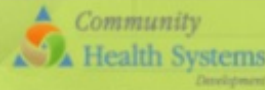


RURAL HEALTH LINK: THE RURAL HEALTH NETWORKS QUARTERLY DIGEST



This newsletter is brought to you by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) and the Community Health Systems Development Team at the Georgia Health Policy Center.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT



The Ellenville Regional Rural Health Network is a consortium embedded in Ellenville Regional Hospital and was founded in 2017 in partnership with the Institute for Family Health and the Ulster County Department of Health and Mental Health. The network is using evidence-based community outreach strategies to reduce childhood obesity in Wawarsing, N.Y., where entrenched poverty and structural barriers to care and social supports result in a high burden of childhood obesity. The Family Wellness Program strives to improve the health of children by working with the whole family, with the goal of facilitating lifestyle changes and supporting changes in their physical, nutritional, and social needs.

The Georgia Health Policy Center recently interviewed Victoria Reed, executive director of the Ellenville Regional Rural Health Network, about participation in the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy's (FORHP's) Network Development Program.

[Learn More](#)

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC UPDATES

Upcoming Deliverables

Data Dashboard: June 30, 2021

The guidance for the data dashboard has already been released. If you have not received it, please contact your Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) project officer.

Marketing Plan: December 13, 2021

The template has not been released. More information is to come.

Extended Deadlines

Performance Improvement Measurement System: September 30, 2021

Reporting is to be completed and submitted in the electronic handbooks (EHBs). The reporting period for the Performance Improvement Measurement System (PIMS) will still reflect data from the most recent grant year (July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021). However, the actual submission of the PIMS will be extended and made available in the EHB on September 1, 2021, and will be due no later than September 30, 2021.

HRSA Resources

If you would like additional resources on managing your grant effectively, please visit HRSA's Manage Your Grant [website](#).

- The Office of Federal Assistance Management provides trainings and technical assistance (TA) that highlights additional resources and answers questions regarding grant-related issues. Here are the [dates](#) of the upcoming events.
- If you are learning how to navigate the EHBs, [here](#) are a series of interactive [videos](#) that can help answer common questions.
- FORHP releases weekly announcements that are a terrific resource for learning more about new federal funding opportunities, COVID-19, and policy updates. Be sure to sign up [here](#).
- The Rural Health Information Hub produces step-by-step, evidence-based toolkits that showcase program approaches you can adapt to fit your community and the people you serve. The most recent focus areas include early childhood health promotion, community health workers, and community paramedicine. For a full list of over 20 evidence-based toolkits, please visit the [RHlhub](#) website.

SCHEDULE OF QUARTERLY TA-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Supporting and Exploring Your Data Dashboard Report

During your July or August TA call, some of the time will be used to discuss the data dashboard report you submit to FORHP. Please remember to email a copy to your TA Provider as he/she does not have access to the EHB. If you need a thought partner in preparing this report, feel free to reach out to your TA provider or mention it on your June TA call.

Scheduling a Virtual Site Visit

As you transition to Year 2 of your RHND grant, take a few moments to discuss with your TA provider planning and scheduling a customized, virtual site visit for your RHND program.

In a recent evaluation of the Georgia Health Policy Center's TA program for FORHP grantees, grantees highlighted the "use of video conferencing (for monthly calls, virtual site visits) to maximize relationship building, stretch resources, and expand the number of people 'touched' by the TA, [and] get access to partners."

This is an opportunity for your internal team and/or external partners to focus on a specific

topic for building capacity, engaging for shared understanding, and/or garnering commitment to much needed work that you can leverage for continued progress and network sustainability. If you haven't done so already, take a moment to review the [site visit flyer](#) as it may include a topic of interest or may inspire you to discuss another idea with your TA provider. Year 1 of the grant has gone by so fast; don't hesitate to get your site visit scheduled asap, as the second grant year will go by just as fast!

Discussing Your Business Model

As you enter year 2 of your RHND grant and continue to implement your program and sustain your network's operations, questions regarding your business model may have surfaced from time to time. Or perhaps the timing is right to initiate a discussion with your members as the initial year's data is under review and you will begin working on your marketing plan deliverable in early fall (due December 13) -- and are looking ahead to the creation of your business plan (due in 2022). Understanding and being able to convey the fundamentals of your business model is foundational to the development of a successful—and sustainable—program and network. Articulation and assessment of those fundamentals—including **what** you are offering, **to whom**, **where**, and how you will cover the **initial and ongoing costs**—will inform and support your planning as well as your work on upcoming deliverables. To assist you as you move forward with these conversations, your TA team is working with a business planning consultant to develop a *RHND Discussion Guide for Assessing Your Business Model*. This tool will be distributed in late July, and a companion Office Hours session with the creator, Heather Gowdy, will be held August 4. Please note this discussion guide is **not a required deliverable** but a resource to help you initiate conversations that will result in a successful planning process.

Attending July Meetings of Peer Groups

Don't forget to check your calendars in July for the meeting date of your peer group(s). If, for some reason, you missed a meeting, don't worry! You are still a part of the group and will be welcomed back with open arms. Your fellow grantees will be grateful for your attendance and be open to your questions and insights. By the way, a "little birdie" from the Telehealth Peer Group mentioned that fellow grantee Mary Oschner did an excellent job sharing Bay Rivers' experiences in supporting providers while implementing telehealth programs. Mary has graciously agreed for us to share the [video](#) from that session. Her presentation offered some excellent resources and generated discussion. Thanks, Mary!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



Office Hours with Heather Gowdy

August 4, 2021, at 2 p.m. ET

Heather Gowdy will answer your questions about using the *RHND Discussion Guide for Assessing Your Business Model*, a tool developed for RHND grantees.



Introduction to Developing a Marketing Plan

September 1, 2021, at 2 p.m. ET

This session will include a review of the required marketing plan template for your RHND grant deliverable.

ARTICLES

[Addressing COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy in Rural Communities](#)

Although half of American adults have received at least one shot of the coronavirus vaccine, the remaining adults feel hesitant toward receiving the vaccine or indifferent, including rural residents. Health officials, state officials, and the Biden administration have been developing creative ways to increase vaccination rates among hesitant or hard-to-reach communities. Check out how [Winding Waters Community Health Center](#) in Wallowa County, Oregon, and health officials in [rural Minnesota](#) are addressing vaccine hesitancy within their communities. Also, check out the various resources on addressing vaccine hesitancy in the resources section below.

[Developing a Marketing Plan](#)

As you will be completing a marketing plan deliverable for your FORHP RHND grant, you might find this article, [Eight Steps to Developing a Simple Marketing Plan](#), helpful. *NOTE: This is not the final template you will be using to submit your deliverable. It is shared only to provide you with a sense of what is typically included in such a plan.* The authors detail why a marketing plan is essential for a business, defines what a marketing plan is, and how to prepare for a marketing plan. Additionally, the authors list steps and tips for creating a marketing plan.

[Using Data to Tell Your Story](#)

Solely using data doesn't always engage your target audience (funders, policymakers, decision-makers, etc.) or drive action. Often, compelling stories evoke emotions that engage your audience. Together, using data to tell your story can strengthen audience engagement and drive action. This article, [How to Tell a Story with Data](#), from the Harvard Business Review, list tips and suggestions on using data for storytelling.

Additionally, the organization, [Storytelling With Data](#) is hosting two, half-day, virtual workshops in the fall (September and October). The workshop will discuss five lessons to improve data storytelling, including the fundamentals of effective visualization with an emphasis on building a compelling narrative around the information you want to communicate. [Click here](#) for more information on the workshops.

RESOURCES, NEWS AND UPDATES

Tools and Resources for Vaccine Competency

Be sure to check out the following resources on vaccine competency:

- [American Medical Association COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy](#): 10 Tips for Talking with Patients includes tips on telling stories that make an impact, preparing your staff to answer questions, and tailoring messages
- [CDC Recommendations on Talking about COVID-19 Vaccines with Friends and Family](#) includes information on exploring their concerns, asking permission to share information, and helping them find their own reason to get vaccinated
- [CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Resources for Disproportionately Affected Communities](#) includes resources for individuals and organizations working with displaced populations, corrections/detention centers, homebound persons, and people living with disabilities
- [Community Health Worker Guide for Addressing COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy](#) includes information on how the vaccine works, common questions about the COVID-19 vaccines, and real questions from community members
- [The GHPC COVID Collection: COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout in Rural Communities](#): Challenges, Innovations, and Unmet Needs includes information on successful innovations and strategies being implemented in rural communities

Conducting Marketing Research

Later this year, you will be completing a marketing plan deliverable for your FORHP RHND grant. As noted in the Schedule of Quarterly TA-Related Activities section in this newsletter, the marketing plan template for your deliverable will be available in September. A typical first step in any marketing plan is identifying and refining the target markets for your goods or services. To jump-start this effort, you may find it helpful to do a

bit of marketing research (or get clearer about the relevant information available) to further refine your target markets. You may find this [4-minute video](#) a good introduction to conducting marketing research.

Data Analysis as a Process

As you anticipate exploring your grant's year 1 data and looking for the patterns, answering the what-if questions, etc., you may find that your team has varying levels of experience in data analysis. This [Introduction to Data Analysis Handbook](#) from the Migrant & Seasonal Head Start TA Center provides a nice overview of the process of analyzing data. If you have team members new to this process, take a look as it might be a resource you could share with them. For others, who have substantial experience in this area, there is a helpful data analysis checklist at the very end of the document.

UPCOMING EVENTS



[Rural Health Network Development Program Meeting](#)

June 8-9, 2021, at 12-5 p.m. ET each day

FORHP is looking forward to hosting the 2021 Delta States and RHND Meeting for grantees. By now, you should have received the agenda and registered two people from your grant program. During the event, there will be opportunities for both in-program and cross-program networking, attending sessions with grantees sharing their program implementation experiences, and hearing from speakers on topics including health equity, healthcare financing, and telehealth. Please reach out to your project officer with any questions. See you June 8!



[Virtual: 2021 Annual NACCHO Conference](#)

June 29-July 1, 2021

Please join the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) as they host the 2021 NACCHO 360 Conference. The conference will explore how local public health professionals and stakeholders can develop collaborative approaches to identify and strengthen cross-sector relationships, refine and create new data-and-information-sharing systems, and more. Registration is currently open.

[Register](#)



[Virtual: 2021 AHA Leadership Summit](#)

July 28-29, 2021

Please join the American Hospital Association (AHA) as they host the 2021 AHA Leadership Summit. The summit will discuss transformational strategies and innovative approaches to achieve sustainability while delivering greater value and health equity. Critical focus areas include leading

for resilience and transformation, post-pandemic recovery and rebuilding, behavioral health integration, and more.

[Register](#)



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers®

[2021 Community Health Institute and Expo](#)

August 22-24, 2021

Orlando, Florida

Please join the National Association of Community Health Centers as they host the 2021 Community Health Institute and Expo. The expo will discuss ideas and partnerships to improve financial sustainability, and attendees will have the opportunity to network and share best practices to stay vibrant and viable in the health care marketplace.

[Register](#)