



Center for
Rural Health

University of North Dakota
School of Medicine & Health Sciences

<http://medicine.nodak.edu/crh>

The Future of Rural Health: A Convergence of Community and Policy Frames

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

Presentation Themes

- *Environmental factors influence rural health* (demographics, economics, workforce, finance, quality of care, and health technology)
- *The concept of community* is pivotal in discussing the future of rural health
- Policy is more than a reimbursement target or a set of grants – it is our ability to *frame our issues and communicate* them effectively in a policy arena
- There is a need for a *national rural voice* not simply one representing individual rural sectors

Issues and Conditions that Impact the Future of Rural Health

- Demographics
- Economics
- Workforce
- Finance
- Technology
- Quality of care and service

Demographic Impact

- Smaller population base to support health providers and organizations
- Skewed patient base typically to an older population
- Increased focus on chronic disease and care
- Changing service base (less OB and more geriatric care)
- Greater reliance on Medicare

Demographics

- **Number of Counties lost population from 1990-2000**

<u>MN</u>	<u>MT</u>	<u>ND</u>
25 of 87 (29%)	23 of 56 (41%)	47 of 53 (89%)

- **Population 65 and older**

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2030</u>
MN	12.1%	12.8%	18.9%
MT	13.4%	15.0%	25.8%
ND	14.7%	15.3%	25.1%

Economic Impact

- Rural hospital is typically the second or third largest employer
- Primary and secondary economic impact on total dollars and employment
- Rural physician (and clinic staff of seven) has an impact of \$320,000
- In ND, 32 CAHs have a primary impact of about \$69 million and a secondary impact of about \$35 million, total \$104 million on the rural economy
- Rural physicians in ND have an impact of about \$28 million
- Rural health serves as an economic anchor for rural communities

Health Workforce Impact

- State employment impact is significant in MN, MT, and ND
- Health workforce supply and demand – lack of alignment
- Technology
- Strategies

Financial Impact

- Medicare as a challenge and an opportunity
 - From inequity to performance
 - The cost-prospective-cost shuffle
- Managed Care or Managed Cost

Quality of Care Impact

- Institute of Medicine “*Quality Through Collaboration The Future of Rural Health*”
- Linkage of performance to quality of care
- Rural hospital opportunity for impact and reward
- Federal policy opportunity
- Future of rural health: champions for quality

Health Technology Impact

- Opportunity of Technology
 - Quality of care
 - Workforce
 - Distance and time
- Challenge of Technology
 - Finance and cost
 - Role of federal and state policy
 - Prospect of grants
- Future of rural health: leading HIT application

Rural Community and Rural Health Linkages

- Rural health is community health
- Community provides to health organizations: ideas, inspiration, vitality, wants and needs, workforce, material/social resources, funding, volunteers, and patients
- Health organizations provide to their communities: health and health care, economic impact, educated and committed workforce, leaders

Rural Community Sectors

- Communities are comprised of key sectors
 - o Health sector
 - o Education sector
 - o Business and private sector
 - o Church and faith sector
 - o Public sector
 - o Cultural sector
- Sectors influence each other to build and influence the nature of the community
- Sectors in a rural community can be even more dynamic in their potential importance than found in urban centers

Future of Rural Health Linked to Future of Rural Community

- Rural communities have strengths and weaknesses
- Future of rural health related to tapping into and maintaining community sectors
- State Rural Health Associations can and do reflect community values and input
- Future of rural health connected to forging multi-organizational alliances
- Future of rural health linked to sharing regional perspectives and forging a new regional identity
- Future of rural health is associated with our ability to face hard facts like community survivability and viability

The Importance of Framing Policy Issues

- Rural People, Rural Policy initiative (W.K. Kellogg Foundation)
- Framing defined
- Why is it important to frame our policy communication?
- What does the research say about positive rural frames?
- Framing example
- Future of rural health: creating and controlling our policy message

Creating a National Rural Voice

- The National Rural Assembly (Kellogg and Ford Foundations)
- A united rural voice?
 - Health
 - Economic Development
 - Education
 - Housing
 - New Americans
 - Faith
 - Business
 - Legal Services
 - Public and Private Sector
 - Other Voices

Creating a National Rural Voice

- The need to “frame” rural policy
- View rural policy in a broader context
- Foster new rural action
- Create alliances between rural and urban America
- Future of rural health: Being part of a larger voice for rural America



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