



Florida Rural Health Association

One Voice for Florida. Louder.

The Florida Rural Health Association is a membership group representing a diverse range of rural stakeholders that includes, but is not limited to: physicians, hospitals, federally qualified health centers, rural health clinics, emergency medical services, health departments, academics, and area health education centers. The mission of FRHA is to

- Ensure that all Floridians have access to affordable, quality healthcare
- Advocate for public policy initiatives to facilitate healthcare services
- Strengthen rural communities

To achieve our mission we members work to educate elected officials and others about the challenges experienced by the >1 million Floridians living in rural counties.

In 2015 we are reaching out to our elected officials to alert them to ongoing concerns relating to:

- Expanding health care coverage by drawing down federal funds as proposed by A Healthy Florida Works. This will provide coverage to over 900,000 Floridians earning less than \$16,000 a year.
- The delayed payments and resulting hardship rural health providers are experiencing under Medicaid Managed Care in spite of statute that requires them to pay bills within 20 days.
- Lack of access to routine testing and services in the rural community because Medicaid Managed Care will not permit rural hospitals to be reimbursed for providing the service. Residents are now forced to travel long distances to have a test that was previously provided by the rural hospital.
- The inadequacy of payment to rural providers for mandated services.
- The impact the loss of supplemental funds on the rural hospital, a major economic engine of the community, and provider of health care for our rural residents.
- The continued need for specialty services, including mental health that could be supported in part by telehealth.
- The declining numbers of health students selecting primary care specialties related to the debt associated with their training.
- The aging infrastructure of our rural hospitals and their need for capital improvement funding to renovate, replace, and upgrade
- The relative lack of tobacco cessation in rural areas of Florida as compared to urban areas.

Choosing to live in rural Florida should not mean choosing to live with less access to care. Please support rural Florida and rural Floridians.

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