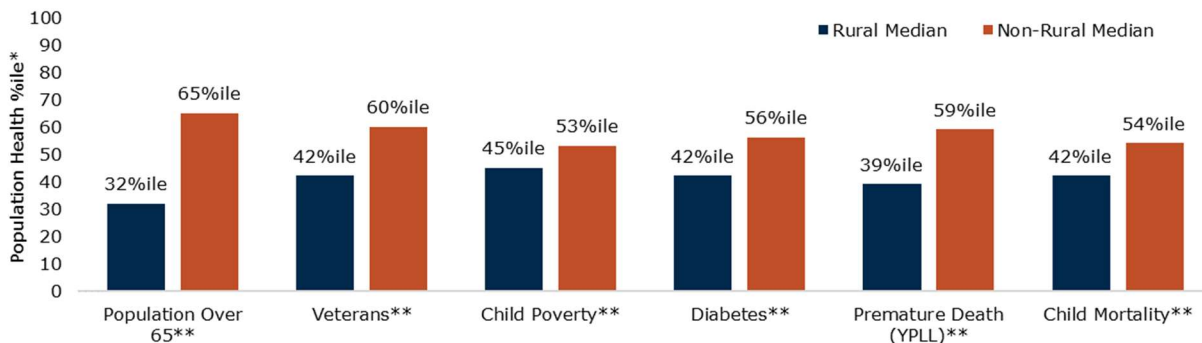
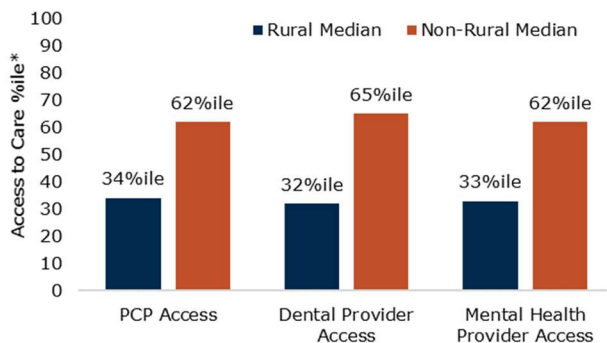


As Legislative Policy Changes Loom, Research Assesses Impact on Rural Communities Challenged by Socioeconomic Disadvantages and Health Disparities

Portland ME and Washington DC, February 6, 2017 – The Chartis Center for Rural Health (CCRH) and iVantage Health Analytics today released research findings revealing new insight into rural healthcare, and the socioeconomic disadvantages and health disparities of rural communities. The 2017 research into the health of rural communities reinforces the perception that rural healthcare providers serve populations that are socioeconomically disadvantaged and suffer from numerous health disparities and poorer outcomes.



Furthermore, these rural communities are challenged by lower access to primary, dental, and mental healthcare at the median.



*Population Health metrics are percentile ranked for all acute care rural and non-rural providers by hospital service area such that **lower ranks indicate greater population challenges**.

**Lower percentile scores indicate higher density (i.e. providers serving a greater proportion of individuals over 65 receive *lower* scores).

The CCRH analysis, which will be presented this week at the National Rural Health Association's Policy Institute in Washington, DC, also modelled the long-term impact of current and proposed legislative policies, which serve as pressure points on the rural health safety net. Across rural healthcare, the average payor mix of rural providers is 61 percent government, compared with 45 percent for non-rural providers. Medicare payments to rural hospitals and physicians are dramatically less than those to their urban counterparts for equivalent services. Thus, study findings suggest that policies such as sequestration, bad debt cuts, changes in Critical Access Hospital reimbursements, and rural PPS Coding Offset will not only negatively impact rural hospital revenues but may have broader consequences for rural populations. These policies jeopardize a combined:

- \$6.4 billion in hospital revenue over 10 years
- 283,000 jobs over 10 years
- \$33.2 billion in GDP over 10 years

"This new research builds upon six years of analysis and is intended to inform and guide rural providers and legislators about the state of rural healthcare in the U.S., as well as the impact of pending policy changes, including the potential repeal or replacement of the ACA. We hope this type of analysis can facilitate exploration of new ways to provide access to rural communities, many of which are economically and resource challenged," stated Michael Topchik, national leader of The Chartis Center for Rural Health.

The iVantage Hospital Strength INDEX® provides the data foundation of the Rural Relevance research and its results are the basis for many of rural healthcare's most prominent awards, advocacy efforts and legislative initiatives. The INDEX provides the industry standard for assessing – and benchmarking - rural and Critical Access Hospital performance. Across the spectrum of performance indicators, there are rural and Critical Access Hospitals that are writing the blueprint for success as they transition to value-based healthcare.

In addition to this exploration of rural health disparities, the 2017 Rural Relevance Study examines other pressure points negatively impacting the rural health safety net as well as the quantifiable value of rural healthcare. The study is scheduled for release later this month. To reserve a copy, please visit ivantageindex.com/studyreservation.

About the Chartis Group

The Chartis Group (Chartis) is a national advisory services firm dedicated to the healthcare industry. Chartis provides strategic planning, value-based care, advanced performance, informatics and technology consulting services as well as leading-edge decision support tools to the country's leading healthcare providers. The Chartis Center for Rural Health (CCRH) was formed in 2016 to offer tailored services, performance management solutions, research and education to rural hospitals and facilities. Learn more at Chartisrural.com.

About iVantage Health Analytics, a subsidiary of The Chartis Group

iVantage Health Analytics (iVantage) is a leading provider of healthcare analytic and performance management analytic tools. Health system and hospital leadership teams across the country rely on the company's software and services to deliver customized insights on clinical and financial performance, strategic planning, market assessment and payment optimization. iVantage's analytics are the basis of continuing thought leadership and insight in the areas of healthcare policy and research. In 2015, iVantage was acquired by The Chartis Group, a national advisory services firm dedicated to the healthcare industry. Learn more at iVantageHealth.com.

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