

Visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov) for the latest Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) updates.  
Read the [30 Days to Slow the Spread Guidance - PDF](#) ([versión en Español - PDF](#)).

# HHS.gov

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 22, 2020**

**Contact: HHS Press Office**

**202-690-6343**

**[media@hhs.gov](mailto:media@hhs.gov)**

## HHS Awards Nearly \$165 Million to Combat the COVID-19 Pandemic in Rural Communities

Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded nearly \$165 million to combat the COVID-19 pandemic in rural communities. These investments will support 1,779 small rural hospitals and provide additional funding to 14 HRSA-funded Telehealth Resource Centers (TRCs) to provide technical assistance on telehealth to help rural and underserved areas combat COVID-19.

"Today's funding gives rural hospitals critical support to build up their capacity for fighting COVID-19 in their communities, including through further expansions of telehealth, more purchases of PPE, and boosting testing capacity," said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. "This funding, secured by President Trump from Congress, will build on the historic expansion of telehealth undertaken by the Trump Administration to help all Americans access the care they need during the pandemic."

HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) received \$150 million through the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act - PDF](#) to assist hospitals funded through the Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP) respond to this public health emergency.

The CARES Act funding allows hospitals maximum flexibility in how they respond to COVID-19 within their communities, including the provision of testing and laboratory services as well as the purchase of personal protective equipment to minimize COVID-19 exposure.

FORHP will award more than \$11.5 million from the CARES Act to the 14 TRCS to provide support as they combat COVID-19. The TRCs provide expertise and customized telehealth technical assistance throughout the United States and its territories, while also acting as a clearinghouse for telehealth research, program design and implementation.

"As the nation combats COVID-19, telehealth is increasingly instrumental and effective as a tool to provide healthcare for patients across the country, especially the most vulnerable," said HRSA Administrator Tom Engels. "Providing the TRCs with this additional funding enables them to expand their ability to provide technical assistance to communities in need."

With these new funds, TRCs will be able to provide hands-on technical support in areas such as equipment acquisition, payment policy, system design and licensing and credentialing.

For a list of today's award recipients, visit: <https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/coronavirus-cares-FY2020-awards>

For more information about the Telehealth Resource Centers Program, visit, <https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/telehealth>.

To learn more about the HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy's response to COVID-19, visit, <https://www.hrsa.gov/rural-health/coronavirus-frequently-asked-questions>

For more information about COVID-19, visit: <http://coronavirus.gov/>

###

---

Note: All HHS press releases, fact sheets and other news materials are available at <https://www.hhs.gov/news>.

Like [HHS on Facebook](#), follow HHS on Twitter [@HHSgov](#), and sign up for [HHS Email Updates](#).

Last revised: April 21, 2020

---