



Fast Facts: Arizona State Office of Rural Health Program (AzSORH)

The Arizona State Office of Rural Health (AzSORH) Program provides the infrastructure to identify, track and address ongoing and emerging issues affecting individuals, families and health systems in Arizona’s rural and underserved communities.

Continuously funded since 1990, AzSORH is housed at the University of Arizona Health Sciences Zuckerman College of Public Health in the Arizona Center for Rural Health (AzCRH). AzSORH is federal and state designated and funded by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), with 3:1 State of Arizona to Federal matching funds.



AzSORH links our diverse staff and faculty with state agencies, rural communities, organizations, stakeholders, state and federal resources to:

- Collect and disseminate rural health information and convene events.
- Provide technical assistance to rural communities and organizations.
- Develop and support rural health networks and partnerships.
- Support and expand health workforce pathways to practice in rural and underserved areas.
- Collect and analyze rural health data, produce actionable reports and publish data visualizations, policy briefs and syntheses of contemporary rural health issues.
- Identify and address factors that create disparities in rural and underserved communities.
- Promote accessible, affordable, and culturally competent healthcare for all Arizonans.

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AzSORH Five-Year Summary: July 1 to June 30 Fiscal Year (FY)

AzSORH Activity	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Total Technical Assistance	4,236	5,210	5,189	5,201	5,306
In-Person Contacts	2,620	2,631	279	385	553
Phone / Emails	545	484	474	425	498
Webinar Participation	749	1,343	1,196	1,347	1,149
Teleconference	106	134	148	261	273
Other Modes (Media, Surveys, Website, Etc.)*	216	553	3,092	2,783	2,833
Newsletter Distribution	9,792	10,164	10,070	10,893	11,758
Web Page Visits	40,696	46,143	44,601	85,666	68,275

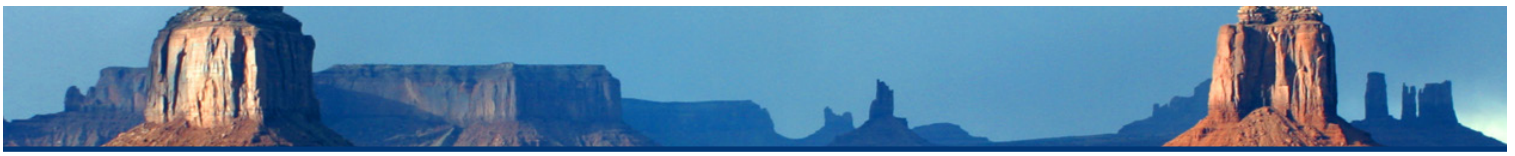
*Previously labeled as “Assistance to researchers, others”



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Arizona Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (AzFlex)

Since 1999, **Arizona’s Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (AzFlex)** has served as the premier technical assistance, training and information resource for populations served by Arizona’s 16 federally designated Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs), 31 Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) – of which 24 are affiliated with AzCAHs – and Community Health Centers (Federally Qualified and Tribal), trauma, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and first responders. AzFlex is housed in the Arizona Center for Rural Health.

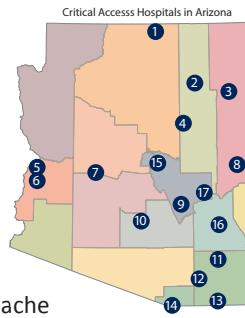
CAHs have fewer than 25 inpatient beds, are 35 miles or more from another facility, staff a 24-hours/7-days per week Emergency Department, and average less than 96 hours for an inpatient stay. Medicare reimburses CAHs on a reasonable cost basis for inpatient and outpatient services. Support by [Medicare](#), [Medicaid](#), AHCCCS (e.g., [AZ CAH Pool](#)) and federal (e.g., DSH) funding, help sustain crucial safety net services in rural communities.

AZFLEX PROGRAM FOCUS AREAS

- **Enhance Healthcare Quality** – AzCAHs report data into a national benchmarking system on patient safety, engagement, care transitions, and outpatient measures. AzFlex distributes quarterly trend reports to AzCAHs reflecting improvement and areas needing improvement.
- **Improve Financial and Operational Performance** – through monthly CAH Executive Leadership meetings, performance improvement education, consultations, technical assistance, financial and operational assessments, and recommendations tailored to individual CAHs.
- **Encourage Community Engagement and Health System Development** – use results from Community Health Needs Assessments, the Arizona Health Improvement Plan, and the 2016 Statewide EMS Needs Assessment to prioritize issues for communities served by CAHs and RHCs.
- **Designate Critical Access Hospitals (CAH)** – support, provide technical assistance to eligible rural hospitals considering federal CAH designation.

ARIZONA’S CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITALS

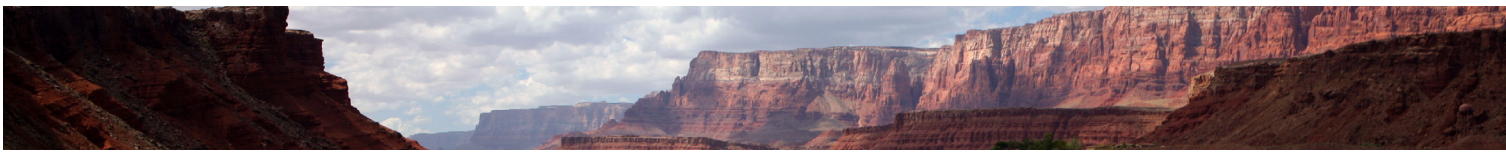
- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1 Banner Page Hospital | 9 Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center | 15 Banner Payson Medical Center |
| 2 Hopi Health Care Center | 10 Hu Hu Kam Memorial Hospital | 16 Mt Graham Regional Medical Center |
| 3 Sage Memorial Hospital | 11 Northern Cochise Community Hospital | 17 Izeé Baa Gowah San Carlos Apache Healthcare |
| 4 Little Colorado Medical Center | 12 Benson Hospital | |
| 5 Parker Indian Health Center | 13 Copper Queen Community Hospital | |
| 6 La Paz Regional Hospital | 14 Carondelet Holy Cross Hospital | |
| 7 Wickenburg Community Hospital | | |
| 8 White Mountain Regional Medical Center | | |



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Fast Facts: Arizona Small Hospital Improvement Program

The [Arizona Center for Rural Health](#) (AzCRH) at The University of Arizona (UArizona) Health Sciences Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health (MEZCOPH) is funded by the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) for the **Arizona Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program** (AzSHIP).

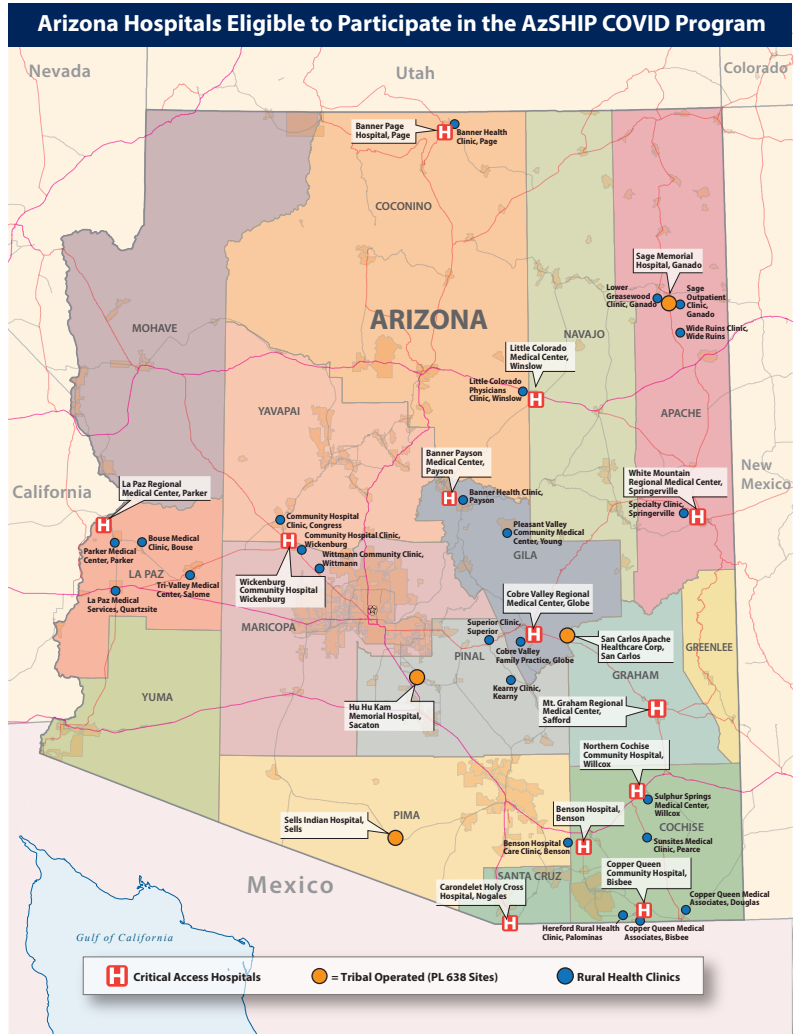
AzSHIP currently includes 11 small rural hospitals (<50 beds) and Critical Access Hospitals (<25 beds, >35 mi from another facility, and operate a 24/7 emergency department). Funds (\$12,000 per hospital) are used for fiscal and quality improvement and reform such as value-based purchasing, participating in accountable care organizations, and payment bundling.

On April 22, 2020 HRSA awarded AzCRH new funding of \$71,500 per hospital for 16 eligible AzSHIP hospitals to prevent and respond to COVID. Funding can be used to:

- Ensure patient and hospital personnel safety to minimize COVID-19 exposure.
- Address emergent COVID-19 issues, including testing, lab, patient and community education.
- Strengthen hospital capacity and staffing levels by reinstating, reassigning providers, hiring new providers, increasing staff time to respond to COVID and continue hospital operations.
- Complete minor renovation to maximize isolation precautions, facilitate telehealth.
- Purchase equipment, including for telehealth, vehicles, triage tents, and mobile medical units.

These 16 eligible Arizona hospitals include for-profit, not-for-profit, and tribal-operated (P.L. 638 self-determination) organizations that provide short-term, general acute hospital and 24/7 emergency care for their rural communities. They play crucial roles in assuring ready access to quality health care, improving population health outcomes, and contributing to rural community economic health and development.

<https://crh.arizona.edu/programs/ship>



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Fast Facts: Rural Health Professions Program

The Arizona Center for Rural Health Rural Health Professions Program (RHPP) is a partnership of Arizona's regional Area Health Education Centers (AHECs), the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health (MEZCOPH), and community partners. The AHEC and RHPP mission is preparing health professional students for practice in rural and urban underserved areas of the state.

RHPP SERVICE LEARNING

Service learning is experiential education - learning in the field – between students, faculty, and community members. Partnerships with Arizona's regional AHEC Centers allow active learning and reflection on achieving health equity, eliminating health disparities, addressing the social and environmental determinants of health, and improving public and individual health outcomes.

The MEZCOPH RHPP emphasizes community-based, service-learning experiences for its students in graduate level, intensive week-long courses:

Border Health Service Learning Institute (PHPM 597C) – takes place along the US-Mexico border in Yuma, AZ and San Luis Colorado, Mexico. Students learn about health and social determinants of health along the US-Mexico border with the Regional Center for Border Health.

Rural Health Service Learning Institute (PHPM 597D) – takes place in Safford, Thatcher, and Morenci, AZ where students are introduced to some of the major industries in rural Arizona and their workforce – including copper mining, cotton farming, and ranching. Students learn about healthcare systems, environmental determinants of health, and work hand-in-hand with community partners.

Maternal and Child Health in Rural Settings (HPS 597B) – takes place in the vast frontier and rural areas of northern Arizona, including participants from the Navajo and Hopi Nations.

Phoenix Urban Underserved Service Learning (PHP 597F) – brings together students and faculty with safety net health and service organizations – Circle the City Healthcare for the Homeless, St. Mary's Food Bank, Vitalyst Foundation, Maricopa Co. Dept. of Public Health and others.

Family & Child Health in Urban Settings (HPS 597A) takes place in Tucson and Pima County and gives students real world and applied experiences on issues affecting the health of families and children.



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Fast Facts: Students Helping Arizona Register Everyone

People in Arizona communities are becoming more aware of their health insurance options through **Project SHARE**.

WHAT IS SHARE?

Project SHARE (Students Helping Arizona Register Everyone) is a student group working under the University of Arizona Center for Rural Health. Project SHARE trains UArizona Health Sciences students from the Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, Pharmacy and Health Sciences to improve the students' health insurance literacy and assist with health insurance education and enrollment efforts.

GOALS:

1. Train health professions students to better equip them to answer health insurance coverage related questions when out in the community and within their personal and professional networks.
2. Address consumers' ability to and comfort with navigating health insurance coverage by being a referral system to Certified Assisters.

What We Do: Health Insurance 101 Trainings and Outreach Fairs. SHARE conducts Health Insurance 101 Trainings and Outreach Fairs with a focus on reaching the uninsured and under-insured populations within Pima County. Our mission is to demystify health insurance and make it accessible to all. Project SHARE provides:

Health Insurance 101 Trainings: Informative sessions to help consumers understand health insurance coverage and the benefits it offers.

Outreach Fairs: SHARE students accompanied by Certified Assisters (Navigators) will attend your event to disseminate health insurance information and help schedule enrollment appointments.

Certified Assister Referrals: We connect individuals with Certified Assisters who can guide them through the process of obtaining proper health coverage.



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Fast Facts: ADHS-CDC COVID-19 Health Disparities Initiative — AHEAD AZ

AHEAD AZ has partnered with the State Office of Rural Health to work with community partners to expand and develop new mitigation and prevention resources. The purpose of these services is to reduce COVID-19 related health disparities along populations that are under-resourced and have higher risks for negative health outcomes. The collaboration between AHEAD and community partners in Arizona aims to improve health equity and address the social determinants of health among these communities.

AHEAD AZ Focus Areas:

Workforce Trainings & Technical Assistance

- Develop, train resource navigators and CHW's on social determinants of health, cultural responsiveness, HIPAA, and other public health related topics.
- Provide timely training and education to public health and healthcare workforce on latest health communication tools (e.g., Artificial Intelligence in Public Health) and information relating to SARS-CoV-2-COVID.
- Establish AZCOVIDTXT-RH texting platform to deliver timely, relevant information on COVID-19 and other public health issues to Arizona's rural health provider network and other public health issues to a network of rural health providers.

Community Education

- Develop and support dissemination of materials to educate and increase awareness on COVID-19 related health disparities, risk information, and prevention methods.
- Enhance rural library capacity to address health disparities and build community resilience through the Library Champions Program.
- Engage youth in trainings and education aimed at building knowledge and awareness of public health issue and skills in community advocacy and engagement.
- Develop culturally appropriate, hands-on activities to increase awareness on physical, mental, spiritual & emotional wellness among Native youth.

Community Outreach

- Collaborate with MOVE UP vaccine and testing sites through administration, community outreach, engagement, and infrastructure.
- Support rural partners in community health fairs and events, with a focus on communicable and non-communicable diseases (e.g., COVID-19 related vaccines, HIV, Hepatitis B & C, Syphilis).

crh.arizona.edu/programs/ahead-az



Affiliated programs and community partners:

- Arizona Area Health Education Center (AzAHEC) Program and its regional partners
- Arizona Alliance for Community Health Centers (AACHC)
- Arizona Community Health Workers Association (AzCHOW)
- Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (ADDPC)
- AZ Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA)
- AZ Library Association (AzLA)
- Mobile Outreach Vaccine Education for Underserved Populations (MOVE UP) Program
- National Parks Service (NPS)
- Pima County Health Department (PCHD)

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Fast Facts: Arizona Rural Health Workforce Research and Analysis

Education, training, retention and support for Arizona’s rural health workforce are essential to carrying out the AzCRH mission of improving the health and wellness of Arizona’s rural and underserved populations.

Health workforce research and analysis help inform decisions on policies and programs aimed at supporting health workforce pathways from education to practice.

Due to the ongoing transformation of the healthcare delivery system in the U.S., it is important for states to collect, compile, analyze and report on the health workforce. It is especially important to provide data-driven solutions to the existing maldistribution of the health workforce that plays a role in shortages and constrained access to care for population based on geography or demographic factors.

With support from the Arizona Area Health Education Center (AZAHEC) Program, we sustain the Arizona Health Workforce Data System (AzHWDS) project. A core component of this project is a data warehouse that contains health workforce, health system, and population level social, health, and demographic data.

The data warehouse serves as the foundation for our core report, the Arizona Health Workforce Profile Report. The profile report includes workforce data for behavior analysts, counselors, dentists, dental hygienists, marriage and family therapists, nurses, physician assistants, physicians, psychologists, social workers, and the substance use disorder counselors workforce.

The standardized collection and reporting of healthcare workforce data supports AzCRH and other stakeholders to answer questions regarding healthcare workforce:

- Supply
- Demand
- Distribution
- Recruitment and Retention
- Influence of social and demographic factors on workforce needs

Arizona Health Workforce Profile: Physician Specialty

The purpose of this brief is to understand the physician workforce by specialty in Arizona, the percentage of each specialty who completed their undergraduate medical education (UME) in Arizona, and how those specialties are distributed across rural and non-rural Arizona. This brief uses 2019 physician licensure data from the Arizona Medical Board and the Arizona Board of Osteopathic Examiners and includes physicians with an active license status and a practice address in Arizona. Physician self-report areas of interest (AOI) in the licensure process. AOIs do not represent board certification. These AOIs were matched to the specialties reported by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) in their State Physician Workforce Data Report.¹

BACKGROUND

- Currently Arizona meets just 37% of its primary care needs and needs 653 primary care providers to address the primary care shortage²
- In the prior twenty years, Arizona's population has increased significantly by over 2 million between 2000 and 2021³
- Arizona ranks 12th highest by state in terms of population over 65 years old (in 2009 Arizona ranked 22nd)⁴
- The COVID-19 pandemic has strained the physician and health workforce. According to the Coping With Covid Study, 31% of physicians intended to reduce hours in the next 12 months⁵

17,180

In 2019 there were 17,180 physicians with active licenses and an Arizona practice address.

In 2019, the ratio of physicians per 100,000 was 243.6. The AAMC estimates the national median ratio of physicians per 100,000 is 272.0⁶

ARIZONA UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION
There are six Undergraduate Medical Education institutions in Arizona, two are public and four are private.

Public

- University of Arizona College of Medicine – Tucson
- University of Arizona College of Medicine – Phoenix

Private

- A. T. Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine – Mesa
- Craigenton University School of Medicine – Phoenix
- Mayo Clinic Allin School of Medicine – Scottsdale
- Midwestern University Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine – Glendale

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¹Department of Health Services, University of Washington
²Department of Health Services, University of Washington
³U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, Housing, and Economic Characteristics
⁴U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, Housing, and Economic Characteristics
⁵Department of Health Services, University of Washington
⁶Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), State Physician Workforce Data Report

If you are interested in summary workforce data for planning, projects, or grants we may be able to assist. You can review our current reports here and the data visualizations here. Please use the **following form** to tell us a little more about your interest and one of our team will follow-up directly with you!



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