Useful Organizations

National Rural Health Resource Center

The National Rural Health Resource Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to sustaining and improving health care in rural communities. As the nation’s leading technical assistance and knowledge center in rural health, The Center focuses on five core areas: Performance Improvement; Health Information Technology; Recruitment & Retention; Community Health Assessments; and Networking. The Center is located in Duluth, Minnesota. The Technical Assistance and Services Center (TASC), a program of The Center, provides information, tools and education to CAHs and to individual State Flex programs. [www.ruralcenter.org](http://www.ruralcenter.org)

The Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

The federal Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP) promotes better health care service in rural America. Established in August 1987 by the Administration, the Office was subsequently authorized by Congress in December 1987 and located in the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Congress charged the Office with informing and advising the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on matters affecting rural hospitals and health care, coordinating activities within the department that relate to rural health care, and maintaining a national information clearinghouse. [www.ruralhealth.hrsa.gov](http://www.ruralhealth.hrsa.gov)

National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH)

The National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH) was initiated to become an influential voice for state rural health concerns. The members of NOSORH strive to develop increased communication and involvement with the 50 State Offices of Rural Health, build strong relationships with other health care groups, and find sources of revenue to improve its effectiveness. [www.nosorh.org](http://www.nosorh.org)

Flex Monitoring Team

The Rural Health Research Centers at the University of Minnesota, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and University of Southern Maine, under contract with the federal Office of Rural Health Policy, cooperatively conduct performance monitoring projects for the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Flex Program). The monitoring project assesses the impact of the Flex Program on rural hospitals and communities and the role of states in achieving overall program objectives, improving access to and the quality of health care services, improving the financial performance of Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs), and engaging rural communities in health care system development. [www.flexmonitoring.org](http://www.flexmonitoring.org)
National Rural Health Association (NRHA)

The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) is a national membership organization, consisting of approximately 10,000 members, whose mission is to improve the health and health care of rural Americans and to provide leadership on rural issues through advocacy, communications, education, and research. NRHA is a non-profit association headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, with a Government Affairs Office in Alexandria, Virginia. [www.nrharural.org](http://www.nrharural.org)

Rural Assistance Center (RAC)

The Rural Assistance Center (RAC) is a national resource on rural health and human services information. The information specialists are available to provide customized assistance, such as web and database searches on rural topics and funding resources, as well as linking users to organizations and furnishing relevant publications from the RAC resource library. [www.raonline.org](http://www.raonline.org)

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is the health services research arm of HHS, complementing the biomedical research mission of its sister agency, the National Institutes of Health (NIH). AHRQ sponsors and conducts research that provides evidence-based information on health care outcomes, quality, cost, use, and access. The information helps health care decision makers—patients and clinicians, health system leaders, purchasers, and policymakers—make more informed decisions and improve the quality of health care services. [www.ahrq.gov](http://www.ahrq.gov)

Rural Hospital Performance Improvement (RHPI) Project

The Rural Hospital Performance Improvement (RHPI) Project is an initiative to address problems that challenge small rural hospitals. The project goals are to preserve health care access in rural communities; provide tools and consultation for hospital performance improvement; and build resources at local, state, and regional levels. The RHPI Project is funded by ORHP. The contract is administered by Mountain States Group, Inc., located in Boise, Idaho, and the National Rural Health Resource Center, located in Duluth, Minnesota, is a program partner. [http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about/delta/](http://www.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/about/delta/)
The National Rural Recruitment & Retention Network (3RNet)

The National Rural Recruitment & Retention Network (3RNet) is a not-for-profit organization helping health professionals find practice opportunities in rural areas throughout the country. Some of the health professions they serve include: Physicians, Dentists, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, as well as other health care providers. www.3rnet.org

The American Health Quality Association (AHQA)

The American Health Quality Association (AHQA) represents Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) and professionals working to improve the quality of health care in communities across America. QIOs share information about best practices with physicians, hospitals, and nursing homes. Working together with health care providers, QIOs identify opportunities and provide assistance for improvement. www.ahqa.org

Rural Health Network Development Technical Assistance Program (TAP)

The Rural Health Network Development Technical Assistance Program (TAP) Web site provides individualized, direct support to current Rural Health Network Development and Delta State Rural Development Network and Outreach Grantees. TAP is implemented by Georgia State University’s Health Policy Center under a contract with ORHP. The primary goal of TAP is to provide ORHP grantees with useful information, resources, and assistance to ensure they have the greatest possibility for success. ORHP serves to strengthen systems of care for underserved people in rural areas. http://chsdonline.com/

Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI)

The Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) conducts policy-relevant research and facilitates public dialogue to assist policymakers in understanding the rural impacts of public policies and programs. Many policies that are not explicitly "rural policies" nevertheless have substantial implications for rural areas and RUPRI is dedicated to understanding and articulating these implications. www.rupri.org
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS or DHHS) is the U.S. government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves. The department includes more than 300 programs, covering a wide spectrum of activities. ORHP is located in HRSA and is charged with informing and advising HHS on matters affecting rural hospitals and health care, coordinating activities within the department that relate to rural health care, and maintaining a national information clearinghouse. www.dhhs.gov

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

As of July 1, 2001, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) is now the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS is a federal agency within HHS that runs the Medicare and Medicaid programs - two national health care programs that benefit approximately 75 million Americans. Together with HRSA, CMS runs the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), a program that is expected to cover many of the approximately 10 million uninsured children in the United States. http://cms.hhs.gov

Indian Health Service (IHS)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Indian Health Service (IHS) mission is to raise the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaskan Natives to the highest level and to ensure that comprehensive, culturally acceptable personal and public health services are available and accessible to American Indian and Alaskan Native people. The foundation is to uphold the Federal Government's obligation to promote healthy American Indian and Alaskan Native people, communities and cultures, and to honor and protect the inherent sovereign rights of Tribes. www.ihs.gov

American Hospital Association (AHA)

The American Hospital Association (AHA) is the national organization that represents and serves all types of hospitals, health care networks, and their patients and communities. Close to 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks, other providers of care, and 37,000 individual members come together to form the AHA. www.hospitalconnect.com
Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is a Boston-based, independent, non-profit organization working since 1991 to accelerate improvement in health care systems in the United States, Canada, and Europe by fostering collaboration, rather than competition, among health care organizations. www.ihi.org/ihi

Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)

An independent, not-for-profit organization, the Joint Commission accredits and certifies more than 15,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States. Joint Commission accreditation and certification is recognized nationwide as a symbol of quality that reflects an organization’s commitment to meeting certain performance standards. www.jcaho.org

American Accreditation Healthcare Commission

American Accreditation Healthcare Commission’s mission is to promote continuous improvement in the quality and efficiency of health care delivery by achieving a common understanding of excellence among purchasers, providers, and patients through the establishment of standards, programs of education and communication and a process of accreditation. www.urac.org

American College of Medical Quality

The American College of Medical Quality is the specialty medical association for physicians and other professionals in the fields of clinical quality improvement, quality assessment, and medical quality management. www.acmq.org

American Society for Quality, Healthcare Division

American Society for Quality, Healthcare Division encourages research, innovation, and the formation of learning partnerships to advance knowledge of health care quality. Members include providers of health care and services, supporters of the providers, and others allied to the field. www.asq.org

National Patient Safety Foundation (NPSF)

The mission of the National Patient Safety Foundation (NPSF) is to improve measurable patient safety in the delivery of health care. The NPSF is an independent not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1997. www.npsf.org
National Quality Forum

The National Quality Forum is a not-for-profit membership organization created to develop and implement a national strategy for health care quality measurement and reporting. A shared sense of urgency about the impact of health care quality on patient outcomes, workforce productivity and health care costs prompted leaders in the public and private sectors to create the National Quality Forum as a mechanism to bring about national change. [www.qualityforum.org](http://www.qualityforum.org)

Quality Interagency Coordination Task Force (QuIC)

The Quality Interagency Coordination Task Force (QuIC) works to ensure that all Federal agencies that purchase, provide, study, or regulate health care services are working in a coordinated way toward the common goal of improving the quality of care. The QuIC seeks to provide information to help people make choices, to improve the care purchased and delivered by the government, and to develop the infrastructure needed to improve the health care system. [www.quic.gov](http://www.quic.gov)

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is the nation’s principal health statistics agency. NCHS compiles statistical information to guide actions and policies to improve health. NCHS is a unique public resource for health information—a critical element of public health and health policy. [www.cdc.gov/nchs](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs)

National Library of Medicine

The world's largest medical library is the National Library of Medicine. Health professionals and consumers alike can access information from the National Library of Medicine via MedlinePlus. There are directories, a medical encyclopedia, and a medical dictionary, easy-to-understand tutorials on common conditions, tests, and treatments, health information in Spanish, extensive information on prescription and nonprescription drugs, health information from the media, and links to thousands of clinical trials. [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is the principal fact-finding agency for the Federal Government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics. BLS is an independent national statistical agency that collects, processes, analyzes, and disseminates essential statistical data to the American public, the U.S. Congress, other Federal agencies, State and local governments, business, and labor. BLS also serves as a statistical resource to the Department of Labor. [http://stats.bls.gov](http://stats.bls.gov)
The Commonwealth Fund

The Commonwealth Fund is a private foundation that aims to promote a high performing health care system that achieves better access, improved quality, and greater efficiency, particularly for society's most vulnerable, including low-income people, the uninsured, minority Americans, young children, and elderly adults. The Fund carries out this mandate by supporting independent research on health care issues and making grants to improve health care practice and policy. An international program in health policy is designed to stimulate innovative policies and practices in the United States and other industrialized countries. www.cmwf.org

Kaiser Family Foundation and Health Research and Educational Trust

The Kaiser Family Foundation is a non-profit, private operating foundation focusing on the major health care issues facing the U.S., with a growing role in global health. Unlike grant-making foundations, Kaiser develops and runs its own research and communications programs, sometimes in partnership with other non-profit research organizations or major media companies. www.kff.org

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ) is the nation's largest philanthropy devoted solely to the public's health. RWJ tries to confront the most pressing health and health care problems threatening society. RWJ focuses on improving both the health of everyone in America, and their health care—how it's delivered, how it's paid for, and how well it does for patients and their families. RWJ invests in improving systems through which people receive care and in fostering environments that promote health and prevent disease and injury, we expect to achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. http://www.rwjf.org