

# Rural Health Equity Plan

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# Mission & Vision

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**Mission:** To coordinate, plan, and advocate for improved health for Michigan's rural residents and communities.

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**Vision:** The Michigan Center for Rural Health will be universally recognized as the center of expertise for rural health in Michigan through creative visionary education, service and research.



# Diverse Portfolio of Work Impacting Rural Michigan

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## **Federal Programs (HRSA)**

### State Office of Rural Health

- Workforce & Education

### Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant Program

- Critical Access Hospitals

### Small Hospital Improvement Program

- Rural Hospitals (49 beds or less)

### Northern MI Opioid Response Consortium

- Substance Use Programming (4 different awards RCORP III, IV, PS, BH)

### Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant Program EMS Competing Supplement

- EMS Quality Improvement

### Rural Health Outreach

- Increasing utilization and quality of Swing Beds

### Rural Health Veterans Health Access

- Increasing access to care for Veterans living in the UP & Thumb of MI (I-REACH)

### Rural Health Public Health Workforce Training Network Program

- Increasing Community Health Workers & Community Paramedicine in the Upper Peninsula (UP-WIN)



# Diverse Portfolio of Work Impacting Rural Michigan

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## Programs Funded by In-State Partners

### Embedding Remote Patient Monitoring into 3 Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs)

- Funded by Michigan Health Endowment Fund

### Enhancing Rural Palliative Care in Rural MI

- Funded by Michigan Health Endowment Fund

### Increasing Chronic Kidney Disease Resources & Screening in Rural MI

- Funded by the National Kidney Foundation of MI

### Rural Health Equity Plan

- Funded by the State of MI (Policy & Planning)

### Increasing Paramedics in Rural MI

- Funded by the State of MI (Division of EMS and Systems of Care)

### Providing resources to Primary Care & Island Clinics

- Funded by State of MI (Policy & Planning)

### Mitigating Health Disparities in Rural MI by Increasing Resources in Rural Local Public Health Departments

- Funded by State of MI (CDC Grant)



# Rural Michigan Snapshot

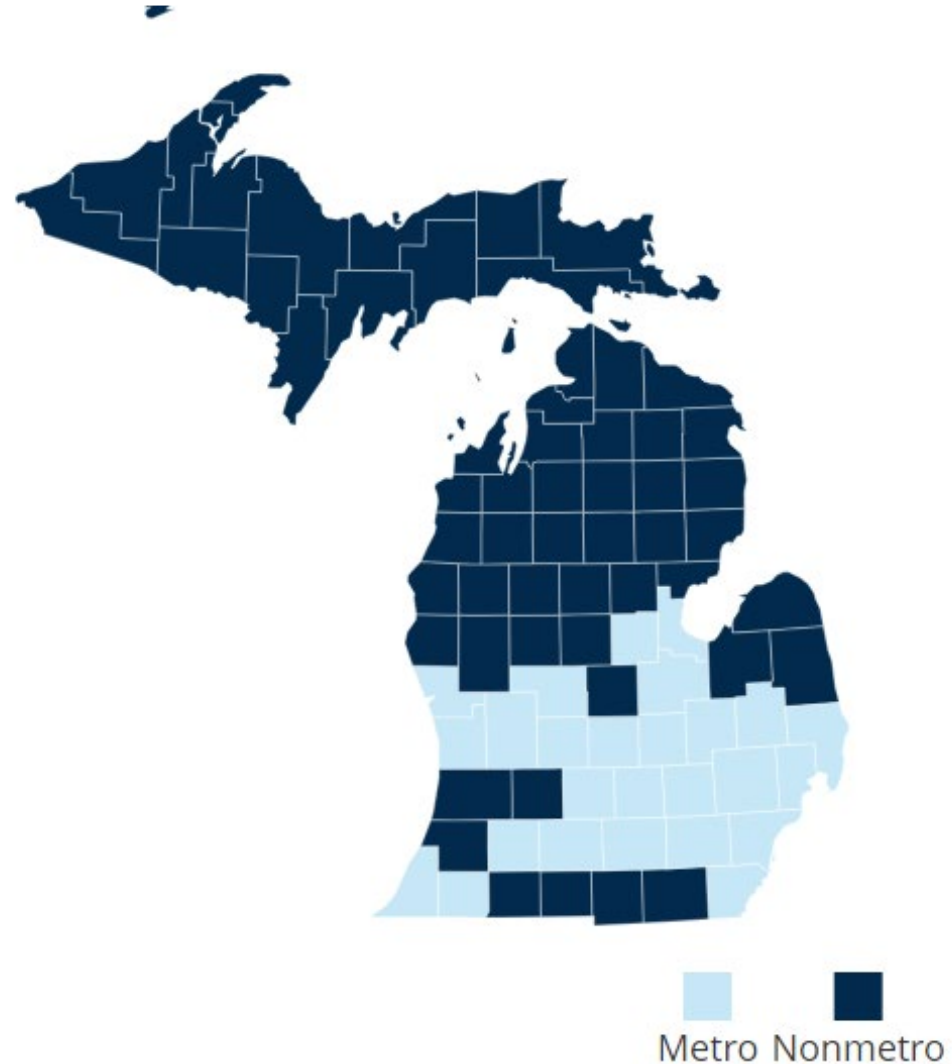
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- **Population**

- **Almost 94 percent** of the state's land mass is considered rural, including most of the northern Lower Peninsula and all of the Upper Peninsula.
- About **1.8 million residents** — nearly **20 percent** of Michigan's population live in rural areas of the state, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture classifications.

- **Agriculture**

- Michigan's rural areas are essential to the **state's economy**, with **10 million acres of farmland** and approximately **47,600 farms**.
- The state produces over **300 commodities commercially**, contributing **\$104.7 billion annually** to the economy and accounting for **17% of state employment**.



# Barriers in Rural Michigan

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Rural Michigan is a vital part of the state's economy and culture, but it faces significant challenges that require **tailored solutions** to improve the quality of life for its residents.

**Access to Services:** Rural residents often face challenges in accessing childcare, affordable housing, and high-speed internet, which can negatively impact their health and well-being.

**Aging Population:** Rural Michigan has a growing elderly population, while the percentage of children under 18 is decreasing.

**Food Insecurity:** Many rural communities face food access issues, with 87% of counties with the highest rates of food insecurity located in rural areas.

**Health Disparities:** Rural areas experience higher rates of disease, mortality, and chronic conditions due to factors like healthcare access, socioeconomic status, and provider shortages.



# MCRH Rural Health Equity Plan

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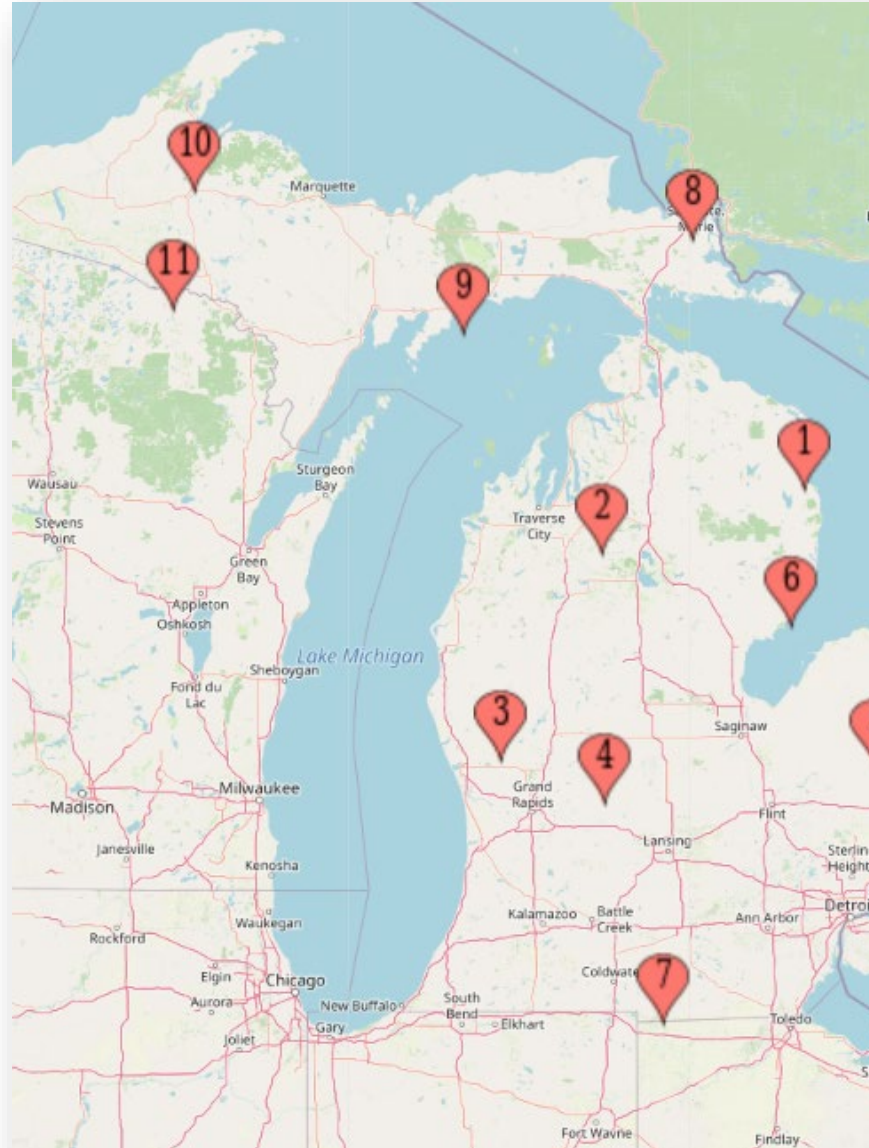
- Supplement to Phase 1 of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Strategy.
  - Food Security
  - Housing Stability
  - Health Equity
- Provides a **rural lens** to the strategy, identifying rural-relevant recommendations that align with the current MDHHS SDOH Strategy.
  - Opportunities for improvement
  - Assess the current rural landscape
  - Expand rural outreach and communication
  - Identify specific rural community needs



# Rural Health Equity Plan Regions of Focus

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1. Alpena
2. Kalkaska
3. Fremont
4. Sheridan
5. Sandusky
6. Tawas
7. Hillsdale
8. Sault Ste. Marie
9. Manistique
10. L'Anse
11. Iron River





# Objective One: Understand the Current Rural Context of the MDHHS SDOH Strategy

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- Assess the rural chronic disease and SDOH data used in the MDHHS Strategy.
  - Determine rural stakeholder engagement with the MDHHS SDOH Strategy.
  - Understand gaps in rural engagement in the current MDHHS SDOH Strategy.
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1. [2022 Poverty Task Force Report](#)
2. [2021 United Way ALICE in Michigan: A Financial Hardship Study](#)
3. [2022 Michigan Health IT Roadmap “Bridge to Better Health” Report](#)
4. [2020-2022 Michigan’s Campaign to End Homelessness](#)
5. [2022 Michigan’s Statewide Housing Plan](#)
6. [2020 Michigan Primary Care Needs Assessment \(PCNA\)](#)
7. [2021 Health Equity Report: Moving Health Equity Forward](#)
8. [2022 Michigan County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#)
9. [2022 Food Security Council: Final Report](#)



# Objective Two: Form Advisory Group

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- Determine appropriate stakeholders for the Advisory Group.
  - Engage interest in appropriate stakeholders and finalize Advisory Group.
  - Determine the meeting schedule, the scope of work, and the charter for the Advisory Group.
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- Developing an advisory group was a key priority and was integral to guiding the Rural Health Equity work plan.
  - The Advisory Group consists of rural stakeholders who are true advocates for rural communities and represent the diverse populations that create rural Michigan.
    - Migrant Farmworkers
    - Health Centers
    - Area Agency on Aging
    - Tribal Population
    - Unhoused Population
    - Critical Access Hospitals
    - Veteran Services
    - Office of Rural Development
    - Continuum of Care
    - Human Development Commission
    - Northern CHIR
    - Food Council of Michigan



# Objective Three: Understand and Review Rural Data

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- Analyze and understand MDHHS data on rural areas with **food security initiatives**.
  - Discover if certain rural areas are utilizing **MDHHS housing initiatives** over other rural areas of Michigan
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- Opportunity to emphasize the **value of rural data in fostering decision-making**, driving positive change, and unlocking the full potential of rural communities.
  - Engaged with rural stakeholders to better understand the **State of Michigan Food Security Initiatives**.
  - Engaged with Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), understanding **voucher utilization** and **lead abatement** project funding by county.



# Objective Four: Assess Current State of Michigan Assistance Programs for Rural Areas

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- Identify the most used and underutilized state programs that address **housing instability and food insecurity** in identified rural areas
  - Identify **gaps and significant barriers** that exist in current state programming.
  - **Conduct focus groups** with rural-relevant stakeholders that utilize assistance programs.
  - Utilize data from rural stakeholders to **identify opportunities for improvement** within current assistance programs
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- Collected **qualitative data** through listening sessions, focus groups, and surveys to engage with rural stakeholders.



# Common Themes

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Transportation

Childcare

Workforce

Technology

Healthcare  
Access

Housing Access

Food Access

Resource  
Sharing

State Assistance  
Application  
Procedure



# Objective Five: Develop a Written Report

- Develop draft written report, garner feedback from Advisory Committee, solicit approval from Advisory Committee.

