



Center of Excellence in Rural Health



ANNUAL REPORT
2022

Message from the Director

The University of Kentucky College of Medicine's Center of Excellence in Rural Health (UK CERH) is happy to share the 2022-year of "Excellence in Action". The report includes highlights from each of our community service programs, academic programs, research reports, publications, and community engagement efforts across rural Kentucky. Our work with rural communities across the Commonwealth allows eastern and western rural counties to work collectively to identify gaps in service, impact health equity, and increase access to health and social care. These activities are key to improving the health and wellbeing of Kentucky.



The year 2022 has met many challenges. The pandemic has continued to impact how we implement services in the community and how our employees interact in the work environment. Then heavy rain between July 25th and July 30th, 2022, brought deadly flash flooding, and devastating river flooding to eastern Kentucky and central Appalachia. Overwhelming amounts of rain and resultant flooding led to 43 deaths including two additional people dying from health complications. One person is still missing.

Widespread catastrophic damage affected many individuals, families, businesses, health care providers and their facilities. Flood waters led to costly damage to infrastructure in the region. Most of Eastern Kentucky lost electricity, water, internet and many secondary roads and bridges became impassible. Our community outreach was refocused as all employees and community partners assisted our employees, students, and community members affected by the flooding with the basic life necessities. Despite these challenges, our team of excellence kept projects moving forward and even grew and developed programs as needs were identified.

Empowering youth to create solutions through our newest program "Healthy Wellness in All Youth" (WAY) to provide leadership development and research training for rural Kentucky high school students. The program provides students with skills to identify and develop solutions to health and social issues at the school and community level. Congratulations to our six 2022 graduates!

Our Kentucky Office of Rural Health has provided support for and worked directly with providers, clinics, hospital administrators, policy makers, and other stakeholders to improve access to care during another pandemic year. They also added a new program in 2022, the Rural Veterans Health Access Program (RVHAP). The goal of this program is to increase services to improve health care for Kentucky's rural veterans.

Message from the Director

The Kentucky Homeplace program reached 5,019 underserved clients, provided 49,130 care coordination services to reduce the social determinants of health, and accessed medical supplies and medications valued at \$13,472,507 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022). Kentucky Homeplace community outreach was refocused in August and September as our community health workers were assisting their clients affected by the flooding with the basic life necessities, access to medical supplies, and access to social and health care.

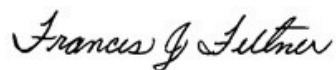
The College of Medicine East Kentucky Family Residency Program trains residents to meet the unique demands of a rural practice and provide quality care in rural settings. A total of 105 graduates from the program now provide access to health care.

The College of Health Science Doctor of Physical Therapy and Bachelor of Health Science with a Major in Medical Laboratory Science program continue providing graduates with the skills and knowledge to meet the workforce needs in rural Kentucky.

Appalachian Community Health Days continued working with our outreach team and community partners throughout 30 Eastern Kentucky counties and two West Virginia counties. These events bring services to hard to reach people who need access to preventative screenings and positive messaging to move from vaccine hesitancy to vaccine confidence. A special thank you to all our community partners in completing 90 events.

I hope you enjoy reading the 2022 “Excellence in Action” Annual Report. Thank you everyone! Together with our University of Kentucky, State, Nation, and most of all, our community partnerships, we will strive to improve the health and well-being of Kentucky.

Sincerely,



Frances J. Feltner, DNP, MSN, RN
Director, Center of Excellence in Rural Health





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ADMINISTRATION DIRECTORY

Administration Directory

UK CERH Administration

Director

Frances Feltner

Center Administrator

Larry Quillen

Administrative Support

Kristi Hudson

Business Office

Administrative Officer

Jodi Munsen

Administrative Staff Support (STEPS)

Peggy Combs

Account Clerks

Karen Pratt

Susan Robertson

Kathy Grigsby (STEPS)

Ellie Parcel

Sharon Whitaker

Facilities

Coordinator

Richard Mee

Maintenance

Chester Ritchie

Wallace Napier

James Holland

Bus Drivers

Jerry Baker

Nehemiah Johnson

Brenda Whitaker

Custodial

Angelina Fugate

Lorene Johnson

Sherry Wilkinson

James Gunter

James Mullins

Tammy Taulbee

Janice Coots

Security

Security Officer

John P. Stidham

Jack Combs

Information Technology

Field Service Analyst

Gary Gilbert

Jon Henrikson

A&RT Web Programmer Analyst

Willie Bates

**PROGRAMS
OF THE CENTER**

Healthy WAY

Staff Directory

Center Director

Frances Feltner

Research Inter-Disciplinary Director

Melissa Slone

Rural Project Manager

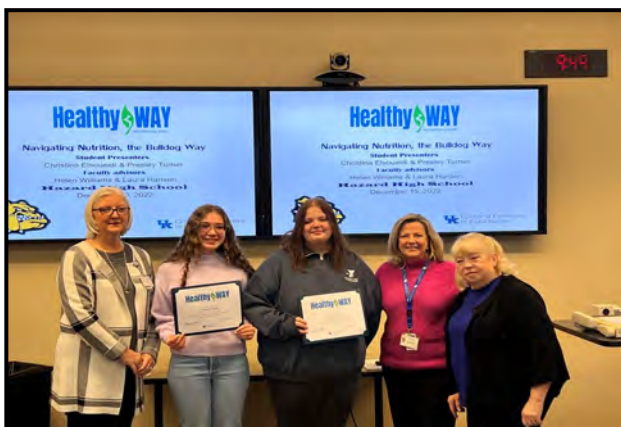
Beth Bowling

Empowering Youth to Create Solutions

Healthy WAY (Wellness in All Youth) is a signature program of the UK CERH that provides leadership development and research training for high school students to empower them with skills to identify and develop solutions to health and social issues at the school and community level. Student-led teams have the opportunity to work with school personnel and community partners to address real world concerns youth are facing today that impact their health and well-being. Project funding, hands-on research experience, technical support and research mentoring are available to student teams selected for this competitive program.

Congratulations 2022 Graduates!! Six student teams successfully implement their proposed projects for the 2021-2022 academic year.

1. Danville High School - "Undertow. A student magazine for creative escape"
2. Hazard High School - "Navigating Nutrition the Bulldog Way"
3. Logan County High School - "I'll be there for You Mental Health Awareness Campaign"
4. Morgan County High School - "Helping the Earth, One School at a Time"
5. Morgan County High School - "Protect our Students. Green Dot violence prevention strategy"
6. Pikeville High School - "Healthy Food Choices"



Healthy WAY

2023 Outlook

Congratulations to the student teams in our new cohort! Five student groups were selected during the competitive application process in the fall of 2022. Current projects are in progress, with an anticipated graduation date of April 5, 2023, when groups will present project outcomes at Appalachian Research Day: Come sit on the Porch.

1. Jackson City High School - "Decompression and Anxiety Reduction in Middle School Students through Yoga and Art Therapy"
2. Johnson Central High School - "Coping after COVID"
3. Martin County High School - "SMILE Club"
4. McCracken County High School - "Stop the Bleed"
5. Pikeville High School - "Be Safe when you Surf"

Healthy WAY will continue to explore opportunities in order to effectively implement the program in local school systems. Providing opportunities for leadership development and research training for high school students will remain a priority. In addition, maintaining connections with students, teachers, school systems, and community partners and continuing to develop these relationships will be essential to the success of Health WAY.



Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Staff Directory

Director:

Ernie Scott

Rural Project Manager:

Kayla Combs
Marcus Pigman
Michael McGill
Scott Helle
Lisa Garza
Caleb Williams
Matthew Coleman
Amelia Holliday
Janice Vance

Rural Program Specialist:

Anita Watts



The UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health serves as the federally-designated Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH). KORH serves as a resource for clinicians, students, community leaders, state agencies and legislators for information about rural health issues. KORH works to promote the improvement of rural health care through partnerships with public and private entities statewide and at the regional and national levels. This program provides a framework for linking small rural communities with local, state and federal resources while working toward long-term solutions to rural health issues. KORH programs are funded primarily through HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as well as through other state and federal agencies; including a 3:1 match support from the UK CERH.

KORH Programs

KORH is pleased to administer the following programs :

State Office of Rural Health Program

The State Office of Rural Health (SORH) encompasses programs that serve to strengthen health care delivery systems and improve health care access in rural areas of Kentucky. SORHs have a core charge of providing technical assistance to rural health organizations, information dissemination of rural relevant information to key stakeholders and rural health entities, and providing COORDINATION efforts for rural health activities to reduce duplication.

"The KORH has been valuable with communicating resources that are available for rural entities. They are also a great advocate for the rural communities and help to keep us informed of issues at the state and federal levels, while assisting in ways to provide better healthcare."

Annette Runyon, Vice President
The Medical Center at Franklin

Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Small Rural Hospital Improvement Grant Program

Supports 46 of Kentucky's small rural hospitals (49 beds or less) by coordinating activities aimed to, improve data collection for reports, boost quality outcomes, make everyone accountable across the continuum of care, and maintain accurate Prospective System billing and coding.

American Rescue Plan (ARP) COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Program

The SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation initiative provided one-time funding to support hospitals for testing education, establishment of alternate testing sites, test result processing, arranging for the processing of test results, and engaging in other activities within the CDC Community Mitigation Framework to address COVID-19 in rural communities. The KORH was awarded \$12,143,672 in funding to provide support to the projects of 47 participating Kentucky hospitals.

Kentucky State Loan Repayment Program

Through SLRP each state and territory can design programs that address the most pressing health care needs of their residents. Primary medical, mental/behavioral, and dental clinicians who receive awards through SLRP-funded programs pay off their student debt in exchange for working in areas with provider shortages.

New in 2022 the **Kentucky Behavioral Health Workforce Initiative (KBHWI)** is designed to help alleviate the growing shortage of Behavioral Health Professionals practicing in Kentucky. The initiative is supported with funds from the Kentucky State Loan Repayment Program.

Health Equity in Underserved Populations Across the Commonwealth of Kentucky Promotion Project

Beginning 2022, KORH will partner with The Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH), Office of Health Equity (OHE) to provide outreach and technical assistance surrounding a funding opportunity designed to ensure that all marginalized and vulnerable populations receive equitable access to healthcare services to optimize Kentuckian's health outcomes and reduce healthcare system barriers. Barriers to optimal care may be mitigated by understanding co-morbidity exacerbation, and other social determinants of health that impact health outcomes through education, outreach, and community engagement using best practices and evidenced based tools and interventions, with the intent of improving overall health outcomes across the Commonwealth.

Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Rural Hospital Flexibility Program

A cornerstone of KORH, Kentucky's Rural Hospital Flexibility (Flex) Grant Program seeks to stabilize the smallest and most vulnerable rural hospitals and to improve access to hospital-based care for rural populations. The purpose of this cooperative agreement is to enable state Flex programs to support critical access hospital (CAHs) in the areas of quality improvement, quality reporting, performance improvement, and benchmarking; to assist facilities seeking designation as a CAH; and to create a program to establish or expand the provision of rural EMS. During 2022, the Flex program continued to provide support to Kentucky's 28 CAHs and the communities they serve.

Committed to the Heart Initiative—Flex EMS Supplemental Funding

Through a competitive application process, Kentucky was selected as one of eight recipients to receive a three-year supplemental Flex funding award (2019-2022) targeted to improve access to quality emergency medical care in rural communities. This supplemental funding is expected to assist in addressing the challenges faced by rural EMS agencies, while contributing to the rural EMS evidence base. KORH's proposal was centered on the phased rollout of CARES (Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival) as well as increasing bystander CPR at the community level and AED registry promotion among targeted communities. The project will specifically focus on improving out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest rates among those rural counties served by one of the state's 28 designated Critical Access Hospitals.

National Health Service Corps

KORH is under contract with the Kentucky Primary Care Office to promote the federal National Health Service Corps (NHSC) programs and provide technical assistance to clinicians, students and facilities across Kentucky applying for and participating in those programs. NHSC programs offer scholarship support to health professions students and loan repayment awards to clinicians as a way to encourage service in communities with limited access to health care.

Kentucky RHC Initiative

KORH continues to serve as a trusted resource for Kentucky Rural Health Clinics (RHC). The KORH facilitates the Kentucky RHC Summit, regional RHC networks, peer-to-peer consultations, coordinates educational opportunities, mock surveys, and offers scholarships for national meetings related to RHC performance. KORH staff are well-informed of changes in RHC policy, reimbursement and compliance and share applicable information by way of a dedicated RHC list serve.

Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Kentucky EMS Leadership Academy

Now in its third year, the Kentucky EMS Leadership Academy is designed to provide the Commonwealth's EMS professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to help them succeed in leadership roles—now and in the future. The academy combines interactive, webinar-based training sessions with one-on-one mentoring from veteran EMS administrators.

Elder Wellness Enrichment Initiative

KORH's Elder Wellness Enrichment Initiative provides funding of up to nonprofit rural health care organizations or community-based organizations to create or enhance services for older adults – to help them age in place in rural Kentucky. Projects were required to be conducted in collaboration with at least one of the following rural stakeholders located in an applicant's community or region: a critical access hospital, a small rural hospital, a rural health clinic, a federally qualified health center, a local health department or an EMS service.

Kentucky Rural Funders Initiative

Launched in 2022, activities include Finding Funding in Kentucky- A monthly webinar series that offers an inside look at funding agencies that support rural health projects in Kentucky and the development of the Kentucky Rural Health Funders Network.

Rural Emergency Hospital (REH) Designation Outreach

Newly funded as a supplement to the 22-23 Flex grant, KORH has been commissioned to provide REH education and outreach across the Commonwealth. The KORH will partner with Wintergreen who has developed a focused educational series on the REH designation as well as an in-depth financial impact assessment for individual hospitals that can be utilized as a practical, in-state "case study" to build out the educational curriculum to augment Wintergreen's didactic resources and facilitate outreach efforts. Our approach is a blend of general education as well as individual REH case studies that will function as vignettes for the broader Kentucky CAH community.

Rural Veterans Health Access Program (RVHAP)

Launched in 2022, this program provides funding to states to work with providers and other partners to improve access to needed health care services and to improve the coordination of care for veterans living in rural areas. Award recipients can implement a variety of strategies to improve the capacity of critical access hospitals and other rural health care organizations to provide services that meet the needs of veterans living in rural areas. Award recipients can also assist providers in making connections to the Department of Veterans Affairs system to coordinate care for rural veterans using community health care providers as well as the VA system.

Expanding Health Care Access for Rural Veterans Project

Funds innovative projects that seek to create, enhance, or increase services that are intended to improve health care for Kentucky's rural veterans.

Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Awards Presented

Kentucky Rural Health Clinic Impact Award

The annual award is presented during the Kentucky RHC Summit. Award recipients are selected based on their unselfishness, compassion and cooperative attitude in seeking ways to make lasting contributions to bettering rural health care. Their work should expand beyond the local community and have a demonstrated effect on rural health at state and national levels. This includes, but is not limited to, contributions to rural health policy, legislation, health care and health programs.

Elsie Crawford, the vice president of operations and director of nursing at the Wilkens Medical Group with clinics in Williamsburg, KY and Jellico TN, was awarded the 2022 Kentucky Rural Health



Kentucky EMS Provider of the Year Award

The annual award recognizes an EMS provider who works or volunteers at a rural Kentucky EMS service and who demonstrates exemplary pre-hospital patient care and dedication to his/her community. The award is presented during National EMS Week.

Jim Thomas of Marion County EMS was named the 2022 Rural Kentucky EMS Provider of the Year. The annual award recognizes someone who works or volunteers at a rural Kentucky EMS service and who demonstrates exemplary pre-hospital patient care and dedication to their community.

One nominator wrote of Jim: "He is absolutely dedicated to his community. He wants nothing more than to serve his community to the best of his ability. ... Little known fact [about Jim] he doesn't tell most people, but he follows up every time with the family or the patient after every single run to check their progress in recovery. This is huge in EMS because, typically, once we turn over care, we don't know our patients' outcome unless we know the patient personally."



Kentucky Office of Rural Health

KORH in the Community

Through the provision of direct and indirect technical assistance, the coordination of rural health resources, and the dissemination of rural relevant information, KORH is continually engaged with the community in every aspect of its work.

The mission of KORH is to support the health and well-being of Kentuckians by promoting access to rural health services. KORH works directly with clinicians, clinic and hospital administrators, policymakers and other stakeholders to improve the accessibility of health care services for the Commonwealth's rural and underserved residents. The office connects communities and health care organizations to local, state and federal resources while working toward long-term solutions to financial, quality improvement and workforce challenges.

Information Dissemination

The *KORH Weekly Update*, a weekly e-newsletter that contains rural health news, announcements, educational offerings, and funding opportunities, is released each Monday morning.

The Bridge, a quarterly publication that highlights best practices and innovative solutions to Kentucky's rural health challenges, debuted in January 2015. Each issue spotlights the programs and individuals that exemplify innovation or excellence across the Commonwealth. The magazine—which is distributed in both print and electronic forms—is a collaboration between the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health and KORH.

2023 Outlook

KORH continues to develop programmatic activities based on the needs of rural stakeholders within the guidelines of funders. The goal of maintaining adequate funding for KORH programs amidst the changing political environment remains an area of constant focus. KORH continues to explore additional opportunities in order to effectively broaden programming while remaining true to the original mission and purpose.

"Healthcare policy is easy to understand and utilize when you have this great resource which is the KY Office of Rural Health and their extremely knowledgeable staff on your side. Rapidly changing Healthcare environment is complex to say the least, The Ky Office of rural Health has made this maze very navigable and calmed my nerves so many times."

Teresa J Robitaille, RN, CPHQ
Director of Quality/ Performance Improvement
Livingston Hospital and Healthcare Services

Kentucky Homeplace

Staff Directory

Principal Investigator

Frances Feltner

Director

Mace Baker

Rural Project Manager

Michaela Amburgey

Rural Outreach Coordinator

Josh Adams

Community Health Workers

Amanda Dials

Amanda Goolman

Annette Saylor

Ashley Combs

Ashley Francis

Austin Carnahan

Austyn Feltner

Barb Justice

Carole Frazier

Chyna Smith

Darla Shepherd

Elizabeth Smith

Heather Bailey

Jowana Jackson

Judy Bailey

Kala Gilliam

Katherina Hamilton

Kathy Slusher

Kimberly Napier

Kimberly Smith

Kyle Burnett

Linda Colwell

Matt Hammons

Misty Rambo

Natasha Thomas

Pollyanna Gilbert

Regina Blevins

Samantha Bowman

Shirley Prater

Tim Marcum



Kentucky Homeplace

Funding for the program is a joint collaboration of the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, University of Kentucky, and UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health.

Kentucky Homeplace is recognized at the national, state and local levels as a Community Health Worker (CHW) model that works. Residents of rural Kentucky have unusually high levels of certain diseases,

including cancer, heart disease, hypertension, asthma, and diabetes. Lifestyle choices, environmental factors, inadequate health insurance and general lack of understanding of the healthcare system are often cited as contributing factors. To help address these issues, Kentucky Homeplace began in 1994 as a demonstration project in 14 Appalachian counties. After more than two decades, Kentucky Homeplace CHWs have linked tens of thousands of rural Kentuckians with medical, social, and environmental services they otherwise may have gone without. Today the Kentucky Homeplace geographic service area includes 30 Appalachian counties in eastern Kentucky. Eligibility for Kentucky Homeplace is not based on income, though nearly all clients are between 100% - 133% of the federal poverty level. All services are offered at no charge to the clients.



Mission

The mission of Kentucky Homeplace is to provide access to medical, social, and environmental services for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

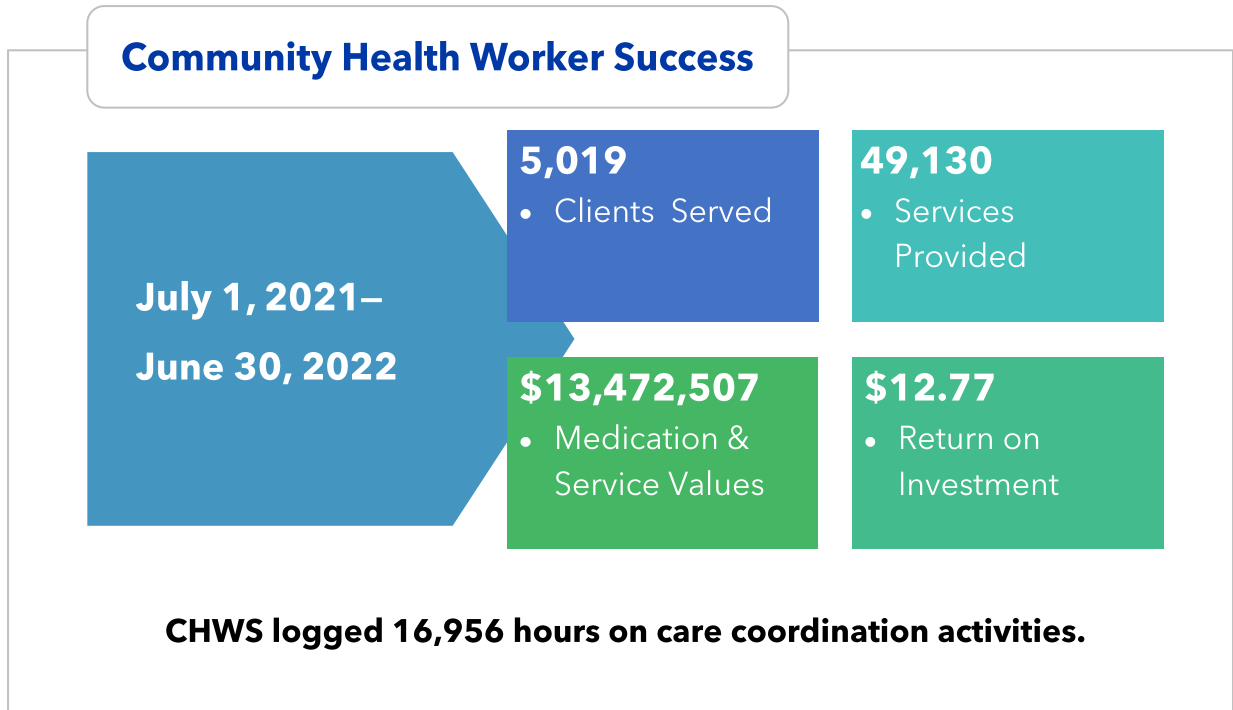
Vision & Goals

The goal of Kentucky Homeplace is to educate Kentuckians how to identify risk factors and use preventative measures to become a healthier people with knowledge and skills to access the healthcare and social systems.

"I have received a lot of help from my community health worker. I first came in for help with diabetic medication, my sister told me about her and the program. She was then able to help me with glasses and helping me get my long-term disability."

- Kentucky Homeplace Client

Kentucky Homeplace



KY Homeplace - Client Encounter

As most people have noticed electric bills across Kentucky are at a high. This especially brings hardship to our elderly/fixed income clients. I had a client to call me in tears. She said she just received her electric bill and it was over \$850.00 for one month. She has about a 1200 square foot home and she said there just was no way she could ever pay that and be able to purchase her medication for the month or food. I had her gather all documents needed and I picked them up off of her porch on my way to the post office since she is unable to drive and had no fax machine and didn't know how to do it on her phone. I then made copies and took them to the LIHEAP office across the hall from my office. At this time there had been a transition of workers at that office and no one really knew what to do to help and here it was in the crisis time for them. I contacted the main office and spoke with a worker there, she asked me to scan everything to her and she would take care of it. So this is what I did. Always before this client was over the income guidelines for ever getting help, but due to the Crisis guidelines she qualified and was gifted \$650 off of her monthly electric bill and I was told to get a copy of her water bill and she could get that paid as well. All of this was done and when I called the client to let her know what all was going to happen, she simply just sat there in silence. I asked a few times ma'am, are you there, are you ok? She just took a few deep breathes and said, this has saved her life this month. She said she didn't know how to repay me and I told her no worries this was my job and we didn't want anything in return, I was just glad we could help her. She called back several times that month just thanking me for being so kind and taking the time out to research help for her and her need.

Quarterly Reports client encounters can be viewed at: [Center of Excellence in Rural Health | Quarterly Reports | University of Kentucky College of Medicine \(uky.edu\)](#)

Kentucky Homeplace

Community Health Worker Trainings

Kentucky Homeplace CHWs receive training in several areas to meet the needs of their clients.

- Medicaid/KCHIP Assisters
- KHBE State-Based Marketplace (SBM) Certification for Kynectors
- Basic Life Support Provider
- Responsible Conduct of Research
- Kentucky Prescription Assistance Program system training
- Medicare Open Enrollment and You
- Certified Community Health Worker Continuing Education Webinar
- KYNECT Community Health Resources
- Mental Health First Aid
- Personal Protective Equipment Training
- Vaccine with Confidence
- Building Partnerships to Promote Health Equity
- Healthy Homes
- Promoting Resilience: Trauma-Informed Strategies for Community Health Workers
- Introduction to Disability and Health
- Disability and Health Resource Training

Kentucky Homeplace in the Community

Kentucky Homeplace CHWs are actively involved in their communities. The following is a sample of the types of events they participated in during this year.

- Diabetic coalitions
- Diabetic shoe clinics
- Child abuse prevention meetings
- Operation Unite
- Healthy Choices for Healthy Communities
- Kentucky Association of Community Health Workers
- Cancer awareness events
- Food drives
- Health fairs
- Interagency meetings across service area
- Appalachian Community Health Days
- Community Impact Council
- Remote Area Medical

Kentucky Homeplace

Appalachian Community Health Days

The UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health received a grant award entitled “Increasing the COVID-19 Vaccination Rates in Rural Appalachia Kentucky”. It is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). As a result of this award, Kentucky Homeplace Community Health Workers are partnering with the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health and USA Drone Port to host Appalachian Community Health Days. The mission is to intensify efforts at the local level to increase COVID-19 vaccination rates in their service area. Dr. Fran Feltner, DNP, director of the UK CERH and principal investigator of Kentucky Homeplace said “Leveraging the expertise of community health workers and our many valued community partners, our intent is to meet people where they are to work through barriers, alleviate fears, dispel myths, educate and assess any needs people may have that could be holding them back from being vaccinated.” The chart shows services provided to individuals through September 30, 2021. The work has been presented at webinars hosted by the National Rural Health Association, Kentucky Cabinet for Health & Family Services, and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Office of Minority Health.

Services Provided	Individual
Health Screenings	46
COVID-19 Vaccination	44
COVID-19 Booster	701
A1C Screening	10
Stroke Risk Screening	181
Grand Total	982

Community-Based Programs

Community health workers are trained to facilitate community-based health education and coaching workshops to assist people with chronic illness to achieve improvements in nutrition, medication use, exercise, communication, decision-making and more.

2023 Outlook

Kentucky Homeplace will continue efforts to obtain sustainable funding in order to meet their mission to provide access to medical, social, and environmental services for the citizens of the Commonwealth. CHWs will continue to provide education, coaching, and services with the goal of improving the health of their clients. Kentucky Homeplace was awarded additional funding from the CDC to improve health equity and vaccine confidence through the KY Health Equity Grant & Community Health Worker Model Expansion grant. This allowed the program to expand and hire 10 additional community health workers.

The Healthcare Worker Loan Relief Program of the Commonwealth

The Healthcare Worker Loan Relief Program of the Commonwealth (HWLRPC), administered by UK CERH, is a new funding opportunity designed to increase the recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals practicing in underserved areas of Kentucky. Participants in the program are required to work 24-40 hours a week, up to 4,160 hours over a two to three year period.

The foundation of the HWLRPC was established during the 2022 convening of the Kentucky General Assembly as HB 573, sponsored by Rep. Kimberly Moser. The program was created to align with the existing federally funded state loan repayment program and expand eligibility to additional healthcare specialists. HWLRPC is geared toward trained and licensed professionals who provide direct patient care in one of the program's eligible disciplines and specialties, including physicians, optometrists, ophthalmologists, audiologists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives, registered nurses, dentists, registered dental hygienists, licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional clinical counselors, health service psychologists, marriage and family therapists, psychiatric nurse specialists, alcohol and substance use disorder counselors, pharmacists and additional specialties are considered.

The first application cycle opened up in October of 2022 and closed in November of 2022. The first group of healthcare professionals will be announced in January of 2023.



THE BRIDGE

The Bridge

The Bridge, a collaborative effort between the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health and the Kentucky Office of Rural Health, is a quarterly publication that focuses on rural health issues in the Commonwealth – spotlighting individuals and programs that exemplify innovation or excellence across Kentucky's rural health landscape.

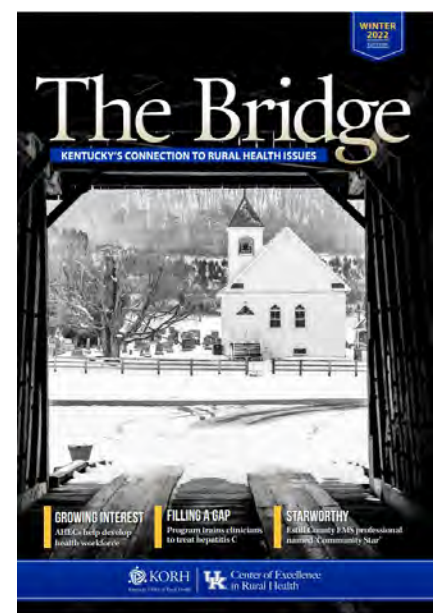
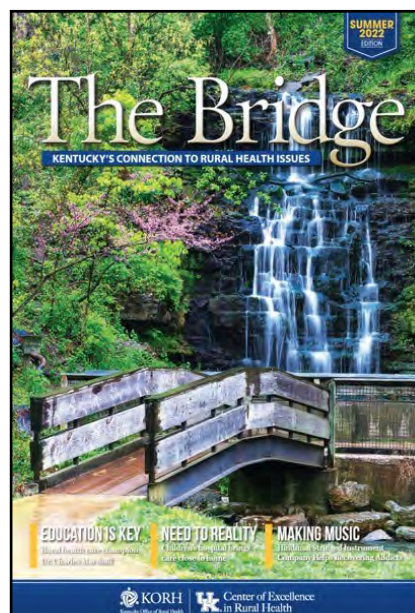
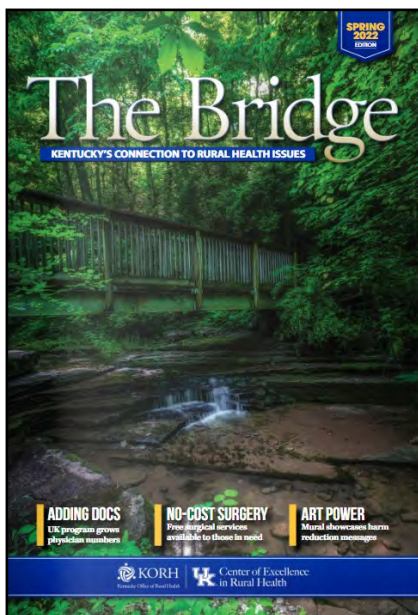
Stories in *The Bridge*, which is available in both electronic and print forms, highlight best practices and successes from across the Commonwealth. Recurring articles spotlight initiatives at hospitals and clinics, rural health champions, and National Health Service Corps participants.

The Bridge targets health care providers, educators, researchers, leaders, community members and others who work in the rural health care arena or have interest in rural health issues, innovations and best practices.

The themes and features contained in each issue of *The Bridge* are developed in consultation with an advisory board and are based on current and future rural health issues, events and concerns. Suggestions for story topics and ideas for *The Bridge* are welcomed and encouraged. Stories are written by staff members and freelance writers.

The Bridge has an annual outreach of nearly 12,000.

The Bridge is funded in part by federal Health Resources and Services Administration Primary Care Office grant funds.



RECOGNITION

Dissemination

Presentations

UK CERH faculty and staff continue to submit abstracts for conferences and workshops that are directly related to our work. These presentations allow us to share work being completed at the Center and to increase our networking connections.

Regional
(Appalachian)
1

State
16

National
6

Regional

1. Feltner, F. (2022, April). You can't get there from here. Presentation for Appalachian Health Summit, Pigeon Forge TN

State

1. Bowling, B., Baker, W. M., Feltner, F. (2022, Nov). New Healthcare Career Pipeline Opportunities for Rural High School Students. Presentation at the Kentucky Rural Health Association Conference, Somerset, KY.
2. Feltner, F., Kitzman, P., Hudson, K. (2022, Nov). Engaging Rural High School Students in a New Program that Meets the Needs of Individuals with Disabilities. Presentation at the Kentucky Rural Health Association Conference, Somerset, KY.
3. Garza, L. (2022, Nov). Creative Solutions for the Rural Workforce. Presentation at the Kentucky Rural Health Association Conference, Somerset, KY.
4. Howard, S. & Pettyjohn, S. (2022, Nov). COVID-19 Stakeholder Experiences in KY. Presentation at the Kentucky Rural Health Association Conference, Somerset, KY.
5. Slone, M. (2022, Nov). Appalachian Community Health Days. Rural Health Webinar Series.
6. Slone, M. (2022, Nov) . Research Poster Moderator: Connecting Research to Policy. Presentation at the Kentucky Rural Health Association Conference, Somerset, KY.
7. Slone, M., Smith, C. & Smith, K. (2022, Oct). CHW Response & Resilience: Appalachian Community Health Days. Presentation at Kentucky Association of Community Health Workers Conference, Lexington, KY.
8. Baker, M. (2022, Oct). CHW Supervisor Panel. Presentation at Kentucky Association of Community Health Workers Conference, Lexington, KY.
9. Garza, L. (Oct. 2022). Small Hospital Improvement Program: SHIP Captain's Log. Informational Webinar.

Dissemination

10. Bowman, S. (2022, Oct). A day in the life of a CHW. Presentation at Kentucky Association of Community Health Workers Conference, Lexington, KY.
11. Garza, L. (2022, July). Kentucky Behavioral Health Workforce Initiative, Informative Webinar.
12. Coleman, M. (2022, May). Rural Data and Kentucky Funding Resources. Presented at Grant Writing Workshop, Berea, KY.
13. Slone, M. (2022, April). Bolstering Leadership Engagement to Community Coalitions in Rural Appalachia. College of Social Work, Training Resource Center, Virtual Event.
14. Pigman, M. (2022, April). Kentucky Office of Rural Health Overview. Presented at the RHC Update Seminar, Somerset, KY.
15. Feltner, F. & Scott, E. (2022, February). Kentucky Office of Rural Health. Presentation for the House Budget Review Subcommittee on Health and Family Services, Frankfort, KY
16. A Vision of Imaging Referral in Physical Therapist Practice in Kentucky. (2022, Sept). American Physical Therapy Association-Kentucky Annual Conference, Bowling Green, KY.

National

1. Feltner, F. & Slone, M. (2022, Dec). Appalachian Community Health Days. Presented at HRSA Office Hours, virtual presentation.
2. Helle, S. (2022, Oct). EMS Learning Community. Presented at the NOSORH Learning Community Webinar
3. Helle, S. (2022, April). The Value of EMS Leadership Training and Education. Presented at the National Virtual EMS & Care Conference.
4. Kitzman, P., Jackson, J., Chelsa, L, Hudson, K, & Slone, M. (2022, March). Impact of Biases, Misconceptions, and Stereotypes on Healthcare and Community Engagement for Individuals with Disabilities. APTA CSM. (Blue Ribbon for Social Responsibility Winner)
5. Hazle, C. Boyles R. (2022, Oct). Do You Trust Your Hands or the Images? The Peripheral Joints. American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists Annual Conference, San Diego
6. Moser, D., Lennie, T., Miller, J., & Feltner, F. (2022, Nov). Effects of Financial Status On Engagement in Self-Care in Rural Caregivers with Cardiovascular Risk Factors. Presented at the American Heart Association Annual Scientific Sessions 2022



Dissemination



Publications

- Moser, D., Chung, M., Schuman, D., Biddle, M., Feltner, F., Mudd, G., Miller, J., Hammash, M., Schooler, M., & Rayens, M.(2022). Psychometric Properties of the Patient Activation Measure in Family Caregivers of Patients with Chronic Illnesses. *Nursing Research*.
- Slone, M.; Carman, A.; & Feltner, F.; (2022). Developing a Public Health Improvement Consortium in Appalachian Kentucky: Harnessing the Power of the Local Collective. *Journal of Healthcare for the Poor and Underserved*, 1114-1112. doi: 10.1353/hpu.2022.0085
- Slone, M. (2022). Bolstering Leadership Engagement to Community Coalitions in Rural Appalachia. University of Kentucky College of Social Work Capstone Project. UKnowledge. https://uknowledge.uky.edu/csw_grad_reports/3/
- Hazle C. *Spinal Traction in Modalities for Therapeutic Intervention* (7th ed). Bellew J, Nolan T, Michlovitz S. (eds); F.A. Davis Publishers, January 2022.

Media

UK CERH NEWS

Great Health Divide, Community health workers help provide 'missing link' in EKY

February 10, 2022

Garrett Wymer

WYMT-TV

<https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.wkyt.com%2F2022%2F02%2F10%2Fgreat-health-divide-community-health-workers-help-provide-missing-link-eky%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cbeth.bowling%40uky.edu%7Cd2fca4c8da144ff16c6708d9ed91d165%7C2b30530b69b64457b818481cb53d42ae%7C0%7C0%7C637802033953149569%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C2000&sd=qlEdQgK0YwozNpSf61rpwkWqQo9P%2BY8%2B5QGjjYuTyI8%3D&reserved=0>

CARAT-TOP Students Make Park More Accessible

Summer/Fall 2022

Exceptional Family Magazine

https://issuu.com/lexingtonfamily/docs/ef_22_sf_--_english_3

MLS Scholarship

March 30, 2022

Evan Hatter

WYMT-TV

<https://www.wymt.com/2022/03/31/arh-offer-scholarship-opportunity/>

Drones making a difference in the lives of Eastern Kentuckians

May 18, 2022

Dakota Makres

WYMT-TV

<https://www.wymt.com/2022/05/18/drones-making-difference-lives-eastern-kentuckians/>

UK CERH to host Kentucky Rural Telehealth Summit in June

May 20, 2022

Beth Bowling

UKNow

<https://uknow.uky.edu/uk-healthcare/uk-cerh-host-kentucky-rural-telehealth-summit-june>

Agenda and Student Discount Rate Announced for Kentucky Rural Telehealth Summit

June 3, 2022

Beth Bowling

UKNow

<https://uknow.uky.edu/uk-happenings/agenda-and-student-discount-rate-announced-kentucky-rural-telehealth-summit>

Media

Free medical care coming to Hazard for two days

June 8, 2022

Zak Hawke

WYMT-TV

<https://www.wymt.com/2022/06/08/free-medical-care-coming-hazard-two-days/>

Kentucky Office of Rural Health Seeks Applications for Elder Wellness Enrichment Initiative Grant

June 24, 2022

Mike McGill

UKNow

<https://uknow.uky.edu/research/kentucky-office-rural-health-seeks-applications-elder-wellness-enrichment-initiative-grant>

Perry County Students Improve Accessibility at Local Park Through UK's CARAT-TOP Program

July 5, 2022

Beth Bowling

UKNow

<https://uknow.uky.edu/uk-healthcare/perry-county-students-improve-accessibility-local-park-through-uks-carat-top-program>

UK, UK HealthCare focusing relief efforts in Eastern Kentucky

August 3, 2022

Hillary Smith

UKNow

<https://uknow.uky.edu/campus-news/uk-uk-healthcare-focusing-relief-efforts-eastern-kentucky>

UK HealthCare providers working to provide for their communities after historic flooding

August 11, 2022

Hillary Smith

UKNow

<https://uknow.uky.edu/uk-healthcare/uk-healthcare-providers-working-provide-their-communities-after-historic-flooding>

Student-run program helps provide medical equipment to Eastern Kentuckians impacted by flooding

August 25, 2022

Hillary Smith

UKNow

<https://uknow.uky.edu/uk-happenings/student-run-program-helps-provide-medical-equipment-eastern-kentuckians-impacted>



Media



Kentucky Homeplace, WellCare of Kentucky partner to distribute free gas cards

Note: this story appeared across numerous media outlets

September 22, 2022

Hillary Smith

UKNow

<https://medicine.uky.edu/centers/ruralhealth/news/kentucky-homeplace-wellcare-kentucky-partner-2022-09-22t08-21-49>

UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health accepting applications for new health care worker loan relief program

November 3, 2022

Beth Bowling

UKNow

<https://uknow.uky.edu/uk-healthcare/uk-center-excellence-rural-health-accepting-applications-new-health-care-worker-loan>

Awards and Honors

Amanda Goolman

Extraordinary Contribution Award

This award is to honor an individual who has made an extraordinary contribution to the community health worker profession in Kentucky.

Awarded by Kentucky Association of Community Health Workers.



Ramona Carper



Kingston Award for Excellence in Teaching

This award recognizes faculty for outstanding contributions and long-term consistent excellence in teaching.

The Kingston Award was established in recognition of Richard "Dick" Kingston's creativity and innovation in education.

**NORTH FORK VALLEY
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTER**

North Fork Valley Community Health Center

UK North Fork Valley Community Health Center (UK NFVCHC) is a joint venture between the UK College of Medicine and the North Fork Valley Community Health Center Board. It is the first community health center in Kentucky to be affiliated with a university and family medicine residency training program. It is located in Hazard at the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health.

Services Provided:

- Primary care
- Dental (Fixed and Mobile)
- Psychological services
- Nutritional counseling
- Pharmacy
- Laboratory



June Buchanan Medical Clinic

The UK June Buchanan Medical Clinic is focused on the health and well-being of all members of Knott and surrounding counties. June Buchanan operates under the direction of the UK NFVCHC leadership.

Services Provided:

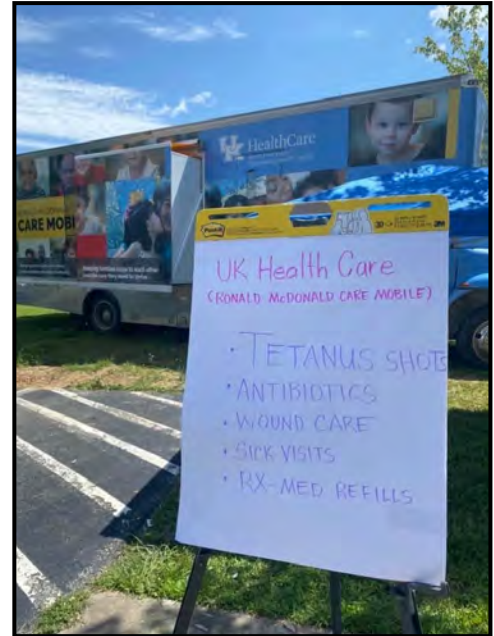
- Primary care
- Behavior health
- Dietitian services
- Discount pharmacy program
- Lab services with next day results
- X-Ray



North Fork Valley Community Health Center

The July flooding had a large impact on NFVCHC, June Buchanan Clinic, and their communities of service. The two clinics with support from the Center and volunteers spent several days out in the communities offering aid. They traveled around to different communities and handed out hygiene items and food as they provided basic wound care, tetanus vaccinations and medical care.

The June Buchanan Clinic received extensive damage from the flooding and was closed for four months while repairs were being made. During the closure staff and doctors from June Buchanan continued to care for clients at the North Fork Valley Community Center in Hazard, KY and through mobile medical clinics. June Buchanan reopened on December 5th, 2022.



The river in front of the June Buchanan building the morning following the flooding.



Inside the June Buchanan Clinic following the flooding.



ACADEMICS

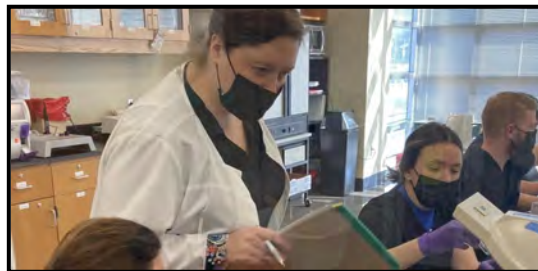
- Academic Programs
- Student Awards
- Student Events

 Center of Excellence
in Rural Health

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Current Academic Programs

The UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health's academic offerings are focused on curbing health professional shortages within rural Kentucky. Regional workforce analyses are conducted periodically to project the need to add or change academic offerings to meet market demands. Long-term tracking of the Center's graduates indicate approximately 80% of graduates work in rural communities.



Academic Programs

UK College of Health Sciences

- Bachelor of Health Sciences with a Major in Medical Laboratory Science
- Doctor of Physical Therapy

UK College of Social Work

- Bachelor of Arts in Social Work
- Master of Social Work

UK College of Medicine

- East Kentucky Family Medical Residency

Faculty / Staff Directory

UK College of Health Sciences

Physical Therapy	Faculty	Student Affairs	Academic Support
	Ramona Carper	Angie Phipps	Services Director
	Chuck Hazle	Admin. Support	Marjorie Hall
	Charles Marshall	Yasman Olinger	
Medical Laboratory Science	Associate Director		
	Bianna Music		

UK College of Social Work

Social Work	Faculty	Coordinator
	Melissa Slone	Jessica Williamson

UK College of Medicine

East Kentucky Family Medical Residency	Faculty	Coordinators
	Wanda Taylor	Heather Pennington
	Jordan Adams	Stephanie Shepherd
	Key Douthitt	
	Juanita Fraan Hughes	
	Brittany Harlow	

College of Health Sciences

Bachelor of Health Sciences with a Major in Medical Laboratory Science

Medical laboratory scientists help improve lives by providing essential clinical information to health care providers. They are responsible for assuring reliable results that contribute to the prevention, diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of physiological and pathological conditions. Laboratory tests are extremely valuable and contribute up to 70 percent of medical decisions made by health care providers.

**MLS
Students**

4 Admitted in 2022

12 Total Enrolled in 2022

8 Graduated in 2022

80 Total Graduates

Student Impact in the Community

MLS students volunteered and participated in:

- AHEC Summer Camp
- AHEC Career Fairs: Paintsville & Harlan. MLS Students provided information about the career to local High School students with hands on activities.
- Eastern Kentucky Flood Relief



"The UK Medical Laboratory Science program at Hazard has already changed my life in so many ways. I am grateful to be a part of this life changing program close to home where I can complete my Bachelor's degree in 16 months. The staff has been so welcoming and they are THERE for you. It feels reassuring to have someone in every corner that's there to help you and want you to succeed. With small class sizes, excellent professors, and state of the art facilities I am receiving the best education possible. I get to do real science and help people all at the same time. It's the best of both worlds for me. This program has given me hope for a future that I've been dreaming about for years. I cannot wait to see where this journey leads me and all of the great things I will accomplish doing what I love."

- Michael Reid Marshall,
UK MLS Class of 2022

Expected Job Growth

Employment of medical laboratory technologists and technicians are projected to grow 11 percent from 2020 to 2030, faster than the average for all occupations. An increase in the aging population is expected to lead to a greater need to diagnose medical conditions, such as cancer or type 2 diabetes, through laboratory procedures. ([Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook](#))

College of Health Sciences

Doctor of Physical Therapy

According to the American Physical Therapy Association website (www.apta.org), "Physical therapists (PTs) are highly-educated, licensed health care professionals who can help patients reduce pain and improve or restore mobility - in many cases without expensive surgery and often reducing the need for long-term use of prescription medications and their side effects.

Physical therapists can teach patients how to prevent or manage their condition so that they will achieve long-term health benefits. PTs examine each individual and develop a plan, using treatment techniques to promote the ability to move, reduce pain, restore function, and prevent disability. In addition, PTs work with individuals to prevent the loss of mobility before it occurs by developing fitness- and wellness-oriented programs for healthier and more active lifestyles."



**DPT
Students**

18 Admitted in 2022

52 Total Enrolled in 2022

18 Graduated in 2021

246 Total Graduates

Student Impact in the Community

DPT students volunteered and participated in:

- AHEC Summer Camp
- For Pete's Sake organ donor campaign
- Project CARAT durable equipment drive
- Kentucky Special Olympics–EKU Campus
- RAM Event Hazard, Kentucky
- Eastern Kentucky Flood Relief

"Over the last couple years, the DPT Hazard program has affected my life in several ways. I have gained knowledge and experience in a tight knit environment which has given me the tools to take on every challenge I have faced. But more importantly, I have become a part of a community that I can always rely on to give me support, encouragement, and guidance. I will forever value the friends I have made, and the time I have spent in the DPT Hazard program."

- Davoud Saghaian, Class President, UK DPT of 2022

Expected Job Growth

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects employment of physical therapists to grow 21 percent from 2020 to 2030, much faster than the average for all occupations. Demand for physical therapy services will come from the aging baby boomers, who are staying more active later in life. In addition, physical therapists will be needed to treat people with mobility issues stemming from chronic conditions, such as diabetes or obesity. ([Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook](#))

College of Social Work

College of Social Work Online Format

In 2020, the College of Social Work BASW and MSW programs were offered completely online. The remaining students affiliated with the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health graduated in May 2022. The number of students admitted and enrolled in 2021 reflect this change on the Hazard campus.

Bachelors of Arts in Social Work

A career in social work offers the opportunity to help groups of people in many different settings. As the only helping profession that emphasizes both human well-being and social justice, social workers strive to empower others to make the changes they desire in their lives and advocate to bring about social change on both individual and community levels.

**BASW
Students**

Program Moved Online

3 Total Enrolled in 2022

3 Graduated in 2022

54 Total Graduates

Student Impact in the Community

- 500 hours in various agencies throughout eastern Kentucky in 2022.

“The BASW program at the center gave me the opportunity to further my education at a great educational institute as a non traditional student. As a 40 year old wife and mother, there was no way I could leave my home and family to go to Lexington to attend the University of Kentucky. The Center gave me this chance and I am now and forever grateful for that experience”

- Christie Adams, BASW Class of 2022

College of Social Work

Master of Social Work

The College of Social Work at the University of Kentucky offers an innovative and exciting MSW curriculum based on ethical imperatives, research to practice and sound assessments and interventions. The program's aim is to equip MSW graduates for the tasks and responsibilities they will encounter in professional Social Work practice.

**MSW
Students**

Program Moved Online

6 Total Enrolled in 2022

6 Graduated in 2022

263 Total Graduates

Student Impact in the Community

- Over 1,800 community service hours in various agencies throughout eastern Kentucky in 2022.

"The UK Center of Excellence and it's wonderful staff made it possible for me to obtain my master's in Social Work while working full-time and being a mom. Their support and willingness to help were not deterred during the pandemic and they are always available to resolve any concerns in a quick and efficient manner even after graduation

- Zece Davidson MSW Class of 2022

Expected Job Growth

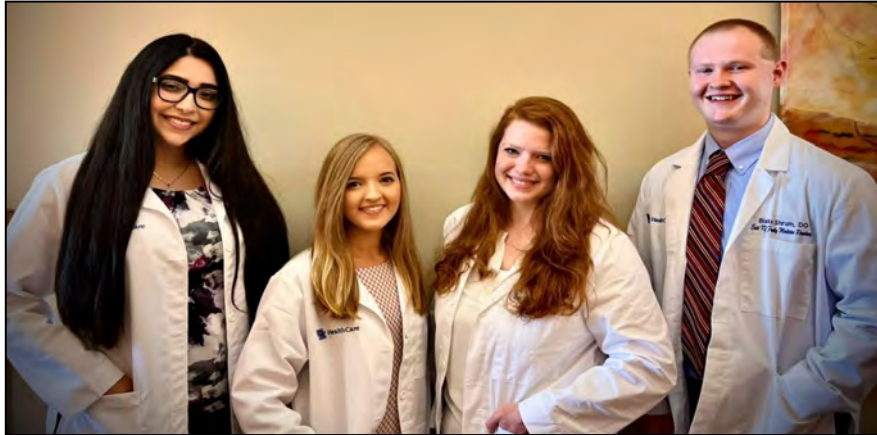
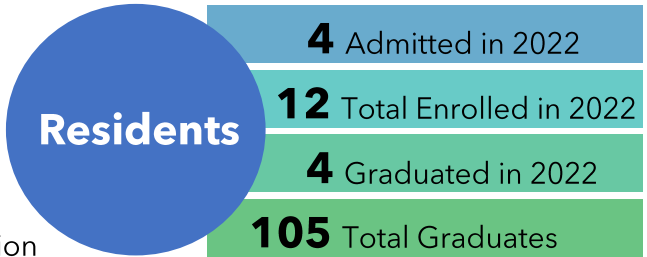
Overall employment of social workers is projected to grow 12 percent from 2020 to 2030. Increased demand for healthcare and social services will drive demand for social workers, but growth will vary by specialization. From 2020 to 2030, employment of child, family, and school social workers is projected to grow 13 percent; employment of healthcare social workers is projected to grow 13 percent; and employment of mental health and substance abuse social workers is projected to grow 15 percent. ([Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook](#))

College of Medicine

East Kentucky Family Medicine Residency

The UK East Kentucky Family Medicine Residency Program selects and trains residents to meet the unique demands of a rural practice and provide quality care in rural settings. The residency program is a community-based, university-administered program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education and American Osteopathic Association and approved for four residents in each postgraduate year. Applicants with an interest in rural practice and with ties to rural Kentucky are strongly considered for admission to the residency. The result is that the majority of graduates have chosen rural practice, mainly in Kentucky.

The UK North Fork Valley Community Health Center, the residency's model clinic, emphasizes quality of care in an environment that provides multi-disciplinary education to residents, medical students, nurse practitioner students and other health care professionals. The presence of the residency program in the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health offers an opportunity for health disciplinary education with a variety of health professionals and collaboration with community programs.



The UK East KY family Medicine Residency was my top choice for residency. I grew up in the mountains of Eastern KY and had a strong desire to serve these people that have helped me become who I am today. Every member of our team is dedicated to providing the highest quality healthcare, and I'm proud to be a part of this program. This residency has both challenged me and benefitted me in so many ways, and I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to be a member of this team.

- Blake Shrum, DO

East Kentucky Family Medicine Residency

STUDENT AWARDS

Student Awards



Amber Creech Whitehead

DPT Class of 2022–Hazard Campus

Student Excellence in Rural Health Award

Given each year to a Hazard Campus student that exemplifies the mission of the Center



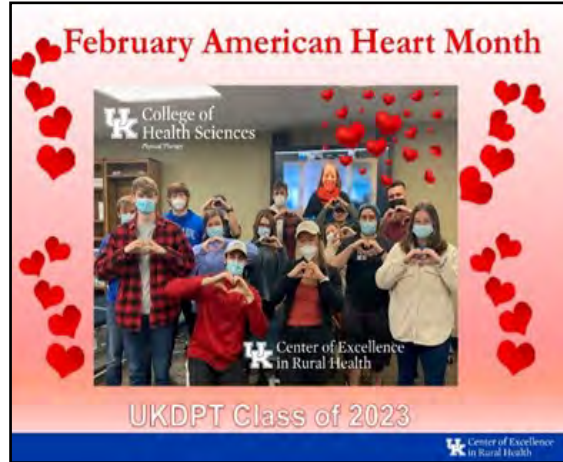
STUDENT EVENTS

Student Events

CHS PT Students Support Women's Heart Month

February 10, 2022

UKDPT Class of 2022 & 2024 students wore Red to promote and support Heart Health Month.



MLS Class of 2022 Breakfast Celebration

April 25, 2022

As part of MLS Lab Week 2022, CHS Office of Student Affairs Hazard hosted breakfast for the class and provided gift boxes



Student Events

Kentucky Special Olympics 2022 – UKDPT Program

June 3, 2022

UKDPT Class of 2024 Hazard Campus participated in volunteering at Kentucky Special Olympics 2022 on the campus of EKU.



RAM Event Hazard, Kentucky

June 5, 2022

Remote Area Medical (RAM), a major non-profit provider of mobile clinics delivering free, quality, dental, vision, and medical care to underserved and uninsured individuals. UKDPT Faculty & Students volunteered at this event.

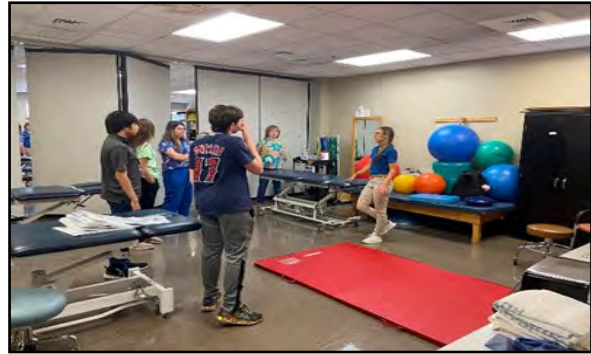


Student Events

AHEC Summer Enrichment Camp at CERH

June 22, 2022

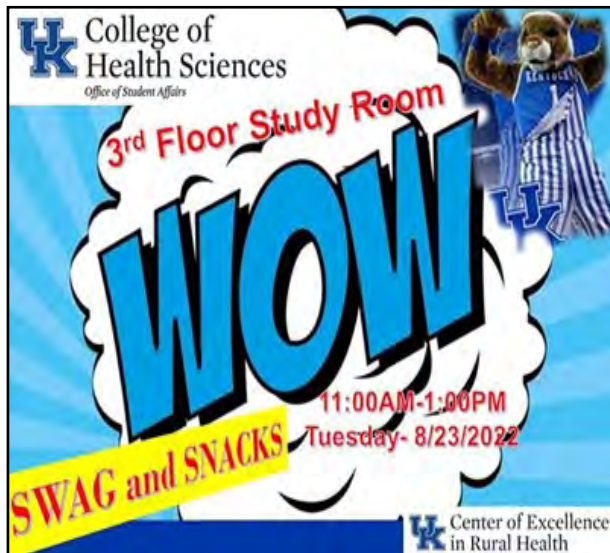
AHEC campers participated in a student lead PT Lab. UKDPT Class of 2024 held a presentation and hands on activities for visiting students.



Welcome Week—CERH CHS OSA

August 23, 2022–August 26, 2022

CERH provided t-shirts, lunch totes, and a tumbler to all UK students. The Office of Student Affairs provided donated school supplies to all students



Student Events

UK Spirit DAY with CHS Students

CERH Employees, Faculty, and Staff was encouraged to wear blue and show their support to students and CERH. Nachos and a photo booth were provided.

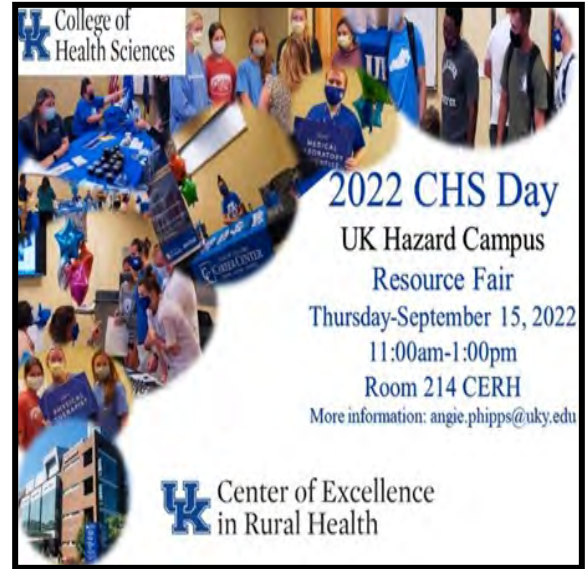


Student Events

CHS Day at Hazard Campus

September 15, 2022

UK CHS Organizations, UK Resource Organization, and Community Organization attend a UK Resource Fair at the Hazard Campus.



Student Events

Pink Out CERH

October 18, 2022

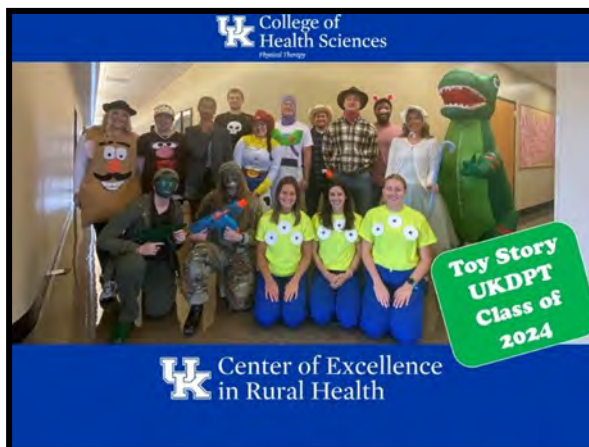
In honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, CHS OSA provided Pink Ribbons & a message board to all employees, faculty, and students. Everyone was encouraged to wear pink.



CHS Annual Halloween Boo Bash CERH Lunch & Learn

October 31, 2022

CHS students, Faculty, and Staff celebrated the annual Halloween Boo Bash with CERH. Lunch & Learn Workshop on health care topics were provided by CERH Healthcare teams. All students attended.



Student Events



National Stress Awareness Day

November 3, 2022

UK College of Health Sciences Students sent information to find time in their lives to get informed about stress and how it affects us. Contact information was provided to join Wednesday Mediation via Zoom with UK Counseling Center or connect with UK College of Health Sciences MINDBODY Connect Series.

National First Generation Week

November 8, 2022

Recognizing the first gen students and connecting them to UK activities and resources available to them.

CHS Cultural Corner

Monthly Event

Each month the CHS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee sends a newsletter to all CHS students of the month's events. The Office of Student Affairs creates marquee display & information is displayed on the third floor Marquee of CERH each month.

Student Events

Social Work Graduation Celebration

May 13, 2022

Graduation celebration for Hazard BASW & MSW Class of 2022, this is the last graduating class of Hazard off-campus students.



Student Events





RESEARCH

- **Research Team**
- **Mission and Goals**
- **Center Grants**
- **Center Research and Partnerships**
- **Appalachian Research Day**

RESEARCH TEAM

Internal Research Team

Internal Research Team

Center Director

Frances Feltner

Research Inter-Disciplinary Director

Melissa Slone

Documentation Manager

Peggy Lewis

Clinical Research Protocol Manager

Wayne Noble

Rural Project Manager

Beth Bowling

Data Analyst

Sydney Thompson

Rural Project Manager

Keisha Hudson

Rural Project Manager

Caleb Williams

Research Coordinator

Margie Duff

Rural Project Manager

Sierra Williams



External Research Committee

External Research Committee Members



Frances J. Feltner, DNP, MSN, RN
Director
UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health



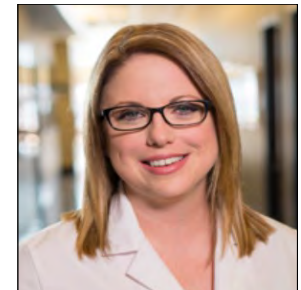
Melissa Slone, DSW, CSW - Chair
Research Inter-Disciplinary Director
UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health



Patrick Kitzman PhD, MSPT
Director
Kentucky Appalachian Rural
Rehabilitation Network
College of Health Sciences



Michele Staton, PhD
Faculty
Department of Behavioral Science
College of Medicine



Wanda Taylor, DO
Program Director
UK North Fork Valley
Community Health Center



Key Douthitt, MD
Medical Director
UK North Fork Valley Community
Health Center



Angela Carman, MBA, DrPH
Assistant Professor
Department of Health, Behavior & Society
College of Public Health

RESEARCH MISSION AND GOALS



Research



UK CERH's dedicated research team of faculty, providers, and staff conducts rural health research related to health disparities, health outcomes, health policy, health care delivery systems, and workforce needs. Through research efforts in local communities, the UK CERH works to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health care for rural Kentuckians by addressing health disparities and barriers to access to quality care.

Research outcomes are disseminated through publications and presentations to help raise awareness, develop solutions, and identify best practices for rural health issues. As an invested stakeholder in the local community, UK CERH is uniquely positioned to facilitate partnerships between community members and other researchers interested in community-based research in rural areas.

Research Mission

Conduct rural health research related to health disparities, health outcomes, health policy, health care delivery systems, and workforce needs.

Research Goals

Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health care for rural Kentuckians by addressing health disparities and barriers to access quality care.

To raise public awareness of rural health issues research findings will be disseminated at the local, state, national, and international levels through publications and presentations.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Research Reports

2022 Research Reports

2022 Follow-up to COVID-19 Stakeholder Experiences in the Commonwealth of Kentucky

Researchers at the UK CERH have released the 2022 follow-up report to the COVID-19 Stakeholders Experiences in the Community of Kentucky. This report details the findings of surveys taken by 145 participants during the fall and winter of 2021. The report can be accessed at this link: [COVID-19 Stakeholder Experiences in Commonwealth of Kentucky 2022](#)



Committed to the Community a Project of Committed to the Health Initiative Report

The University of Kentucky Center of Excellence in Rural Health's Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH), as a part of the Committed to the Heart initiative provided funds for eligible organizations, Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies to provide community Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated Electronic Defibrillator (AED) education training while increasing bystander readiness on a community level. Seven organizations were chosen from across the state to provide community training and education. The report will be released on the website soon and will be located under the KORH report tab.

Kentucky- Demographics, Analytics, Trends and Access (K-DATA)

The UK CERH created this document, comprised of various data points, sources, and figures to assist community members, grant writers, program developers, education programs, and others with supportive data for program development, goal setting and evaluation. Updates to the data sets are currently being updated in the 2021 report and the 2022 version will be released in the first quarter of 2023.

CENTER GRANTS

UK CERH Grants

Health Resources and Services Administration

09/15/22–09/14/25

“Community Health Worker Training Program”

(PI: Feltner F., CO-I: Slone, M.)

Goals: This proposal is designed to increase the number of CHWs and ensure that they have the knowledge and skills needed to increase access to care, strengthen the public health workforce, reduce health disparities and help underserved populations to achieve health equity.

Kentucky Community & Technical College System

01/01/22–03/31/23

“Kentucky EMS for Children-Rural Expansion”

(PI: Scott, E.)

Goals: Provide program guidance, topical expertise and pediatric mental health first aid course education to rural EMS/hospital providers and/or communities.

KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services

11/16/22–06/30/23

“Promoting Health Equity in Underserved Populations Across the Commonwealth of Kentucky”

(PI: Scott, E.)

Goals: Assist the DPH Office of Health Equity in increasing response to RFAs to existing funding opportunities within KYDPH to mitigate health disparities in high risk and rural communities.

Health Resources and Services Administration

08/01/22–07/31/25

“Flex Rural Veterans Health Access Program”

(PI: Scott, E.)

Goals: This funding provides financial support to 47 small rural Kentucky hospitals to increase COVID-19 testing and expand the range of mitigation efforts. The Kentucky Office of Rural Health will provide these 47 small rural Kentucky hospitals with program guidance, reporting assistance, and general oversight related to the use of their funds.

Health Resources and Services Administration

07/01/21–05/31/23

“Covid-19: Increasing the COVID-19 Vaccination Rates in Rural Appalachia Kentucky”

(PI: Feltner, F.)

Goals: Vaccinate Appalachian communities by providing community outreach, increase access by removing barriers, needs assessment of individuals, and provide education and positive message throughout a 30-county Appalachian region.

Health Resources and Services Administration

07/01/21–12/31/22

“Covid-19: SHIP COVID Testing and Mitigation”

(PI: Scott, E.)

Goals: This funding provides financial support to 47 small rural Kentucky hospitals to increase COVID-19 testing and expand the range of mitigation efforts. The Kentucky Office of Rural Health will provide these 47 small rural Kentucky hospitals with program guidance, reporting assistance, and general oversight related to the use of their funds.

UK CERH Grants

Health Resources and Services Administration

09/19/19–08/31/24

“Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant Program”

(PI: Scott, E.) (CI: Combs, K.)

Goals: Encourage and assist the 27 CAHs in the state to report and improve their MBQIP scores, to support financial improvement in CAHs across the state through trainings and technical assistance and to work towards integrating rural EMS into local systems of care.

Health Resources and Services Administration

09/01/18–08/31/25

“State Loan Repayment Program”

(PI: Scott, E.)

Goals: This project is a 50/50 matching program that works to increase the availability of primary health care services through repayment of education loans to eligible health professionals practicing in Health Professional Shortage Areas.

Health Resources and Services Administration

08/01/22–07/31/23

“Rural Emergency Hospital (REH) Technical Assistance Supplement”

(PI: Scott, E.)

Goals: To provide outreach and education surrounding Rural Emergency Hospital designation.

Kentucky Department for Public Health

07/01/18–03/31/24

“National Health Service Corps Promotion Project”

(PI: Scott, E.)

Goals: Provide increased awareness of all NHSC programs to eligible clinicians and students. The project also provides basic technical assistance statewide for local NHSC facility site applicants.

Health Resources and Services Administration

07/01/16–06/30/26

“State Office of Rural Health”

(PI: Scott, E.) (CI: Feltner, F.)

Goals: This project provides a framework for linking small, rural communities with state and federal resources while working toward a long-term solution to rural health issues.

Health Resources and Services Administration

06/01/16–05/31/23

“Small Rural Hospital Improvement Grant Program”

(PI: Scott, E.)

Goals: This project provides funding to small rural hospitals to help them pay for costs related to the implementation of PPS, comply with provisions of HIPAA, reduce medical errors, and support quality improvement.



UK CERH Grants



Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

07/01/14–06/30/24

“Kentucky Rural Health Journal”

(PI: Feltner, F.) (KORH Director and Rural Project Manager)

Goals: Produce a quarterly publication that focuses on rural health issues and topics pertaining to the Commonwealth.

Kentucky Department of Public Health

07/01/05–06/30/23

“Kentucky Homeplace”

(PI: Feltner, F.) (Kentucky Homeplace Director, Project Manager, and CHWs)

Goals: To provide access to medical, social, and environmental services for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

**CENTER RESEARCH
AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Research Partnerships

2022 Research Partnership Topic Areas

Rural Health Issues

Public Health Improvements

Transforming Health Care Practice

Heart Disease

Diabetes

COVID-19

Depressive Symptoms and Heart Disease

Youth Resilience

School-Based Intervention

Environmental Concerns

Opioid Use Disorder/Substance Use Disorder

PCORI

10/01/20–10/31/24

“Online Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Depressive Symptoms in Rural Patients with Coronary Heart Disease”

(PI: Moser, D.) (CI: Feltner, F./ Slone, M.) (CERH Research Assistant)

Goals: Using a randomized, controlled, stratified (by sex) design, we will compare real-time, face-to-face interaction with a therapist–video-conferenced CBT (vcCBT) and internet-based self-administered CBT without a face-to-face therapist (iCBT) in rural CHD patients on the primary outcome of depressive symptoms over time. Secondary outcomes of all-cause hospital readmissions, physical activity and medication adherence will be compared over time. We will also examine whether health literacy, stigma or sex moderate the effects of the interventions on outcomes.

National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities

07/15/22– 03/31/27

“COVID-19 K-VAC: Kentucky: Vaccinating Appalachian Communities” (PI: Kiviniemi, M.) (CI: Feltner, F)

Goals: The purpose of this community-engaged study is to optimize SARS-CoV-2 vaccine uptake in the Appalachian Kentucky population.

CDC

06/30/21– 06/29/24

“Implementing the Kentucky Stroke Improvement Cooperative to Advance Stroke Care Across the Care Continuum in Kentucky” (PI: Goldstein) (Other Significant Contributor: Feltner)

Goals: This grant is intended to coordinate and expand existing efforts in Kentucky to improve stroke-related health outcomes by working with Kentucky health care systems and community providers to implement comprehensive stroke systems for those at high risk for stroke and those who have had a stroke.

Health Resources and Services Administration

07/01/16–06/30/22

“Primary Care Training and Enhancement”

(PI: Cardarelli, R.) (CI: Feltner, F.) (CERH Research Assistant)

Goals: The proposed project will prepare primary care providers to practice in and lead transforming healthcare systems aimed at improving the triple aims of access, quality, and cost effectiveness of care.

Research Partnerships

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

09/30/19–09/29/22

“Promoting Substance Use Prevention and Recovery Training and Education through Extension in Rural Kentucky”

(PI: Davis, A.) (CI: Scott, E.)

Goals: This project reflects a multi-faceted approach to preventing and reducing opioid misuse via research-based public education, implementation of evidence-based prevention programming, and the provision of recovery support services as well as a novel arts-expression program to support at risk individuals.

Health Resources and Services Administration

09/01/19–08/31/22

“National Rural Health Economic Analysis”

(PI: Davis, A.) (CI: Scott, E.)

Goals: The purpose of Center for Economic Analysis for Rural Health (CEARH) is to increase public and stakeholder awareness of the economic impacts of rural health care sectors on rural, state and national economies, as well as the relationship between community economic development and the health outcomes of rural residents.

Health Resources and Services Administration

09/01/19–08/31/22

“Building SUD Workforce Capacity in the Appalachia Region”

(PI: Benner, K.) (CI: Slone, M.)

Goals: This multi-disciplinary proposal is a systematic strategy to meet the prevention, intervention and recovery needs of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, including Appalachia, by developing workforce capacity to address SUD in Central Kentucky and the surrounding areas.

National Institute of Food and Agriculture/USDA

05/15/19–05/14/22

“The Importance of Access to Health for Rural Economic Development”

(PI: Davis, A.) (CI: Scott, E.)

Goals: The long-term goal of this integrated project is to improve the understanding of the role of healthcare and a healthy workforce as determinants of local economic development in rural communities.

UK Center for Clinical and Translational Science

“Journey of Hope in Appalachian Youth”

04/01/18–01/31/22

(PI: Feltner, F. & Mudd, G.) (CERH Clinical Research Protocol Manager, Rural Outreach Coordinator and Research Inter-Disciplinary Director)

Goals: Develop and pilot test a culturally relevant, user-friendly, and cost-effective intervention to promote resilience in Appalachian youth.

National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences

08/15/16–06/30/26

“Kentucky Center for Clinical and Translational Science”

(PI: Kern, P.) (CI: Community Engagement/ATRN Cores: Feltner, F.)

Goals: The UK Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CTS) accelerates the translation of basic science discoveries into tangible improvements in public health.

Research Partnerships

Health Resources and Services Administration

07/01/18–06/30/22

"Nurse, Education, Practice, Quality and Retention - Registered Nurses in Primary Care"

(PI: Lock, S.) (CI: Feltner, F.)

Goals: The major goals of this project are to recruit and train undergraduate nursing students and current registered nurses (RNs) to practice to the full extent of their license in community based primary care teams and to increase access to care and address the health care needs of patients in rural and underserved communities with an emphasis on chronic disease prevention and control, including mental health and substance use conditions.

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

08/01/17–07/31/22

"Community to Clinic Navigation to Improve Diabetes Outcomes"

(PI: Schoenberg, N.) (CI: Feltner, F.)

Goals: Reduce adverse outcomes from Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus by combining an evidence-based intervention to improve diabetes self-management with individually-tailored patient navigation to improve appropriate clinical care.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

05/01/17–04/30/22

"Accountable Health Communities Track 3 Alignment - Kentucky Consortium for Accountable Health Communities"

(PI: Williams, M.) (Other significant contributor: Feltner, F.)

Goals: The goal of this project is to determine whether providing a combination of tailored community service referrals and patient navigation services assistance, as well as clinical partner alignment at the community level, will yield improvement in patient outcomes, health care utilization and costs for vulnerable populations in economically depressed and medically underserved geographic areas across the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

05/01/17–03/31/22

"UK Center for Appalachian Research in Environmental Sciences"

(PI: Hahn, E.) (Other significant contributor: Feltner, F.) (CERH Project Manager)

Goals: Expand our extensive history of partnerships with Appalachian communities and address community concerns linked to prevalent environmental exposures and to leverage community perspectives and UK-CARES's strengths to facilitate new understandings of environmental factors in disease and their community impact.

Kentucky Department of Public Health

07/01/05–06/30/23

"Kentucky Homeplace"

(PI: Feltner, F.) (Kentucky Homeplace Director, Project Manager, and CHWs)

Goals: To determine the outcomes of services to underserved communities by helping them access medical, social, and environmental services.

Research Partnerships

Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS)

Staff Directory

Frances Feltner, Co-Director, (Community Engagement & Research)

Caleb Williams, Rural Project Manager

Community Engagement and Research Core

The Community Engagement and Research Core connects community, clinical, and academic partners in community-engaged research to address priority health needs and improve health outcomes in Kentucky and Appalachia.

The Community Engagement and Research program is supported by a central office at UK and two Rural Research Hubs located within the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health (Hazard, KY) and St. Claire Regional Medical Center (Morehead, KY). Both Rural Research Hubs are located in Appalachian Kentucky and are staffed with a clinical faculty liaison and a research study coordinator.

Services from the Community Engagement and Research Core include:

- Study coordination support from either or both of the two CCTS Rural Research Hubs (Hazard or Morehead).
- Research consultation on community engaged grant applications, project implementation, and/or research dissemination.
- Identification of collaborative partnerships with community organization, practice based research networks.
- Identification of collaborative opportunities within the Appalachian Translational Research Network and the Western States Consortium.

**APPALACHIAN
RESEARCH DAY**

Appalachian Research Day

Community-based research begins at the local level, built upon the foundation of relationships with individuals, neighborhoods, and groups who have common questions and concerns. The University of Kentucky Center of Excellence in Rural Health hosts Appalachian Research Day each year to provide an opportunity to join in the discussion and learn about findings from research studies that have occurred in local communities.

Unfortunately our attempt to resume an in-person Appalachian Research Day event in 2022 did not occur due to the historic flooding in eastern Kentucky. The flyer below was used to announce the postponement of ARD and for everyone to save April 5th, 2023 as the new date.



In the wake of historic flooding in eastern Kentucky, our hearts and prayers continue to be with our families, neighbors, friends and communities. While our region works together to focus on recovery efforts, Appalachian Research Day, *Come Sit on the Porch* is being postponed.

*Please save the new date, April 5, 2023
Ramada by Wyndham Hotel and Conference Center
Paintsville, Kentucky*

 Center of Excellence
in Rural Health

 Center of Excellence
in Rural Health



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT and SERVICE

- **Trainings**
- **Boards and Committees**
- **Community Partnerships**
- **Community Events**

TRAININGS

Trainings

Trainings Offered by the UK CERH

Training	Number Trained 2022
Basic Life Support	16 Participants
Mental Health First Aid	55 Participants
Community Health Worker Training	30 Participants
PPE for Community Health Workers	52 Participants

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Boards & Committees

UK CERH leadership encourages community involvement through service on various boards and committees. Participation usually occurs based on professional association or areas of interest. The majority of the service occurs in three focus areas: academics, research, and community engagement/service. We have classified each board or committee to one specific area, however, most fall under more than one focus area. Roles held by employees also vary, ranging from simple membership to leadership positions with the various boards or committees.



ACADEMICS

- Clinical Leadership & Management Advisory Board
- Hazard Community & Technical College Human Services Advisory Committee
- Kentucky Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers
- National Academic Advising Association
- National Association of Advisors for Health Professions
- Ohio Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers
- Regional Academic Advising Association NACADA (Mid-South Region 3)
- Tennessee Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers
- University of Kentucky College of Health Sciences Diversity and Inclusivity Committee
- Virginia Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers
- West Virginia Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers

RESEARCH

- Appalachian Regional Healthcare Internal Review Board
- Center for Clinical and Translational Science Community Champions Cabinet
- UK Center for Appalachian Research in Environmental Sciences Stakeholders Advisory Board

Boards & Committees

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / SERVICE

- ACCSIS Community Advisory Board
- Appalachia Community Cancer Network Grant Community Advisory Board
- ARH Advisory Committee
- ARH Community Needs Assessment Steering Committee
- ARH Local Advisory Council
- Bell County Interagency
- Big Sandy Diabetes Coalition
- Boyd County Interagency
- Center for Economic Analysis of Rural Health
- Clay County Diabetes Coalition
- Community Advisory Board Cancer Focus Group
- Community Health Improvement Planning Committee
- Community Health Worker Advisory Board
- Delta Region Community Health Systems Development Program Advisory Committee
- Disaster Case Management Committee
- East Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board
- Elder Maltreatment Council Project Life Saver Scholarship Committee
- Expanding Rural Access to Pulmonary Care Workshop
- Family Consumer Science Advisory Board - UK Extension
- Farm and Home Field Day
- Flex Committee
- Food & Faith Coalition Perry County
- Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky Board of Directors
- Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky Community Advisory Council
- Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky Health Equity Workgroup
- Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee
- FRYSC- LGR Advisory Council
- HANDS / Tobacco Advisory Council
- Harlan County Health Coalition
- Health Advisory Team Board
- HepFree Kentucky Stakeholder Coalition
- KATS Network Program Awareness / Marketing Committee
- KATS Network Socialization Committee
- Kentucky 3RNet Consortium
- Kentucky Apprenticeship Council
- Kentucky Association of Community Health Workers (KYACHW)
- KYACHW Bylaws Committee
- KYACHW Conference Planning Committee
- KYACHW Membership Committee
- KYACHW Nominating Committee
- KYACHW Professional Development Committee
- Kentucky Board of EMS Services - Mobile Integrated Health/Community Paramedicine Project Board
- Kentucky Cancer Consortium
- Kentucky EMS Association
- Kentucky Leads Survivorship Care Community Advisory Board
- Kentucky Physical Therapy Association Legislative Committee
- Kentucky River Health Consortium
- KRHA Nomination Committee
- KRHA Board of Directors & Conference Planning Committee
- Kentucky Social Welfare Foundation
- Kentucky Society for Healthcare Public Relations & Marketing
- Kentucky Telehealth Steering Committee
- Lawrence County Diabetic Support Group
- Lawrence County Interagency
- Lawrence County Oral Coalition Board
- Letcher County Interagency
- Letcher County Food Pantry
- Martin County Interagency
- MCCC Homeplace Clinic Consumer Advisory Council
- Mid-Atlantic Telehealth Resource Center (MATRC) Advisory Committee
- Mountain Drinking Water Project Stakeholder Consultation Core
- Highlands ARH Regional Medical Center Local Advisory Committee

Boards & Committees

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / SERVICE

- NARHC Education Committee
- National Organization of State Offices in Rural Health (NOSORH)
- NOSORH Awards Committee
- NOSORH Board of Directors
- NOSORH Policy Committee
- NOSORH Primary Care Committee
- NOSORH Rural Stakeholder Taskforce
- NOSORH Champion Board
- North Fork Valley Community Health Center Board
- Outreach & Social Media Marketing Committee
- People's Clinic
- Perry County Diabetic Coalition
- Rotary of Louisa
- Southeast Kentucky Regional Trails Planning Committee
- The Bridge Advisory Board

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community Partnerships

Community Leadership Institute of Kentucky

CLIK is a leadership development training program offered by the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health and the UK CCTS Community Engagement and Research Program. The Institute is designed to enhance community research and capacity-building competencies in community leaders, directors, and administrators.

The overall goal of the program is to assist community leaders associated with organizations that engage and empower communities to reduce health disparities, leverage funding, and learn how to use data to improve services and programs.

Participants are selected based on leadership qualities and a proposed real-world project that will positively impact their community.



CLIK at a Glance

- **52 CLIK Participants**
- **40 Real-World Research Projects Implemented, with Focuses on: Diabetes, cancer prevention, substance misuse, food insecurities, smoking cessation, chronic kidney disease, and environment and physical activity**
- **28 Appalachian Counties Impacted**

2021–2022 Participants

Projects

Camille Robidoux	Early education for patients with chronic kidney disease
Craig Wilmhoff	Educate youth about the dangers of vaping
Diane Whitehead	Implement a diabetes prevention program to increase physical activity and weight loss
Kristin Brandenburg	Implement a fit trail to aid in better mental/emotional health and increase physical activity

Community Partnerships

Kentucky Appalachian Rural Rehabilitation Network

The Kentucky Appalachian Rural Rehabilitation Network (KARRN) is a statewide network of people with spinal cord injury (SCI), stroke, and brain injury (TBI), healthcare providers, educators, researchers, and other community members committed to the health and well-being of people with neurological impairments who live in the Appalachian region. The KARRN network continually engages community members and conducts research in the areas of SCI, TBI and stroke. Each year, the network holds an annual conference, which provides CEUs for physicians, nurses, social workers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech therapists. In addition, KARRN helps to provide assistance with the Kentucky Congress on Spinal Cord Injury Conference.

In 2022, KARRN was awarded an extension for the Commonwealth Council on Developmental Disabilities grant to expand Project CARAT, and the continuation of the CARAT-TOP (Together One Priority) Program. KARRN also managed the Grace Jones Memorial Fund. The grant committee received 11 applications, of which 4 applications were funded, for a total of approximately \$4,000. In addition, KARRN completed 2 cohorts of high school students, with the CRAAT-TOP program, for a total of 30 students. Toys with a Purpose, a toy lending library was also established. The Appalachian Center for Assistive Technology (ACAT) was created at the UK Center of Excellence in Rural health, as part of the KATS Network. ACAT will be the new Assistive Technology Resource Center (ATRC) for the region. The center includes a maker space, lending library, workforce training, and education. KARRN also completed the disabilities bias survey, and a manuscript is, currently, being written.

The UK CERH is a long-standing partner of the network. Under the umbrella of KARRN are Project CARAT (Coordinating and Assisting the Reuse of Assistive Technology).

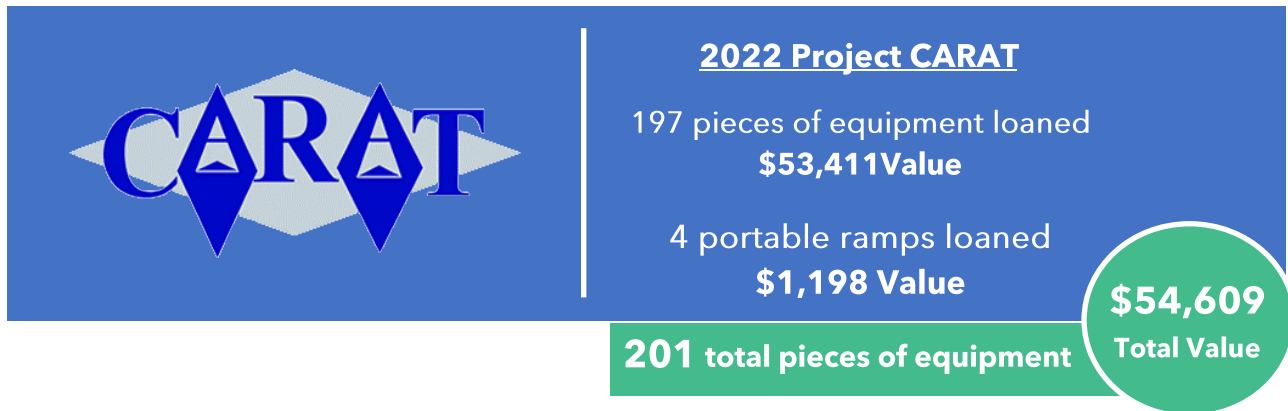


Community Partnerships

Project CARAT

Project CARAT is a community outreach, service learning program that aims to make assistive technology and durable medical equipment (DME) more accessible to those who need it in underserved areas of Kentucky. The UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health and Carl D. Perkins Center were the original sites for Project CARAT. The UK CERH site is unique in that it is a service learning program and ran by Physical Therapy students. Students are trained to clean and refurbish DME to distribute to those in need. Project CARAT has several locations across Kentucky and is now overseen by the Kentucky Assistive Technology Service Network (KATS).

In 2022, Project CARAT was part of the Commonwealth Council on Developmental Disabilities grant. This grant allowed Project CARAT to expand the program and help establish a toy lending library. There were 16 DPT students trained within the program. Project CARAT also continues to have two satellite sites, with the UK CERH being the main hub. These two sites are in partnership with Kentucky Homeplace and are located in Harlan, and Rowan Counties.



“This means so much to me to get this equipment since I lost all of mine in the flood.”

- Flood Victim

Community Partnerships

Coordinating and Assisting the Reuse of Assistive Technology— Together One Priority (CARAT-TOP)

CARAT-TOP includes a eight-week service learning program that brings together students, of all abilities, from local high schools and the community to develop skills in assessing community accessibility, refurbishing used medical equipment, adapting toys and other assistive technology devices, prototype new parts, and develop strategies for engaging community stakeholders (leaders, businesses, faith communities, local media, etc.). As part of this program participants will work on an overall project that will be presented to the Community Advisory Committee and other community members. In addition to the service learning program, CARAT-TOP includes three additional programs: Project CARAT refurbishing and reutilization program, Toys with a Purpose: Adapted Toy Lending Library, and a workforce development internship/apprenticeship program.



In 2022, two cohorts of high school students completed the program, with 31 students in total. In the Spring semester, 16 students from Perry County Central High School completed CARAT-TOP. These students adapted the Perry County Park to make it more accessible for everyone. They were divided into four groups, with each group adapting a portion of the park. The portions of the park the groups focused on, were as follows: pool area, picnic shelter, playground, and miniature golf. A certificate of completion ceremony was held for this cohort, in May 2022.

In December 2022, the second cohort of students at Perry County Central High School, completed the program. This cohort consisted of 15 students. The project they chose was to adapt toys. Students were split into five groups and each group chose two toys to adapt. Once the toys are completed and adapted, they will present them to a local elementary school, West Perry Elementary.

COORDINATING AND ASSISTING THE REUSE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY: TOGETHER ONE PRIORITY

CARAT-TOP

Community Partnerships

Community Health Worker Career Pathway for High School Students

United Healthcare (UHC) and the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health announced a gift to support the first-ever Students Striving Toward Better Health in Self and Community initiative, available to Perry County and Hazard Independent high school students.

High school students enrolling in the program receive tuition-free college education and training toward community health worker certification. UK CERH leads the development, coordination, and execution of content and programming with UHC providing expertise and support resources. The community health worker curriculum is based on the Kentucky Homeplace training model and is built upon Kentucky Homeplace's 28-years of community health worker experience. Classes are conducted onsite at Hazard Community and Technical College with remote learning available when needed.

This pilot program presents a unique partnership that demonstrates how private businesses, higher education, and communities can partner to address rural health needs. The gift for \$35,000 will cover costs for 23 students, include a virtual mentor internship by United Healthcare and a paid apprenticeship for the students.

In 2021, the training program graduated seven students. In July 2022, the seven students completed their 80-hour shadowing apprenticeship at the Center of Excellence in Rural Health making them eligible for State Certification as a Community Health Worker. Four students graduated the program in December 2022 and will begin their shadowing apprenticeship in Spring 2023.



Community Partnerships

Kentucky River Health Consortium

The mission of the Consortium is to use the collective expertise and resources of our local agencies to address the health burdens in the Kentucky River counties of Breathitt, Knott, Letcher, Leslie, Lee, Owsley, Perry, and Wolfe.

The Center initiated the development of the consortium and continues to take a leading role in moving the group forward.

The Consortium has three workgroups to look at health and wellbeing issues within these specific populations. The workgroup's focus populations are youth, aging and substance use disorder. The overall consortium serves as a resource to the workgroups by offering a place for them to share ideas, promote projects in the community and look for additional resources when needed. With the flooding in July a mental health workgroup was established in a effort to ensure these impacted by the flooding had a access to mental health services. This group is now a standing workgroup of the consortium. This workgroup also includes agencies from the Big Sandy counties and we have started discussions on how to best expand the work of our current consortium to include their region.

Through the efforts of our workgroups and partners we were able to host and participate in several events in 2022.

The Kentucky River District Health Department and the substance use disorder workgroup have create the HUB in Lee County, Kentucky which is a one-stop location for those with SUD issues, those in recovery and family members of those impacted by SUD. The HUB provides office space for numerous agencies to provide needed services for Lee and surrounding counties. These partners have also collaborated and applied for grant funding to enhance and increase the services being provide. This site serves as a pilot and will be a model for the creation of HUBs in other counties.

The consortium members partnered to conduct a door to door needs assessment with flood impacted communities. With volunteers from the consortium and outside we were able to reach over 100 families to collect information regarding immediate needs (food, water, medical supplies) and longer term needs (debris removal, help with home repairs, etc.). Information collected was shared with local Kentucky Homeplace CHWs for follow up. Long term needs were also shared with each counties long-term recovery groups for additional assistance.



KENTUCKY RIVER
HEALTH CONSORTIUM



Community Partnerships

Kentucky River Health Consortium

The Youth Workgroup hosted an event on December 9th at AB Combs for the staff and students of Robinson Elementary and Buckhorn Elementary and Buckhorn High schools. These two Perry County schools were destroyed by the July flooding. The event called "I'm Worth It- Protective Factors for all" was to acknowledge the trauma experienced by students and staff of these schools after the catastrophic flood, explore how traumatic events impact one's life, and to build protective factors which allow one to withstand trauma. The Center was a leading partner in the event and four of our DPT students assisted with classroom activities.



The faculty and staff of each school were provided appetizers, snacks and coffee.

Students were able to process their experiences, have meaningful conversations about how to take care of themselves, and practice the skills they learned to apply in their daily lives.



KENTUCKY RIVER
HEALTH CONSORTIUM

UK Center of Excellence
in Rural Health

Community Partnerships

Kentucky Rural Health Association Conference

The UK CERH hosted the poster session at the Kentucky Rural Health Association (KRHA) annual conference. This year's conference was held in Somerset, Ky on November 16 and 17th, 2022. The poster session was moderated by Melissa Slone, UK CERH Research Inter-disciplinary Director.



KRHA POSTER WINNERS

First Place

Passing Policy in Appalachia: A Look Into Smoke-Free Policy Work in Eastern Kentucky
Tara Vostad and Sherrie Stidham: Kentucky River District Health Department

Second Place

We Got Through It Together: The Impact of Telehealth During COVID on Hepatitis C Treatment in Complex and Rural Patients at Academic Medical Center
Megan Cooper, Heather Foley, Thom Platt, Christian Rhudy and Maribeth Wright, UK Specialty Pharmacy



Other Submissions

- Crossroad of Inpatient and Outpatient Care: Identifying and Caring for Patients with Hepatitis C While Inpatient for Endocarditis Treatment at an Academic Medical Center
- Expanding the Web of Hepatitis C Treatment Uptake Across an Academic Medical Center
- Assessing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Anxiety, and Depression in Caregivers of Children with Sickle Cell Disease
- Recommendations for Evaluation and "Rule Out" of Suspected Cases of Pulmonary M.tb in Kentucky
- The Odds are Stacked Against Them: Use of Medication-Assisted Therapy in the Recovery Process
- An innovative Approach to Conducting a Community Health Assessment Using Real-Time Data to Make Informed Decisions to Tackle Today's Health Issues in a Rural Western Kentucky County
- Lessons Learned from Medical Teams During Eastern Kentucky Flood Relief
- Confirmed and "Suspected" Cases of Tuberculosis in Kentucky: An Eight-Year Update

Community Events

Celebrating the Power of Rural on National Rural Health Day

The Kentucky Rural Health Association Annual Conference was held on November 16 and 17 this year allowing for rural health advocates to celebrate the day together in Somerset, KY.



The Center played an integral role in the celebration of National Rural Health Day. Our team secured the signed state proclamation and Dr. Feltner read the National Rural Health Day proclamations that were issued by U.S. President Joe Biden and Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear.

"National Rural Health Day was the perfect occasion to recognize the passion and commitment of our many dedicated rural health professionals across the state, including our own "excellence in action" team."

-Dr. Feltner



Community Partnerships

Connecting Rural Communities in Western and Eastern Kentucky

Since 2020, a UK CERH team has been networking with rural partners in Western Kentucky to increase our collaborations.

Work groups have been established to move several projects forward:

- A Kentucky Rural Health Webinar Series
- Development of a Rural Health Leadership and Development Program which has been titled Leaders Advocating for Rural Kentucky Health
- Creating a Research Conference Opportunity in the Delta similar to Appalachian Research Day

Each work group has representatives from eastern and western rural communities.

The Kentucky Rural Health Webinar Series committee hosted two events during 2022.



Kentucky RURAL HEALTH WEBINAR SERIES

15 June 2022
9-10:30 AM CST
10-11:30 AM EDT

RURAL HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Speakers :

 MarryAnne Medlock Business Services Liaison, Purchase Region	 Michael Muscarella Executive Director, Ambulatory Services Baptist Health Paducah	 Sonya Bergman Chief People Officer, Appalachian Regional Healthcare, Inc.	 Dr. Fran Feltner Director, UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health
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Kentucky RURAL HEALTH WEBINAR SERIES

November 2, 2022
9:00-10:30 AM CST
10:00-11:30 AM EST

ENGAGING RURAL COMMUNITIES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Speakers :

 <i>Appalachian Community Health Days Increase COVID-19 Vaccine Efforts in a 32 County Region of Kentucky and West Virginia</i> Dr. Melissa Stone, Research Interdisciplinary Director UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health
 <i>Happy Healthy Harvest</i> Micha Croft, Family Resource Center Assistant Coordinator/GEAR Coordinator Livingston Central High School
 <i>Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER): Rapid Needs Assessments in Flood Affected Counties in Eastern Kentucky</i> Dr. Oshea Johnson, CDC Epidemic Service Intelligence Officer Kentucky Department for Public Health

COMMUNITY EVENTS



UK CERH Events



Finding Funding in Kentucky

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: First Tuesday of every month

Location: Virtual

Focus/Theme of Conference: Funding resources

Keynote speakers: Janell Ray, The Pallottine Foundation of Huntington; Jean Mize, R.C. Durr Foundation; Scott Fitzpatrick, Blue Grass Community Foundation; Jana Reese, Rural Health Information Hub; Sherry Crose, The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels; Kirby Leacy, Massachusetts Office of Rural Health; Sue Higgins, CDR Maguire Emergency Management

Major Topics Covered: Kentucky funding resources, private foundations, grant applications and writing, community foundations, community health, health equity

Number of Attendees: Averages 24 attendees monthly (High of 52)

Type of Event: Statewide

Kentucky Rural Health Grant Writing Workshop

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: May 4–5 2022

Location: Berea, Kentucky

Focus/Theme of Conference: Grant Writing

Keynote speakers: Teryl Eisinger, NOSORH

Major Topics Covered: Budget, Logic Model, Work Plan, Evaluation

Number of Attendees: 20

Type of Event: Statewide

What RHC's Need to Know About New CMS Regulations on Vaccine Mandates

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: February 17, 2022

Location: Virtual

Focus/Theme of Conference: The COVID-19 vaccine-specific information that needs to be included in a rural health clinic's policy and procedure manual; the documentation required for staff exemptions to the vaccine mandate; the consequences/penalties for not having all staff vaccinated; actions that can be taken for staff who refuse to get vaccinated or complete the exemption process

Keynote Speakers: Anne-Tyler Morgan, McBrayer Law Firm; Jason Hollon, McBrayer Law Firm

Number of Attendees: 52

Type of Event: Statewide

UK CERH Events

2022 CPT Changes, Evaluation and Management Training

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: March 25, 2022

Location: Virtual Webinar

Focus/Theme: Documentation guidelines set forth by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for reporting evaluation and management (E/M) services, as defined by CPT.

Keynote speakers: ArchPro Coding–Gary Lucas

Number of Attendees: 80

Type of Event: Statewide

2022 Kentucky RHC Summit

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: July 22, 2022

Location: Richmond, Kentucky

Major Topics Covered: Education and Information related to RHCs

Keynote Speakers: Washington Update - Sarah Holman, Director of Government Affairs, National Association of Rural Health Clinics (NARHC); Kentucky Medicaid Update - Commissioner Lisa Lee, Kentucky Department of Medicaid; Reimbursement Impact of the Modernization Act on Kentucky RHCs - Jonathan Pantenburg, Principal, Wintergreen; Mental Health Billing in a Primary Care Office - Patty Harper, Principal, InQuiseek Consulting & Shannon Chambers, Director of Provider Solutions, South Carolina Office of Rural Health; No Surprise.... New Policies in Organizing your RHC Policy Manual - Scott Robbins, Manager of Clinic Development, Midwest Health Care, Inc; Common RHC Deficiencies & Effective Quality Assurance - Steve Simmerman, Chief Operating Officer, The Compliance Team; RHC Cost Reporting - Clint Brill, Senior Manager, Blue & Co., LLC; RHC Billing Essentials - Amanda Dennison, Senior Consultant, Revenue Cycle, Blue & Company, LLC; Getting Paid for Telehealth versus Virtual Communication Services - Gary Lucas, Vice President of Education, Association for Rural & Community Health Professional Coding; Improving Patient Access & Workflow in Your RHC - Patty Harper, Principal, InQuiseek Consulting; Biennial Evaluation: Meeting the Requirements - Shannon Chambers, Director of Provider Solutions, South Carolina Office of Rural Health

Number of Attendees: 200

Type of Event: Statewide

Credentialing Certification for Rural and Community Health

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: November 18, 2022

Location: Versailles, Kentucky

Focus/Theme: Increase the knowledge and competence in the credentialing and enrollment process for RHCs and FQHCs

Keynote Speakers: ArchPro Coding–Stacy Howe

Number of Attendees: 27

Type of Event: Statewide



UK CERH Events



Rural or Community Health Coding & Billing Bootcamp

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: December 5-6, 2022

Location: London, Kentucky

Focus/Theme: Training is designed to help staff with RHCs & FQHCs understand the unique rules around RHC/FQHC documentation, coding, billing, and cost reports require careful attention, workflow adjustments, and full awareness of key CMS resources that differ from traditional medical offices.

Keynote Speakers: ArchPro Coding–Gary Lucas

Number of Attendees: 20

Type of Event: Statewide

Quality and Patient Safety Fellowship

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: Multiple dates

Location: Virtual

Focus/Theme of the Conference: Quality and Patient Safety

Keynote speakers: Cynosure Health–Barb BeBaun

Major Topics Covered Inpatient hospital quality

Number of Attendees: 20

Type of Event: Statewide

CAH Revenue Cycle Network

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: Monthly

Location: Virtual

Focus/Theme of the Conference: CAH Revenue Cycle

Keynote speakers: Stroudwater–Amy Graham

Major Topics Covered: Revenue Cycle Processes

Number of Attendees: 25

Type of Event: Statewide



UK CERH Events



CAH Quality Leaders Conference

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: June 16, 2022 & November 29, 2022

Location: Lexington, Kentucky

Focus/Theme of the Conference: CAH Quality

Keynote Speakers: Cynosure Health–Barb DeBaun

Major Topics Covered: Leadership rounding, ABX stewardship, safety protocols, etc.

Number of Attendees: 20

Type of Event: Statewide

Kentucky EMS Leadership Academy

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: January 26, 2022

Location: Webinar

Focus/Theme of the Conference: EMS Leadership

Keynote Speakers: Kentucky Office of Rural Health– Scott Helle; Cebollero & Associates– Chris Cebollero

Major Topics Covered: Leadership Development

Number of Attendees: 17

Type of Event: Statewide

Kentucky EMS Leadership Academy

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: March 23, 2022

Location: Bardstown, Kentucky

Focus/Theme of the Conference: EMS Law & Employee Engagement and Retention

Keynote Speakers: Page, Wolfberg, & Wirth Law Firm–Steve Wirth; The EMS Professional–Andrea Abbas

Major Topics Covered: HIPAA, Patient Privacy, Legal Compliance, Documentation, EMS Culture, Creating Positive Change and Leadership Tactics

Number of Attendees: 15

Type of Event: Statewide



UK CERH Events



Kentucky Resuscitation Academy

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: April 26-27, 2022

Location: Berea, KY

Focus/theme of the conference: Resuscitation – Improving Survival from Cardiac Arrest

Keynote Speakers: Jessamine County EMS – Floyd Miracle; Kentucky Board of EMS – Dr. Walt Lubbers; The Resuscitation Academy Seattle – Johnathan Larsen; The Resuscitation Academy Seattle – Julie Buckingham

Major Topics Covered: Resuscitation, Survival Chain, High Performance CPR, and Telephone CPR

Number of Attendees: 55

Type of Event: Statewide

Kentucky EMS Leadership Academy

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Location: Bardstown, Kentucky

Focus/Theme of the Conference: Fundamentals of Budgeting in EMS & EMS Leadership

Keynote Speakers: Harris County ESD 11 Mobile Healthcare – Rob Farmer

Major Topics Covered: Finance, Budgets, and Understanding your system

Number of Attendees: 15

Type of Event: Statewide

The Citizen CPR Academy and Community Resuscitation Officer Program

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Location: Webinar

Focus/Theme of the Conference: Improving cardiac arrest survival in the community

Keynote Speakers: Richland Fire & Emergency Services – Josh Smith; Code One Trainings Solutions, LLC – Dave Hiltz

Major Topics Covered: Community based approach to improving survival, Citizen CPR Education, Emergency Action Plans: Developmental and Testing, AED Placement, and First Responder Defibrillation

Number of Attendees: 40

Type of Event: Statewide



UK CERH Events



CMS Ground Ambulance Cost Data Collection Workshop

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: November 2, 2022

Location: Frankfort, Kentucky

Focus/Theme of the Conference: CMS Ground Ambulance Cost Data Collection Workshop

Keynote Speakers: American Ambulance Association - Scott Moore; American Ambulance Association - Brian Werfel

Major Topics Covered: Cost Data Collection

Number of Attendees: 50

Type of Event: Statewide

Cost of Poverty Experience (COPE)

Hosted by Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Date: December 1, 2022

Location: Morehead, Kentucky

Focus/Theme of the Conference: CMS Ground Ambulance Cost Data Collection

Keynote Speakers: Think Tank

Major Topics Covered: COPE is an interactive experience meant to help deepen the participants' understanding of the realities of poverty, improve practices and approaches of participants to better engage low income individuals and their families, and to build partnerships with the broader community to improve outcomes for low-income families. The event was hosted by the Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH), the Northeast Kentucky Area Health Education Center (AHEC), and the regional Family Resources and Youth Services Center.

Number of Attendees: 200+

Type of Event: Regional

Community Events

Appalachian Community Health Days

The University of Kentucky Center of Excellence in Rural Health, Kentucky Homeplace, USA Drone Port and a network of community partners joined forces to intensify efforts at the local level to increase COVID-19 vaccination rates in a 32-county region of Appalachia Kentucky and neighboring counties in West Virginia, with \$3.3 million in grant funding from the U.S. Health Resources Services Administration.

The goal is to improve COVID-19 vaccination rates in Appalachian communities by:

- Increasing community outreach in remote communities.
- Removing barriers to vaccine access.
- Assessing needs of individuals.
- Provide education.
- Increasing positive messaging.



A series of more than 90 Community Health Days are to be held across the region beginning in August 2021 and with continuations will go through May 2023. The activities focus on removing as many barriers as possible and reaching as many individuals as possible in our more rural and underserved communities.

Since August, 2021 this grant has enabled us to provide over 90 events in local communities allowing us to provide COVID-19 education, vaccinations and health screenings. At the end of 2022 the funding had allowed us to conduct 2,294 health screenings, reach over 3 million individuals through digital media, and provide access for 1,231 individuals to receive a COVID vaccination. We will continue to host events in our communities and broaden our efforts to engage children and their families through the remainder of the grant funding.



Community Events

Kentucky Rural Health Summit

The 2022 Kentucky Rural Telehealth Summit was hosted at Embassy Suites on June 9th, 2022, and supported by the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health. This occasion brought over 200 healthcare leaders together from across the state to focus on the use of telehealth, regulations, and future directions. Areas of discussion included the “Unintended Competitive Consequences of Telehealth,” “Telehealth Updates: Statutory and Regulatory Information and Predictions for the Post-Waiver Future,” and “Preparing Telehealth Literate Providers.” The Summit was specific to Kentuckians who are vested in providing the highest quality care beyond brick-and-mortar facilities while meeting patient needs efficiently and effectively.



Center of Excellence in Rural Health

EXCELLENCE IN ACTION



Vision:

A Healthier Kentucky

Mission:

Improve the Health and Wellbeing of Rural Kentuckians

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