

Winter 2021



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IRHA Member and Past Board President Tim Putnam Named to Biden-Harris Administration COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force

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As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to plague the country, it has had a disproportionate impact on some of our most vulnerable communities. Shortly after COVID-19 was first identified in the United States, disparities in testing, cases, hospitalizations, and mortality began to emerge. These inequities were quickly evident by race, ethnicity, geography, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other factors.

President Biden and Vice President Harris have released a National Strategy to combat the pandemic that has equity at its core. To help ensure an equitable response to the pandemic, the President signed an executive order on January 21 creating a task force to address COVID-19 related health and social inequities. This Task Force is chaired by Dr. Marcella Nunez-Smith.

Here is the full list of individuals who will serve as non-federal members of the Biden-Harris COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force:

Mayra Alvarez of San Diego, CA
James Hildreth of Nashville, TN
Andrew Imparato of Sacramento, CA
Victor Joseph of Tanana, AK
Joneigh Khaldun of Lansing, MI
Octavio Martinez of New Braunfels, TX
Tim Putnam of Batesville, IN
Vincent Toranzo of Pembroke Pines, FL
Mary Turner of Plymouth, MN
Homer Venters of Port Washington, NY
Bobby Watts of Goodlettsville, TN
Haeyoung Yoon of New York, NY

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/press-briefings/2021/02/10/president-biden-announces-members-of-the-biden-harris-administration-covid-19-health-equity-task-force/>

Tim Putnam, DHA, EMS

Tim Putnam is President and CEO of Margaret Mary Health, a community hospital in Batesville, Indiana, and has over 30 years of healthcare experience. He received his Doctorate in Health Administration from the Medical University of South Carolina where his dissertation was focused on acute stroke care in rural hospitals. He is a Past President of the Indiana Rural Health Association and the National Rural Health Association. In 2015, he was appointed by the Governor to the newly created Indiana Board of Graduate

Medical Education and has chaired the Board since its inception. Dr. Putnam is also a certified Emergency Medical Technician.

IRHA Board Member Nikki King Interviewed for PBS Series Amanpour and Company

IRHA Board Member, Nikki King, was recently interviewed for the public affairs series Amanpour and Company which aired on PBS on February 8, 2021. Born in Kentucky, Nikki saw firsthand the devastating impact of the opioid crisis and became determined to give those suffering from addiction a fighting chance. She moved to Indiana, where she established an innovative new addiction program at Margaret Mary Health that focuses on treatment and support rather than jail. She tells Hari Sreenivasan how this could serve as a model for other rural areas.



Direct link: <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/amanpour-and-company/video/how-nikki-king-is-innovating-treatment-for-opioid-addiction/>

Woodlawn Hospital Awarded HFAP Certification



Woodlawn Hospital was recently awarded **STROKE READY CERTIFICATION** by HFAP, the nation's original independent, accreditation program. Certification confirms that this specialty of Woodlawn Hospital is providing high quality care as determined by an independent, external process of evaluation.

Gravesmill, Vice President, HFAP, remarked: "We base our decision on the findings of an extensive and thorough onsite review against standards for organizational operations and clinical services that drive patient safety and continuous quality improvement. Woodlawn has earned the distinction of HFAP certification through its performance in successfully meeting those standards."

Being "Stroke Ready" indicates that Woodlawn Hospital has a highly trained team ready to quickly recognize when a patient has the signs and symptoms of a possible stroke. Tests are rapidly completed and, using a robust telemedicine platform, a neurologist can see the patient and their test results within minutes. The neurologist and the emergency physician then collaborate to recommend the best treatment for the patient. With stroke, "Time Lost is Brain Lost", and being "Stroke Ready" makes all the difference.

"We're proud to achieve this prestigious certification," said John Alley, Woodlawn's President and CEO. "Earning HFAP certification is a stringent process and significant achievement that recognizes our commitment to providing outstanding care to our patients and our community."

The community is encouraged to Call 9-1-1 if they think they are experiencing the signs and symptoms of a stroke (i.e.: facial droop, arm or leg weakness, slurred speech, sudden vision changes or sudden loss of balance).

Rush Memorial Hospital Earns 2020 CHIME Digital Health Most-Wired Recognition

The College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) announced that Rush Memorial Hospital has earned 2020 CHIME Digital Health Most-Wired recognition as a certified level 7. The CHIME Digital Health Most-Wired program conducts an annual survey to assess how effectively healthcare

organizations apply core and advanced technologies into their clinical and business programs to improve health and care in their communities.

Jim Boyer, RMH VP of Information Technology, had this to say about winning the award in 2020: "Regarding our 8th year in a row, winning this prestigious award of CHIME's Digital Health Most Wired recognizes again the dedicated team of Rush Memorial Hospital (RMH) employees who do what is right for our patients. RMH has continued to invest in impressive technologies and processes, which allows our employees to serve our patients better. All of us at RMH, including the technology team, will continue to align and use the best technologies, which will continue to benefit the population of our community and our employees. Again, we are very excited to win this prestigious award as it shows that RMH is on the right track and committed to our patients."

"Digital technology has been a driver of innovation in healthcare for many years now, but never to the degree that we saw in 2020 with the pandemic," said CHIME President and CEO Russell P. Branzell. "The Digital Health Most-Wired program underscores why healthcare organizations keep pushing themselves to be digital leaders and shows what amazing feats they can achieve. This certification recognizes their exemplary performance in 2020."

A total of 30,135 organizations were represented in the 2020 Digital Health Most-Wired program, which this year included four separate surveys: domestic, ambulatory, long-term care and international. The surveys assessed the adoption, integration and impact of technologies in healthcare organizations at all stages of development, from early development to industry leading.

Each participating organization received a customized benchmarking report, an overall score and scores for individual levels in eight segments: infrastructure; security; business/disaster recovery; administrative/supply chain; analytics/data management; interoperability/population health; patient engagement; and clinical quality/safety. Participants can use the report and scores to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. Participants also received certification based on their overall performance.

Cameron Memorial Community Hospital Welcomes New Heart Doctor



We are pleased to announce the arrival of Dr. John Varner, DO, FACC, Cardiologist to Cameron Medical Group. He graduated with honors in 1999, completed his residency and fellowship at Botsford General Hospital, and brings more than 22 years of diverse experiences, especially in Cardiovascular and Heart Rhythm care.

The arrival of Dr. Varner will further solidify Cameron's commitment to bring a wide variety of highly sophisticated care not typically found in rural communities. Cameron's goal is to drive connection and synergy to regional heart care in Northeast Indiana. We are delighted to collaborate with our existing providers and partners to expand access and develop new world-class options for our patients.

Dr. Varner and his team of experienced healthcare providers will be able to provide not only outpatient clinic visits for cardiac patients but provide diagnostic services such as imaging and stress tests at Cameron. We will also provide Cardiac Device Management with our onsite Cardiac Device Clinic and be able to implant pacemakers and defibrillators right here at Cameron. Dr. Varner will be available to start seeing patients in the Spring. We are honored to be able to provide best practice and years of experience that rivals bigger communities right here in Angola.



Heart Safety

Beating nearly 115,000 times per day, the human heart is one of the most important organs we need to survive. Heart disease is the number one killer in women and steadily growing for men. Here are some safety tips to keep your heart pumping and healthy.

- Eat well balanced meals.
- Exercise regularly.
- Limit your alcohol consumption.
- Manage your stress.
- Get enough sleep.
- Maintain a healthy weight.

Play it Safe!

This important safety message is brought to you by the Union Hospital Clinton emergency team staffed with experienced and reliable Emergency Room Physicians close to home.

**UNION
HEALTH**
Union Hospital Clinton



Your Union Hospital Clinton emergency team



Listen to your heart

\$49 Heart Scan at Union Hospital Clinton

This non-invasive scan, performed at Union Hospital Clinton, has helped many patients understand the early warning signs of heart disease. Through this simple scan, high-risk conditions have been identified which have allowed patients to get treated before a life-changing event could occur. If evidence of heart disease is caught and treated early enough, conditions are more likely to be treated and potentially reversed.

For more information about Heart Scans at
Union Hospital Clinton
call **765.832.1317**

Heart scans are generally recommended for men over 40 and women over 45 who have a family history of heart disease, but do not experience symptoms. Additional risk factors include smoking, diabetes, obesity and high blood pressure. The cost for a heart scan is \$49. Due to the state grant at select critical care hospitals no insurance is needed. Exams must be paid with cash or your health savings account prior to testing.



Union Hospital Clinton is also offering \$49 "Heart Scan Gift Cards" to help determine heart risks for your loved ones. A unique gift that shows how much you care.

myunionhealth.org/heartscan

Governor Holcomb Announces Initiative to Place Overdose Reversal Kits in All 92 Counties



Gov. Holcomb announces initiative to place overdose reversal kits in all 92 counties

Overdose Lifeline, Inc. will distribute "NaloxBoxes" in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic

Governor Eric J. Holcomb and the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration's Division of Mental Health and Addiction today announced the state will partner with Overdose Lifeline, Inc. to expand access to the opioid reversal agent naloxone through the purchase of 24/7-access "NaloxBox" units.

"Making overdose response tools like naloxone readily available to any Hoosier who may encounter an individual suffering from an overdose is critical in addressing the drug epidemic," Gov. Holcomb said. "We're committed to raising awareness about the need for bystanders to carry this lifesaving drug, which is why we've made it available via so many avenues, oftentimes at no cost to Hoosiers."

Any business or community entity committed to helping Hoosiers at risk of opioid overdose is eligible to request a NaloxBox unit to install in an accessible and highly visible area. Community partners who receive a unit will be responsible for monitoring the NaloxBox location daily and requesting naloxone refills after use.

Naloxone, or Narcan, is a medication approved to reverse overdose by opioids. Naloxone is given when a person is showing signs of opioid overdose. It blocks the toxic effects of the overdose and is often the difference between a patient living and dying.

A NaloxBox is a hard acrylic box mounted to an exterior wall that provides 24/7 access to naloxone and is an effective measure of addressing the increase of opioid overdoses in Indiana. Each unit contains six to eight doses of naloxone, instructions for use, and treatment referral cards.

Overdose Lifeline, Inc., an Indiana nonprofit dedicated to helping individuals, families and communities affected by substance use disorder through advocacy, education, harm reduction, prevention, resources, and support, intends to purchase and place 215 NaloxBox units across the state, including at least one in every county.

Overdose Lifeline, Inc. has negotiated a purchase price with the manufacturer of \$58,200 to include 215 NaloxBox units and shipping costs. Funds were made available by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's state opioid response grant.

Naloxone administration rates by emergency medical services continue to climb statewide during the COVID-19 pandemic. Local health departments registered with the Indiana Department of Health as entities to dispense naloxone may be experiencing limited access to resources due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The state's partnership with Overdose Lifeline, Inc. allows local health departments to devote their resources to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

"Our mission is to save lives from a disease that has devastated communities across our state," said FSSA Secretary Jennifer Sullivan, M.D., M.P.H. "NaloxBoxes are just one innovative strategy we're using to support Hoosiers with substance use disorders. By normalizing access to this overdose reversal tool, we're reducing the stigma often associated with opioid overdose."

Businesses or community entities who wish to receive a NaloxBox should contact Justin Phillips, founder and executive director of Overdose Lifeline, Inc. at justin@overdoselifeline.org.

This initiative is in addition to an existing collaboration with Overdose Lifeline, Inc. announced by Gov. Holcomb in May 2020 to fund a nearly \$1 million distribution of naloxone to ensure the medication reaches Hoosiers who are at risk of overdose.

First responders, families, caregivers, and other individuals who would like to receive a supply of naloxone can register online at www.overdoselifeline.org/2020-indiana-naloxone-request

FSSA Division of Mental Health and Addiction
402 W. Washington St. W353,
P.O. Box 7083
Indianapolis, IN 46207-7083



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, February 12, 2021

Contact: Tina Darling, (812) 478-3919 ext. 248, e-mail: tdarling@indianarha.org
Cara Veale (812) 478-3919 e-mail: cveale@indianarha.org

IRHA encourages Hoosier families to explore health coverage during Marketplace Special Enrollment Period

WASHINGTON, Indiana – IRHA's Connecting Kids to Coverage (CKC) program is assisting Hoosier families in completing applications for either state health insurance coverage or through Indiana's Federally-Facilitated Marketplace platform, healthcare.gov. IRHA has four licensed Indiana insurance navigators who are also Marketplace Certified Application Counselors, and are ready to serve Indiana's families.

According to a 2019 report, 7.1% of Indiana children do not have health insurance, ranking Indiana 10th in the nation for highest child uninsured rates (Georgetown University Center for Children and Families, 2019). Layoffs and furloughs from the COVID-19 public health emergency have placed an added burden on Hoosiers who previously relied on employer-sponsored coverage for themselves and their families. To address this situation, the Biden administration is opening a Marketplace special enrollment period (SEP) from February 15 to May 15, 2021.

“IRHA is proud to have our CKC team in place and ready to help Hoosier families during this SEP,” said Cara Veale, IRHA Chief Executive Officer. “This is a great option for families who may not qualify for state coverage and have no employer-sponsored health coverage to fall back on.”

The CKC team is available to consult with families regarding their health insurance options such as Marketplace, Hoosier Healthwise and the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP). Residents can receive free assistance with the application process, as well as help to maintain their coverage from year to year. Appointments can be made online at www.indianaruralhealth.org/CKC-IN; by email at navigator@indianarha.org; or by phone at 812-478-3919, ext. 248.

To invite a CKC team member to join your event, please contact Tina Darling, CKC Program Director, at tdarling@indianarha.org, or 317-478-3919, ext. 248. Follow us on Facebook: Connecting Kids to Coverage – Indiana, and on Twitter: @kids_coverage.

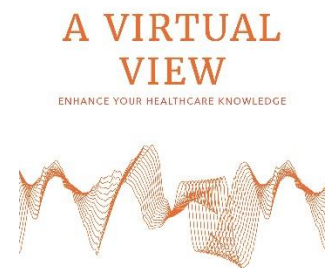
The CKC project is supported by Funding Opportunity Number 1Y1CMS331712-02-00 from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

About the Indiana Rural Health Association

The Indiana Rural Health Association was organized in 1997 and is a nonprofit organization working to enhance the health and well-being of rural populations in Indiana through leadership, education, advocacy, collaboration, and resource development. The strength of the organization is through the present diverse membership and the founding organizers who are committed to impacting the health of citizens through the identification of rural health issues and through advocacy roles in both the public and private sectors. IRHA membership is made up of almost 3,000 diverse individuals and organizations, making it the largest state rural health association in the nation, and a nationally recognized leader in rural health care. For more information, visit www.indianaruralhealth.org

UMTRC’s “A Virtual View”

As of late 2020, the Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center (UMTRC) has started a podcast called, “A Virtual View,” hosted by the UMTRC’s Program Director, Becky Sanders. As individuals who are passionate about Midwesterners and the healthcare they have access to, each episode of “A Virtual View” highlights the amazing things people are doing in healthcare and telehealth. A few of the topics that Becky has already discussed include tobacco cessation in Indiana, the Indiana Telehealth Network, and health coverage for Indiana families and pregnant women. You can listen to a new episode of “A Virtual View” every first and third Friday of the month wherever you listen to podcasts. Currently, there are 5 episodes posted at <https://www.umtrc.org/engagement/podcasts/>.



If you are passionate about Midwesterners too and have a story you’d like to share, a topic you’d like us to tackle, or resources to help improve others healthcare knowledge, you can reach out to the UMTRC at <https://www.umtrc.org/forms/podcast-inquiry/>.



Conferences, webinars and other educational opportunities from the Indiana Rural Health Association...

IRHA is monitoring COVID-19 and will notify registrants if there are any changes to in-person events

Virtual Events

IRHA Spring Rural Summit

Join us for the IRHA Spring Rural Summit on April 8, 2021! We will cover topics ranging from leadership to quality and more with a focus on Critical Access Hospitals, Rural Hospitals, and Rural Health Clinics.

IRHA members who are Critical Access Hospital employees can attend for just \$40!

Registration is open!

Registration fees:

IRHA Member - \$85

IRHA Member and Critical Access Hospital (CAH) employee - \$40

Non-member - \$235

Non-Member Critical Access Hospital (CAH) employee - \$140

Student member - \$50



Event Details

Date: April 8, 2021

Time: 8:30am- 2:30pm EST

Location: Virtual

[Agenda](#)

[Register](#)

Telegenetics Training Program

The Midwest Genetics Network and the Heartland Genetics Network are collaborating with the Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center (UMTRC) to offer an introductory telegenetics training program for genetics providers and genetic counseling students.

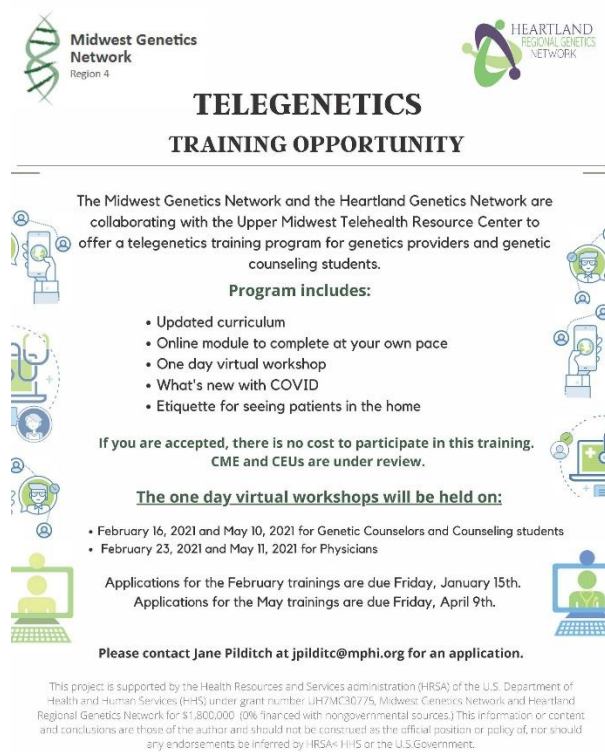
The one day virtual workshops for **Genetic Counselors and Counseling students** will be held on:

- May 10, 2021

The one day virtual workshops for **Physicians** will be held on:

- February 23, 2021
- May 11, 2021

[Application Info](#)



Midwest Genetics Network
Region 4

HEARTLAND REGIONAL GENETICS NETWORK

TELEGENETICS TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

The Midwest Genetics Network and the Heartland Genetics Network are collaborating with the Upper Midwest Telehealth Resource Center to offer a telegenetics training program for genetics providers and genetic counseling students.

Program includes:

- Updated curriculum
- Online module to complete at your own pace
- One day virtual workshop
- What's new with COVID
- Etiquette for seeing patients in the home

If you are accepted, there is no cost to participate in this training. CME and CEUs are under review.

The one day virtual workshops will be held on:

- February 16, 2021 and May 10, 2021 for Genetic Counselors and Counseling students
- February 23, 2021 and May 11, 2021 for Physicians

Applications for the February trainings are due Friday, January 15th.
Applications for the May trainings are due Friday, April 9th.

Please contact Jane Pilditch at jpilditc@mphi.org for an application.

This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number UH7MC00275, Midwest Genetics Network and Heartland Regional Genetics Network for \$1,800,000. (9% matched with nongovernmental sources.) This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

In-Person Events

23rd Annual Rural Health Conference

Save the date for the 23rd Annual Indiana Rural Health Conference scheduled for June 15-16, 2021 in French Lick, Indiana. This is a MUST-ATTEND event for health professionals, students, and more! The agenda will be released soon. Exhibitor and attendee registration is open now. Exhibitor space is limited.

Register now!

[Register](#)



Webinars

Brian Lee Webinars

Brian Lee, CSP, is one of North America's leading experts in the field of World-Class patient experience, staff engagement and culture change. He is known for his passion and enthusiasm in delivering inspirational keynote presentations that create impact and bring transformation to healthcare organizations. Brian is offering the following up-coming webinars:

"How to Thrive in the Next Normal"

February 19, 2021, 1:00pm-2:00pm EST

[Register](#)



"How Hospitals Can Win Back Every Single Patient"

March 4, 2021, 1:00pm-2:00pm EST

[Register](#)

IRHA Lunch & Learn: Indiana Health Coverage Enrollment Assistance: Language, Culture, and Citizenship

This webinar will review health coverage options in Indiana, primarily for those who are without (or cannot afford) employer-sponsored coverage, or who do not qualify for tax credits in Indiana's Federally Facilitated Marketplace. A review of who qualifies for health coverage based on citizenship will be provided, along with where to find free assistance in completing the applications. Information will be shared on where to find licensed navigators who are either bilingual, or who use interpretation services to help those with limited or no English proficiency.



Event Details:

Date: February 24, 2021

Time: 12:00pm- 1:00pm EST

Location: Virtual

Presenter(s): Tina Darling and Collette Rhoads,
IRHA Staff/Indiana Navigators

[Register](#)

IRHA Lunch & Learn: Indiana Community Health Workforce Development Institute

A group of four women faculty from Purdue University have engaged community partners throughout Indiana in an effort to eliminate health disparities for marginalized communities through the creation of the Community Health Workforce Development Institute. The overarching goals of the Institute are to create and sustain Community Health Worker (CHW) jobs for members of vulnerable neighborhoods in Indiana and to provide accessible job training to help communities overcome barriers to employment and other poverty-associated challenges.



Event Details:

Date: February 25, 2021

Time: 12:00pm- 1:00pm EST

Location: Virtual

Presenter(s): Jasmine D. Gonzalvo, Natalia Rodriguez, Yumary Ruiz

[Register](#)

IRHA Lunch & Learn: HRSA Designations - Making Sense of the Alphabet Soup

Join us for a full explanation of HRSA designations and how to maximize them for your community and health care organization.

By the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to:

1. Understand the HRSA Designation process.
2. Understand National Health Service Corps and how to take advantage of this as a recruitment tool
3. Understanding HPSA, MUA, and MUPs.



Event Details:

Date: March 10, 2021

Time: 12:00pm- 1:00pm EST

Location: Virtual

Presenter(s): Elizabeth Burrows and Lacy Foy

[Register](#)

IRHA Membership

Please check to be sure your IRHA membership is up to date! For instructions on renewing your membership [CLICK HERE](#). Student memberships are free! We welcome new members to join at any time!

If you have any questions, please contact [Heidi Malone](#).

[Join Now](#)



Main Satellite Office (payable & receivable):

Corporate Office:
201 East Main Street, Suite 415

Satellite Office:

2901 Ohio Boulevard, Suite 240
Terre Haute, IN 47803
Phone: (812) 478-3919
Email: info@indianarha.org

Washington, IN 47501

Located at the Indiana Interchurch
Center
1100 West 42nd Street, Suite 305
Indianapolis, IN 46208



Please submit future CAHoots newsletter articles to Tina Elliott at telliott@indianarha.org.