



Rural and Community Health

June 2014

Washington's rural health program is working to address health disparities. We focus on assuring that rural and urban underserved communities have access to healthcare services and providers. We provide technical assistance and connect communities with state and federal resources to solve local problems. We also provide information about rural health systems to the public, legislators and other policy makers.

Services

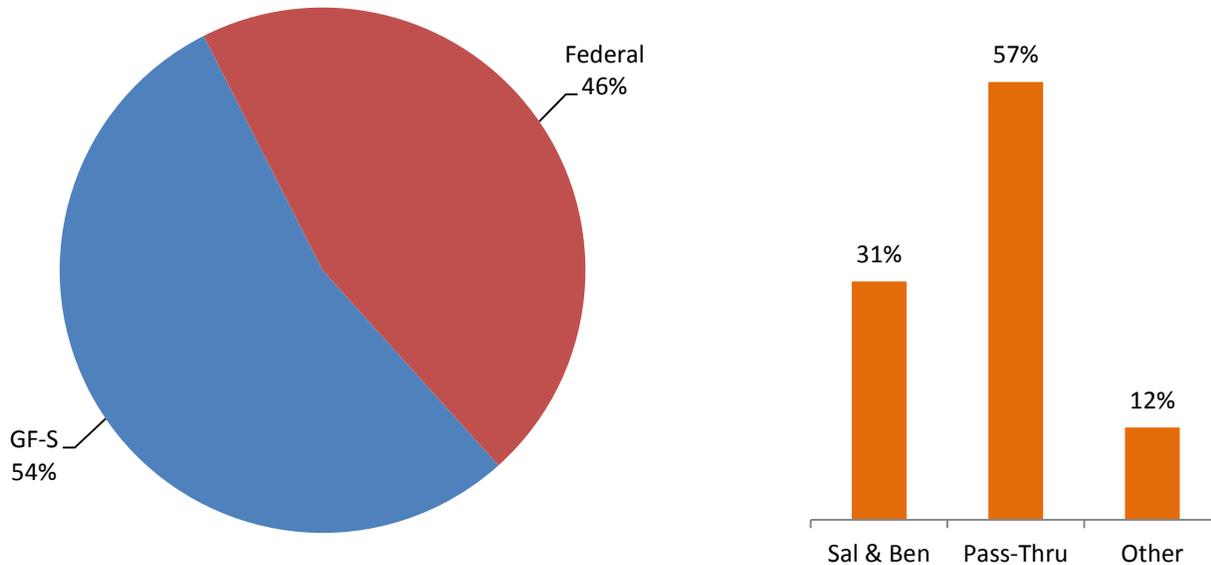
- Provide rural health system coordination, planning and technical assistance
- Help establish and maintain Certified Rural Health Clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Critical Access Hospitals, and other health care facilities that provide care to medically underserved communities.
- Coordinate rural health resources in the state by connecting rural facilities with state and federal resources, disseminating best practices and supporting quality improvement efforts
- Partner with safety net healthcare organizations to recruit doctors, dentists, nurse practitioners and physician assistants
- Provide incentives for healthcare providers to practice in medical shortage areas through management of federal programs including: State Office of Rural Health, National Health Service Corps, State Loan Repayment Program and J1 Visa Waiver program
- Analyze data to provide information on healthcare access and rural-urban health disparities
- Identify and help to designate federal Health Professional Shortage Areas, which result in millions of additional federal dollars coming to providers located in these areas
- Support the Washington State American Indian Health Commission and tribal health services
- Pay malpractice insurance for volunteer healthcare providers and license renewal fees for retired healthcare volunteers providing free care
- Contract with partners to:
 - Educate K-12 students about healthcare careers
 - Expose health professions students to rural training and practice opportunities
 - Develop and implement education programs for rural facilities, students and providers
 - Train providers in understanding military culture and support veteran integration into healthcare careers
 - Administer the Volunteer and Retired Provider Malpractice Program to support free clinics and healthcare volunteers
 - Implement federal programs such as the Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Program
 - Improve retention of healthcare providers at Federally Qualified Health Centers

Stakeholders

- Rural hospitals, clinics, and practitioners (doctors, dentists, nurses, etc.)
- Urban Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Free clinics and volunteer practitioners
- Rural communities
- Medicaid clients, low-income and uninsured people, Medicare clients

2013-15 Biennium

Rural Health Fiscal Information



	GF-S	Federal	Dedicated	Fees	Total	Sal & Ben	Pass-Thru	Other
Total	4,123,000	3,485,000	0	0	7,608,000	1,811,000	4,797,000	1,000,000

Recent Funding History

2007-09 biennium:

- Reduction of \$107,000 eliminated the Locum Tenens Program. The program sent providers (i.e. doctors) to rural communities so the local provider could take vacation or sick leave or attend continuing education.

2009-11 biennium:

- GF-S reduction of \$300,000, for operations, community health grants, and savings from Volunteer Provider Malpractice Insurance premiums
- GF-S reduction of \$120,000 to the Area Health Education Centers.

2011-13 biennium:

- GF-S reduction of \$202,000, to the Area Health Education Centers, continued savings from Volunteer Provider Malpractice Insurance premiums.