



**National Rural
Health Association**
Rural Health Equity Conference
May 6-7, 2024 — New Orleans, LA

Monday, May 6

1 – 1:15 p.m.

Conference Welcome

Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)

Alan Morgan, MPA, NRHA CEO

Mary-Katherine Smith McNatt, DrPH, MPH, NRHA Health Equity Council Chair

1:15 – 2:30 p.m.

Opening Plenary

Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)

Promoting Equitable Healthcare Delivery in Rural Communities

Benjamin Anderson, MBA, Hutchinson Regional Healthcare System, President & Chief Executive Officer

Duane Reynolds, MHA, Chartis, Chief Health Equity Officer and President, Chartis Center for Health Equity & Belonging

Michael Topchik, Chartis, National Director, The Chartis Center for Rural Health

Troy Brown, Network Consultant, Rural Health Specialist, The Chartis Group

Efforts to counter rural health disparities and advance health equity are increasingly influenced by emerging government regulations, social pressures, and financial sustainability, adding layers of complexity for hospital leadership teams. This session will explore components for an effective health equity strategy that meets regulatory requirements to eliminate health disparities.

2:30 – 2:45 p.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

Grand Ballroom DE (5th floor)

2:45 – 4 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

1A. CDC Overdose Prevention and Harm Reduction Rural Efforts

Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)

Robin Rinker, MPH, CDC/NCIPC/DOP, Communication Branch Chief

Brenton Guy, MS, CDC/NCIPC/DOP, Team Lead

Jessica Wolff, MPH, CDC/NCIPC/DOP, Team Lead

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Overdose Prevention invests in overdose prevention in rural communities – including harm reduction. Panel will feature CDC staff discussing equity-focused rural health activities in local public health encompassing public safety partnerships, formative communication campaigns, and the Drug-Free Communities program.

Beyond Incarceration: Improving Outcomes for Women and Families affected by Substance Use Disorder

Dallas McCance, MPS, Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences, Center for Rural Health, Director of Programs

This session will address the effectiveness, challenges, and successes of deploying telehealth services within rural jails, virtual care coordination using evidence-based practices, and continuum of care for women and families once they exit the justice system. It will provide an overview of successful case studies involving rural consortia leveraging resources.

1B. Addressing Rural Dementia Disparities in Minnesota with CBPR

Grand Ballroom A (5th floor)

Joshua Fergen, PhD, University of Minnesota Medical School - Duluth, Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team, Senior Research Associate

Kristen Jacklin, PhD, University of Minnesota Medical School - Duluth, Memory Keepers Medical Discovery Team, Executive Director

Dereck Salisbury, PhD, University of Minnesota School of Nursing, Assistant Professor

Limited insight into dementia disparities in rural and Indigenous populations is partially attributed to underrepresentation in research. Community-based participatory approaches can mitigate these limitations. This session shares an ethical model for rural and Indigenous community engagement, ethnographic findings on rural and Indigenous dementia experiences, and a rural dementia exercise intervention.

1C. Improving Primary Care for LGBTQIA+ and Neurodivergent Youth

Grand Ballroom B (5th floor)

Anthony DiMartino, MA, The Weitzman Institute, Education Program Specialist

Reese Ramponi, APRN, PMHNP-BC, Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

Joel Ramirez, MD, Camarena Health, Chief Medical Officer

Cassalyn David, MPH, Mariposa Community Health Center, Behavioral Health Program Director

With sufficient training, rural federally qualified health centers are well-positioned to expand equity for under-represented populations. This panel explores best practices for LGBTQIA+ and neurodivergent youth in healthcare, steps two rural FQHCs are taking to advance inclusive care for these populations, and how a community of practice supports these initiatives.

4 – 4:15 p.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

4:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Concurrent Session

2A. Critical Access Hospital Engagement with Social Needs Data

Madeleine Pick, MPH, Flex Monitoring Team at the University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, Research Fellow

Carson Crane, BA, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, Graduate Research Assistant

Grand Ballroom A (5th floor)

In this session, we will describe demographic and social needs data that are currently being collected by Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) and provide examples of best practices for how CAHs use these data to improve health equity in their communities, as informed by interviews with CAHs and other stakeholders.

Social Drivers of Health in Value-Based Care

Whitney Zahnd, PhD, University of Iowa College of Public Health, Assistant Professor

Jeannie Davis, EdD, Division of Community Health, Western University of Health Sciences

Jim Whelan, MD, Medical Director Munson Clinically Integrated Network and Northern Michigan Care Partners

Rural Health Value hosted a summit with rural leaders to share insights on the intersection of rural providers and communities; value-based care, and social drivers of health (SDOH). During this session, summit facilitators and panelists will discuss strategies rural hospitals may employ to address SDOH and align with value-based care.

2B. RCORP's Service to America: An Equity-Based Approach

Grand Ballroom A (5th floor)

Sarah O'Donnell, MPH, Team Lead, Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
Mike Shimmens, CPRP, Executive Director, 3RNET
Sarah Lifsey, MPP, PMP, Senior Project Manager, RCORP-Evaluation/CVP
Jeanine Hanna, PhD, Deputy Project Director, RCORP-Evaluation/Abt Global- TBD
John Barnas, Executive Director, Michigan Center for Rural Health

This session will highlight health equity accomplishments and lessons learned from the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program, which is honoring five years of supporting rural communities in fighting the opioid crisis. This session will also discuss opportunities for stakeholder engagement in RCORP and the future of health equity in the program.

2C. Climate Change's Impact on Border Region One Health **Grand Ballroom B (5th floor)**

David Line, PhD, MPH, MSW, Midwestern University, Program Director
Carrie Shaver DHA, IHC, FACHE, Assistant Professor, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Department of Health Management and Leadership

This session examines climate change's impact on One Health in rural border region communities. The session will review the relationship of One Health to rural border communities. Then we will look at how climate change impacts the One Health based economic, social, and cultural equity in vulnerable populations.

Tuesday, May 7

7 – 8 a.m.

Continental Breakfast
Poster Session

8:00 – 9:15 a.m.

Opening Plenary
Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)

Medical Debt: Implications for Rural Health Equity

Carrie Henning-Smith, PhD, MPH, MSW, University of Minnesota School of Public Health, Associate Professor
Alexis Swendener, PhD, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, Postdoctoral Associate
Ingrid Jacobson, MPH, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, Research Fellow
Katie Rydberg, MPH, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, Program Manager

Medical debt is widespread and impacts financial well-being, health, and access to care. This session will describe rural/urban inequities in medical debt and healthcare affordability, as well as within-rural inequities by race, ethnicity, and health status. We will also describe equity implications of medical debt for rural safety net hospitals

9:15 – 9:30 a.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

9:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

3A. Trauma-informed care: Moving from Buzzword to Practice **Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)**

Mina Tanaka, MD, MPH, Northern Navajo Medical Center, Internal Medicine Physician

Experiences of trauma can impart adverse health effects but trauma-informed care that infuses compassion into healthcare interactions can mitigate these effects. This session will describe the current landscape and the importance of trauma-informed care in rural settings with a special focus on Indigenous populations and the impact of historical trauma.

3B. Behavioral Health Best Practices and Challenges in Border Communities

Grand Ballroom A (5th floor)

Ginnie Lin, Public Health Analyst, HRSA

Mariana Vasquez, Systems Navigation Program Manager, Sonoran Prevention Works

Alexandra Boneo, Programs Manager, Amistades, Inc.

Ryann Elena Quick, Santa Cruz County Overcoming Substance Addiction (SOSA) Consortium Representative, Mariposa Community Health Clinic

In this session, explore strategies in delivering behavioral health services in Arizona-Mexico border communities. HRSA hosts a panel of Rural Community Opioid Response Program recipients to share diverse approaches on addressing healthcare, cultural diversity, and geographical hurdles. Gain actionable insights and foster a deeper understanding of this unique rural landscape.

3C. U.S. Policies Threaten Native American Access to Water

Grand Ballroom B (5th floor)

Mary-Katherine McNatt, DrPH, MPH, ATSU College of Graduate Health Studies Public Health Department, Chair and Professor, Public Health Department

Marsha Presley, PhD, MPH, ATSU College of Graduate Health Studies Public Health Department, Research Associate & Adjunct Faculty

Susan Thomas, M.S. Ed., B.M.E., AT Still University College of Graduate Health Studies, Instructional Designer & Adjunct Faculty

Tó éí ííńá át'é. Water is life. This session examines how ongoing U.S. water policies in the Colorado River basin affect struggles in 30 Colorado River basin tribes to access clean water and how a paucity of potable water threatens indigenous health and ways of life.

10:45 – 11:00 a.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Concurrent Session

4A. Enrollment Assistance: Decreasing Inequities by Place and Race

Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)

Susie Gurzenda, MS, Cecil G Shep Center for Health Services Research, Graduate Research Assistant

Mark Holmes, PhD, Cecil G Sheps Center for Health Services Research, Director

Tanja Pauler, MA, Charlotte Center for legal Advocacy, Health Insurance Navigator

North Carolina's leadership in Marketplace health insurance enrollment is thanks to diverse partnerships with enrollment assisters serving rural and historically under-insured communities. This panel highlights partnerships between a navigator program, researcher institute, and community organizations working together to decrease inequities by place, race, and ethnicity through quality, affordable health insurance.

4B. Violence During Pregnancy: Racial/Ethnic Differences Among Rural Residents

Grand Ballroom A (5th floor)

Emily Sheffield, MPH, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, Ms.

Perinatal intimate partner violence (IPV) is a common and preventable contributor to maternal morbidity and mortality. This session will describe differences in experiences of physical IPV and postpartum abuse screening among rural residents who gave birth, with attention to differences in these outcomes at the intersections of rurality and race/ethnicity.

Supporting Rural Victims of Intimate Partner Violence

Alyssa Fritz, MPH, University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, Research and Policy Fellow

This session will share findings from key informant interviews with local and national organizations that support rural victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) and describe challenges and opportunities for ensuring health and safety for rural victims, with attention to race/ethnicity, poverty, and pregnancy and the postpartum period.

Upending the “Political Economy of Silence” in Rural Communities: Survivors Speak Out

Anna Mullany, PhD, Emory University - Rollins School of Public Health, Postdoctoral Fellow

Rural settings are often depicted as idyllic and harmonious close-knit communities. For women experiencing intimate partner violence, however, they are often met with stigma and silence. This session will examine what I call the “political economy of silence” and how rural communities hold unique potential to support survivors in distress.

4C. Healthcare Access for Migrant Workers in Rural Missouri

Grand Ballroom B (5th floor)

Kandice Grossman, PhD, University of Missouri, Postdoctoral Research Fellow (Sociology Department)

Joan Hermsen, PhD, University of Missouri, Associate Professor of Sociology

Rebecca Scott, PhD, University of Missouri, Associate Professor of Sociology

This session examines and compares migrant workers’ healthcare access and resource experiences in two rural Missouri towns. Although both populations are primarily employed in corporate meat packing plants, experiences related to healthcare differ in each place significantly based on levels of community social support and social and political environments.

Bridging the Gap Between Clinical-Practices and Community Health

Eisha Khan, MPH, MaineHealth, Program Manager

Dora Mills, MD, MPH, FAAP, MaineHealth, Chief Health Improvement Officer

Join MaineHealth, the largest healthcare system in the nation’s most rural state, as we share our approach for social determinates of health. Discover how trauma-informed care, community engagement, and statewide partnerships are transforming health access, addressing rural and racial inequities, and creating a model aligning clinical-practices with public health needs.

12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Networking Lunch

Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)

1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Plenary Presentation

Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)

Increasing Diversity in Kansas and Missouri Healthcare Workforce

Alana Knudson, PhD, NORC Walsh Center for Rural Health Analysis, Director

Kael Martin, Health Forward Foundation, Impact Strategist

Lisse Regehr, BA, Thrive Kansas and Thrive Allen County, President and CEO

This session highlights the Health Forward Foundation’s efforts to increase diversity in the healthcare workforce serving rural and other under-represented communities in Kansas and Missouri. Community-based organizations, healthcare providers, and educational institutions engage to guide data collection efforts, review findings, and identify short and long-term opportunities to increase workforce diversity.

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Networking Break, Poster Session

2:45 – 4:00 p.m.

Concurrent Session

5A. Pharmacists: Filling the Gaps in Rural Healthcare

Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)

Emily Eddy, PharmD, Ohio Northern University Raabe College of Pharmacy, Associate Professor of Pharmacy Practice

Stuart Beatty, PharmD, Ohio Northern University Raabe College of Pharmacy, Dean

Pharmacists serve as vital members on the healthcare team, poised to fill gaps as provider extenders and impact care in rural healthcare deserts. Speakers will highlight pharmacist-provided care initiatives addressing mental health and chronic disease within a rural community pharmacy, a mobile clinic, and a college of pharmacy.

A Shot at Equity: Overcoming Racial Health Inequities

Kristin Motley, PharmD, MBA, Health Educated, Inc, Founder and Executive Director

This talk presents strategies for tackling COVID vaccine hesitancy in underserved communities, focusing on culturally sensitive approaches. The framework used to successfully overcome vaccine hesitancy will be demonstrated, offering adaptable methods for rural settings to effectively address health disparities.

5B. Health Literacy and Access in Unincorporated Rural-Border Communities

Grand Ballroom A (5th floor)

Shiloh Williams, PhD, San Diego State University, Assistant Professor

This session will examine the health needs of low income, unincorporated communities along the California-Mexico border. Participants will gain a better understanding of the intersection between low health literacy, social determinants of health and health behaviors of diverse rural-border populations with an emphasis on exploring strategies to promote health equity.

Kuleana Health: Health Literacy on Hawaii Island

Randy Kurohara, BA, Community First Hawaii, Executive Director

Lee-Ann Heely, M.Ed, DM, Hawaii Island Community Health Center, Director of Health Equity

Community First Hawaii will present on how it's Kuleana Health project elevated health literacy on Hawaii Island for both providers and community members targeting our most rural and disadvantaged communities. We utilized community focus groups, community health centers, and a variety of partners to deliver health literacy in innovative ways.

5C. Mapping Arizona's CHW Potential in Rural (MAP Project)

Grand Ballroom B (5th floor)

Floribella Redondo, BS, Arizona Community Health Worker Association, CEO

Susan Kunz, MPH, Susan Kunz Consulting, Public health

The MAP Project (Mapping Arizona's CHW Potential) is identifying rural organizations and communities where CHWs are not utilized or underutilized, as well as assessing capacity-building needs of those organizations that utilize CHWs. The results will prioritize where CHW core competency and CHW supervisor training is needed to improve health outcomes.

Arming Community Health Workers to Fight Care Inequities: A Martha's Vineyard Case Study

James Wolff, MD, MPH, MAT, BMS, Island Health Care, Chief Medical Officer
Kathleen Samways, DPT, PT, Island Health Care, Chief Public Health Officer
Lauren Fox, MSc in Communication, Culture, and Media Studies, Dimagi, Senior Project Manager

Federally-qualified health center Island Health Care, seeks to bridge care gaps and boost health equity by utilizing digitally-enabled community health workers (CHWs) to provide care outside of traditional facilities. Island and Dimagi will provide replicable insights into how care-coordination tools enable CHWs to improve care delivery for rural, underserved patients.

4:00 – 5:15 p.m.

Plenary Presentation

Grand Ballroom C (5th floor)

Lessons Learned Through Development of Rural Clinical-Community Linkages

Jennifer Conner, DrPH, MPH, MAP, American Heart Association, Vice President for Rural Health, SouthWest Region

Tim Nikolai, BS, American Heart Association, Senior Rural Health Director, Midwest Region

Jessica Donze Black, RD MPH, American Heart Association, National Vice President, Community Health

Innovative clinical-community linkages created in collaboration with rural libraries, food pantries, agricultural partners, and other local stakeholders can address rural health disparities. Community “health hubs” can be established for Self-Monitoring Blood Pressure programs, food security initiatives, and rural CPR education. Lessons from this rural community impact work will be shared.

5:15 p.m.

Conference Adjourns

Thank you for your attendance and your continued support of NRHA and the Health Equity Conference! Join us next year in Atlanta, GA on May 19-20, 2025.

2024 Health Equity Conference Accepted Poster Sessions

- Communications to Improve Rural Youth Health- Brunswick, GA
Llewellyn Cornelius, Ph.D
- Mindfulness for Pain and Addiction in Underserved Communities
Eric Garland
- Addressing Unmet Social Needs of People Living with Epilepsy in Rural Communities
Thometta Cozart, MPH, MS, MCHES, CPH
- MN RIDE Study for Rural Adults with SCD
Dereck Salisbury, Ph.D
- Underserved and Rural Scholars Program: Preparing Rural Leaders
Emily Eddy, PharmD
- Pennsylvania Training Center for Health Equity
Amanda Taylor Gehman, MPH
- Integrating the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse in Hurricane Disaster Response
Rebecca Nash, MSN, DNP(c)
- C-Sections: Exception or the Norm in Rural Arkansas?
Craig Wilson, JD, MPA
- Platform to Identify, Monitor, and Improve Diabetes Disparities
Sagar Dugani, MD, PhD, MPH
- Immunizations among Medicare Beneficiaries: Rural vs. Urban

Ray Tupling, MAE

- Advancing Health Equity with Native Hawaiians
Aulani Silva, BA
- Hair Equity: Addressing Systemic Racism at its Roots
Vanessa Rose
- Making the Invisible, Visible
Amanda Talor Gehman, MPH
- Seeking Transformational Change-Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH)
Kaley Petersen, MS/ OTR
- Mental Health Resource Gaps in Rural Schools
Kaley Petersen, MS/OTR
- Addressing COPD in Rural America
Nicole Goldsboro, BS
- Capacity Building from Rural Perspectives: Addressing Tobacco Disparities
Natalie Murdock, MPH
- Promoting Health Equity and Educational Excellence in Rural Communities
Olya Clark, PhD
- Stress, Cardiovascular Health, and Rural African American Women
Amnazo Muhirwa, Ph.D, FNP-C, RN, BSN
- Rural School Nurses Ensuring Student Health During COVID-19
Eden Donahue, DNP, RN, PHN, NCSN
- A Potluck Dinner Approach: Addressing Rural Health Disparities
Marybeth Mitcham, PhD, MPH
- An application of the lessons learned approach from the RQFSM model for evaluating health disparities in rural Nevada
Asma Awan, DrPH. MPH
- Mapping Priorities for Rural Youth Substance Use Prevention
Janessa Graves, Ph.D, MPH
- Research on social behavioral factors in rural veterans
Priscah Mujuru, DrPH, MPH, RN
- Bridging Rural Gaps: Mobile Clinics for Behavioral Health
Rebekah Kaufman, MS
- Care Coordination in a Rural Region: A Qualitative Analysis
Tiffini Hawkins, MPH
- Navigating Cancer Care: Rural Veterans at the Forefront
Wade Swenson, MD, MPH, MBA
- Enhancing Rural Oncology Care through Financial Navigation
Wade Swenson, MD, MPH, MBA
- Community Engagement Approaches in Rural Health Equity Research
Janessa Graves, PhD, MPH
- Telehealth in Rural Areas: A Feasible Option?
Analise McGreal, MD
- The Missouri Health Care Workforce Project
Shirley Murphy, MPH
- Rural Health Community Needs Assessments: Methodological Approaches
Carmen Culotta, PhD
- Barriers to Rural Veteran Clinical Trial Access

Emily Westergard, DO

- Increasing Diversity in Cognitive Research: Community-Engaged Approaches
Monique de Villa, MPH
- Health Care Professional's Perspectives on eSANE for Rural
Bridget Diamond-Welch, PhD
- Universal School Meals: A Strategy to Improve Rural Health in New Mexico and Beyond
Olivia Thompson, PhD, MPH
- Improving Access to Hepatitis C Care
Jean Wiggins, BSPH
- Another Look at Agricultural Rural Food Deserts
Hamidah Sharif, EdD
- Border Checkpoints and Healthcare Access for Undocumented Immigrants
Christine Blackburn
- Curing Hepatitis in Rural WV – Access and Equity
Judith Feinberg, MD
- Bundled intervention serving rural Black women with HIV
Shawna McNally, MSPH
- Rooting out BIAS in Agricultural Health and Safety
Knesha Rose-Davison, MPH
- Mental Health Care Disparities Among US Pregnant Individuals
Julisa Tindall, MSW
- Well-being and Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Exams
Lindsey Grabowski
- Community Providers on Meeting the Needs of Rural LGBTQ+ Youth
Caroline Blethan, MD Candidate
- Variation in Syringe Service Programs by Community Characteristics
Nathan Dockery, B.S.
- Community-Based Workforce for COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach
Niharika Khanna, MBBS, MD, D.G.O; Carissa Kwan, MPH
- Successfully Remaining in Community for Home Health Care Patients
Daniel Jung, PhD
- Enhancing Healthy Food Access in Rural North Carolina Communities
Kristin Wing-Coleman
- HPV vaccination Starting at Age 9 Evidence: Creation, Dissemination, and Impact
Christina Turpin
- Promoting Community knowledge and Acceptance of Molecular HIV Surveillance
Michael Thomas, MPH
- Empowering Women to Improve Overall Wellness Through a Culturally-Competent Community-Based Intervention
Yashika Watkins, PhD, MPH
- CommunityRx-Cardiovascular Disease: Community Referrals in Rural NC
Maura Drewry, MPH
- Best Practices to Outreach and Deliver Preventive Care Services to Cross-Border and Binational Populations During COVID-19 Pandemic and Post-Pandemic
Melissa Liman
- Rural, Remote & Resolute: Rural Resident Perceptions of Digital Equity – Implications for Telemedicine

Ann Marie Castleman, MPH, MA

- Refocusing Health Equity Education with a Hyperlocal Lens
Kimberly Randall, MA
- Applicability of Health Equity Guiding Frameworks to Rurality
Andrea Carmichael, MPH
- Using Race/Ethnicity Data to Drive Health Equity Improvement
Joe Mando, MPP
- Rural Mobile Events to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities
Kimberly Sprenger, MPA
- Improving Organizational Health Literacy
Andrea Murray
- Improving Migraine Outcomes through Primary Care Education
Jennifer Watkins, MSN
- Exploring African American Men Living With PCA Accessing Care: Qualitative Phenomenology Study
Paul Williams

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