



North Carolina Rural Health Centers

2015 Profile

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<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/orh>

Overview

North Carolina's Rural Health Centers provide quality primary medical services in underserved rural communities. The Office of Rural Health (ORH) was instrumental in the creation of this network of community-owned, non-profit health centers that serve vulnerable populations. Without support from ORH, many patients, would lose local access to quality primary healthcare. This effort greatly decreases patient dependency on emergency departments, which carries a much greater cost. ORH assists these centers in four ways:

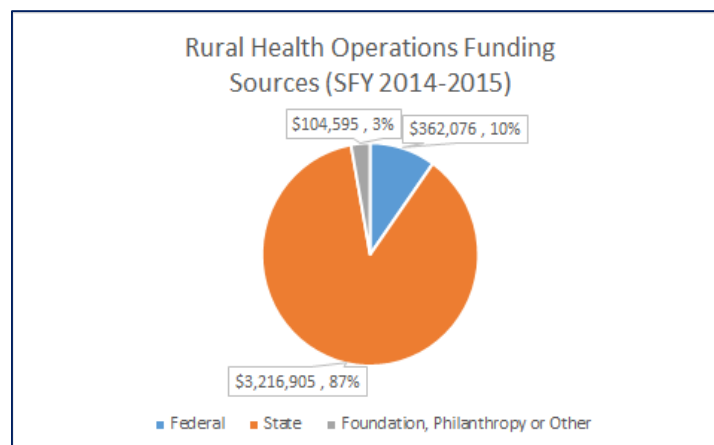
- Medical Access Plan (MAP) supplemental funding to the health center for low income patients that need assistance to pay for their office visits.
- Capital funding to support the renovation and equipping of rural health centers.
- Innovation funding provides support through two project tracks: 1) the center works to become National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) Patient Centered Medical Home recognized and 2) the creation and implementation of sustainable technological infrastructure that enhances access to health care and improves its quality.
- Planning and Implementation Projects provides seed funding to those organizations deemed by ORH as a state-designated rural health center on or after July, 2014. Grant dollars will support planning and implementation activities associated moving toward long-term sustainability.
- Technical Assistance provides a comprehensive package of technical assistance (including accounting), ICD-10, work flow analysis, information technology (including in-depth Meaningful Use), and oral health (including in-depth practice assessments).

Importance

- Rural areas of North Carolina have limited access to quality primary health care. By supporting access in rural communities the overall health of citizens can be improved and costly emergency department visits can be avoided.
- These centers serve as medical homes for vulnerable populations, including uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid, and Medicare patients.

Cost, Savings and Program Monitoring

- ORH Rural Health Centers provide a medical home to 90,178 unduplicated NC residents including 11,272 uninsured, 16,442 Medicaid and 22,079 Medicare patients in SFY 2015.
- Average annual cost of \$40 per patient served at a rural health center.
- Of the 15 current state designated rural health center organizations:
 - Four centers report being in the process of obtaining Level I Patient-Centered Medical Home status and one center has obtained Level III status.
 - Nine centers have attested to Stage I Meaningful Use status.
- Based on current best practices, the state designed rural health center performance on national Medical measures (HEDIS) for both Diabetic patients and Hypertension patients is historically better than average. The HEDIS measures are:
 - Diabetic patients: HbA1c Control \geq 9.0 is 44.7% (lower is better).
 - Hypertension patients: BP Control < 140/90 is 56.3% (higher is better) respectively.





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Program Coverage:

- 13 different counties and 16 rural health center locations were supported with MAP and innovation grant
- 5 capital grants were awarded for a total of \$315,671.
- Technical Assistance provided in 96 of 100 counties in the state

Technical Assistance: supporting safety net infrastructure in vulnerable communities resulted in 483 TA encounters for a total of 357 hours:	
<i>Type</i>	<i># of activities</i>
<i>Board Meeting Assistance</i>	14
<i>Citizen Assistance/Interaction</i>	5
<i>Clinic/Staff Assistance</i>	155
<i>Community Development/Assistance</i>	19
<i>Contract Development/Assistance</i>	51
<i>Site Development/Assistance</i>	5
<i>Software Assistance/Support</i>	1
<i>Recruitment and Retention</i>	2
<i>Training Sessions</i>	26
Total	278



If you have further questions, please contact:

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