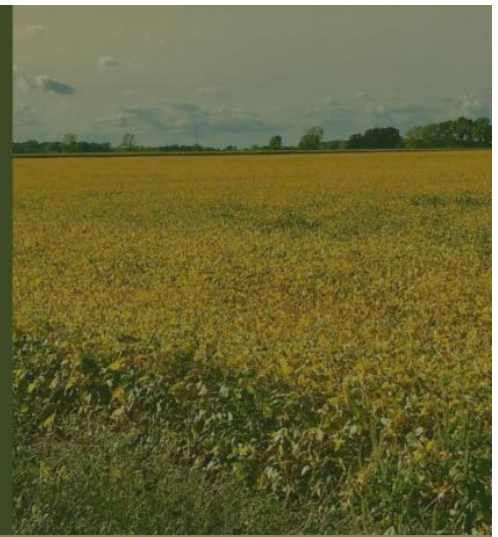




## — Our Mission:

TO COORDINATE, PLAN,  
AND ADVOCATE FOR  
IMPROVED HEALTH FOR  
MICHIGAN'S RURAL  
RESIDENTS AND  
COMMUNITIES.



# MCRH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2023  
Volume 4, Issue 11

## Announcing the 27th Annual Michigan Rural Health Conference - April 25-26, 2024

Now Accepting Speaker Proposals Until January 18, 2024

### 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Michigan Rural Health Conference



### The Ripple Effect: Ideas Into Action

April 25-26, 2024 • Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort • Mt. Pleasant, MI



Mark your calendars now for the 27th Annual Michigan Rural Health Conference which will be held April 25-26, 2024 at Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort in Mt. Pleasant, MI. Registration will be opening soon so please follow MCRH on social media and stay tuned to our monthly newsletter for details.

### Call For Presentations

MCRH is accepting proposals for this year's conference. Proposals are welcomed for 30 and 60-minute presentations that are interactive, creative, dynamic, feature best practices in rural health, and will encompass this year's theme: ***The Ripple Effect: Ideas into Action.***

### **Areas of Focus:**

The Michigan Rural Health Conference typically hosts presentations that are focused on the following areas:

- Health Information Technology
- Public Health
- Health Equity
- EMS
- Workforce
- Finance & Operations
- Quality Improvement

### **Suggested Topics of Interest to Conference Attendees:**

- 2024 Billing/Coding
- RHC Compliance and Regulations
- Chronic Care Management
- Childhood and Seasonal Vaccine Programming
- Behavioral Health Integration
- Community Services for Clients: Transportation, Food Security, other Social Drivers of Health
- Financial Tools/Strategies for Low-Volume CAHs
- RHC Cost Reporting
- CMS Standards & Health Disparities
- Engaging Disproportionately Impacted Populations
- Other Innovative Approaches to Rural Health Care

If you have additional questions regarding a proposal submission, please contact Renee Calkins ([renee.calkins@affiliate.msu.edu](mailto:renee.calkins@affiliate.msu.edu))

[Click Here for the Full Call for Presentations PDF](#)

[Click Here for Submission Link](#)

## **Grant to Establish EMS Health Professional Shortage Designation Awarded to MCRH**



MCRH has been awarded \$277,497 in grant funding from the **Michigan Health Endowment Fund** (Health Fund). The Special Projects and Emerging Ideas grant award will be used to develop a methodology to understand the EMS workforce shortage. This project work will provide a data-driven approach to allocate

resources across the state effectively, leading to improved service delivery and potential policy changes.

Over the next 18 months, MCRH will use this Health Fund grant to leverage relationships with key stakeholders, and in-house expertise, to develop an EMS Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) methodology. A HPSA designation identifies an area, population, or facility experiencing a shortage of health care services. As it currently stands, there is no designation to identify shortages of pre-hospital care professionals for rural Michigan.

Developing this HPSA designation will bring awareness and understanding to the pre-hospital provider workforce disparities in rural communities across the state of Michigan.

[Click Here to Read the Full Press Release](#)

## Veterans Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough Visits Baraga County Memorial Hospital



Recently, Secretary of Veteran Affairs (VA), Denis McDonough, visited Baraga County Memorial Hospital (BCMh) to learn about their in-house assistance program for veterans.

The success of the program was made possible with the help of the MCRH I-REACH program led by Project Director Jim Yates. The I-REACH program facilitated coordination between the VA and BCMH to establish a Veteran Services Coordinator program at BCMH. BCMH identified an LPN from their staff to run the program, with assistance from the VA, to provide dedicated support to veterans.

During his visit, Sec. McDonough participated in a panel discussion at BCMH where issues related to limited options for non-emergent primary care and long-term care placement were discussed.

To learn more about the I-REACH program and its efforts to eliminate barriers for veterans to access care in their community, please click [here](#).

[Click Here to View a News Report from WLUC in Negaunee, MI Spotighting BCMH and Secretary McDonough's Visit](#)

## Michigan State Loan Repayment Program 2024 Application Period Update





### **2024 Application Period: February 1, 2024 through April 30, 2024**

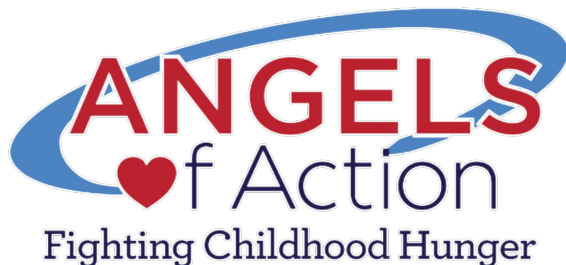
The Michigan State Loan Repayment Program (MSLRP) assists employers in the recruitment and retention of medical, dental, and mental health primary care providers who continue to demonstrate their commitment to building long-term primary care practices in underserved communities designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs). MSLRP will assist those selected by providing up to \$300,000 in tax-free funds to repay their educational debt over a period of up to ten years of participation.

New applicants and current participants compete for consecutive two-year MSLRP agreements requiring them to remain employed for a minimum of 40 hours per week for no less than 45 weeks per year at eligible nonprofit practice sites providing primary healthcare services to ambulatory populations.

Providers must remain with the employers who sponsor them during their two-year agreements, and employers must continue to employ the providers they sponsor during their two-year service obligations.

[Click Here for Michigan SLRP 2024 Application Details](#)

## **December's Strength of Rural Spotlight: Angels of Action**



*Each month, the Michigan Center for Rural Health highlights people and organizations who uplift rural health through the Strength of Rural Spotlight Series. In December, MCRH spotlights the Angels of Action in Big Rapids, MI. The following is an excerpt of their submission.*

Angels of Action is a non-profit organization serving children and families in Mecosta and Osceola Counties. The team partners with schools, churches, community agencies, volunteers, and local businesses to ensure physical, emotional, and educational needs are being met within all aspects of the family unit.

Over the past 10 years, hygiene kits [Little Angel Hygiene Kits], books [Little Angel

Book program] and fleece blankets [Warmth for Winter] have also been provided to any child in need, throughout the multiple school districts Angels serves; as well as to foster homes, homeless shelters, and other local organizations that serve families with children.

In 2020, amidst the pandemic, Angels experienced a significant increase in calls for assistance. Many of these calls expanded beyond food insecurity and basic hygiene essentials. Realizing that the needs in the community were outpacing the services being offered, the team went to work to implement new, intentional, meaningful programs designed to empower children & families to thrive.

*Please contact MCRH Social Drivers of Health Manager, Laura Mispelon ([laura.mispelon@affiliate.msu.edu](mailto:laura.mispelon@affiliate.msu.edu)), if you are interested in having your organization featured in an upcoming Strength of Rural Spotlight.*

[Click Here to Read the Full Angels of Action Spotlight](#)

## Quality Improvement Study: OSF Escanaba Emergency Department Throughput Project



***MCRH Quality Improvement Advisor, Jeff Nagy, works with Michigan Rural Health Clinics and Critical Access Hospitals to provide resources and technical assistance, in operations, finance, and quality improvement projects. One of his recent projects was to assist OSF Healthcare St. Francis Hospital & Medical Group in improving their Emergency Department throughput. The following contains the project details:***

**OSF HealthCare St. Francis Hospital & Medical Group (SFH)** identified the opportunity to improve various processes that impact Emergency Department (ED) throughput and patient experience. During FY22, Q1-Q3, ED throughput metrics were below target in the following areas: Left before treatment complete, Length of Stay (LOS) overall, 2-hour boarders, and patient experience. A large area of opportunity surrounds the 15% of ED patients admitted to SFH or transferred to tertiary facilities.

The SFH pre-planning began at the end of summer 2022, with the project kicking off with an onsite visit on October 3, 2022. Pre-planning included a review of key metrics and a discussion of numerous processes. The onsite visit covered three and half days of technical assistance focusing on understanding the current state.

The visit included observation, and interviews with staff in the emergency department (ED) and all departments impacting the ED. The next phase of the visit included a value stream mapping session, which walked through each step of a patient's visit from arrival to disposition to discharge, noting issues/barriers in the processes along with possible solutions.

[Click Here to Read the Full OSF Project Results](#)

## Register Today for the 2024 Social Determinants of Health Summit



The **Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Office of Policy and Planning** is excited to present the Social Determinants of Health Summit, From Roadmap to Reality: Implementing Michigan's Roadmap to Healthy Communities for Lasting Change. The Summit will be held January 23- 26, 2024. The live virtual session will take place January 23-25 with a half-day in-person reception on January 26.

The goal of the Summit is to create a space for collaboration and alignment with Michigan partners. Attendees will learn from each other and strengthen partnerships for a greater impact in their community.

Registration closes on January 10, 2024.

[Click Here for SDOH Summit Details and Registration](#)

## Apply for Michigan Health Endowment Fund 2024 Community Health Impact and Capacity Building Grant Programs



### Community Health Impact Grant

The Health Fund's Community Health Impact Initiative is seeking proposals from health-focused, community-based organizations with bold ideas that empower communities to solve their most pressing health issues and successfully implement health-focused, community-driven interventions. Grassroots organizations, neighborhood groups, and small and medium-sized nonprofits are encouraged to apply.

[Click Here for Community Health Impact Grant Details](#)

**Capacity Building Grants**

The Capacity Building grant program assists health-focused, community-based organizations in becoming stronger, more effective institutions within their community by meeting basic organizational needs, allowing them to spend more time and energy focused on their mission. It also supports collaborative efforts among providers, service agencies, and community-based organizations to cooperatively address health issues in a sustainable way.

[Click Here for Grant Capacity Building Grant Details](#)

## Connected Nation To Host Free Digital Literacy Workshops



**Connected Nation (CN)** is committed to empowering communities and their residents with the power of broadband and related technologies. As part of that commitment, CN is offering digital literacy workshops in your community that are free of charge.

Through its digital skills training, career readiness, and job placement opportunities, CN is dedicated to providing training opportunities for disadvantaged families, new technology adopters, job seekers, veterans, and military spouses to adopt and use technology effectively.

### **What type of community organizations can participate?**

Agencies or organizations that provide services to local residents; Community organizations; Libraries; Family Resource Centers at K-12 Schools; Non-profit organizations; Places of Worship; Government agencies; Social service providers.

[Click Here to Learn More Information from Connected Nation](#)

## Medicaid Coverage of CHW/CHR Services Announced





The **Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance** (MiCHWA) recently announced that the official policy for Medicaid Coverage of Community Health Worker (CHW)/Community Health Representative (CHR) Services has officially been released!

At the link below, you will find a document that shows a crosswalk comparing the language of the policy as it was released for public comment in July and the policy as it has been released in its final form to be included in Michigan's Medicaid State Plan.

MiCHWA acknowledges the **Michigan Department of Health and Human Services** (MDHHS) for its work in creating this policy. MDHHS has shared that they received over 300 comments regarding this policy, and their efforts to incorporate stakeholder feedback are well-reflected in the policy.

[Click Here to View the Crosswalk Document](#)

[Click Here to Read the Full MDHHS Bulletin](#)

## Medical Leadership in Disaster Preparedness and Response Virtual Conference February 7-8, 2024



The **HHS Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response**(ASPR) Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange (TRACIE) is pleased to host the Medical Leadership in Disaster Preparedness and Response Virtual Conference on February 7-8, 2024.

This virtual conference will focus on the spectrum of medical leadership responsibilities and some of the specific challenges faced in this role.



Anyone who has a medical direction role for their health care facility, public health department, emergency medical services agency, health care coalition, or other entity during disasters and other emergencies causing a patient surge is encouraged to attend.

[Click Here for Full Conference Details and a Link to Register](#)

## Rural Federally Qualified Health Centers Earn HRSA Community Health Quality Recognition Awards



MCRH congratulates the MI Rural FQHCs who have recently received the Community Health Quality Recognition award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for providing high-quality patient care. Awardees are ranked in the top 30% for quality of patient care among all Federally Qualified Health Centers and Look-alike Programs in the country.

Every year, HRSA Health Center Program awardees and look-alikes are required to report a core set of information. This includes data on patient characteristics, services provided, clinical processes, health outcomes, patients' use of services, staffing, costs, and revenues. This information is part of a standardized reporting system known as the UDS and is used to determine the recognition.

### Rural Michigan CHQR awardees include:

Upper Great Lakes Family Health Center - Hancock, MI  
Bay Mills Health Center - Brimley, MI  
East Jordan Family Health Center - East Jordan, MI  
Thunder Bay Community Health Service - Hillman, MI  
Northwest Michigan Health Services - Traverse City, MI  
Traverse Health Clinic and Coalition - Traverse City, MI  
MidMichigan Health Services - Houghton Lake, MI  
Sterling Area Health Center - Sterling, MI  
Baldwin Family Health Care - Baldwin, MI  
Isabella Citizens for Health - Mt. Pleasant, MI  
Intercare Community Health Network - Bangor, MI  
Covered Bridge Healthcare of St. Joseph County - Centerville, MI

Congratulations on a job well done!

## Gov. Whitmer Announces Nearly \$2 Million in Recreation Grants for Local Park and Trail Improvement and Development



Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced that 15 communities will share \$1,977,300 in Recreation Passport grants for projects, including the addition of a skate park in Mecosta County, new playground equipment in Roscommon County, a new campground and boat launch in Ontonagon County, and park improvements in Barry and Tuscola counties.

**View projects recommended for funding** for this year’s Recreation Passport grant awards. Counties where funded grant projects have been approved include Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Crawford, Ingham, Ionia, Iosco, Mecosta, Montmorency, Ontonagon, Roscommon, St. Clair and Tuscola counties.

Selected projects were scored and selected from a field of 47 grant applications seeking \$5.4 million in local funding. Successful applicants clearly demonstrated projects designed to broaden public access to quality outdoor recreation opportunities.

The application period for the next round of Recreation Passport grant funding opens in early 2024, with applications due April 1. **Click here** to learn more about the program and view application materials.

## Save The Date for Two Upcoming EMS Events in 2024

Registration Opening Soon

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**FIRST RESPONDER MENTAL WELLNESS CONFERENCE**

- ✔ Strategies and tools to help you thrive in your professional & personal life!
- ✔ International, national, and local presenters!
- ✔ The latest information and best practices!

**April 16-17 2024**

Location: Delamar Hotel, Traverse City, MI

**SAVE THE DATE**

**EMS EXPO 2024**

Eberhard Center, Grand Rapids

May 2-4

Mark your calendars to attend the **Michigan Rural EMS Network's First Responder Mental Wellness Conference April 16-17, 2024** at the **Delamar Hotel in Traverse City** and the **Michigan EMS Expo** taking place **May 2-4, 2024** at the **Eberhard Center in Grand Rapids**.

Follow MCRH's social media and **subscribe to the EMS newsletter** for event and registration updates.

## Upcoming MCRH Educational Events



**GRAND ROUNDS:**  
**January 18, 2024, 12- 1 PM EST**  
Special Topics Grand Rounds: Bleeding Disorders in Women and Girls + (Gender

Inclusive): Issues and Challenges

**Speaker:** Roshni Kulkarni, MD

[Register Here](#)

CE Provided for Nursing, Social Workers, Physicians, and Community Health Workers

**Project ECHO:**

**January 17, 2024, 12 -1 PM EST**

Infectious Disease ECHO: *Topic To Be Announced Soon!*

**Speaker:** Dr. Peter Gulick

[Register Here](#)

CME Provided

**EMS:**

**Please visit the [MCRH EMS Continuing Education Website](#) for the 2024 EMS Webinar Schedule coming soon!**

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## **ADDITIONAL NEWS & RESOURCES:**

### **HOSPITAL PROGRAMS:**

[Hospital-based Substance Use Disorder Consultation Reimbursement Coverage](#)

[Mandatory Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program \(CHIP\) Quality Measures](#)

### **FUNDING:**

[SAMHSA Announces Funding Opportunity for Rural EMS Training - Apply by March 20](#)

[HRSA Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program - Apply by February 26](#)

[New Funding Opportunity for Planning Rural Residencies – Apply by February 12](#)

[Rural Health Network Development Planning Program – Applications Due January 26](#)

[USDA Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program – December 31](#)

### **TELEHEALTH:**

[DEA Plans to Extend Telemedicine Rules for Controlled Substances Through 2024](#)

### **SOCIAL DRIVERS OF HEALTH:**

[Watch Now: “Improving Access to Health Care Coverage in Rural Communities with Medicaid and CHIP” Webinar](#)

### **SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER:**

[SAMHSA Resource: Engaging Community Coalitions To Decrease Opioid Overdose Deaths Practice Guide 2023](#)

[Recovery-Ready Workplace Toolkit for Businesses](#)

[Model Recovery Ready Workplaces Act](#)

### **WORKFORCE:**

[Interested in Becoming an NHSC Site? Check Out the MCRH Workforce/NHSC Resources Page for More Information](#)

### **VETERANS:**

[An Introduction to Online Veterans Resources](#)

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

[Nationally Aligned Community Health Worker Certification Now Being Offered from the Northern Michigan Center for Rural Health – Begins January 9, 2024](#)

[Updated Catalog of Value-Based Initiatives for Rural Providers](#)

[New Birthing Friendly Hospital Designation Available on Care Compare Website](#)

[New Map Shows Rural Emergency Hospitals](#)

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# A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO MCRH'S 2023 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORS



Is your organization interested in becoming a 2024 MCRH Organizational Sponsor? Please contact Doug Siwek ([siwekdou@msu.edu](mailto:siwekdou@msu.edu)) for more information on this branding opportunity.

[Click to View More Organizational Sponsor Details](#)

[Click Here for the 2024 MCRH Organizational Sponsor Form](#)

[Visit the MCRH Website](#)

Please visit and follow MCRH's social media channels for more news and information:



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