

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Vulnerable Rural Hospital Assistance Program provides targeted assistance to at risk rural hospitals struggling to maintain health care services.

#### VRHAP works with hospitals and their communities to:

- Understand community health needs and resources
- Ensure hospitals and communities can keep needed health care local
- Address economic challenges

#### Solutions may include:

- Assessing key health care services to provide
- Identifying cost efficiencies
- Exploring other mechanisms to meet community health care needs

VRHAP is a cooperative agreement with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) and implemented by the Center for Optimizing Rural Health at Texas A&M University.



**95**

rural hospital  
closures since 2010



**542**

vulnerable  
hospitals

### FUNDING AND AWARDEES

One \$800,000 cooperative agreement award is made per year. Applications for participating hospitals are accepted late summer.

Texas A&M Center for Optimizing Rural Health received the inaugural award which will provide technical assistance to rural hospitals nationwide for up to five years.

- Five hospitals will receive on-site technical assistance, including:
  - A comprehensive assessment
  - Change-management strategies
  - Mentoring
- Twenty-five hospitals will receive remotely facilitated technical assistance, including:
  - Mentored intervention group
  - Educational material
  - Webinars
  - Facilitated peer-to-peer learning discussions
  - Hospitals in this group are eligible to apply for on-site assistance in a subsequent year
- Self-directed technical assistance will be available to all communities through the program website that will include webinars and documented best practices as the project gets underway.



**25**

remote facilitated  
technical assistance  
each year



**5**

intense technical  
assistance  
each year

## PROGRAM IMPACT

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We will measure performance outcomes throughout the award period to allow for continuous quality improvement opportunities.

Data collected, tracked, and analyzed will include:

- Hospital capacity to provide services
- Accessibility of services
- Utilization
- Affordability

## HRSA FEDERAL OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH POLICY

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The Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) administers grant programs to improve rural health care by increasing access to care for underserved populations and building health care capacity at both the state and local levels. FORHP advises the Secretary on the effects of current policies and proposed statutory, regulatory, administrative, and budgetary changes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ssa.gov/OP\\_Home/ssact/title07/0711.htm](https://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title07/0711.htm)