Top Stories

Rural Counties Face Psychiatrist Shortage

A new assessment study from the Wisconsin Policy Forum finds significant behavioral health shortages in rural areas. Fifty-five Wisconsin counties meet the state's standard for a psychiatrist shortage, and thirty-seven counties meet the federal standard for one.

The brief proposes possible solutions to increase the number of psychiatrists in Wisconsin, like utilizing loan assistance programs (like those from our office), increasing the number of residency programs in underserved areas, and expanding the use of integrated care models. (Source: Wisconsin Public Radio and Wisconsin Policy Forum)

Read more

Report Examines State of Transportation in Wisconsin

A new collaborative report examines the effectiveness and equitability of transportation across both rural and urban Wisconsin. The report profiles the transportation systems in Eau Claire, Fox Cities, Hayward, La Crosse, Madison Metro, Milwaukee County, Racine, Waukesha, and Wausau. It also takes a broader look at inequity in Wisconsin's public transportation system. The report recommends increasing investment in transit and the use of Regional Transportation Authorities to do so. Read the whole report here. (Source: WEAU)

Read more

HeART Helps Older Adults Age in Place

Yesterday, our office met with partners and stakeholders in Waupun to sift through data and identify the areas of greatest need for the community's older adults, as part of the Healthy Aging in Rural Towns (HeART) project.
The project is helping communities in Iowa County, Langlade County, and the City of Waupun help their older adults age in place. It’s the product of a collaboration with our office, the Center for Aging Research and Education at the UW-Madison School of Nursing, and community stakeholders from senior services, local public health departments, fire and emergency management, and hospitals.

More News

- The Wisconsin Addiction Recovery Hotline, which helps to connect people with resources to overcome a dependence on opioids or other substances, became operational on Monday. The statewide service is available 24/7 by calling 211 or 833-944-4673. (Source: Wisconsin Public Radio)

- At recent meeting of the Wisconsin Dairy Task Force (2.0), panelists noted general concerns about their rural communities, including lack of broadband, deterioration of rural roads, and dwindling enrollment in local schools. (Source: Wisconsin State Farmer)

- A workgroup established by the National Quality Forum identifies quality measures specifically for rural areas. Read the report here. (Source: Health Affairs Blog and National Quality Forum)

- As Election Day nears, Governor Scott Walker and challenger Tony Evers sparred over the issue of pre-existing conditions in a gubernatorial debate last week. Watch the full debate here. (Source: Scott Bauer/AP and C-SPAN)

- A nonprofit organization in west central Wisconsin is bridging cultural gaps between farmers and immigrant workers. It’s also delivering health care to dairy farm employees. (Source: Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism)

Funding & Opportunities

- The Aging and Disability Resource Center, which serves Barron, Rusk, and Washburn Counties, will hold weekly educational programs for caregivers this fall. Entitled "Powerful Tools for Caregivers," the program will help caregivers take care of themselves while caring for another. (Register by: October 29th)
Grants from the Federal Transit Authority will fund transit coordination projects that improve access to healthcare. The grants will help improve options for people with limited transportation choices and bridge the gap between service providers in the transportation and health sectors. (Deadline: November 13th)

Accredited nursing schools can apply for a grant to offer loan assistance to students who will work to become nurse faculty. (Deadline: November 28th)

The Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging will provide mini-grants to community programs for healthy living, focusing on such programs like falls prevention, chronic conditions, diabetes, and chronic pain (Deadline: November 30th)

Events

- **October 27th**: Safely dispose of your unwanted or unused medications on Drug Take Back Day - find the location nearest you.

- **October 29th**: A webinar will examine the rural landscape of adverse childhood experiences - forms of chronic stress or trauma that can have profound consequences on an individual's health and well-being.

- **November 2nd**: A conference from the Wisconsin Council on Medical Education and Workforce will focus on the challenges healthcare leaders face in designing a clinical workforce, and will present policies/initiatives that target health care provider shortages in both rural and urban settings.

- **November 7th**: We want to hear your concerns and solutions about EMS at another stop on our EMS Listening Tour in Boscobel.

- **November 15th**: Celebrate Wisconsin Rural Health Day! Our office has a dedicated page of celebration ideas and activities for your community to celebrate the power of rural.