospitals, community health centers, nursing homes, Rural Health Clinics, substance use providers, and state or local workforce development boards. Each grantee will receive approximately $1.5 million for a three-year project. FORHP will hold a webinar for applicants on Wednesday, January 5 at 1:00 pm ET. For those unable to view online, see the Events section below for dial-in information.

HRSA Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement Program Funding Opportunity – applications due March 21. HRSA will be making approximately 40 awards of up to $200,000 each to support the planning and implementation of quality improvement activities in rural communities. Applicants must be rural domestic public or private nonprofit entities with demonstrated experience serving, or the capacity to serve, rural underserved populations in a HRSA-designated rural area. FORHP will hold a technical assistance webinar for applicants via Zoom on Wednesday, January 26, 2022 from 2-3 p.m. ET. A recording will be available for those who cannot attend.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

The COVID-19 pandemic colliding with the epidemic of opioid use disorders (OUDs) and other substance use disorders (SUDs)
The COVID-19 pandemic has affected populations disproportionally at higher risk, such as people with SUD and OUD and people in recovery. The National Institute on Drug Abuse reported that while people with an SUD are more likely to require hospitalization and die from COVID-19 than those without SUD, the rate is eight times higher for those diagnosed with an SUD during the pandemic. Literature reveals that people with SUDs often have weakened lung function, which immediately puts them at increased risk of contracting and suffering worse outcomes from COVID-19 (Wang, Q.Q. et al, 2020).

In addition to being medically disadvantaged, people with SUDs and OUDs have experienced a tremendous cascade of challenges during the COVID pandemic. These adverse effects include disruptions in the availability and accessibility of treatment, changes in social support and networks, and isolation, which lead to higher levels of anxiety, depression, and despair inducing to relapse and potential overdose. Possible resources to reverse opioid overdose have been reduced, such as naloxone distribution practices and visits to the emergency department (Root, E.D. et al, 2021).

The AzCRH’s AHEAD (Advancing Health Equity, Addressing Disparities initiative PI Dr. Dan Derksen and Program Managers Dr. Mona Arora and Jennifer Peters) is committed to address this urgency by raising awareness in underserved communities across the state of Arizona. AHEAD is working with partners (e.g., Overdose Data to Action, OD2A) to educate and connect communities to COVID-19 related and social services. In collaboration with the MOVE UP program (Mobile Outreach Vaccination Education for Underserved Populations lead by Dr. Cecilia Rosales), AHEAD is reaching out to rural communities to facilitate naloxone distribution to mitigate the effects of the opioid crisis and improve access to vaccination to fight against COVID.

Below are some tools that frontline workers and the public can use to support individuals with SUD/OUD:

- **COVID-19 and people at increased risk** The Center for Disease Control and Prevention stresses on the urgency for vaccination and following preventive measures to protect people with SUD/OUD from getting COVID-19.
Resources to help your patients with SUD during the COVID-19 pandemic The National Institute on Drug Abuse provides resources and guidance for health care professionals related to strategies for a safe treatment and vaccine uptake and hesitancy.

Behavioral health treatment services locator The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration aids persons with SUD/OUD who are seeking treatment by locating near facilities to them in the U.S and territories. Additionally, this source includes helplines for different distress crisis.

Opioid Assistance and Referral Line- 1-888-688-4222 Banner Health provides a free 24/7 support line for health care providers with SUD/OUD patients.


Community Toolkit for Addressing Health Misinformation. The new resource asks for participation from individuals, teachers, school administrators, librarians, faith leaders, and health care professionals to understand, identify, and stop the spread of misinformation. The toolkit includes common types of misinformation and a checklist to help evaluate the accuracy of health-related content.

HHS Facts About COVID Care for the Uninsured. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) helps uninsured individuals find no-cost COVID-19 testing, treatment, and vaccines. The HRSA Uninsured Program provides claims reimbursement to health care providers generally at Medicare rates for testing, treating, and administering vaccines to uninsured individuals, including undocumented immigrants. There are at-a-glance fact sheets for providers and for
patients in English and Spanish.

**Reaching Farm Communities for Vaccine Confidence.** The AgriSafe Network is a nonprofit organization that provides information and training on injury and disease related to agriculture. Their health professionals and educators created a social media toolkit that aims to provide clear messages about COVID-19 vaccination for agriculture, forestry, and fishing workers.