

Michigan Rural Health Clinic



Monthly Bulletin

Volume 5, Issue 11:
November 2023



A Few Words From Jill:

The end of the year is fast approaching, but it isn't too late to begin thinking about 2024 and how to continue improving your RHC operations.

I encourage your Rural Health Clinic(s) to participate in a collaborative quality improvement project funded by the Michigan Center for Rural Health and offered in collaboration with Lilypad.

This is a unique and timely opportunity for clinic leaders to prepare for anticipated public reporting mandates and develop valuable quality improvement skills and experience to foster future success.

Participation has been designed to enable clinics to start when you are ready and proceed at a pace that fits with your operational realities – we meet you where you are and provide resources so you can access them in a way that makes sense to your clinic team.

Over the past two grant cycles, we've had several clinics participate. Those clinics are encouraged to continue with new or expanded quality work, and we invite **all** Michigan RHCs to join the existing cohort, with a long-term goal of having 100 percent RHC participation.

If you are interested in being part of this project, plan on having your clinic leaders attend an introductory 30-minute webinar hosted by Lilypad on Monday, December 4th at noon Eastern.

Click here to register.

For more information about the project details and goals, **please click here.**

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need any guidance (oester35@msu.edu).

Thanks,
Jill

BREAKING NEWS! CMS Finalizes 2024 Regulatory Updates

Hear More Details at a December 11 Webinar - Registration Information Below



On November 2nd, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued the **CY 2024 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) Final Rule** and the **CY 2024 Medicare Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS) Final Rule**, finalizing several Rural Health Clinic (RHC) specific policy proposals that the National Association of Rural Health Clinics (NARHC) first **outlined** in July.

In September, NARHC submitted **comments** as to how CMS proposals may impact the RHC community and suggested various changes to ensure that safety net providers can take full advantage of the expanded benefits.

Much of the advocacy was successful, particularly in conveying to CMS that RHCs should be able to bill the general care management code, G0511, more than once per patient per month to capture the full benefits of expanded Remote Patient Monitoring (RPM) flexibilities and other benefits.

We encourage you to join the NARHC Washington, D.C. team for a webinar on December 11th, 2023, where there will be a discussion of the final rule and answer your questions about the implementation of these various policy proposals. Please register for the webinar [here](#).

[Click Here for the Full RHC Summary](#)

What Rural Health Providers Need from Washington D.C. in 2024



The NRHA recently sent a letter **outlining actions Congress can** take to shore up rural health care, ranging from enhanced support for staff retention at the poorest facilities to carveouts from some controversial policies strongly opposed by the broader hospital industry.

NRHA is taking your rural voices to Capitol Hill to educate Congress on what rural health care needs at **NRHA's 35th Rural Health Policy** Institute Feb. 13-15 2024 in D.C.

Interested in **advocating on behalf of rural** health today? Sign up to participate in NRHA's rural health advocacy campaigns and review NRHA's updated advocacy 101 guide.

[Click Here to Read More](#)

MDHHS and MSHDA Launch "Good Housing = Good Health" Program



The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) are announcing the official launch of the "Good Housing = Good Health" program, a partnership aimed at promoting housing stabilization and addressing social determinants of health (SDOH) within Michigan communities.

This innovative initiative is part of the MDHHS Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) strategy within Michigan's Roadmap to Healthy Communities, which provides comprehensive solutions to the social drivers of health by looking at factors like housing that impact the health of Michigan residents.

The program also incorporates Michigan's Statewide Housing Plan, which enhances the different factors contributing to housing access in Michigan.

Key objectives of the "Good Housing = Good Health" Program include:

- Increasing housing access: The program will improve housing access for eligible households, particularly those that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- Providing education and resources: Educational resources and support will be provided to prevent the loss of housing, ensuring individuals and families have the tools needed to secure and maintain safe and affordable housing.
- Strengthening health and well-being: The program aims to enhance the health and well-being of households facing the highest barriers to securing and maintaining safe, affordable housing.

[Click Here Full Program Details](#)

Tobacco Quitlink Celebrates 20 Years of Helping People Become Tobacco-Free



Tobacco use continues to be the leading cause of preventable death in Michigan. Approximately 70% of all adult smokers report wanting to quit, but fewer than one in 10 succeed in quitting for good without the assistance of coaching and/or nicotine replacement therapy.

The Michigan Tobacco Quitlink is a free and confidential service that offers several different programs designed to help Michiganders quit tobacco based on the level of support needed, including phone and online coaching.

The Michigan Tobacco Quitlink, formerly the Tobacco Quitline, was established in

October 2003 as a pilot project for Upper Peninsula residents. In 2004, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) received a grant to expand the service statewide.

In 2022, 27% of Tobacco Quitlink phone coaching participants quit using tobacco. However, Quitlink enrollees who participated in four or more coaching calls had a quit rate of 34%, illustrating that Quitlink participants who stuck with their program had a better chance of quitting tobacco for good.

Quitlink uses proven strategies that have helped more than 1.5 million people quit tobacco.

[Click Here for More Information](#)

WEBINAR: Assessing Opportunities to Fill the Gap for Health Care Services for Veterans in Rural and Highly Rural Areas - November 28, 2023



Please register to join a free, upcoming webinar, held in conjunction with the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) and the VA's Accessing Telehealth through Local Areas Stations (ATLAS) Program.

This webinar will be held on **Tuesday, November 28th, 2023 at 1 PM ET.**

The Office of Connected Care at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs created the ATLAS Program to establish telehealth access points for Veterans in rural community-based locations.

The program team is interested in sharing information about the model with RHCs and learning from you in the following areas as they consider opportunities to partner with RHCs to fill the gap in healthcare services for Veterans:

- What are your biggest needs in serving Veterans at your RHC?
 - What types of services are you interested in helping to support?
- Are you interested in opportunities to partner on initiatives like these?
- What barriers do you anticipate in collaborations with VA?

This webinar will be provided free of charge, and your participation is encouraged.

[Click Here to Register](#)

RHC Billing Lunch and Learn Webinars for November and December 2023

Healthcare Business Specialists (HBS) are pleased to announce the latest series of Lunch and Learn webinars on RHC billing and cost reporting coming up in November and December 2023.

Some of the special guest speakers on RHC billing include Amanda Dennison from Blue & Co, Patty Harper from InQuiseek Consulting, and Charles James, Jr. from North American Health Management Services.

Each webinar will be one hour long and will have time for questions. The webinars are free and will be recorded and posted to the HBS YouTube channel [here](#).

**Click to View The Complete Lunch & Learn RHC
Billing Webinar Schedule from HBS**

REMINDER: MDHHS Recommends Getting Vaccinated for Flu, COVID-19 and RSV



The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is recommending residents get the flu, COVID-19, and RSV vaccines to protect against respiratory viruses this upcoming season.

Getting vaccinated is critical because flu, COVID-19, and RSV frequently spread at the same time of year. Residents can get their COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as the flu vaccine and RSV vaccine if they are eligible. Vaccinations are safe, effective strategies to protect residents, their families, and communities from illness.

“With the addition of COVID-19 to respiratory illness season during fall and winter, it is important to use tools to prevent getting sick and spreading illness, which includes getting safe and effective vaccines,” said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, MDHHS chief medical executive. “Flu, COVID-19, and RSV vaccines are available in many convenient locations, from primary care providers to local pharmacies, and you can receive them at the same time.”

Most Michigan residents can still get a COVID-19 vaccine for free. For people with health insurance, most plans will cover the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost. Michigan residents who don't have health insurance or have health plans that do

not cover the cost can reach out to a health care provider or local pharmacy participating in the CDC's **Bridge Access Program**, their local health department, or visit **Vaccines.gov** for additional information on ways to obtain a free vaccine.

Children eligible for the **Vaccines for Children** program also may receive the vaccine from a provider enrolled in that program.

To find a vaccine location near you, including Bridge Access Providers, visit **Vaccine Finder**.

NHSC Students to Service Loan Repayment Program - Apply by December 7, 2023



The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Students to Service Loan Repayment Program offers up to \$120,000 in tax-free loan repayment assistance to students in the last year of medical, nursing, or dental school.

In return, participants provide at least three years of service at an NHSC-approved site in a designated Health Professional Shortage Area. For the first time, an additional \$40,000 is available to physicians specializing in obstetrics, gynecology, or family medicine physicians who practice obstetrics regularly, as well as certified nurse midwives.

Apply now through Thursday, December 7, at 7:30 p.m. ET.

[Click Here for Full Program Details and Useful Resources](#)

Apply for the Bill Finerfrock Health Policy Fellowship - Deadline is January 5, 2024



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
RURAL HEALTH CLINICS**

Apply today for the 2024 Bill Finerfrock Health Policy Fellowship. This program is designed for mid-career professionals with experience ranging from billing, coding, office management, and/or clinical care in either the RHC setting or a rural health care system.

Applicants may either be current rural health professionals or have past experience in rural health and are currently pursuing additional education/training. The fellowship is a personal and professional commitment to making further impacts in rural health practice and policy.

The fellowship requires a full-time, in-person commitment for either a 4-week continuous timeframe, or two, 2-week periods in May, June, or July 2024. The selected candidate will reside in Alexandria, Virginia during the fellowship period and work within the NARHC DC Office, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Lodging and travel expenses will be fully covered by the program, and a \$8,000 stipend will be provided to the fellow directly. Additionally, the selected fellow's employer will receive a \$2,000 stipend to be used as the organization sees fit in gratitude for its support of the fellow's participation in this program.

During the program, the BFHP Fellow will:

- Participate in NARHC advocacy meetings with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Capitol Hill staff
- Analyze NARHC educational content for relevancy
- Identify areas of focus for NARHC
- Educate key policymakers on the realities of rural health

The application for the 2024 Bill Finerrock Health Policy Fellowship Program along with all supporting materials, is due by January 5, 2024, at 11:59 pm ET. Completed applications should be emailed to Sarah.Hohman@narhc.org. Interviews will be conducted in mid-January, and the selected candidate will be notified by mid-February, 2024.

[Click Here to Apply](#)

[Click Here for More Details](#)

**Interested in Becoming an NHSC Site?
Check Out the MCRH Workforce/NHSC
Resources Page for More Information**



Retaining and recruiting can be challenging, especially in a tight labor market. Being a National Health Service Corps (NHSC) site, can help with recruitment.

As an NHSC-approved site, loan repayment assistance can help to improve future employees' financial health which can impact not only the recruiting of health professionals but employee retention as well. How does a site though become an NHSC site?

At MCRH, we have created presentations and PDFs for each section of the

NHSC Site Application. Please review the resources of the below recordings before applying to be an NHSC Site.

For more information on becoming an NHSC Site please contact MCRH Access to Care Manager, Paige Recker, at paige.recker@affiliate.msu.edu.

[Visit the MCRH NHSC Resources Page](#)



Upcoming MCRH Educational Events

Grand Rounds:

December 13, 2023, 12- 1 PM EST

Pharmacy Grand Rounds: Heart Failure - Optimizing Medical Therapy

Speaker: Curtis Smith, PharmD, BCPS

[Register Here](#)

CE Provided: Pharmacist, Pharmacy Technicians, and Nursing

Project ECHO:

December 6, 2023, 12 -1 PM EST

Infectious Disease ECHO: Topic TBD

Speaker: Dr. Peter Gulick

[Register Here](#)

CME Provided

EMS Webinar:

December 6, 2023, 6 PM EST

HR Competencies for EMS Leaders

Speakers: Scott Moore, Moore EMS Consulting

[Register Here](#)

CE Provided: 1 Operations & 1 Education Administration

RHC November News & Resources

Here are some of the topics impacting the RHC community in Michigan this month.

Click on the BOLD links to read more:

NEW THIS MONTH:

- NEW RESEARCH: **Lyme Disease Most Common in the Age Group 51-60 in the Period 2018-2022**

RESOURCES:

- Reaching Out to People Who Live In Rural Areas about Medicaid & CHIP Renewals: **Click Here for Updated Resources and Information Document**
- The Michigan Health Council (MHC) Offers Five Virtual One-Hour Implicit Bias Training Courses
- HRSA Payment Program for RHC Buprenorphine-Trained Providers

COVID-19 Vaccine Updates and Resources

This a reminder that COVID-19 is still having an impact on our rural neighbors and those providing care and solutions. **Please click on the links below for important information regarding the latest on vaccines, boosters, testing, and other recommendations:**

- **RESOURCE:** [Updates to Coverage for COVID-19 Tests](#)
- **RESOURCE:** [CMS Recinds COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination Requirements](#)
- **RESOURCE:** [RHC Vaccine Confidence News and Information - UPDATED](#)
- **RESOURCE:** [One Stop Online for COVID Prevention and Treatment in Every County](#)
- **RESOURCE:** [COVID-19 Impact on Emergency Preparedness for RHCs](#)
- **RESOURCE:** [The Implications of Long COVID for Rural Communities](#)
- **UPDATE:** [MDHHS Medicaid Policy Bulletins](#)
- **UPDATE:** [MDHHS L-Letters Guidance](#)
- **ONGOING:** [Understanding the Federal COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates: Practical Considerations for Covered Employers](#)

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