

Assisting Pennsylvania’s Agricultural Producers  
in Using Pesticides Safely

Through the Pennsylvania Rural Health Farm Worker Protection Safety Program, **PORH** staff continued to provide technical and compliance assistance to agricultural producers on the Environmental Protection Agency’s Worker Protection Standard to prevent illness or injury from pesticide exposures.

The program continues to promote other health and safety resources to the agricultural community through our farm visits and information booths. Growers were especially interested in information on Lyme disease since Pennsylvania ranks as the number one state in the nation for this disease.

The Pennsylvania Rural Health Farm Worker Protection Safety Program is a collaboration between **PORH**, the Penn State Pesticide Education Program, and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

*This publication is available in alternative media on request. Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the diversity of its workforce. U.Ed. HHD 16-047*



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Enhancing the Health Status  
of Rural Pennsylvanians



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# Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health

Since its inception in 1991, the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health (**PORH**) has worked with local, state, and federal partners to achieve equity in, and access to, quality health care for Pennsylvania’s rural residents. **PORH** strives to be the premier rural health leadership organization in Pennsylvania and one of the most effective State Offices of Rural Health in the nation. Located at the Penn State University Park campus, **PORH** is administratively located in the Department of Health Policy and Administration in the College of Health and Human Development.

**PORH**’s areas of expertise center on rural health, agricultural health and safety, and community and economic development.

## Vision

To be recognized as the premier rural leadership and information organization in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and to be one of the most effective state offices of rural health in the nation.

## Mission

To enhance the health status of rural Pennsylvanians through education, outreach, advocacy, applied research, and special programs and projects.

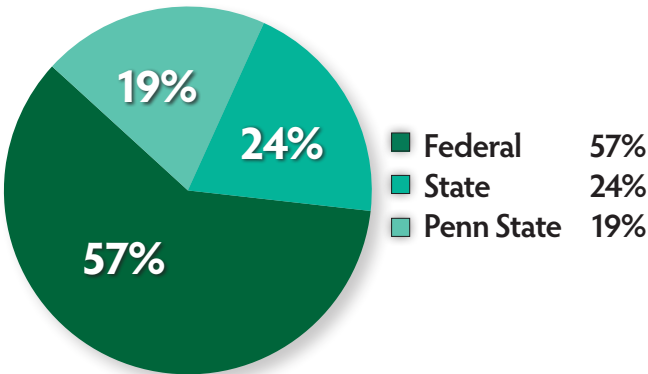
## Services

**PORH** staff provides technical assistance, information dissemination, partnership development, continuing education, policy development, small rural hospital and rural health care provider support, research, and agricultural outreach.

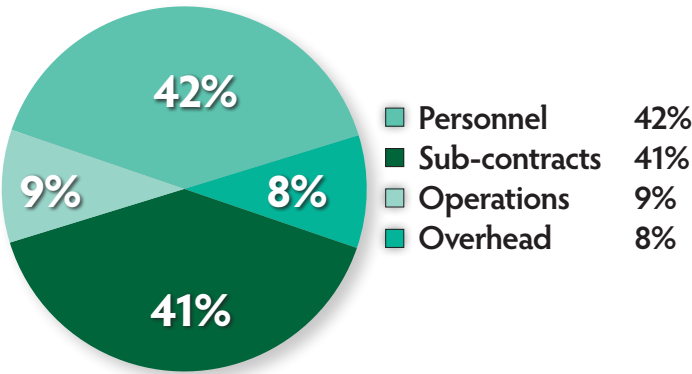
## Funding

**PORH** is funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, other state and federal agencies, and with in-kind support from the Pennsylvania State University.

Sources of Support



Categories of Expenditures



# Highlights and Accomplishments

## Technical Assistance and Advocacy for Healthy Rural Communities

Providing technical assistance to rural health care providers and communities and disseminating information are two of the core functions of a State Office of Rural Health. In 2014-15, **PORH** staff provided nearly 800 technical assistance services to communities, state and local agencies, health care providers, educators, and consumers, which received information on funding opportunities, project development, grant reviews, best practices, referrals, tools, and more.

**PORH** reached over 1,200 rural health providers, educators, and advocates through continuing education events and outreach.

## Population Health Efforts to Strengthen Community Health

**PORH** continued to assist Pennsylvania’s small rural hospitals to address identified community health needs. **PORH** engaged the Healthy Communities Institute (HCI) to implement their web-based data collection and presentation tool for use in planning, decision support, evaluation, quality improvement, and partnership-building.

Eleven contiguous rural counties in Pennsylvania are included in the HCI project. The small rural hospitals that are part of the project, and the communities they serve, have access to local data for more than 100 measures. These data have proven to be useful to hospitals and regional collaborations for updating and evaluating their community health needs assessments and tracking progress on identified health priority areas. HCI also provides evidenced-based implementation strategies for many of the most promising practices from across the nation.

Publicly available HCI data for participating counties can be accessed at [porh.psu.edu](http://porh.psu.edu).

## Community-based Health Care

In collaboration with community and state partners, **PORH** launched a statewide Community Health Worker (CHW) initiative to integrate CHWs into health care policy, practice, and payment. The effort kicked off with the Community Health Worker Summit and CHW Strategic Planning Workshop and will continue through much of 2016. Stay tuned!

## Recognition of Leadership and Excellence

- 2014 National Rural Health Day Celebration
- 2014 Pennsylvania Rural Health Week Proclamation
- Presentation of the 2014 Pennsylvania Rural Health Awards

## Training and Continuing Education

- Ag Progress Days
- Community and Public Health Conference
- East Coast Migrant Stream Forum
- Federal Grants Technical Assistance Workshop
- Funding for Health Information Technology and Telehealth Workshop
- Health Insurance Marketplace Enrollment Webinars
- Pennsylvania Community Health Worker Summit
- Pennsylvania Community Health Worker Strategic Planning Session
- Pennsylvania Rural Legislative Briefing
- Swimming Pool Pesticide Applicator Training

## State at a Glance

- State Population – 12.79 million (2014 U.S. Census Bureau)
- % of Population Considered to be Rural – 23%
- Critical Access Hospitals – 13
- Rural Hospitals – 60
- Rural Health Clinics – 73
- Rural FQHC/CHC Look-alike Sites – 91



*“I am proud of the efforts you put forth, the first-class results of your work, and the vision you have to serve our constituents.”*

Division Chief, State Agency

*“PORH has been an indispensable resource to our hospital being certified as a Critical Access Hospital. Their guidance and council was of great benefit to us!”*

Hospital CEO and President

*“Continuing education programs coordinated by PORH have helped our organization build skills, expand programs, and secure funding.”*

Senior Director of Development