

Mark your Calendar!



The Branch

An Update for State Offices of Rural Health and our Partners

February 2012

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February 9

Overview of SORH Non-Competing Continuation Instructions (1 PM EST)

February 14

Development Committee (2 PM EST)

February 15

Community Paramedicine Insights Forum (4 PM EST)

February 16

TruServe Learning Community (2 PM EST)

February 21

Policy Committee (2 PM EST)

February 23

USDA State Directors and ONC Regional Extension Centers Session (3 PM EST)

FLEX Committee (3 PM EST)

February 28

Communications Committee (3 PM EST)

March 1

Joint Committee on Rural Emergency Care (3 PM EST)

March 5

Webinar: Partnership for Patients Initiative: An Introduction to SORHs

CONGRATULATIONS TO NRHA – Great conference, great resources!

Thanks to all of you for helping make the National Rural Health Association 2012 Policy Institute a great success! NRHA, President Lance Keilers wrapped up the conference on Wednesday stating that this year there were more attendees, more presentations from congressional leaders and federal agencies, than in any other year. NOSORH estimates that at least 70 Congressional members heard from State Offices of Rural Health about the work of SORH, the need to ensure

no cuts to Medicare providers and continued appropriations for key rural programs.

NRHA partner, SANO shared data regarding the impact of 2% sequestration. Check out the report for information on the estimated impact on your state by [clicking here](#).



Kris Sparks (WA) and Denny Berens (NE) SORH leaders and past-presidents were recognized for service to NRHA during the Policy Institute Monday, February 22, 2012.

MEETINGS DATES

The 2012 ORHP SORH Grantee meeting and the NOSORH Annual Meeting will be held in Madison, Wisconsin October 16th – October 18th. Mark your calendar now to attend. Watch your email for details. All regional meeting dates and locations have been confirmed. Save the date notices with location and lodging information have been emailed to each region and posted on the NOSORH website, [click here](#) for the Upcoming Events section on the NOSORH website.

NRHA AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 8th

Each year the National Rural Health Association honors outstanding individuals and organizations in the field of rural health during its Annual Rural Health Conference. Please nominate professionals like your NOSORH colleagues or professionals or students in your state who have dedicated their time and talents to improving the health and well-being of others. It's easy to submit a nomination, and the deadline is Feb. 8 at 5 p.m. CST. [Click here](#) to review awards categories. [Click here](#) to submit a nomination. Questions? Contact [Donna Douglas](#).

PARTNERSHIP FOR PATIENTS UPDATE

NOSORH is proud to help celebrate **National Patient Safety Awareness Week** with a webinar occurring on **March 5th at 2pm EST** on the Partnership for Patients Initiative [click here](#) to view the information. Speakers include Paul Moore (HRSA), and Monique Sheppard (National Content Developer). Please join us to learn more about the initiative,

current activities and resources, and how State Offices can get involved in this significant work.

The assessment of the State Offices of Rural Health is nearly complete. Offices are voicing needs and resources in conducting community needs assessments, working with local hospital associations, understanding and moving forward with the

Partnership for Patients Initiative, and implementing healthcare reform.

All Offices have been contacted to schedule a time to talk about projects and areas of focus. If you have not set up your meeting and would like to share what's happening in your office or what your office needs please contact [Jessica Burkard](#).

TRUSERVE NEWS – NEW MAPPING FEATURE NEW USERS!

Reminder to all State Offices of Rural Health and Primary Care Offices the Tru-Serve web based performance measures tool is available to all SORH and to PCOs. PCOs who are “co-located” with the SORH and can share the enrollment in the tool with no additional cost. Other PCOs can enroll to use the tool by [clicking here](#).

All maps generated in TruServe are now fully interactive! What does this mean? When you generate a map in TruServe, not only will it show you how many activities you have done per county, but you can actually click on the county to see full details about those activities in a printable report. These reports can even feature your

organization's logo and branding! This new feature is available immediately to all TruServe members, at no extra cost. To see a live demo of the new mapping feature visit und.edu/serves. For more information about TruServe, contact [Mark Barclay](#), TruServe Coordinator.

Please visit our [News & Events](#) section to learn about these and additional upcoming events.

SORH GRANT GUIDANCE RELEASED FEBRUARY 7

As you plan the submission of your SORH grant, please plan to attend the webinar on February 9th at 2 PM. As always we're available to provide any technical assistance you need in the preparation of your application. If you have considered building your SORH work with rural health clinics there are some simple strategies that can help you get started. We're putting together a list of ideas and budget items to consider for your application. Watch your email for more details.

RESOURCE REFRESH

Thanks to the NOSORH Communication and Educational Exchange committee and the Board for good ideas on refreshing the website. We'll be working on that over the next few months.

We want to make sure we're sharing good work of SORH so we'll be mining SORH websites for Promising Practices and looking for new ways to feature them.

Some good examples of work done as part of the Leadership Institute, on EMS projects and a list of interesting projects we heard about at the regional meetings can be accessed. [Click here](#) to access these examples.

We've also begun a list of "recommended" speakers for a variety of topics... [click here](#) (other resources)

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PARTNERING WITH PUBLIC HEALTH ON COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT?

Charles Owens (GA) and John Gale, Maine Rural Health Research Center serve on a national committee formed to develop a model by which local public health agencies and 501c(3) hospitals and their partners others such as FQHCs, RHCs may collaborate to conduct community health assessments. Charles sends along a reminder about this important work...

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) includes a requirement for all 501©(3) hospitals to conduct a community health needs assessment (CHNA) every three years. On a parallel basis, a new set of national accreditation standards have been established for local public health agencies by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) requiring each public health agency to conduct periodic community health assessments as a first step in the accreditation process.

We would all agree that in the "Perfect World" there would be a needs assessment that by which all providers participate and adopt as each work collaboratively to address the areas of a community realizing that various members would have varying lines of a defined "community". We are on an aggressive timeline to have a product available by April 2012.

John Gale, and I have promoted SORHs as a great national network to reach our rural hospitals and public health departments that are the primary focus of the project. We will keep you apprised of the developments of the model.

COMINGS AND GOINGS AND CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations and welcome to Ernie Jr, Career Service Award luncheon, Scott, MD Rural Project Manager of the Kentucky Office of Rural Health.

We bid fond farewell to George Ives, Flex Coordinator with the Alaska Office of Rural Health and Aileen Harris, Virginia Office of Minority Health and Health Equity.

Aileen leaves to take on a part-time opportunity as she seeks to grow and develop her own consulting business (AEH Advising Health Professions, LLC) helping high school and college students interested in pursuing medicine as a career. Kathy Wibberly, Director of the Virginia Division of Primary Care and Rural Health says "We miss Aileen's presence, but wish her the very best...and I'm sure she'd be happy to take referrals from State Offices of Rural Health!"

Congratulations Gerrelde!



Louisiana Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health Director **Gerrelde Davis** was honored January 27th at the 53rd annual Charles E. Dunbar

receiving the highest honor classified state employees can receive for their service to the citizens of Louisiana

"Gerrelde absolutely deserves to join the ranks of distinguished Dunbar award recipients," said DHH Secretary Greenstein. "Each and every day she serves as a role model to her colleagues, demonstrating her unwavering commitment to the people of Louisiana. We are fortunate to have her on our team."

Tracie Ingram, Davis's colleague who nominated her for the Dunbar Award, comments that Davis' commitment to the community extends to the workplace where she has led by example in her charity work. She initiated a program within the Bureau of Primary Care & Rural Health to in which the staff selects meaningful charities to donate to throughout the year.

Rita Salain, a SORH alumni, will step down from her work with NOSORH on the Rural Health Clinic technical assistance work. Rita says "State Offices of Rural Health supporting Rural Health Clinics is a winning

strategy. RHCs are essential safety-net providers making access to preventive and primary care for millions of rural Medicaid and Medicare beneficiaries, the uninsured and underinsured - reality. NOSORH's project designed to help SORH increase understanding of, outreach to, involvement with and technical assistance provision to RHCs is important. It is the right thing to do. I am grateful to have worked on the NOSORH RHC Technical Assistance project with the experts serving on the Rural Health Clinic Advisory Team, with Teryl and Stephanie, and national partners. This work will continue to grow through continued investment, leadership and commitment and will strengthen SORH and RHCs. Thank you for allowing me to work on the beginning phase of this important SORH RHC technical assistance strategy." Thanks to you Rita and your good work helping us lay a solid foundation for all State Offices of Rural Health to do this important work.

RESOURCES FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

The successful diagnosis and case management for MS patients requires consults from specially trained neurologists, up to date information on the latest pharmaceutical interventions and other resources, which can be scarce for rural providers.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society has started an initiative to promote and expand access to quality care for people living with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in rural and underserved areas. Through its Professional Resource Center, the Society is seeking collaborations with established rural healthcare

organizations that work with primary and family care physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners. Resources and support are available to providers and patients including of a wide range of webinars, workshop presentations, conference exhibits, discipline-specific consultations, classroom curriculum development, grand rounds, and an online library. Topics focus on detection, diagnosis, and management of this very unique and challenging disease. Through the Society's 50 state network of chapters, models for enhancing MS care in

rural areas are being explored using telehealth to link rural practitioners with neurologists specializing in MS, educational opportunities hosted by MS Centers for Comprehensive Care, and collaborative health professional education endeavors with AHECs.

Over the next few months State Offices of Rural Health will be contacted by the National MS Society to seek their support in this educational outreach. For more information about this Society initiative, please contact Dorothy Northrop at dorothy.northrop@nms.org.