

Wisconsin Office of Rural Health  
310 N Midvale Blvd, Suite 301  
Madison, WI 53705

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## State of Wisconsin - Rural Health Day Proclamation Released

Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker has proclaimed **Thursday, November 16, 2017 as Rural Health Day**, an opportunity to showcase rural Wisconsin; increase awareness of rural health-related issues; and promote efforts addressing those issues.

Approximately 1.5 million people – one in four Wisconsinites – live in rural and frontier communities throughout Wisconsin. “Small towns and rural areas are the beating heart of our state,” said Wisconsin Office of Rural Health Director John Eich. “And the hospitals and providers serving these rural communities help keep that heartbeat strong and healthy. They provide high quality care, and keep good jobs in rural Wisconsin.”

These communities also face unique healthcare needs. “Today more than ever, rural communities are tackling accessibility issues. As a rapidly expanding elderly population, often suffering from several chronic conditions, reaches out for care, they have fewer healthcare providers to reach out to,” Eich said. “Meanwhile, rural hospitals are threatened with declining reimbursement rates and disproportionate funding levels that makes it challenging to provide the level of services their neighbors depend upon.”

Rural Wisconsin communities and organizations are planning events to celebrate Rural Health Day as part of the National Rural Health Day, celebrated on the third Thursday of each November. The theme of Rural Health Day is “Celebrating the Power of Rural.” Communities can use the Twitter hashtags: #PowerofRural or #NationalRuralHealthDay to tag their events and are encouraged to link to the [Wisconsin Office of Rural Health’s website](#) for further ideas.

Wisconsin organizations involved in supporting rural communities and Rural Health Day are: Wisconsin Office of Rural Health, the Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative, the Wisconsin Hospital Association, the Wisconsin Primary Health Care Association, the Wisconsin Medical Society, the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, and the Medical College of Wisconsin.

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If you would like additional information about this topic, please call Kevin Jacobson at 608-261-1888, or email [kmjacobson2@wisc.edu](mailto:kmjacobson2@wisc.edu).

