



Center for
Rural Health

<http://ruralhealth.und.edu>

How to Talk the Talk: Shaping Your Message to Educate Policymakers

**National Organization of State Offices of Rural
Health**

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*Connecting resources and knowledge to strengthen
the health of people in rural communities.*



Center for Rural Health

- Established in 1980, at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Grand Forks, ND
- Focuses on:
 - Education, Training, & Resource Awareness
 - Community Development & Technical Assistance
 - Native American Health
 - Rural Health Workforce
 - Rural Health Research
 - Rural Health Policy
- Web site: <http://ruralhealth.und.edu>



What is policy framing?

- Beginnings
 - FrameWorks Institute
 - W. K. Kellogg Foundation – Rural People Rural Policy
- FrameWorks research shows the following
 - A form of communications
 - Organizing principles – socially shared – work symbolically
 - “The pictures in our heads” – mental shortcuts
 - Understanding from frame-based, not fact-based
 - Providing cues that link new information with our pre-existing pictures in our heads
 - Changing opinion you must shift the frame



Levels of Understanding

- Level One Frames
 - Big Ideas
 - Freedom, Justice, Equality, Equity, Community, Human Rights, Success, Prevention, Responsibility
- Level Two Frames
 - Issue – Types
 - Environment, Health, Poverty, Education, Child Care, Aging
- Level Three Frames
 - Specific Issues
 - Health Insurance, Access to Care/Services, Hospital Viability, Workforce



Currently Used Rural Frames and Their Impact

- Stereotype 1 – Rural Utopia
- Stereotype 2 – Rural Dystopia
- Stereotype 3 – Rural Needs Protection
- Stereotype 4 – Change is THE Rural Problem



More Effective Frames and Their Potential for Impact

- Fairness Frame
- Interdependence Frame
- Patchwork Simplifying Model
- Causal Sequences



Different Stores – Different Policies

Episodic Frames

Individuals
Events
Psychological
Private
Appeal to consumers
Better Information
Fix the person

Thematic Frames

Issues
Trends
Political/environmental
Public
Appeals to citizens
Better Policies
Fix the condition



Some Concrete Examples: What We Have Done

NRHA Policy Institute North Dakota Hill Visits

- **Level 1 Frame** – Equal access to quality health care for all North Dakotans regardless of their degree of rurality, income, or ethnicity
 - All programs supported by federal funds are efforts to accomplish equal access – improve health status
 - Fairness
- **Level 2 Frame** – Capacity building – infrastructure building – safety net
 - Resources, skill set development, linkages, leverage funds
 - Interdependence (collaboration and network development)
- **Level 3 Frame** – Individual rural health programs (e.g., Flex, SORH, SHIP, Outreach and Network Development, SEARCH, AHEC, and other)



Practice Framing...

- How does the public think about this issue?
- What frames are currently used?
- How could the issue be framed?



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