

COVID-19 in Rural America

The Policy Landscape



Mercer University School of Medicine
Center for Rural Health
AND HEALTH DISPARITIES

Warren_JC@Mercer.edu

Jacob C. Warren, PhD, MBA, CRA
Endowed Chair and Director
Center for Rural Health and Health Disparities
Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Mercer University School of Medicine

Solutions in Place



Telehealth

- Reimbursement parity
- Home as presentation site
- Home as distant provider site



Pharmacy

- Early refills
- Pharmacist authority for refills of maintenance medication
- Expansion of delivery and 3-month fills



Funding Streams

- Suspension of Medicare Sequestration
- SBA Paycheck Protection Program* and Economic Injury Disaster Loan*
- CMS Advanced Payment Program*

A wooden surface with a broken white ceramic cup and a one-dollar bill.

**Burden beyond
COVID Care**

**Lapses in
Funding**
*e.g., PPP,
EIDL*


**Healthcare
Uniqueness**
e.g., \$100K

A person's feet in purple sneakers walking on a tightrope.


**Underlying
Financial
Health**
e.g., CMS

**Fragility of
Provider
System**
e.g., only 1

**Remaining
Issues**

A long hallway of server racks in a data center.

**Broadband
Inequity**

A wooden gavel resting on a pile of US dollar bills.

Liability
e.g., FTCA

CMS 1115 and 1135 Waivers

FQHC, RHC, and CAH

CESA Funds

NHSC Loan Repayment

SBA PPP and EIDL

CMS Advanced Payment Program

Memorialize Changes

Policy Levers