



WISCONSIN OFFICE OF

# Rural Health

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## **New Report Examines Obstetric Delivery Services in Rural Wisconsin**

**For Immediate Release**

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(Madison, Wisconsin)—The Office of Rural Health is proud to announce the release of a new statewide report on the availability of obstetric delivery services within rural Wisconsin hospitals.

Specifically, this assessment details the rural hospitals within the state that provide obstetric care, the types of providers available for those services, and risk factors that may signal the closure of rural obstetric units in the future.

“As rural hospital obstetric unit closures continue to affect rural communities across the nation, gathering more information on these closures is crucial to understanding the scope and consequences of the problem in Wisconsin,” says Penny Black, Data and Evaluation Program Manager and the study’s lead author.

According to the data collected, 56% of rural Wisconsin hospitals provide obstetric delivery services, while 12 rural hospitals in the state have closed their obstetric units in the past decade. And, while 99% of women of child-bearing age live within a 30-minute drive of a hospital that provides obstetric delivery services, only 60% of those hospitals have obstetricians/gynecologists available to deliver babies.

When asked about the challenges they face in keeping obstetric units open, rural hospitals most frequently cited challenges with provider coverage, maintenance of provider skills, and low or reduced volume of deliveries.

The report is available in full [at this link](#).

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The [Office of Rural Health](#) works to improve the access to and quality of rural health care.