Az CRH Highlights

SAVE the DATES!

On August 1 & 2, 2019, AzCRH will convene its 46th Annual Rural Health Conference at High Country Conference Center in Flagstaff, AZ at the High County Conference Center. The Conference brings together a statewide audience of health providers, health professional educators, students and staff, county and community health professionals, clinic and hospital administrators, state and local leaders, CEOs, CFOs, and others to network, foster collaboration, discuss ideas and solutions, and showcase best practices to improve the health and wellness of Arizona’s rural populations.
Any Positive Change: Arizona's first harm reduction conference

Please join us for Arizona’s first ever Harm Reduction Conference on Friday March 29 at the Black Canyon Conference Center! This conference will serve as a space to bring together local and national experts, community members, health and treatment professionals, and those directly impacted by substance use to hold conversations about harm reduction at every level.

Tribal Opioid Conference
Indigenous Approaches to Building Capacity & Resilience to Address Substance Use Disorder

The conference, April 3-4, 2019 at the San Marcos Resort in Chandler, will provide a space for community health professionals to network, discuss their concerns, successes and challenges, and provide best practices related to substance use, misuse, and abuse prevention, treatment and recovery.

2019 Statewide Symposium in Support of Service Members, Veterans & Their Families

The only statewide conference that brings together military, government and community organizations to focus on strengthening care, services, support and opportunities for Arizona's 600,000+ service members, veterans & their families! April 17 & 18, 2019 at the Desert Willow Conference Center in Phoenix.
Border Health Information for Action

Researchers, community organizations, health providers, and activists from the region all joining together to discuss and dialogue about their work. **May 16-17, 2019 at the Fiesta Inn, Nogales, Sonora.**

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AzCRH News and Updates

Mar 17, 2019 : [Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association Names Ann-Marie Alameddin New President & CEO](#)

Feb 26, 2019 : [OpEd: Syringe service programming is good public health policy](#)

Feb 12, 2019 : [Arizona, other states in ‘governors challenge’ target veteran suicides](#)

Feb 08, 2019 : [SAMHSA Grant Announcement: Building Communities of Recovery](#)

Feb 06, 2019 : [Peer Support Specialists Care for and Connect Rural Behavioral Health Clients](#)

Jan 29, 2019 : [Tucson hospitals now post all costs for services, but it can be confusing](#)

Jan 23, 2019 : [CMS Approves Arizona’s Medicaid Community Engagement Demonstration Amendment](#)

Jan 23, 2019 : [When getting mom and baby to the right hospital is a matter of life or death](#)

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Upcoming Rural Events

Mar 21 2019 : [Opioids: The Painful Truth](#)

Mar 27 2019 : [At the Intersection of Aging and Transportation](#)
New Federal Funding Opportunity for Small Rural Health Care Providers

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has published a new Notice of Funding Opportunity. The **Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement Grant Program** will support up to 32 public or private nonprofit health care providers located in rural areas to improve patient care in their communities. HRSA expects to invest approximately $6.4 million for this program that aims to improve the quality of rural health care through an evidence-based approach to primary care that has proven effective in rural areas. **Previously funded organizations under this program** designed and carried out projects focused on coordinated care for patients, chronic disease management, integrated care delivery systems, and reduced admissions for emergency rooms and hospitals, among other issues for rural providers. Objectives for this program, that’s competitive every three years, include improved health outcomes, better engagement of patients and their caregivers, and continuous improvement to chronic disease management. Grantees are also encouraged to implement quality improvement activities that measure value by outcomes, establish and maintain **patient-centered medical homes**, and integrate behavioral health into the primary care setting.

**Full details of the program and requirements for applicants** are available at...
SAMHSA Grants Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children’s Health – April 19. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) will make 15 awards of up to $800,000 each for projects that address developmental needs of children from birth to age eight. Eligible applicants are public and private nonprofit entities, including tribal organizations, that can disseminate effective and innovative early childhood mental health practices and services. A recent report from the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services examined the long-term health effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences for rural, tribal and other at-risk populations.

Rural Communities Opioid Response Program-Implementation (RCORP-Implementation) – May 6. The Health Resources and Services Administration’s (HRSA) Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) will be making approximately 75 awards of up to $1 million each to rural communities to enhance service delivery for substance use disorder, including opioid use disorder. Over the course of a three-year period of performance, grant recipients will implement a set of core prevention, treatment, and recovery activities that align with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Five-Point Strategy to Combat the Opioid Crisis. Award recipients are strongly encouraged to leverage workforce recruitment and retention programs such as the National Health Service Corps (NHSC). All domestic public and private entities, nonprofit and for-profit, are eligible to apply and all services must be provided in HRSA-designated rural areas (as defined by the Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer). The applicant organization must be part of an established network or consortium that includes at least three other separately-owned entities. At least two of these entities must be located in a HRSA-designated rural area. FORHP will hold a 90-minute webinar for applicants on Wednesday, March 27, 2019 from 11:30-1:00 pm ET. A recording will be made available for those who cannot attend. For the webinar dial-in and playback information, please reference page (ii) in the Notice of Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. (Click “Preview” on the Package tab, and then “Download Instructions”.) Contact ruralopioidresponse@hrsa.gov with questions.
NIH Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health – May 14. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) will support exploratory developmental research to improve Native American health, including secondary analysis of existing data, conduct of pilot and feasibility studies, and assessment of measures developed and/or adapted for use in Native American communities. Eligible applicants include state, local and tribal governments, small businesses, institutions of higher learning, and ethnic minority-serving organizations.

Recommended Resources

New Data Show Growth in Rural Population. The Economic Research Service (ERS) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports an uptick in population for the first time in nearly a decade. In 2016-17, the rural population increased by 0.1 percent, adding 33,000 people. This annual report from the ERS also includes geographic variations in population trends and a breakdown by race and ethnicity.

CMS could scrap hospital star rating model, seeks feedback

CMS is considering scrapping the model it uses to assign hospital star ratings, signaling a big shift from the agency's stance just seven months ago. In conjunction with releasing new ratings on the Hospital Compare website for the first time in nearly 15 months, the agency also opened a public comment page for stakeholders to provide feedback on potential changes to the ratings program, including removing the variable model. Comments are due March 29. As CMS considers new strategies for rating hospitals for consumers, NRHA asks that they be sure to implement a rural lens in this process. Understanding the challenges with star ratings for rural hospitals because of their size, CMS adjusted the program accordingly. As they develop a new methodology, they should include a separate rural metric in the original program.