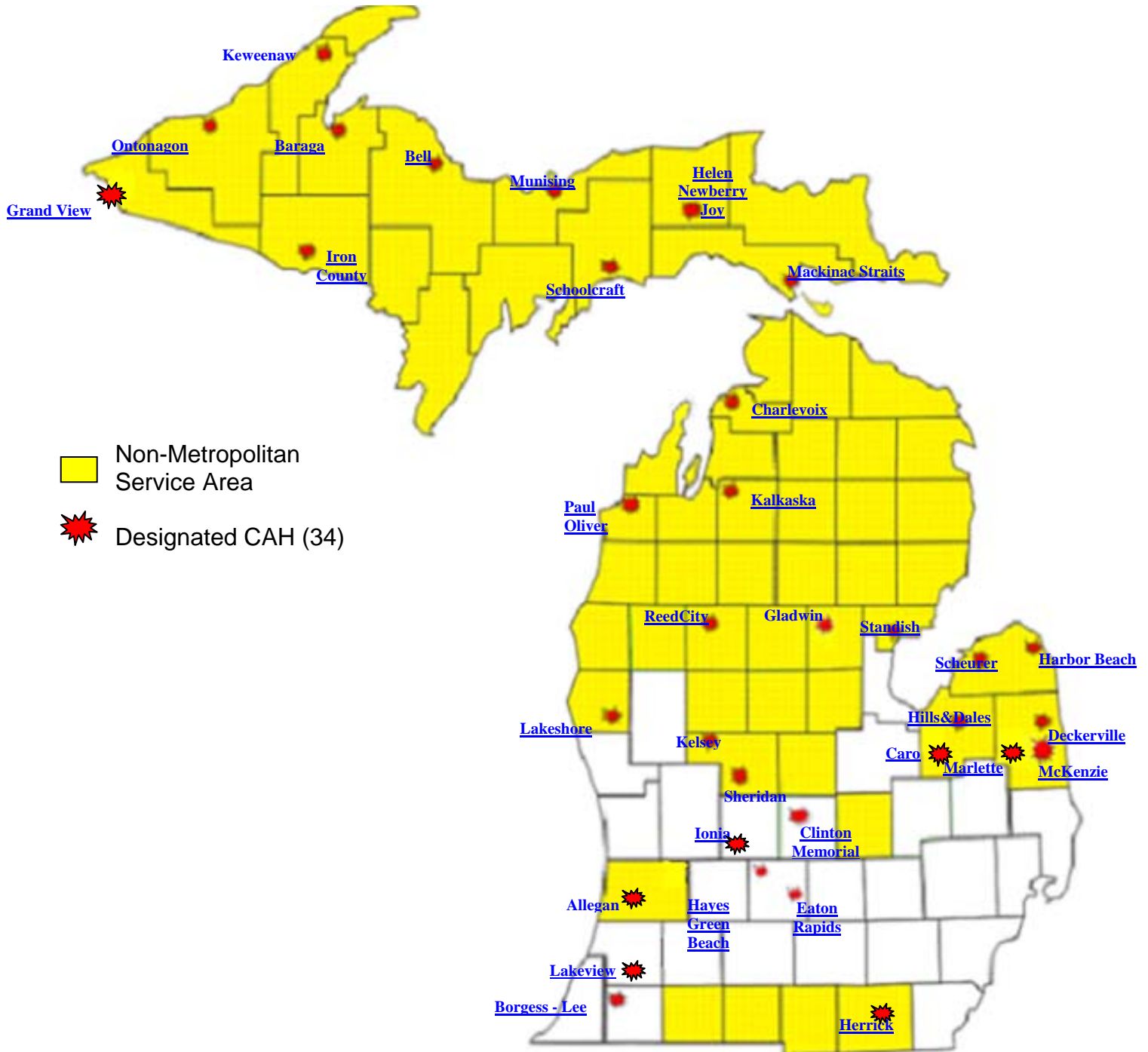


CAH Chronicle



Michigan Department of Community Health ♦ Michigan Center for Rural Health ♦ Michigan Health & Hospital Association

MICHIGAN CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITALS



President Obama Selects Top Rural Health Care Advocate to Oversee Key HHS Agency

Dr. Mary Wakefield will be the next Administrator of HRSA

President Obama today announced the appointment of one of the nation's top rural health care professionals as Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Dr. Mary Wakefield, Director of the Center for Rural Health at the University of North Dakota, will oversee this critical agency, which helps to deliver health care to those who are uninsured and underserved by our current health care system.

As a nurse, a Ph.D., and a leading rural healthcare advocate, Mary Wakefield brings expertise that will be instrumental in expanding and improving services for those who are currently uninsured or underserved, President Obama said. Under her leadership we will be able to expand and improve the care provided at the Community Health Centers which serve millions of uninsured Americans and address severe provider shortages across the country.

In addition to Community Health Centers across the country upon which millions

of uninsured Americans depend for coverage, HRSA oversees many programs that the federal government runs to bring health care providers to underserved areas throughout the nation. In addition, HRSA will administer \$2.5 billion allocated in the Recovery Act to invest in our health care infrastructure and train health care professionals.

Dr. Mary Wakefield was most recently the Associate Dean for Rural Health at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, where she was a tenured professor and Director of the Center for Rural Health. Dr. Wakefield has expertise in rural health care, quality and patient safety, Medicare payment policy, workforce issues, and public policy. She has written many articles and columns on health policy and is on the editorial board of a number of professional journals.

Dr. Wakefield previously served as director of the Center for Health Policy, Research, and Ethics at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA. She also served as the Chief of Staff for United States Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND) from January 1993 to January 1996 and as Legislative Assistant and Chief of Staff to Senator Quentin Burdick (D-ND).

Dr. Wakefield has served as a member of the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission and the Department of Veterans Affairs Special Medical Advisory Group. She served as Chair of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Committee on Health Care Quality for Rural America and of the Catholic Health Initiatives Board of Trustees, and was a subcommittee chair for President Clinton's Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry.

Dr. Wakefield received her M.S. in nursing and her Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Texas at Austin and her B.S. in nursing from the University of Mary at Bismarck, ND. She is a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing, and is a recipient of numerous awards including the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) 2006 Nurse Research Award and the 2008 Nursing Economics Margaret D. Sovie Writer's Award.

Source: THE WHITE HOUSE



Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN

Key Facts in Rural Health

December 2008

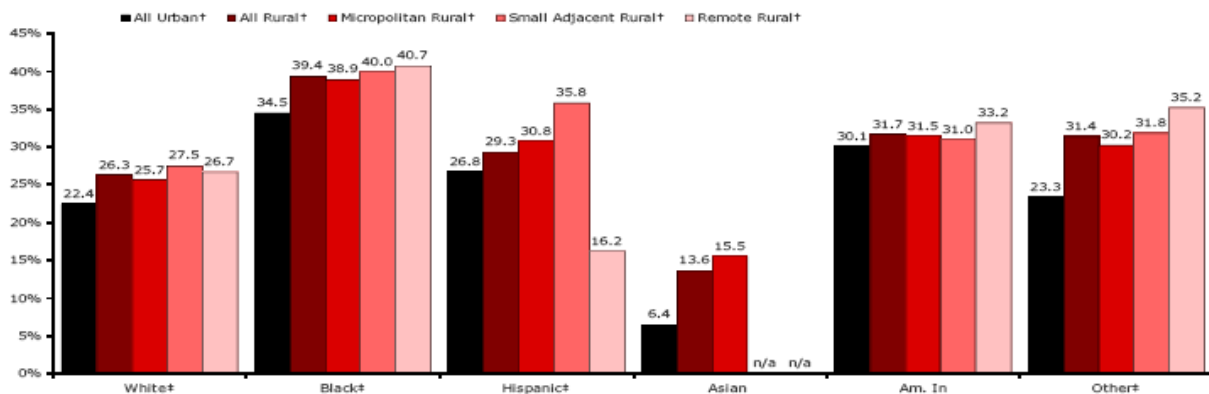
Health Disparities: A Rural – Urban Chartbook

Rural minorities experience disparities in health and health care delivery. *Health Disparities: A Rural – Urban Chartbook* expands on the work of the National Healthcare Disparities Reports, issued annually by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, by examining potential disparities among rural populations in health, health behaviors, preventive services and diabetes care, using information from the 2005 and 2006 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Key findings include:

Health & Health Behaviors

- Rural residents were more likely to describe their health as “fair to poor” than were urban residents (19.5% versus 15.6%)
- Rural adults were more likely to be obese than urban adults (27.4% versus 23.9%), with particularly high rates of obesity among rural African Americans (see below).

Obesity Among Adults, by Race and Level of Rurality, in Percents



† Significantly different, by race, $p < 0.05$ ‡ Significantly different from urban, $p < 0.05$
 “n/a” indicates too few observations to display a stable estimate.

Access to Healthcare Services

- Rural adults were more likely to be uninsured than urban adults (17.8% versus 15.3%), with uninsurance rates among rural Hispanic adults ranging from 40.8% in rural micropolitan counties to 56.1% in small remote rural counties.

Receipt of Preventive Services

- Rural residents were less likely to report an annual dental exam with cleaning than urban residents (82.1% versus 88.8%).
- Rural women were less likely than urban women to be in compliance with mammogram screening guidelines (70.7% versus 77.9%).

Source: South Carolina Rural Health Research Center

Eaton Rapids Emergency Department Opens March 2

After 10 months of construction, Eaton Rapids Medical Center will open its new \$6 million Emergency Department on March 2. An Open House and dedication ceremony is planned for Saturday, February 28 from 10 – 2pm. Tours and free health checks are planned.

The new Emergency Department promises a unique experience designed for privacy, comfort, and personal attention. Patients will enjoy the convenience of being triaged, registered and treated in a private room, equipped with comfortable furnishings and flat screen televisions. Ten private rooms will increase efficiency and decrease wait times. Decontamination and isolation areas, along with two trauma bays will provide the setting for staff members to control any situation. Family members will also be at ease in a beautiful waiting area or in the patient's room.

As part of the construction, 6 Specialty Clinic rooms have been added that will allow the Medical Center to expand the numbers of specialists that serve area patients. These rooms convert easily to Emergency Department rooms to handle overflow or mass-casualty situations.

The Emergency Department averages approximately 1200 patients per month. The previous Emergency Department simply could not accommodate the number of patients without compromising privacy and safety. The new department will serve the growing community well into the future and will provide area residents with piece of mind and exceptional care.

Conrad J-1 Waiver Information

2008-2009 packets are still available!

***The deadline for accepting Applications
has been extended through
March 31, 2009***

The Michigan Conrad State 30 Program Application and Information packet contains complete instructions on how to apply for a J-1 waiver in Michigan. *It is not necessary to have an employer sponsor before ordering the packet.*

To order your official application and information packet...

- Send a check for \$100, payable to "Michigan Health Council" (This is a non-refundable fee)
- Include: Physician's full name, address, specialty and graduation date (from residency)
- Mail both to: Michigan Health Council, J-1 Visa Waiver Staff, 2410 Woodlake Drive, Okemos, Michigan 48864

You will receive...

- An official application packet - numbered and registered in your name.
- Complete information about the program requirements.
- **Application acceptance dates: February 1, 2009 - March 31, 2009**
- ***Sorry, overnight orders cannot be accepted. Packets are mailed via USPS as soon as we are able to process the request.***

Bill with Medicare Rural Ambulance Relief

Senators Kent Conrad (D-N.D.) and Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) have introduced S. 323, the Rural Revitalization Act of 2009. The legislation aims to boost struggling rural economies with federal investments in multiple sectors crucial for rural competitiveness and revitalization. The proposal would make significant investments in rural development priorities, including infrastructure projects, energy programs, housing assistance and rural health care. Many of the acts provisions are included in the current stimulus packages and NACo is working with the Senators staffs to keep these programs critical to rural counties in the final package.

The act includes funding to: expand transmission lines; construct renewable fuel pipelines; build and maintain rural roads and highways; support rural hospitals and repair school buildings; expand funding for USDA Rural Development Programs and the Economic Development Administration; and increase funding for small businesses in rural areas.

Rural health provisions in the bill language included components of the AAA permanent Medicare ambulance relief package but on a temporary basis. S. 323 would replace the current 3% increase for transports originating in rural areas with the 6% increase from the AAA package and extend the current expiration date of December 31, 2009 to December 31, 2010. The bill would also extend the super rural bonus payment by one year to December 31, 2010.

The bill also includes an extension to the Section 508 program, which provides certain hospitals greater Medicare reimbursement for labor-related costs. Many hospitals use Section 508 to help retain nurses, doctors and other trained medical staff. The proposal would extend the current "Section 508" program from Sept. 30, 2009 to Sept. 30, 2010.

The bill also proposes an additional \$300M for FY2009 and FY2010 for the National Health Service Corps programs, and a 5% increase in Medicare payment to rural home health providers.

For more information, contact Erik Johnston at ejohnston@naco.org.

12th Annual Rural Health Conference

Conference Agenda and Registration information now available on line at: <http://www.mcrh.msu.edu>

April 23-24, 2009

Soaring Eagle Resort, Mt. Pleasant, MI

GRAND ROUNDS:

PHARMACY

ARTHRITIS

GERIATRIC

NURSING

PSYCHIATRY

SOCIAL WORK

EMS TELECONFERENCES

A full description of all Grand Rounds presentations are at:

<http://www.mcrh.msu.edu/> and click on Grand Rounds.

For more information on any of the Grand Round education sessions, contact Phyllis Ball, Education Coordinator at:

ballp@msu.edu or 517-355-8250.

INTERESTING QUOTE:

Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.

-Sir Winston Churchill

