

HEALTH SERVICES IN RURAL AMERICA

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Rural Development Service
and Economic Research Service
Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 362**

ABSTRACT

Health care needs and services in rural areas are compared with those in urban areas, with the results indicating that rural people continue to have more health problems and less satisfactory care. Federal health care legislation and its effect on rural areas is discussed, particularly legislation pertaining to health manpower, health planning programs, health facilities construction, health care financing, and health programs for special groups. Examples of successful new public and private experimental health delivery programs are given, many of which focus on providing better health care to rural people.

Key words: Health services, health needs, health facilities, rural and health services.

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
SUMMARY.....	v
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Health Care Costs.....	4
Objectives of Report.....	5
HEALTH SERVICES AND NEEDS IN RURAL AMERICA.....	7
Health Personnel and Hospitals.....	7
Physicians.....	7
Nurses.....	9
Dentists.....	9
Use of Health Services.....	9
Hospitals.....	12
Mortality and Morbidity Rates.....	14
Mortality.....	16
Chronic Conditions.....	17
Injury and Hospitalization.....	18
Insurance.....	23
FEDERAL HEALTH LEGISLATION.....	24
Health Manpower.....	24
Manpower Development and Training.....	24
New Types of Health Personnel.....	25
Incentives for Rural Practice.....	25
Comprehensive Health Planning.....	25
Facilities Construction.....	26
Financing Health Care.....	27
Programs for Special Groups.....	27
Maternal and Child Health.....	27
Care of Aged.....	27
Care of Disabled.....	28
Migrant Workers.....	28
Rural-Urban Differences.....	29
PILOT RURAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS.....	29
Government-Sponsored Programs.....	29
South Carolina.....	29
West Virginia.....	30
Pennsylvania.....	30
Medical School Programs.....	31
University of Washington Medical School.....	31
Kirksville College of Osteopathy.....	31
Oklahoma Medical School.....	32
University of Florida Medical College.....	32

CONTENTS--Continued

	<u>Page</u>
Medical Association Programs.....	33
Illinois State Medical Society.....	33
Student American Medical Association.....	33
New York State Medical Society.....	34
Private Programs.....	34
Monterey County Physicians.....	34
Illinois Physicians-on-Call.....	34
Sears-Roebuck Foundation.....	35
Kentucky Dentists.....	35
Samaritan Health Services.....	35
CONCLUSIONS.....	36
LITERATURE CITED.....	37

TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1--Persons below the low-income level, by residence, 1970.....	2
2--Percentage of persons with some limitation of activity due to chronic health conditions, by family income, 1968-69.....	3
3--Aggregate and per capita health expenditures, and aggregate expenditures as a percentage of gross national product, selected years, 1929-71.....	6
4--Average annual percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index and the medical care component, selected years, 1946-71.....	6
5--National expenditures for medical care, by type of service, 1971, and projections for 1975 and 1980.....	7
6--Physician-population ratios, by size of county, 1969.....	8
7--Distribution of physicians per 100,000 population, by SMSA and non-SMSA areas, 1970.....	10
8--Distribution of selected health personnel per 100,000 population, by SMSA and non-SMSA areas, 1966-68.....	10
9--Number of physician visits per person, by residence and age, 1969.....	11
10--Number of physician visits per person, by family income and age, 1969.....	11
11--Visits per 100 families to selected medical specialists and practitioners, by residence, fiscal 1964.....	13
12--Number of dental visits per person, by residence and age, 1969.....	13
13--Number of hospitals and hospital beds, and hospital beds per 100,000 population, by metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, 1970.....	15
14--Infant mortality rates and maternal mortality rates, by race and residence, 1968.....	17
15--Number of days of restricted activity due to chronic conditions per person, by age and residence, 1968-69.....	17
16--Percentage of persons with limitation of activity due to chronic health conditions, by age and residence, 1968-69.....	18

TABLES--Continued

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
17--Percentage distribution of men 27-34 years old qualifying and not qualifying for military service, by place of origin, 1964.....	19
18--Persons injured annually per 1,000 population, by area of residence, 1968-69.....	19
19--Number of male blue-collar workers 17-64 years old injured while at work and associated days of disability, per 100 employed persons, by residence, fiscal 1967.....	20
20--Number of persons hospitalized per 1,000 population, by age and residence, 1968.....	20
21--Rural-urban differences in number and percentage of nonworkers giving ill health or disability as the main reason for not working, 1970.....	22
22--Percentage of persons under 65 years old having hospital and surgical insurance coverage, by residence, 1968.....	23

FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1--Percentage of persons with limitation of major activity due to chronic health conditions, by age and family income, 1968-69.....	3
2--Days lost from work per employed person due to injury or illness, by educational attainment, 1968.....	4
3--Number of dental care needs per patient, by city size, 1965.....	14
4--Number of dental care needs per patient, by family income, 1965.....	16