



RURAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMISSION

NEBRASKA OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH
P.O. BOX 95026 • LINCOLN, NE 68509-5026 • PHONE (402) 471-2337 • FAX (402) 471-0180

MINUTES of the

Rural Health Advisory Commission (RHAC)

Wednesday June 11, 2025

1:30 p.m. – 3:04 p.m.

Younes Conference Center

Bronze Room #2

Kearney, NE

1. Call Meeting to Order; Open Meetings Act and Agenda Posted/Available for Download; Adopt Agenda; Approve Minutes from February 21st, 2025 Meeting

Chairman Marty Fattig called the quarterly meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. with the following members present: April Dexter, N.P.; Marty Fattig; Jeffrey Harrison, M.D.; Rebecca Schroeder, PhD.; Myra Stoney; Roger Wells, PA-C; Diva Wilson, M.D.

Mr. Fattig announced that the meeting notice had been posted to the DHHS website and sent out via email and USPS on May 28th, 2025.* Additionally, the Open Meetings Act and meeting agenda were posted outside the meeting room.

Myra Stoney moved to approve the June 11th, 2025, meeting agenda with the removal of item 4B “Medically Underserved Governor’s Shortage Areas” and Jeffrey Harrison, M.D. seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Dexter, Fattig, Harrison, Schroeder, Stoney, Wells, Wilson. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Hesser, Janousek, Kusek, Tesmer. Motion carried.

Myra Stoney moved to approve the February 21st, 2025, meeting minutes, and April Dexter, N.P. seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Dexter, Fattig, Harrison, Stoney, Wells, Wilson. ABSTAIN: Schroeder. EXCUSED: Hesser, Janousek, Kusek, Tesmer. Motion carried.

2. Administrative Items

Current Members Status Updates

Members with Terms expiring September 2025:

- o Marty Fattig
- o April Dexter
- o Kate Hesser
- o Kate Kusek
- o Myra Stoney

Roger Wells’ work in a rural area will be cut in half soon due to clinic needs. His current term expires in September 2026. Commission members discussed seeking new applicants while he served the remainder of his term.

Update on Applicants for 2 Vacant Positions

Two applications were submitted for the vacant rural resident position last summer. At least one application was submitted for the vacant nursing home administrator position in May. Per contact at the Governor's Office: "We are working on getting appointments made, but I don't know the timeline."

Commission members asked the Office of Rural Health to continue asking for updates on a quarterly basis.

New staff member - Brittany Tran

Brittany Tran (Primary Care Office) is the newest member of the Office of Rural Health team. She was welcomed and then gave a brief overview of her experience.

3. Office of Rural Health Update

Heidi Peirce then gave an update on the Office of Rural Health (ORH) activities.

Summer Marketing Trip

Based on a previous request made by the commission, staff visited hospitals and health centers located in Crete, Friend, Fairbury, Red Cloud, Hastings, Grand Island, and Aurora for the purpose of marketing and outreach. Many contacts were made and information shared. Wabi Sabi in Hastings is a unique behavioral health organization. They have two NE NHSC State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) recipients. They shared that they're having a lot of difficulty with prior authorizations. There were two cancellations, but Ms. Peirce was able to reschedule these for the week of the NeRHA conference and RHAC meeting, taking Brittany Tran along with her and making the stops on the way to the conference.

Ms. Peirce mentioned that the office may try to do another trip later in the summer.

Announce ORH Intern, Teresa-Linh Tran-Le

ORH has an intern for the summer. She just graduated from UNL and is looking into a Master's of Public Health.

4. Rural Health Systems and Professional Incentive Act Program Updates

Approve Updated State Shortage Areas

This is the statewide assessment done every three years. A 30-day period of public comment was initiated May 22, 2025. The updated maps were posted on the website and emailed out to the following groups: Rural Health Advisory Commission members (RHAC), RHAC interested parties/groups, student loan recipients with forgiveness or in training, loan repayment recipients and community contacts, NE rural hospitals, NE certified rural health clinics, NE professional organizations/associations, NE Public Health Departments, NE community action partnerships (CAPs), and community health centers (FQHC's). After Commission approval, the new maps will be official as of July 1, 2025.

Myra Stoney moved to approve the updated state shortage areas that will go into effect July 1, 2025, Roger Wells, PA-C seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Dexter, Fattig, Harrison, Schroeder, Stoney, Wells, Wilson. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Hesser, Janousek, Kusek, Tesmer. Motion carried.

Medically Underserved Governor's Shortage Areas

This item was moved to the August meeting. A map will be presented for the commission's information, but does not require a vote/approval.

LB 553 Implementation

Legislation adding certified registered nurse anesthetists and registered dietitian nutritionists passed and needs to be implemented. ORH is having the Health Professions Tracking Service (HPTS) sign a new contract to track the new providers. We should have everything implemented before the end of the year. Commission members discussed what the shortage area requirements would be for these new providers.

For CRNAs, OB GYN county-level shortage areas could be used to determine initial eligibility. It looks like (based on a cursory count of providers, cross-referenced with hospitals that deliver babies – using the OB GYN shortage areas would

exclude those counties that currently have the most CRNAs). We may want to do facility-based eligibility with a point system prioritizing facilities with OB GYN services and emergency surgery services, as well as those facilities that have fewer than 2 CRNA's (2 providers are required for OB GYN/Emergency surgery). We would use facility-level prioritization of applicants if we get more applications than we can comfortably fund, and could revisit this idea at the end of the year based on applications received and funding levels.

April Dexter, N.P. remarked that not having CRNAs inhibits her site from delivering babies. She also sees CRNAs working in the pain clinic, which may be something to consider. Marty Fattig asked if we could require applicants to provide a letter discussing what services they provide; ask about OB GYN/emergency surgery, or use a survey to ask. Jeffrey Harrison, M.D., remarked that we may want to avoid giving funding to those who don't live in the community. The intent is to recruit and retain providers to these communities.

Myra Stoney motioned to use the OB GYN shortage area map to determine initial CRNA eligibility with the understanding that additional measures could be added to aid in prioritization based on applications received, and that this would be discussed at a future meeting. Rebecca Schroeder, PhD, seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Dexter, Fattig, Harrison, Schroeder, Stoney, Wells, Wilson. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Hesser, Janousek, Kusek, Tesmer. Motion carried.

For Registered Dietitian Nutritionists, the RHAC must determine the ratio to use, and may also want to include a requirement to work in a hospital. Physical and Occupational Therapy use a population to provider ratio of 5000:1. Commission members remarked that they see these providers being used a lot for outpatient diabetic education. April Dexter, N.P. stated that they don't have anyone on staff providing these services, but there is a contract employee; this provider is used most in the affiliated nursing home.

Roger Wells motioned to use a population-to-provider ratio of 5000:1 to assess shortage areas for registered Dietitian Nutritionists, Jeffrey Harrison, M.D. seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Dexter, Fattig, Harrison, Schroeder, Stoney, Wells, Wilson. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Hesser, Janousek, Kusek, Tesmer. Motion carried.

LB 261 and Budget Update (Agenda Item 4D)

Marty Fattig discussed his work advocating for keeping funding and how grateful he is that funding was maintained. Nebraska Hospital Association (NHA) also did a lot of advocacy work. He thanked ORH for sharing information so quickly when requested and thanked commission members for supporting him in advocating on behalf of the commission.

Fiscal Year 2025-26; July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026 – first year of new biennium:
Total allocation = \$2,180,723 – funding levels were maintained

General Funds Obligated FY25-26 (total):
\$1,466,219.72

General Funds Remaining for FY25-26:
\$714,503.28 (can be carried over)

5. Review Current Federal and State Legislative Activities Impacting Rural Health

Marty Fattig remarked that the Offices of Rural Health and Public Health are really under attack at a federal level. FLEX and SHIP programs as well. There's been a lot of discussion about 340B; the State put down rules and regs that said you can't limit the number of providers. Big pharma sued right away, but he's optimistic about keeping the standards in place. There is a Bill to limit capacity and abilities of PBMs to extract money from the system (white bagging, etc). He discussed a program that funds residents and is being zeroed out. Finally, he remarked that there is a lot of support for rural in the legislature.

Roger Well, PA-C mentioned "Cibolo" – new transition; nineteen hospitals are joining this value-based program.

Heidi Peirce mentioned that federal funds are slow right now. ORH is waiting on grant applications and funds that would usually have arrived by now.

6. Public Comment

Emily Royer, Psychiatrist of Columbus, Nebraska would like to inquire whether the commission would consider increasing the telehealth allowance to up to 75% or 100%.

Marty Fattig stated that he is not initially interested in changing this. Other members remarked that the intention of the program is to bring providers to the communities to work and live. Brittany Tran mentioned that the Mental Health shortage areas are distinct, with most of the state qualifying as a shortage area. RHAC members are in favor of recruiting people to these communities. Rachael Wolfe will add this as an agenda item to the next meeting if Dr. Royer is interested in coming to speak more about it.

Roger Wells, PA-C asked if we should look at the percentage of Medicaid patients dentists are treating as part of the shortage area assessment process. Heidi Peirce remarked that Medicaid cases are considered on a federal level to document shortage, and that she gets Medicaid data annually from the state in August. There will be a report shared with the commission at the next meeting.

Myra Stoney mentioned that some of the Local Health Departments are cutting oral health programs due to budget cuts at the state level.

7. CLOSED SESSION

Roger Wells, PA-C moved to go to Closed Session for the purpose of review and discussion of accounts receivable, loan repayment program applications, and other confidential information, and for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of the individuals. Myra Stoney seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Dexter, Fattig, Harrison, Schroeder, Stoney, Wells, Wilson. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Hesser, Janousek, Kusek, Tesmer. Motion carried.

Chairman Marty Fattig announced that the Commission would go into Closed Session at 2:55 p.m.

It was announced that guests should leave the room and the Webex.

8. OPEN SESSION

The Commission returned to Open Session at 3:01pm

Jeffrey Harrison, M.D. moved to approve the loan repayment applications with estimated loan repayment start dates and loan repayment amounts as indicated or as determined by Office of Rural Health staff, based on issuance of license and/or loan documentation, practice time in the shortage area, and the availability of funds for the state match, and also to approve action discussed during the accounts receivable portion. Rebecca Schroeder, PhD. seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Dexter, Fattig, Harrison, Schroeder, Stoney, Wells, Wilson. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Hesser, Janousek, Kusek, Tesmer. Motion carried.

Date application submitted	First Name:	Last Name:	Profession/Specialty	License Number OR Date you will be licensed:	Name of Main Facility	County	Average Hours per Week TOTAL	Average ER Hours Per Week	Date of Practice	Loan Balance	Match Funds	State Start Date:	State Award Amount:	SLRP Start Date:	SLRP Minimum Award Amount:	SLRP Maximum Award Amount:
2/20/2025	Kimberly	Moldenhauer	Nurse Practitioner, Family Practice	115616	Gordon Memorial Hospital	Sheridan	40	16	10/1/2024	\$220,000.00	\$15,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 90,000.00			
3/5/2025	Angela	Sucha	Physician Assistant, Family Practice	2176	AMH Family Practice Neligh	Antelope	38	10	3/5/2025	\$ 5,132.47	\$ 2,500.00	7/1/2025	\$ 5,132.47	4/1/2025	\$ 5,132.46	\$ -
3/7/2025	Brooke	Becker	Physician Assistant, Family Practice	2/20/2026	Valley County Health System	Valley	40	8	1/5/2026	\$ 56,327.91	\$15,000.00	3/1/2026		3/1/2026	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 80,000.00
3/21/2025	Raeann	McFadden	Physician Assistant, General Surgery	8/30/2024	Great Plains Health	Lincoln	40	0	10/6/2025	\$ 91,854.84	\$ 5,250.00	7/1/2025	\$ 31,500.00			
4/10/2025	Josiah	McAllister	MD/DO, Family Practice	36713	Tecumseh Family Health	Johnson	40	0	4/10/2025	\$ 98,111.89	\$30,000.00	7/1/2026	\$ 98,111.88	9/1/2025	\$ 98,111.84	\$ -
4/16/2025	Colleen	Lovett	Licensed Mental Health Professional	4084	Beatrice Community Hospital	Gage	40	0	9/25/2023	\$169,080.19	\$10,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 60,000.00			
4/21/2025	Jacob	Vasa	MD/DO, Family Practice	36306	OneWorld Bellevue	Douglas	40	0	9/4/2024	\$119,586.69	\$25,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 119,586.68	9/1/2025	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 119,586.69
4/28/2025	Emily	Mahon	Physician Assistant, Family Practice	2160	One World Community Health	Douglas	40	0	2/21/2024	\$ 89,424.74	\$25,000.00			9/1/2025	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 89,424.74
4/29/2025	Breanna	Fiene	Nurse Practitioner, Family Practice	8/1/2025	Creighton Avera Hospital	Knox	32	12	8/1/2025	\$ 30,062.21	\$15,000.00	8/1/2025	\$ 30,062.20	9/1/2025	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 30,062.21
4/29/2025	Allison	Sand	Licensed Mental Health Professional	2436	Beatrice Community Hospital and Health Center	Gage	40	0	9/24/2018	\$165,926.17	\$10,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 60,000.00	9/1/2025	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
5/5/2025	Molly	Oertwig	Nurse Practitioner, Family Practice	111890	Genoa Medical Facilities/Park Street Clinic	Nance	40	10	8/10/2023	\$ 55,126.36	\$15,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 55,126.36	9/1/2025	\$ 37,500.00	\$ 55,126.36
5/7/2025	Yi	An	MD/DO, Family Practice	36841	Chase County Community Hospital and Clinic	Chase	40	50	8/1/2025	\$287,911.33	\$30,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 180,000.00			
5/13/2025	Molly	Skomer	Nurse Practitioner, Family Practice	112248	Syracuse Area Health	Otoe	40	0	4/27/2020	\$ 20,121.25	\$ 5,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 20,121.24	9/1/2025	\$ 20,121.12	\$ 20,121.25
5/21/2025	Rachelle	Reynolds	Nurse Practitioner, Family Practice	115856	Box Butte General Hospital	Box Butte	40	0	7/1/2025	\$ 33,000.00	\$15,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 31,685.94			
5/21/2025	Alyssa	Ludwig	Nurse Practitioner, Family Practice	8/15/2025	Niobrara Valley Hospital	Boyd	40	4	9/1/2025	\$ 77,479.86	\$15,000.00	9/1/2025	\$ 77,479.86	9/1/2025	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 77,479.86
5/22/2025	Reegyn	Thompson	Nurse Practitioner, Family Practice	114866	Niobrara Valley Hospital	Boyd	40	4	9/1/2023	\$ 33,816.01	\$10,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 33,816.00	9/1/2025	\$ 33,816.00	\$ -
5/27/2025	Mackenzie	Beavers	Licensed Mental Health Professional	5/31/2026	Beatrice Family and Internal Medicine	Gage	40	0	1/6/2025	\$ 94,061.94	\$10,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 60,000.00	9/1/2026	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 80,000.00
5/28/2025	Shelby	Liesemeyer	MD/DO, Family Practice	35278	Kearney County Health Services	Kearney	50	10	10/1/2026	\$137,952.58	\$30,000.00	10/1/2025	\$ 137,952.58	9/1/2025	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 137,952.58
6/2/2025	Joshua	Garza	Physician Assistant, Family Practice	1879	Sidney Regional Medical Center- Walk in Clinic	Cheyenne	40	0	5/21/2025	\$ 89,612.32	\$15,000.00	7/1/2025	\$ 89,612.32	9/1/2025	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 89,612.32
6/2/2025	Drew	Thompson	MD/DO, General Internal Medicine	36842	Grand Island Regional Medical Center	Hall	40	0	9/1/2025	\$274,943.02	\$30,000.00	9/1/2025	\$ 180,000.00			
6/5/2025	Cathryn	Ward	MD/DO, Family Practice	33152	Valley County Health System	Valley	40	8	8/1/2022	\$124,005.78	\$30,000.00	11/1/2026	\$ 124,005.78			

Note: If award amount is blank for a particular program, provider does not qualify for that program. If \$- is listed for State, provider will be added to a waitlist to allow time for them to find a match. If \$- is listed for SLRP maximum amount, total award is for two years only.

9. Adjourn

The next RHAC meeting is in Lincoln on August 15th. Final meeting of the year is November 7th, in Lincoln/hybrid. Meetings for 2026 will be scheduled at the November meeting.
The Commission adjourned at 3:04 p.m.