



**The America's Healthy Future Act
Help for Rural America's Communities**

The burden of our broken health care system can be seen in America's rural communities every day, where the nearest doctor's office, specialist or surgeon can be hours from home and the shortage of doctors and other health care providers makes it difficult for these communities to provide quality, affordable and accessible care. The America's Healthy Future Act contains several provisions to ensure rural health care facilities and providers have the resources they need to deliver quality care in their communities.

➤ **Helping Small Rural Hospitals Provide Quality Care**

- The America's Healthy Future Act extends the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant Program to provide funding for small rural hospitals that participate in programs to improve the quality of care for patients.
- The America's Healthy Future Act also extends funding to cover the costs of small rural hospitals that provide clinical laboratory services under Medicare Part B for two more years.

➤ **Keeping Rural Providers in the Medicare Program**

- The America's Healthy Future Act extends extra funding for small rural hospitals that have a high proportion of patients on Medicare, so they can continue participating in the program.
- Providing quality care to patients in rural areas means small hospitals face higher costs per patient. The America's Healthy Future Act provides additional funding for such "low-volume hospitals" to ensure they can continue providing vital quality care in rural communities.

➤ **Expanding Funding for Innovative Small Rural Hospitals**

- Last year, Medicare established a demonstration project, the *Community Health Integration Models Program*, to help small hospitals adopt new models of health care delivery shown to improve the quality of care. The America's Healthy Future Act expands eligibility for this project by allowing all counties in eligible rural states the opportunity to participate.

➤ **Ensuring Small Rural Hospitals are Paid Fairly and Accurately**

- Rural health providers face unique financial and workforce challenges. Under the America's Healthy Future Act, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) will assess the adequacy of Medicare payments to rural providers and provide Congress recommendations for appropriate modifications to ensure small rural hospitals are paid fairly and accurately.

➤ **Protecting Rural Hospitals from Devastating Payment Cuts**

- The America's Healthy Future Act protects isolated rural hospitals from funding cuts so they can continue offering vital outpatient services to their communities. The bill ensures Sole Community hospitals – those hospitals that are the only hospital providers within a 35 mile radius – will be reimbursed for at least 85 percent of their outpatient costs relative to any losses they may experience due to changes in payment reimbursement systems.

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