

# Rural Health Partnership

*at WellFlorida Council*



**August 6, 2009**

***Kendra Siler-Marsiglio, Ph.D.***

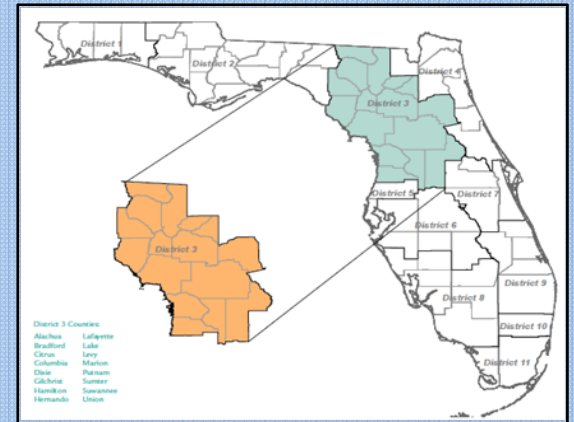


# Rural Health Partnership (RHP) at WellFlorida Council

RHP is affiliated with WellFlorida Council, one of Florida's 11 Health Planning Councils that serve urban/rural areas.

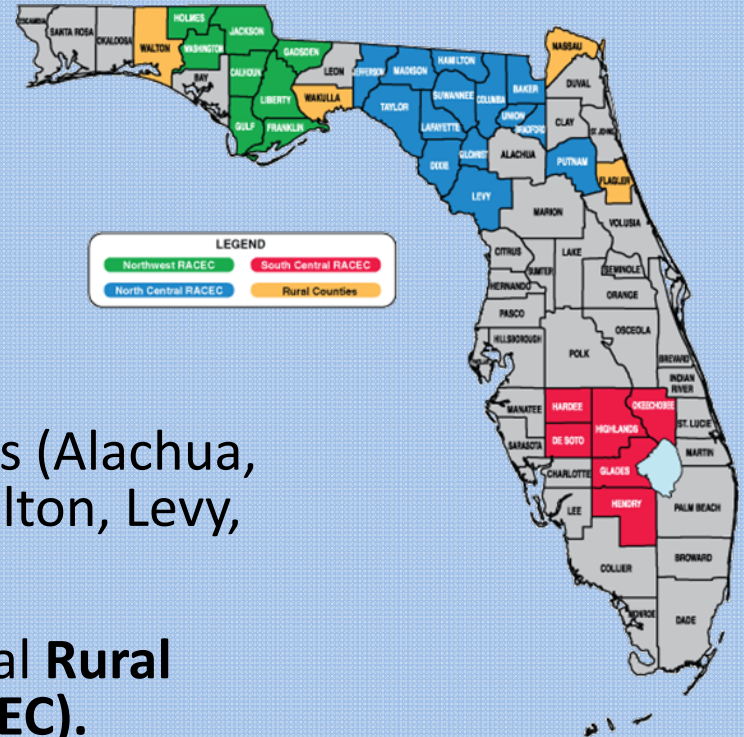
Services include:

- Community health needs assessments
- Grant writing & evaluation
- Qualitative/Quantitative data collection/analysis
- Community initiatives implementation
- Federally-qualified health center applications.



# What is RHP?

- Private, 501(c)-3 incorporated in 1996
- Est. in Florida statutes in 1993 (381.0406)
- Designed to coordinate the rural healthcare delivery system at the community level
- Serves nine North Central Florida counties (Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Levy, Suwannee & Union).
- Eight of these are within the North Central **Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC)**.



***RHP is one of Florida's nine Rural Health Networks that serve Florida's 33 rural counties.***

# RHP Members

- “Safety Net” Healthcare Facilities (e.g., Federally-Qualified Health Centers, County Health Departments, Volunteer Clinics)
- Primary and Specialty Care Medical Practices
- Hospitals
- Hospice
- Emergency Medical System Providers
- Area Health Education Center (AHEC)
- Health Information Technology Consultant
- Regional Mental Healthcare Provider Facility

# What does RHP address?

RHP addresses fundamental and unique issues that rural medical communities face such as:

- inadequate financing (e.g., fewer people = lower revenue, many uninsured/underinsured patients).
- difficulties recruiting/retaining healthcare personnel.
- patient migration from rural providers to urban providers.

***These core problems undermine the abilities of rural clinics and hospitals to provide timely and effective care.***

# How does RHP help its rural medical community overcome these obstacles?

RHP coordinates public and private health resources with the following objectives:

1. Emphasize cooperation over competition.
2. Provide a bridge between community organizations and governmental regulatory agencies and legislators.
3. Empower community partnerships.
4. Promote statutory rural hospital and safety net clinic use.
5. Prepare Florida's rural medical community for new health-related policies and trends—such as HIT.

# RHP HIT Roadmap

RHP membership prioritized HIT as the key focus area for the Partnership

STAGES	PROCESS	TIMETABLE
1	E-prescribe adoption	Sept 2008-present
2	HIT preparedness	Feb 2009-present
3	PHR/EHR use	
4	Health information exchange participation	
5	Measurable improved community health outcomes attainment	

# RHP's E-Prescribing Initiative

Rural provider concerns about e-prescribing:

- 1) Quality/cost of connectivity
- 2) If PDAs used, quality of connectivity
- 3) HIPAA/information security
- 4) Availability of local pharmacies accepting electronic prescriptions
- 5) Other implementation costs
- 6) Maintenance costs/back-up plans

# RHP E-Prescribing Initiative



## Five-point initiative:

1. Provider outreach
2. CME-approved training events
3. Surveys
4. Implementation assistance
5. Continual follow-up

# E-Prescribing Initiative Status

- 18/55 (33%) healthcare practices in RHP's service area are actively e-prescribing (June 2009 data from Availity and Surescripts).
- Prior to our initiative, < 20% of rural facilities were e-prescribing.
- 9/17 (53%) facilities attending trainings now actively e-prescribe (includes metro attendees).

# RHP's Operational Readiness Assessments

Starting in February 2009, RHP began performing readiness assessments with willing providers in our service area.

<u>Provider Type</u>	<u># of facilities</u>
Hospitals	6
FQHC	3 (25 sites)
RHC	3
Sole Practitioners	3
Hospice	1
Regional Mental Health	1

# RHP's Operational Readiness Assessments

Of the 17 facilities assessed:

- Three small, private practices had EHR-enabled solutions (vendor relationships vary; all were “hosted”)
- Many providers lack internal IT personnel to assist with HIT integration
- Few providers have documented Business Continuity Plans or Disaster Recovery Plans
- Limited local collaboration with other area providers.

# HIT Preparedness Projects

- Developing Business Continuity Plan & Disaster Recovery Plan for Critical Access Hospital and rural hospital.
- Final stages of developing off-site data back-up system and low-cost document scanning solutions for service area facilities.
- Hosting an HIT preparedness training in October.

# RHP Collaborative Partners

- Healthy Ocala
- Florida's Rural Health Networks & Health Planning Councils
- Santa Fe College Health Information Management Program
- USF
- Tricounty Health Alliance
- ePrescribe Florida
- Availity
- Carolina Consulting Solutions, Inc.

# Questions? Comments?



## **CONTACT**

***Kendra Siler-Marsiglio, Ph.D.***

Director, RHP

[kendrasm@wellflorida.org](mailto:kendrasm@wellflorida.org)

352-313-6500 ext. 109