



## Top Stories

### Report: Tobacco Use in Rural Communities

A **new report** from several public health institutions highlights the impact of tobacco use on rural communities. The report looks at cessation, prevention of initiation, and public health interventions to produce smoke-free air. The report details local, state, and national recommendations for advancing rural tobacco control initiatives.



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### Wisconsin Hospitals Rank Nationally

Seven Wisconsin hospitals are among the top 250 in the nation, according to a **recent ranking from HealthGrades**. The rankings sort hospitals based on their patient outcomes for 32 conditions and procedures based on Medicare data, reports Wisconsin Health News. Hospitals in Green Bay, Mequon, and Menomonee Falls made the list, in addition to several in Milwaukee and Madison.



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### Governor Proposes \$43 Million for Dental Access

Governor Evers announced in a press release on Monday that his budget will include a \$43 million investment to expand dental access across Wisconsin. Among many initiatives for dental care included in the proposal is an expansion of the dental loan assistance program, specifically for rural dentists.

Other changes would establish dental therapist licensure and dental therapy training programs, expand the Seal-A-Smile program that provides preventative services to children, and



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increase the number of low-income dental clinics eligible to receive grant funding.

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## More News

- At the end of this year, Wisconsin is scheduled to withdraw from a compact that allows doctors to practice across state lines. State legislators are **now proposing to keep Wisconsin in the compact** permanently.
- National lawmakers have **introduced two bills** designed to relieve the burden on rural hospitals. One would repeal Medicare's 96-hour rule, and the other would allow physician assistants to be directly compensated by Medicare.
- Nine organizations have been awarded **matching grants from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation** that will help advance entrepreneurship across the state, including in several rural areas.
- In the face of difficult economic conditions, Wisconsin lost **nearly 700 dairy herds** last year.
- Is **artificial intelligence the future of health care**? A.I. could soon be analyzing electronic health records in an effort to flag medical conditions.

## Funding & Opportunities

- Local government agencies or affiliated 501(c)(3)s engaged with parks and recreation can **apply for grants** to expand farmers markets, plan meal programs, or address transportation and infrastructure needs. (Deadline: March 6th)
- **Funding** from the Wisconsin DATCP to help farms and business produce, process, market and distribute food in local markets. (Deadline: March 20th)
- **SAFER Grants** will provide fire departments, governments, or tribal organizations with financial assistance to help fire departments increase frontline firefighters (Deadline: March 22nd)
- **Funding** to rural hospitals, Rural Health Clinics, and more to develop new rural residency programs or rural training tracks in family medicine, internal medicine, and psychiatry. (Deadline: March 25th)
- Nominate your fire/EMS Department to win **equipment and training** on grain safety and rescue. (Deadline: April 30th)

## Events

- Feb 26th: [Webinar: Creating and Maintaining Partnerships with Philanthropies](#)
- Feb 28th: [Shawano and Waupaca Counties Rural Palliative Care Coalition](#)
- March 19-20th: [DHS Opioid Forum in Green Bay](#)

- April 17-18th: National Rural EMS & Care Conference 2019



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