

Rural Health

Obj. 6.1: Identify a community's assets and needs related to rural health.



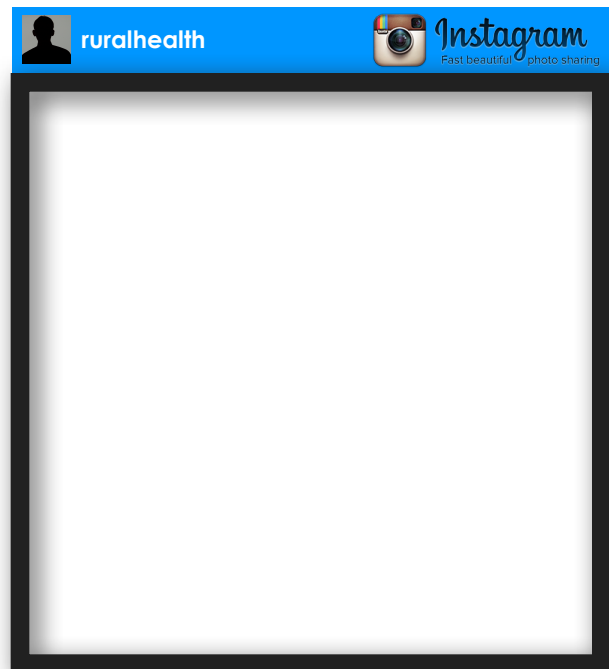
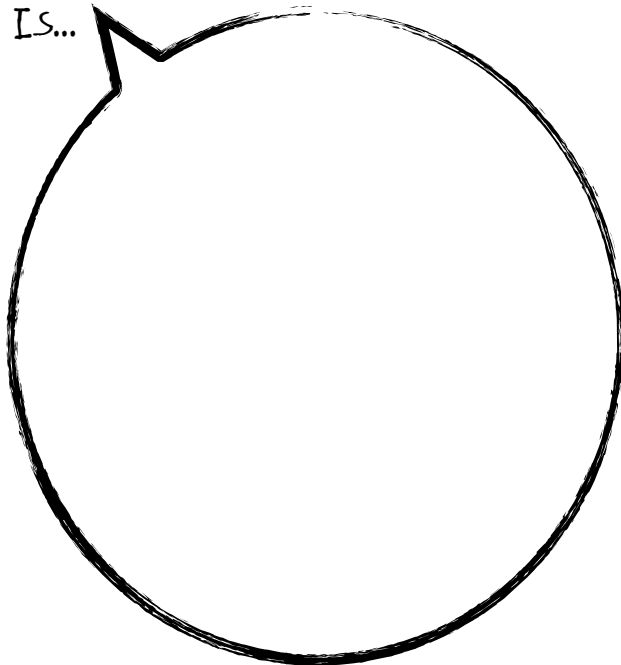
Rural Health Instagram

Goal: Collectively portray rural health using a series of representative images.

Directions:

1. Brainstorm: What is rural health? List your ideas in the bubble below. Aim for quantity with this brainstorm--the more ideas the better!
2. Choose one idea about rural health and imagine that idea as a simple image. Make a quick rough sketch of that image in the Instagram photo square below.
3. Draw the final version of your image on the Instagram square that is passed out.

RURAL
HEALTH
IS...



DISCUSS

Present your idea to the class as you hang your Instagram square on the wall. As you listen to your classmates present, think about the following questions:

1. Which ideas were most surprising or unique?
2. What were the most common themes?
3. Do you think any of the ideas presented are stereotypes about rural health?
4. What proportion of the ideas had a positive versus negative association?



What is Rural Health?

Rural health does not have a simple, one-size-fits-all definition. This is because no two places have the same characteristics. Differences in geography, population, economy, infrastructure, policies, resources, and ecosystems can all influence health, and these factors make each place that human call home incredibly unique.

In order to improve the health status of all people, we must carefully examine how certain environments influence health. Both urban and rural communities face significant **health disparities**, unmet needs and challenges that affect people’s health on a daily basis and over a lifetime. However, there are also a wealth of **assets** in these communities, which can be capitalized upon in order to establish better health outcomes in rural communities.

VOCABULARY:

rural: geographic area located outside of cities and towns; usually having low population density

health disparity: a type of difference in health that is closely linked with social or economic disadvantage

assets: a useful or valuable thing, person, or quality



Challenges and Assets

Goal: Consider the needs and assets in a community that may influence health.

Directions: For each of the following vignettes, list at least one need and one asset in the table.

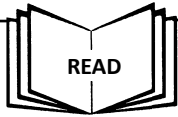
Vignettes	Rural health...	
	Challenges	Assets
<p>1: During a football game, a young quarterback is knocked unconscious. The trainer is on the field immediately, and assesses the player’s head injury. The nearest hospital is 40 minutes away, but luckily an ambulance is on-call at the game. At the hospital, the player’s parents are told about dangers of repetitive head injuries from contact sports, but they don’t understand the doctor’s explanation because of the complex medical language he uses.</p>		

Vignettes	Rural health...	
	Challenges	Assets
<p>2: June is a single-mother raising two children on a farm. Her husband died four years ago in a farming accident. June provides her children with fresh fruits and vegetables from a small garden she planted years ago for the family. But managing the farm has become difficult without her husband. June does not have health insurance and struggles to pay the bills every month. Despite all her struggles, whenever June gets too stressed, she takes long walks around in the woods surrounding the farm. The clean air, wildlife, and nature have a way of calming her.</p>		
<p>3: Dennis is a single middle-aged man, working as a custodian. He has dealt with mental health issues his whole life, but recently his bouts of depression seem to be coming more often and lasting longer. He has never been diagnosed or treated, but his family and neighbors have long suspected and they tend to help him through his most difficult times with small gestures of kindness. Dennis is also obese. He limits his trips to the grocery store to every six weeks (due to distance) and doesn't have another source for fresh produce.</p>		

DISCUSS

Write another vignette related to your community. Include at least one asset and one challenge. Then exchange vignettes with a partner and have them identify the challenge(s) and asset(s).

Vignette	Challenges	Assets



Letter from Obama

On November 15, 2013, President Obama wrote an open letter in honor of National Rural Health day. As you read the President's words, highlight to indicate the positive factors (assets) and the disparities and challenges (needs) mentioned.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 15, 2013

I send greetings to all those observing National Rural Health Day on November 21.

Rural towns and communities are central to the American way of life. They supply our food, fiber, and energy. They safeguard our natural resources and help drive developments in science and innovation. And the spirit of integrity, community, and self-discipline we associate with small towns reflects the values that built our country and the very best of our national character.

National Rural Health Day provides a special opportunity to celebrate the important role rural America plays in the life of our country. It also helps highlight the unique health challenges faced in rural communities across our country. Americans living in rural areas often suffer from increased rates of disease, disability, and mortality as well as inequities in access to health services, including preventive care.

My Administration remains committed to ensuring all Americans can get the care they need and deserve at a price they can afford, and we have taken important steps to make sure this extends to small towns and rural communities. Through the Improving Rural Health Care Initiative, we have partnered with local leaders to support the health care workforce and expand the use of health information technology. And by assisting Regional Extension Centers, we are addressing barriers facing rural providers and hospitals in implementing these technologies. In 2011, I established the White House Rural Council to strengthen rural communities and promote economic growth, and its efforts include expanding health services for veterans in these areas. Through the Affordable Care Act, we are helping uninsured rural Americans gain unprecedented access to coverage. And we are improving health care for millions across our country—helping ensure they have the security of high-quality, affordable health insurance.

On National Rural Health Day, let us extend our thanks to the health care providers tirelessly serving rural America, reaffirm our commitment to meeting the needs of these communities, and celebrate the lasting contributions they have made to our national life.

**Think-PairShare:**

- 1. THINK:** Choose one asset and one need that you found most compelling and explain why each is significant in rural health.

Asset (positive factor):	Need (disparity or challenge):

- 2. PAIR SHARE:** Share your answers with a partner.

**Instagram or Interview!**

Choose one of the options below for your homework assignment:

- 1. Instagram:** Your challenge is to take 3 photos that capture the spirit of rural health in your community. They can portray the assets or challenges, and you are encouraged to be creative. For each photo, write a short caption explaining it. Listen carefully for instructions on how to submit your photos.

I should submit my photos in the following way:

- 2. Interview:** Your challenge is to interview someone in the community about the assets and challenges they observe related to health in your community. Record the questions you ask and a summary of their responses on a separate paper.