



Spring 2023

IL RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

217-280-0206

Staff@ilruralhealth.org

www.ilruralhealth.org

**IDPH's
Underserved
Loan Repayment
Program expands
to PAs/APNs and
privately owned
RHCs on July 1st
(see page 6).**



**IRHA Awards
\$8,250 in Dental
& Behavioral
Health
Scholarships (see
page 12).**

Agenda Set for IRHA Aug 9-10th 34th Annual Educational Conference I-Hotel Champaign

Please join us for our upcoming Annual Educational Conference . All of our speakers have been selected and attendees will have more than 17 breakout sessions to choose from, along with a keynote opening address by Brock Slabach, COO of the National Rural Health Association.

Fewer than 6 spots are open for exhibit space, so register soon and don't forget to book your hotel room early as well because they sell out quickly. Go to www.ilruralhealth.org to register.



See pages 4-5 for complete agenda.

National Rural Health Association Annual DC Policy Institute Feb 7-9th 2023

One of the grants received by Illinois Rural Health Association stipulates that an officer or representative will attend the annual NRHA Policy Institute in Washington DC. It is a requirement I have personally been happy to fulfil in my role as IRHA President. I love few things more, professionally, than advocating for Rural Health providers.

This was the first in-person Policy Institute since COVID. I had attended the 2020 Policy Institute just as COVID was breaking. It was surreal and wonderful to return and refresh policy focus. A definitive sense of triumph permeated the room, JUST by being back in DC on behalf of rural providers.

Constituent Group meetings and the NRHA Healthcare Congress were held on Day 1. I attended the Rural Health Clinic Constituency Group. Healthcare Congress attendance is limited to formal HC Congress delegates. The subsequent day was filled with speeches and presentations by various Legislative, Executive, and Healthcare Administration representatives. The Surgeon General, HRSA Director, Senators, and Congresspeople were among those spoke on Tuesday.



Charles James
IRHA President



Our Illinois delegation included Pat Schou and multiple Critical Access Hospital CEOs. During our Hill Visits on Day 3, we met with all of the Rural Congressional Delegation, including both Senators Duckworth and Durbin. Senator Durbin met personally with the Illinois Delegation and soon after publicized a press release. The most common topic during our in-person conversations was the desperate need for emergency behavioral health services in our rural hospitals.

Our requests to Congress were in three parts: **Infrastructure, Workforce, and Health Equity**. We advocated for **Infrastructure** legislation to address rural hospital closure, **Workforce** measures to address the urgent need for trained medical personnel in rural America, and **Health Equity** dollars to expand access to Maternity Care services, Telehealth, EMS, and treat Chronic Illnesses. Of course, nearest to MY heart is [The Rural Health Clinic Burden Reduction Act](#), to ensure critical changes to the RHC program.

The most important function of the Policy Institute is building relationships with our legislators and their aides. All are eager to hear our challenges and ideas for resolving them. The Illinois Delegation was encouraged by the reception we received. Some of us coordinated immediate visits with Congresspeople. In today's political environment, legislative action is precious. We need to ensure that when legislation DOES get passed, our most urgent needs and concerns are included. It was good to be back.



Accreditation Simplified

for Illinois Rural Health Association



The Compliance Team has served Illinois Rural Health Clinics for over 10 years.

Providers in the prairie state welcome our genuine commitment to the rural community and our comprehensive, yet simplified approach to accreditation.

Clinic & Health Department Programs

- CMS Approved Rural Health Clinic Accreditation
- CMS Recognized Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH)
- Physician Practice/Outpatient Clinic Accreditation
- Immediate Care Clinic Accreditation
- Swing Bed Certification
- Emerging Infectious Disease Certification
- Immunization and Testing Certification


**The
Compliance
Team™**
Accreditation Organization

Let's talk about taking
your patient care to the next level!

TheComplianceTeam.org
215-654-9110

34th Annual IRHA 2023 Educational Conference Schedule
[REGISTER NOW](#)

Wednesday, August 9

8:30 am to 10:30 am – Exhibitor Set-Up

10:45 am – Attendee Check-In and Vendor Visits

Noon – Sit Down Luncheon & Annual Meeting

12:45 pm – **Federal Rural Health Update** - Keynote Speaker Brock Slabach, COO NRHA

Wednesday, 2:30 pm Sessions

A1 – Mental Illness in Rural Seniors: Needs, Barriers, and Potential Treatment Options

Kenna Dunlap Johnson, MBA, MSW, LCSW

UltraGroup Healthcare; University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

A2 – Addressing the 2023 Top Ten HIPAA Cybersecurity Violations List

Carole Crawford, MBA/Principal/COO

The Saturn Partners, Inc.

A3 – Overdose Awareness Campaign

Imran Mohammed, BS

Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development, Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Wednesday, 3:30 pm Sessions

B1 – Value-Based Care for RHCs

Charles James, CEO/President

North American Healthcare Management Services

B2 – Swimming Upstream: Reexamining the Social Determinants of Health in Rural America

Zachary Benedict, President

MKM architecture + design

B3 – Role of Performance Improvement Coach and Workflow Transformation

Angie Jochem, BA

Illinois Rural Community Care Organization

B4 – Behavioral Health Care Implementation in Rural America: Policy Vs Reality

Renee Schulte, MA, LMHC

Rural Policy Partners

Wednesday, 4:30 pm Sessions

C1 – The Importance of Medicare Annual Wellness Visits

Megan Meier, BS

ICAHN/IRCCO

C2 – Vaccine Coverage in Illinois: Partnering for Solutions

LaDaryl Hale, BS

Illinois Department of Public Health



IL RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

C3 – Applying Fluoride Varnish in Primary Care Settings

Stephanie Atella, MPH, CHES
Illinois Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics

C4 – How the AHEC Scholars Program Can Benefit your Recruitment and Retention Efforts

Elizabeth Squires, MPH, MCHES
National Center for Rural Health Professions

6-9 pm Evening Networking Social

Thursday, August 10

8:15 to 9:15 am – Vendor Visits & Breakfast

9:15 am – Raffle & Vendor Tear Down

Thursday, 9:45 am Sessions

D1 – RHC Accreditation and Provider Enrollment Process / Timeline

Charles James, CEO/President
North American Healthcare Management Services

D2 – Caring for a Seriously Ill Child in their Home Community

Kristin James, LCPC
Executive Director, Pediatrics, The Hospice and Palliative Care Foundation
Greater Illinois Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition

D3 – Building Healthier Communities through Community Health Worker Teams

Tracey Smith, DNP, PHCNS-BC, MS
Illinois Public Health Association

Thursday, 10:45 am Sessions

E1 – Lessons Learned: Implementing Facility-wide Telemedicine Technology

Julie Edwards Baumann, MBA
Madelyn Bennett, BBA, PMP
Carle Health System

E2 – Mental Health in Rural Communities- Helping Students Cope

Meg Tomlins, MPH, BSN RN
University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Nursing

E3 – Lip Service or Full Service

Diane Logsdon, IPEM
The Logsdon Group

E4 – Dental Hygienists are Helping to Break Down Silos

Laura M Scully, MS RDH PHDH CDA
Illinois Dental Hygienists' Association

11:45 am – Box Lunch to Go



IRHA Initiative to Expand IDPH Loan Repayment Program to Go Into Effect July 1st

The Illinois Department of Public Health's administrative rules were finally approved April 18th for PA 102-0888, which will expand the current Underserved Physician Loan Repayment Program, to also allow PAs and APNs, to qualify for the loan repayment of \$50,000, if they agree to practice a designated shortage area for at least 2 years full-time or four years part-time.

Privately owned Rural Health Clinics and hospitals were also added to the list of approved employers, as long as they accept Medicaid, Medicare, the State's Children's Health Insurance Program, private insurance and self-pays. The new law was an initiative of the Illinois Rural Health

Association and was sponsored in the General Assembly by Sen. Doris Turner (D-Springfield) and Rep. Lance Yednock (D-Ottawa). Applications will be available starting July 1st on the Illinois Department of Public Health's website. Here is a link to information about the how current program works for physicians <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/life-stages-populations/rural-underserved-populations/underserved-physician-workforce.html>



IRHA Executive Director Margaret Vaughn



integritas

We provide *long-term* staffing solutions.

Integritas is a physician-owned staffing company based in the central U.S. that brings physicians and hospitals together to provide efficient, effective, and compassionate care to the communities we serve. We tailor our services to client needs, and are currently providing the following staffing services to hospitals throughout the Midwest:

Emergency Department
Hospitalist
Urgent Care



We would love to learn how you are serving your community and what obstacles you face to meeting your goals!

Please reach out to us to set up a call or schedule an in-person visit!

618.833.1691

integritasproviders.com/services

*Together, we can
provide great care to
your community.*



PCR-based Infectious Disease Testing in Rural Community: Lessons Learned from COVID-19 Pandemic

Equitable access to healthcare services and facilities is one of the prime factors that contributes to the national public health. According the [USDA](#), as of 2020, 46 million people resided in rural areas within the United States. Noteworthy, rural residents face greater challenges in acquiring timely healthcare interventions, either due to lower availability of testing and treatment services, short staffing of healthcare professionals in rural clinics, inadequate healthcare benefits or simply due to limited access to transportation, communications, and infrastructure facilities.

Due to above-mentioned reasons, the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated infections had a disproportionate impact on rural communities in terms of worsening healthcare as well as financial instabilities. At the same time, the pandemic also underscored the importance and effectiveness of nontraditional, emergent molecular-based testing approaches, such as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests which provide reliable and faster results, in maintaining healthcare services.

PCR is molecular test that is mostly performed in a lab setup. The test can detect the pathogen (viral, bacterial or fungal) genetic material for several days after an infection is contracted. According to [CDC](#), for the COVID-19 detection, PCR was most reliable for both symptomatic and asymptomatic patients. In fact, according to [studies](#), PCR is considered far superior as compared to antibody- and antigen-based assays.

The past two decades have witnessed tremendous scientific innovations in the field of diagnostics; however, the recent COVID-19 pandemic and thereafter the Mpox outbreak highlighted the need for inexpensive, rapid diagnostic tests for low-resource (such as underserved/vulnerable/rural) and emergency settings. In fact, as the COVID-19 related restrictions were eased in 2022, the [US faced](#) a state of [triple-demic](#) (concurrent co-circulation of RSV, Flu and SARS-CoV-2 virus within the population). The triple-demic posed a severe healthcare burden, and the CDC recommended usage of multiplex PCR, where several pathogens can be tested simultaneously, for faster disease diagnosis and better patient outcomes.

Despite the challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented unique opportunities to improve the following sectors of healthcare in rural communities:

- 1.Public awareness: enhanced the awareness of PCR-based diagnostic tests for detecting other infectious diseases.
- 2.Researchers and healthcare providers: toward epidemiological studies and testing for infectious diseases in rural setup.
- 3.Logistical and infrastructural improvisation for sample collection, integrated patient data management and remote consultation.

In addition, major advancements in healthcare technologies and services such as mobile testing, point of care tests (both PCR and serology based), direct to consumer (DTC) tests, and telehealth have been instrumental in alleviating some of the diagnostic testing-related challenges faced by rural communities and their providers. However, the level of implementation and approach of these services to the rural communities need to be studied in greater detail.



**Pallavi Upadhyay, PhD
Director of Scientific
and Clinical Affairs
HealthTrackRx**



**Thompson
Electronics
Company**

Your One Stop

for healthcare systems

nurse call

1

- nurse call stations
- intercoms & phones
- paging systems
- fall prevention
- elopement management
- wander guard

audiovisual

2

- conference rooms
- video walls
- digital signs
- sound systems

security

3

- video surveillance
- intrusion detection
- access control
- alarms

fire alarm

4

- fire alarm systems
- smoke detection
- CO detection
- mass notification
- inspections

Serving Illinois since 1980

Peoria & Naperville • 800-323-3300 • thompsonet.com

Learn more!



IRHA Scholarship Recipient Now Instructor & Industry Leader

It's been a little more than six years since I received notification that was a 2017 Spring HIT Scholarship recipient. I recently touched base with IRHA Executive Director Margaret Vaughn who asked if I would mind sharing an update on my career and volunteer work.

When I won the scholarship, I was a student in the SIUE Healthcare Informatics master's program. I was also a working professional with many years of experience in health information under my belt. I was the Student Insurance Manager and HIPAA Privacy Officer at Eastern Illinois University and teaching health information courses online for a career college in Florida. One of my goals in obtaining my degree was to open additional doors for teaching opportunities. The other was to further my knowledge to be a better manager and health information professional.



**Angela Campbell, MSHI, RHIA,
FAHIMA**

I have remained at EIU where I still serve as the University's HIPAA Privacy Officer and Assistant Director of Student Insurance. I am also a full-time Assistant Professor at San Juan College in Farmington, NM for an online associate Health Information Technology Program. I used knowledge gained during my master's program to develop a course in data management that I now teach. My students learn how to create meaningful data visualizations that can impact healthcare.

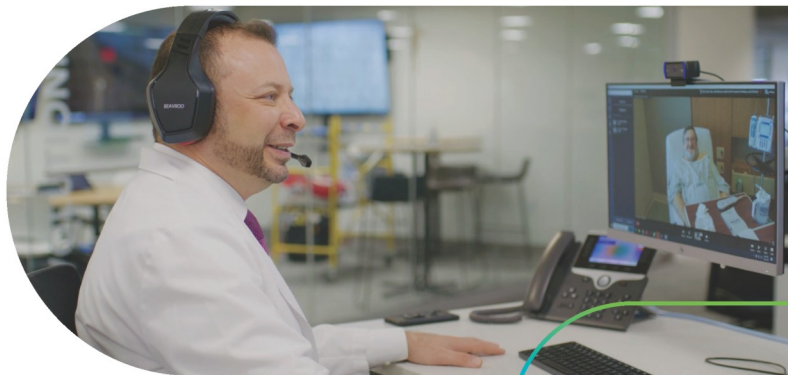
I was active in my professional organizations, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) and the Illinois Health Information Management Association (ILHIMA) prior to completing my degree. Since that time, I have served as President-Elect, President, and currently serve as Past-President for ILHIMA. In 2022 I helped develop the ILHIMA Mentorship program for students and new professionals.

I serve as an Illinois Delegate for the AHIMA House of Delegates, where we advocate for our profession and members. I am Co-Chair of the House of Delegates Envisioning Collaborative Team. This team tracks emerging issues and trends through environmental scanning, helping us prepare for future needs.

I was honored to be awarded Fellowship by AHIMA in 2022. Fellowship is an "earned recognition for AHIMA member who made significant and sustained contributions to the profession."

My real passion is working with students and giving back to the industry. I have been a contributor to nine practice briefs/learning labs/courses, have been the technical reviewer for more than 25 publications, primarily textbooks, and was chief contributor for a medical coding textbook. I serve as a Subject Matter Expert for multiple projects and organizations. I also work with our accrediting agency as a peer reviewer.

The IRHA HIT Scholarship was a real blessing. I have tried to pay it forward by sharing my knowledge and giving of my time to an industry that I am passionate about. Watching students develop into thriving professionals is a wonderful reward. Many students stay connected years after graduation. I believe this is one of the best compliments a teacher can receive.



REST EASY.

Your patients are in good hands
with Virtual Hospitalist by OSF OnCall.

COST-EFFECTIVE HOSPITALIST COVERAGE

With our virtual hospitalists as an extension of your care team, you no longer have to worry about gaps in coverage, providers getting sick or taking vacations, and stretching your team thin with nights, weekends and holidays. Your Virtual Hospitalist by OSF OnCall coverage will flex with your patient volumes. And you get that safe, expert coverage at a fraction of the cost of an employed hospitalist.

What we offer

- Coverage options customized to meet your unique needs, including daytime, nighttime, weekend, 24/7 or any combination
- Reliable staffing by a dedicated board certified or board eligible hospitalist who actively manages and interacts with your patients
- Support for your nursing staff
- Real-time admission assessment and order placement
- Video consultations

Potential benefits

- Reduced care delivery costs and increased revenue
- Fewer transfers and increased timeliness of care
- Decreased length of stay
- Enhanced work-life balance for providers
- Expanded ability to care for more patients

Visit osfoncall.org/partner to learn more.

OSF OnCall
DIGITAL HEALTH



\$690k
ESTIMATED
ANNUAL SAVINGS*

**Savings will vary by facility*



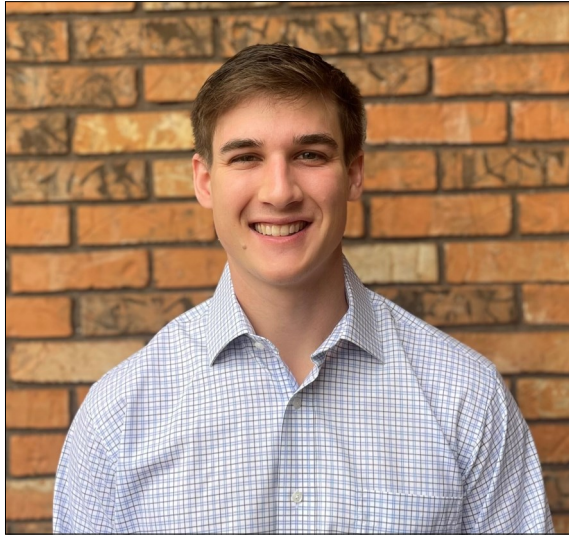
Ready to get started?

Email BusinessDevelopment
@osfhealthcare.org
or scan the QR code.

IRHA Awards 2023 Rural Workforce Development Scholarships

With the shortage of dentists and behavioral health specialists in rural settings, the Illinois Rural Health Association is proud to announce the recipients of the 2023 IRHA Workforce Development Scholarships:

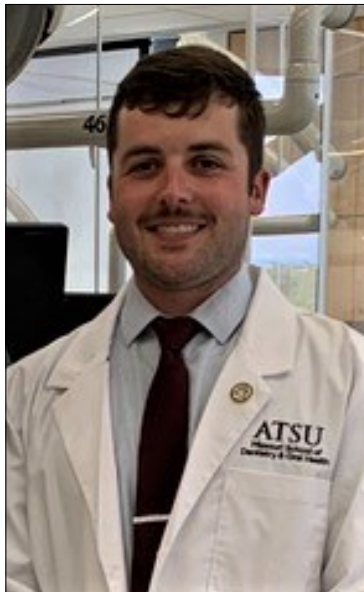
2023 Dental Scholarship Recipients



Caleb Rybolt
Pana, IL
Southern Illinois University
School of Dental Medicine



Megan Nuxoll
Effingham, IL
Southern Illinois University
School of Dental Medicine



Tyler Pryor
Ramsey, IL
A.T. Still University Missouri School of Dentistry and Oral Health

**IRHA Awards 2023 Rural Workforce Development Scholarships
Behavioral Health/Social Work Scholarship Recipients**



**Carly Geltz
Newton, IL
Eastern Illinois University
Clinical Mental Health Counseling**



**Donna Burroughs
Harrisburg, IL & Carterville, IL
Southern Illinois University
Master of Social Work**



**Joanna Davies
Effingham, IL
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Master of Social Work**



**Tia Leabu
Carterville, IL
SUI Carbondale
Master of Social Work—School Social Work**

**IRHA Awards 2023 Rural Workforce Development Scholarships
Behavioral Health/Social Work Scholarship Recipients**



**Kaitlyn Habel—Weldon, IL
University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
Social Work**

CSWE ACCREDITED PROGRAM | GAIN APPLICABLE & EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE SKILLS
TOP 50 RANKED UNIVERSITY | IN-PERSON INTERNSHIPS BASED ON YOUR LOCATION
TOP 10% OF ALL MSW PROGRAMS

**GET YOUR BACHELOR OR MASTER
OF SOCIAL WORK DEGREE**

100% ONLINE

LEARN MORE AT:

go.illinois.edu/iBSW_program or go.illinois.edu/iMSW_program



School of Social Work
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



IPHA 82nd Annual Conference Driving Public Health Forward

**Register
Now!**

**September
6-7**

Starved Rock Lodge
& Conference Center

Illinois, here we come!

ipha.com



WE ARE *integritas*

*A professional medical
staffing company.*

*We provide long-term staffing
solutions for:*

- EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT
- HOSPITALIST
- URGENT CARE
- TELEHEALTH



LEARN MORE AT INTEGRITASPROVIDERS.COM





PROJECT ECHO

(Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes)

Project ECHO offers tele-mentoring sessions in various medical topics throughout the year. The one hour sessions take place over the lunch hour on scheduled days. Continuing education credits are available for participants.

To sign up, click the register here buttons below each session.

Asthma

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Opioid

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Memory and Aging

[REGISTER HERE](#)

For more information about the SIU Medicine's project ECHO, visit siumed.edu/echo.



MEMORY AND AGING ECHO

*Join SIU School of Medicine
for discussions on key
memory and aging topics*

**2nd Monday each month
Noon - 1 pm**

**Registration is required to attend*

Hosted by specialists from the Smith Alzheimer's Center at SIU Medicine, each Memory and Aging ECHO session involves a case-based learning approach containing 30-minute didactic lessons followed by clinician-patient case presentations.

Continuing education credits are available for participants. **These ECHO sessions help satisfy the Illinois-required 1 hour dementia training, beginning January 1, 2023.**



TO REGISTER VISIT
eventbrite.com/e/135762291669.

For more information about the SIU Medicine's project ECHO, visit siumed.edu/echo



Rural Mental Health Crisis: 3 Ways to Do More with Less

Recent articles in the news highlight the mental health challenges facing rural Illinoisians. An April 2023 snapshot of indicators anxiety and depression from the National Center for Health Statistics indicate a whopping 32.2% of the Illinois population is struggling.

As a native, southern Illinoisian, I hear about the struggles my family faces in getting the healthcare they need, let alone mental health services. The challenges are real: workforce shortages, long distances between providers, lack of access to broadband for telehealth, stigma and the perception of stigma, the list goes on.



Renee Schulte, MA LMHC

There are 3 things that I recommend that can be done to improve the mental health system. First, candid conversations are crucial to setting the stage. Marking an X indicating access on a map where services are supposedly available across any rural state does not guarantee that services exist or are accessible. Are you having the tough conversations about the gaps that exist with people of influence or those who can change it? Do you know what resources you do have in the community that you can build on?

Second, creative solutions are necessary to fill the gaps. Programs that are evidence based and research proven that work on the coasts do not necessarily translate well to rural America. Cookie cutter approaches will not work. After you determine the resources exist, you must be creative and build upon the strengths that exist in the community. What is working? How can that be expanded to help others?

Third, collaborative strategies are essential. There is no room for duplication of services. When funding is tight, the last thing needed is competition about how to use the limited funding. By determining the gaps and resources available, you can strategically develop key services and implement policies that fill needs. Ask questions like: Who is not at the table that needs to be part of the solution?

We were called recently to assist in development and planning of more efficient mental health

responsiveness in the only emergency department in a four county area. Upon holding several very frank and candid conversations we learned that communication with local law enforcement about chronic high needs clients had ceased. We immediately developed a collaborative plan that engaged all stakeholders to plan, partner and communicate to meet the needs of patients and bridge care gaps.

At Rural Policy Partners, we focus on implementing better healthcare policy for rural, remote and frontier states. There will not be a right answer or a one size fits all solution. The answer starts with having candid conversations eye to eye and finding creative solutions to fill gaps, and collaborating with all providers strategically to meet the needs of Illinoisians.

The Past 3 Years have been Difficult in Rural America

- Pandemic
- Derechos and Drought (extreme weather)
- Avian flu (bird flu)
- Social/Racial injustice
- Inflation
- Supply chain disruptions
- And it goes on and on...

Compounding emotional experiences all at once over a prolonged length of time contribute to collective trauma...

BEST HOSPITALS
WOMEN'S CHOICE AWARD
ORTHOPEDICS
2023

BEST
100 HOSPITALS
WOMEN'S CHOICE AWARD
PATIENT EXPERIENCE
2023

BEST HOSPITALS
WOMEN'S CHOICE AWARD
OBSTETRICS
2023



5 Stars for Patient Satisfaction



Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS)

Celebrating 70 Years!

GIBSON AREA HOSPITAL



gibsonhospital.org

Carle Richland Memorial Hospital's Mental Health Program Addresses the Need for Mental Health Resources and Awareness in Rural Communities

Mental health is important to physical health and luckily, mental health issues and the need for resources and acceptance have become more the norm over the past few years.

While we still have a long way to go, making people more aware of the importance of mental health and helping people to realize when someone may be experiencing a mental health crisis has been a huge focus for Carle Richland Memorial Hospital.

While you may be aware of the importance of mental health and the need for more robust resources and providers, would you know what to do if you were in a situation where a co-worker, loved one, friend, or even a stranger you came into contact with was experiencing a mental health event?

Thanks to the Mental Health First Aid program, Leslie Shan, MS, QMHP, mental health first aid instructor, is helping to bring awareness and training to organizations, schools, businesses and community members throughout Richland County and beyond.

The most common classes she teaches are the adult, youth and teen classes. The adult and youth classes consist of 2 hours of pre-work and then a five-hour class session. Teen classes take place over several weeks and students at both Crawford and Richland County high schools took part in the teen program.

The students were able to submit questions anonymously to have addressed during the next class. This helps provide them answers to questions that they may not have had the courage to ask in class.

All students who take the course fill out an "exit ticket" at the end. This allows the instructor to see what questions the kids still have, if they need someone to check in on them and if it is an immediate need or if they are concerned for either themselves or someone else. These help to identify students who may need more intervention or those that are worried for a friend or family member.

School systems can see an immediate effect on their students who have attended the Teen Mental Health First Aid training. Eight students in need of urgent mental health care have been identified through these classes. This training potentially prevented eight empty chairs.



On top of identifying several unknown crises from class exit slips, students that participated in this training are actively seeking help on behalf of others, which allows the implementation of support/interventions before "crisis" level.

Many local health departments have hosted classes, schools, healthcare staff and law enforcement have taken advantage of the course.



**Tara Lemke, Manager
Organizational and
Community Development at
Carle Richland Memorial
Hospital**



Energy Efficiency
PROGRAM

Boost Your Budget With Energy Savings

Increase the safety and comfort of patients and staff with energy-saving equipment upgrades for around the clock savings. The **Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program** offers financial incentives to lower your facility's out-of-pocket cost for energy efficiency projects, including:



Heating, Cooling and Ventilation Equipment

- Boiler tuneups, steam trap surveys and replacements, advanced rooftop controls, furnace and air chiller replacements.



Interior and Exterior LED Lighting

- Offices, patient rooms, hallways, exit signs and parking lots.
- Networked lighting controls, occupancy sensors and daylight sensors.



New Construction Projects

- Ground-up construction, change-of-use and building additions.



Specialty Equipment

- Ozone laundry, ultra-low temperature freezers and kitchen demand ventilation controls.

How To Get Started

There are many more ways to save on energy costs with the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program. Schedule your **FREE Energy Consultation** with one of our highly trained Energy Advisors to help you identify energy-saving opportunities in your facility.

To schedule your consultation, call **1.866.800.0747** or visit **AmerenIllinoisSavings.com/RuralHealth** and start saving today!

SCAN HERE TO
START SAVING



Track Your Vitals During Pregnancy

Our nation and our state have a maternal health problem. [According to the American Medical Association](#), the U.S. is currently the most dangerous place in the industrialized world to give birth. The risk of a Black or indigenous woman in the U.S. dying in childbirth is greater than 75 per 100,000 women who give birth. This is compared to a risk of 7 per 100,000 for a woman in the UK.

A potential solution to the maternal health crisis was developed by a woman who experienced preeclampsia in the postpartum period and needed a way to communicate her condition to her provider. Emagine Solutions Technology is a health technology company, that has developed an innovative and award-winning app called [The Journey Pregnancy](#). The Journey Pregnancy is a patient's companion for a safe pregnancy. The Journey Pregnancy was developed as a way for first time and high-risk pregnant patients to document their health and advocate for themselves during pregnancy and postpartum care.

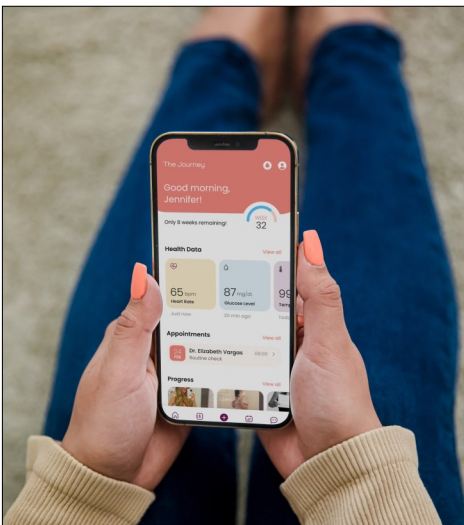


Courtney Williams
Co-founder & CEO
Emagine Solutions Technology

Emagine Solutions Technology, based in Tucson, AZ, developed an app called The Journey Pregnancy for women to document vital signs and symptoms during pregnancy to help them better communicate with their health care providers during pregnancy and postpartum care.

The Journey Pregnancy is free to download on the App Store. It has clear and intuitive screens that anyone can use. A premium version of the app is available that offers wellness coaching with a certified pregnancy wellness coach once a week through the pregnancy and three months into the postpartum period.

Pregnant patients can use The Journey Pregnancy to log blood pressure, weight, blood glucose, pregnancy symptoms, and mood. While The Journey does not replace appropriate medical care, any values outside of the recommended range result in an immediate notification to follow up with a health care provider. The Journey Pregnancy has been studied under a grant from The National Science Foundation. Users surveyed reported that using The Journey Pregnancy brought attention to logging and tracking blood pressure when many patients might not typically consider monitoring it. Users reported that they felt "safer" during their pregnancy as a result of having access to the app.



For more information about The Journey Pregnancy, visit thejourney.health

Download The Journey Pregnancy on the Apple App store: apps.apple.com/us/app/the-journey-pregnancy/id1543752524

Download The Journey Pregnancy on Google Play: play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=co.thejourney

Follow on TikTok at www.tiktok.com/@thejourneypregnancy?lang=en and on Instagram at [@emaginestech](https://www.instagram.com/emaginestech) www.instagram.com/emaginestech/



Illinois **DocAssist**

**Answering your child, adolescent
and perinatal mental health questions**

Visit docassistillinois.org or **Call 866-986-ASST (2778)**



LEARN MORE

Illinois healthcare providers can access
fast, free & friendly psychiatric consultation
9am to 5pm Monday- Friday.

We also offer:

- Assistance with locating referral resources
- Continuing education events
- Online CME
- Mental health screening and treatment tools

Preparing for the Future with PCMH The Shift from Quantity to Quality

Within the last decade, we have seen significant transformation of our healthcare system and practices have had to keep pace, or at least attempt to do so. These changes have proven to be frustrating for providers and staff as they are already stretched beyond their limits. Add a public health emergency to the mix and some of these changes seem nearly impossible. Value-based care, also known as accountable care, is ultimately designed to allow opportunities to improve patient satisfaction and outcomes while financially rewarding providers for the quality of care they are providing at a lower cost. By prioritizing quality over quantity, healthcare can be more effective and efficient.

According to the HHS Secretary, the goal is for all Medicare beneficiaries and a vast majority of Medicaid beneficiaries to be in an accountable care relationship by the year 2030. That is just around the corner, but it seems like many are wondering how and where to start. The key is prevention and proactive care utilizing a team-based approach with high level care coordination between transitions, and ensuring patients have access to their primary care team *when they need it*. The key is becoming a Patient-Centered Medical Home! PCMH is what your practice needs to prepare for this inevitable shift to value-based care and providing exceptional care to your rural communities.

“What is a Patient-Centered Medical Home”, you might ask? It is a model designed to deliver value-based care and allow providers to facilitate wellness at a lower cost which will make the organization more successful when participating in these new and future programs. It puts patients at the forefront and builds better relationships between patients and their care teams. It provides structure and accountability while fostering an environment of quality improvement.

Why do it? As a result of accreditation, you will see improved patient outcomes, improved staff and patient satisfaction, efficiency within the practice and new-found revenue sources. Chronic Care Management is one example.

CCM is within reach for all medical practices and is a win for both the patients and the practice. CCM provides reimbursement to providers for supporting chronic conditions. Get paid for the work you’re doing with Medicare patients! The Compliance Team’s PCMH standards are the foundation for CCM and will ensure success. The standards were written specifically with Rural Health Clinics in mind as they try to navigate through existing and incoming hurdles such as staffing shortages, technology challenges, and staff and provider burnout. Resources and experienced Advisors are also available to jumpstart your CCM services. Let us know how we can help!



Kristen Ogden, RN
Director of Quality Improvement
The Compliance Team



I-VAC

ILLINOIS VACCINATES
AGAINST COVID-19



COVID-19 is not going away, and it is important to continue to offer protection to all Illinoisans.

- ✓ **Commercialization is just around the corner. Plan and prepare for how you will continue to provide COVID-19 vaccines.**
- 💰 **Access to these vaccines may become more difficult for many patients. Helping to ensure there is access is important and a part of health equity in IL.**



Vaccine Implementation Support, Education, & Resources

Illinois Vaccinates Against COVID-19 (I-VAC) is here to support you in integrating COVID-19 vaccines in your clinics. Participation is free and includes educational credits.

**KEEP GOING.
WORK TOGETHER.
BE INFORMED.**

**Sign up today at
IllinoisVaccinates.com**



▶ COVID-19 Vaccine Bootcamps

In-person and virtual training sessions that include foundational knowledge and what is needed to integrate COVID-19 vaccines into routine clinical workflows.

▶ Learning Collaborative Sessions

A forum for healthcare providers to engage with peers and subject matter experts to help solve challenges related to COVID-19 testing, mitigation, vaccination and management. Sessions are tailored to providers serving both pediatric and adult & pregnant populations.

▶ One on One Support

Meet one-on-one with expert peer advisors in your region.

▶ Vaccine Resources

Ready-to-print vaccine outreach materials including patient handouts and posters, up-to-date scheduling & dosing charts, outreach materials, a do-it-yourself toolkit, and I-VAC podcast **Beyond the Needle**.

Follow Us

 [@illinoisvaccinates](https://www.instagram.com/illinoisvaccinates)

 [@Ilvaccinates](https://twitter.com/Ilvaccinates)



Funding for this project was made possible by the Office of Disease Control, through the Illinois Department of Public Health.

SIU Medicine's Farm Family Resource Initiative: Empowering Illinois Farming Families with Support and Resources

The Farm Family Resource Initiative (FFRI) is a program designed to provide support, resources, and education to families in rural areas who are involved in agriculture. The program was created by the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development in collaboration with other organizations to address the unique challenges faced by farming families.

Farming can be a demanding and stressful occupation, and families involved in agriculture face many challenges such as managing finances, dealing with crop failures, managing livestock, and coping with the physical and emotional toll of long hours and hard work. Additionally, rural areas often lack access to healthcare, mental health resources, and other support services that can help farmers and their families cope with the stresses of the job.

The FFRI is leading the effort to build a network of support and resources for Illinois farm families. The initiative's purpose is to provide a range of resources, including a helpline, to assist with farmer and farm-related issues that include mental and physical health needs. The initiative also offers ongoing outreach, education, and training to agriculture professions working to improve the health and safety of farm families.

The helpline is available 24/7 via phone and text at 1-833-FARM-SOS (1-833-327-6767) and email at FarmFamilyResourceHelpline@mhsil.com). FFRI contracts with Memorial Behavioral Health in Springfield, IL. The call center is staffed by bachelor and master level mental health professionals who are available 24/7." This means you are talking to people living in Illinois who can relate to the local economy, weather, and other daily stressors that might be specific to Illinois.

In addition, the FFRI offers mental health telehealth counseling to farming families. Farming can be a stressful occupation, and the isolation of rural areas can exacerbate mental health issues. Telehealth counseling sessions with SIU Medicine counselors are available for those in need of additional support. Up to six individual, couple, or group sessions are available at no cost to the farmer or farm family member with the support of grant funding. Additionally, the FFRI offers educational workshops on stress management, mindfulness, and coping strategies.

The FFRI is a collaborative effort between the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and other organizations, including the Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Department of Agriculture. This partnership allows the program to leverage the expertise and resources of these organizations to provide comprehensive support to farming families.

The success of the FFRI demonstrates the importance of providing support and resources to farming families. The program recognizes that farming is not just an occupation but a way of life for many families in rural areas. By providing comprehensive support, the FFRI helps farming families overcome the unique challenges they face and thrive in their communities. *(Continued on following page.)*



Karen Leavitt Stallman
Ag Resource Specialist
Farm Family Resource
Initiative
Center for Rural Health
and Social Service
SIU School of Medicine

SIU Medicine's Farm Family Resource Initiative: Empowering Illinois Farming Families with Support and Resources *(Continued)*

The Farm Family Resource Initiative is a valuable program that provides critical support, resources, and education to farming families and agriculture professionals. The success of the FFRI demonstrates the importance of supporting farming communities and recognizing the vital role they play in our economy and our way of life. Many stressful issues facing those in agriculture. Please check on friends, family members, and neighbors throughout this planting season. Spread the word about the Farm Family Resource Initiative and encourage others to reach out and talk to someone! It's available at no cost due to grant funding, it's confidential, and it may save the life of you or someone you know!



To learn more, visit siumed.org/farm.



— WE DESIGN WHAT MATTERS.

SHIVEHATTERY
ARCHITECTURE+ENGINEERING
SHIVE-HATTERY.COM

WE ALL NEED SOMEONE WE CAN TALK TO

NO COST | CONFIDENTIAL | 24/7



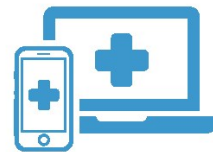
CALL OR TEXT

1-833-FARMSOS

(833-327-6767)

EMAIL

FarmFamilyResourceHelpline@mhsil.com



Telehealth counseling sessions with SIU Medicine counselors are available for those in need of additional support. Up to six individual, couple or group sessions are available at no cost to the farmer or farm family member with the support of grant funding.

Someone is always here to listen. Anytime. Anywhere.
We know the struggles of farming and are here to help.

SOMEONE YOU CAN TALK TO




SIU MEDICINE
CENTER FOR RURAL HEALTH &
SOCIAL SERVICE DEVELOPMENT
siumed.org/farm

Highlights of NRHA Annual National Conference

The National Rural Health Association's Annual Conference just wrapped up in San Diego May 16-19th. *Challenges in Rural Maternal Care, Health Equity, Hospital Closure, and Value-Based Care* were the major topics. The new Center for Disease Control Office of Rural Health attracted significant attention from participants.

IRHA would like to congratulate IRHA member Ada Bair, CEO of Memorial Hospital in Carthage, for her hospital receiving the "Outstanding Rural Health Organization" Award from the National Rural Health Association, the first time an Illinois hospital has ever received this honor.

Founded over 70 years ago, the Memorial employs 400 employees and operates 7 clinics throughout Hancock and McDonough counties. The award was presented on May 18th during the NRHA Annual Awards banquet held in conjunction with their Annual Conference.



IRHA President Charles James with NRHA CEO Alan Morgan



ICAHN Executive Director Pat Schou and Memorial Hospital CEO Ada Bair



Victoria Popela, DO; West Central AHEC Director Mary Jane Clark; CEO Ada Bair; Kristy Wisslead, FNP and Chief Ancillary Service Officer Dawn Owren,, all from Memorial Hospital