

THE COLORADO RURAL HEALTH CENTER

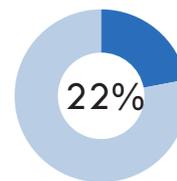
SB15-197: THE RURAL IMPACT

SB15-197 is intended to increase access to healthcare by reducing prescriptive authority barriers for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs). The bill is particularly intended to address healthcare disparities in rural Colorado, and as such the Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) believes that the most successful outcome of the proposed legislation is increased access to safe, high quality healthcare. Moreover, as a statewide authority on rural health, CRHC must take this opportunity to provide an objective context for understanding the rural implications of SB15-197.

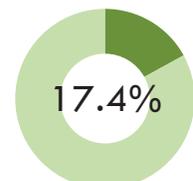
RURAL HEALTH IN COLORADO

Colorado faces many obstacles to health in the vast rural parts of the state. Rural Coloradans are older, have lower incomes and suffer from higher rates of disease than urban Coloradans. In Colorado, 77 percent of our state's land mass is rural, while only 16 percent of Coloradans reside in rural areas.

The geriatric population is rising rapidly across the state, and even more so in rural areas. By 2018 seniors will make up 22 percent of the rural populations, compared to 17.4 percent of urban population projections.

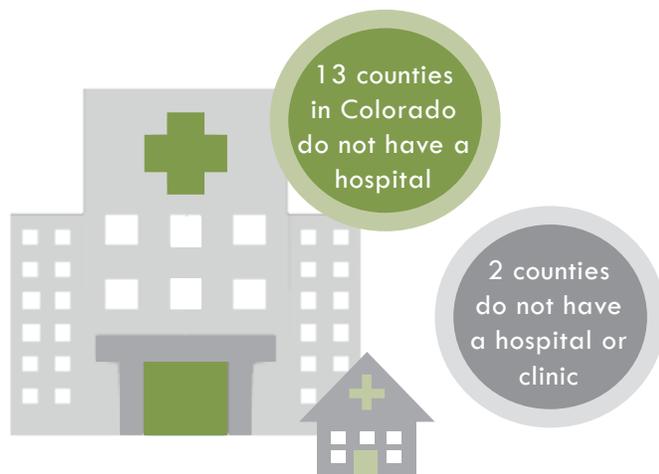


Rural Seniors



Urban Seniors

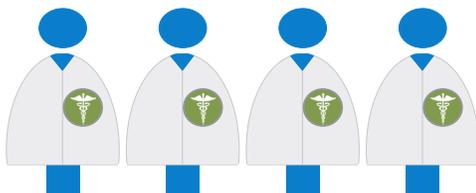
RURAL HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE



Rural economies rely on healthcare. In fact, the healthcare industry is among the top three industries in rural counties in Colorado. Strengthening the rural healthcare workforce will certainly strengthen the overall economy in rural communities across the state.

We know 13 counties in Colorado do not have a hospital, and two counties do not have a hospital, a Rural Health Clinic or a Federally Qualified Health Center. Yet, nearly all rural counties in Colorado are either totally or partially designated as a shortage or underserved area. The need will continue to be significant, as less than 40 percent of rural primary care providers remain in the same rural community for five consecutive years.

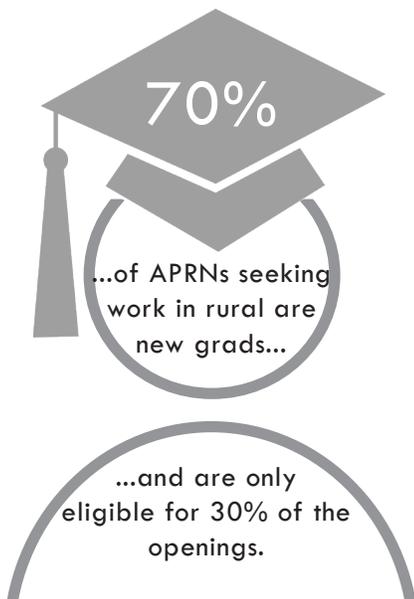
<40%
of rural
providers
stay 5 years



ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSES IN RURAL COLORADO

Colorado Provider Recruitment (CPR), a program of CRHC, focuses on expanding the primary care workforce throughout Colorado's rural communities. Our placement specialists experience firsthand the shortage of healthcare professionals, including many placements that could be filled by APRNs with more expedient prescriptive authority.

Only 19 percent of all CPR rural jobs currently posted are open to APRNs. However, 70 percent of APRNs seeking employment in rural Colorado are new graduates without full prescriptive authority. At this time, nearly 50 percent of rural jobs posted by CPR require full prescriptive authority.



The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) is Colorado's nonprofit State Office of Rural Health. CRHC works with Federal, state and local partners to offer services and resources to rural healthcare providers, facilities and communities.

Rural population information provided by Health Awareness for Rural Communities (HARC) databank. HARC is a valuable service of the Colorado Rural Health Center and is the first data bank created solely to examine the dynamics of rural and frontier counties in Colorado, through the use of quantitative measures.

For further action or information, contact:
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The State Office of Rural Health