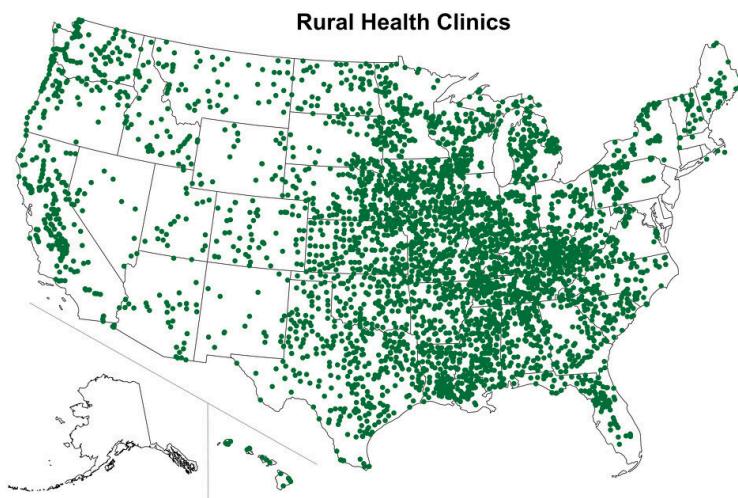


# Rural Health Clinics

**The Rural Health Clinic (RHC) Program is intended to increase access to primary care in rural areas. RHC status allows primary care providers to receive enhanced reimbursement rates for Medicare and Medicaid services.**



 **RHI hub**  
Rural Health Information Hub

Data Source(s): data.HRSA.gov,  
U.S. Department of Health and Human  
Services, July 2025

- RHCs are required to have a team approach to healthcare delivery by using physician and non-physician providers (NP, PA, & CNMs).
- RHCs must be staffed by non-physician providers at least 50% of the time.
- RHCs are required to provide outpatient primary care, basic lab services, and first response to common acute illnesses.

- An RHC must be located in a non urban area and an underserved or shortage area.
- RHCs are either an independent clinic (39%) or provider based clinic (61%).
- Nearly 2/3 of provider-based RHCs are operated by a Critical Access Hospital.

**Nearly 2 in 3** rural Americans are served by RHCs.



Over **39.2 million** patients served in 2024.



Over **5,461** clinics across 46 states.

# NRHA Supported Legislation

## RHC Modernization

Includes three bills aimed at modernizing and providing regulatory relief for RHCs

### **H.R. 5217: Rural Behavioral Health Improvement Act**

*Reps. Tokuda (D-HI) & Mann (R-KS)*

Removes limitations on the delivery of behavioral health services at RHCs allowing better integration of services.

### **H.R. 5198: Rural Health Clinic Location Modernization Act**

*Reps. Mann (R-KS) & Tokuda (D-HI)*

Preserves Medicare eligibility standards that allow RHCs to operate in communities with under 50,000 residents consistent with previous Census Bureau definition.

### **H.R. 5199: Modernizing Rural Physician Assistant and Nurse Practitioner Utilization Act**

*Reps. Mann (R-KS) and Tokuda (D-HI)*

Modernizes RHC physician supervision requirements by aligning them to state scope of practice laws governing PA and NP practice.

### **H.R. 3878: RNs for Rural Health Act**

*Reps. Hinson (R-IA) and Scholten (D-MI)*

Expands and strengthens rural healthcare access by updating Medicare policy to allow registered nurses (RNs) at RHCs to facilitate Medicare Annual Wellness Visits.

### **S. 1261/H.R. 4206: CONNECT for Health Act**

*Sens. Schatz (D-HI), Wicker (R-MS) & Reps. Thompson (D-CA), Schweikert (R-AZ)*

Makes permanent expansion of Medicare telehealth access by removing geographic restrictions, allowing home as an originating site, extending COVID-19 telehealth flexibilities, allows audio-only services, and rural health clinic and community health center payment parity.

### **H.R. 1480: Rural Health Innovation Act**

*Reps. Kustoff (R-TN) & Pappas (D-NH)*

Establishes two new grant programs to increase access to emergency care in rural areas through rural health clinics, community health centers, and local health departments.

### **S. 1248/ H.R. 2533: Equal Access to Specialty Care Everywhere (EASE) Act**

*Sens. Mullin (R-OK), Padilla (D-CA), Tillis (R-NC) & Reps. Arrington (R-TX), Salinas (D-OR), LaHood (R-IL)*

Authorizes a virtual specialty network demonstration that offers integrated services in rural communities to test the effectiveness of increasing access to specialty care and facilitating transitions to value-based payment.