

# Rural Public Health: A High-Level Overview

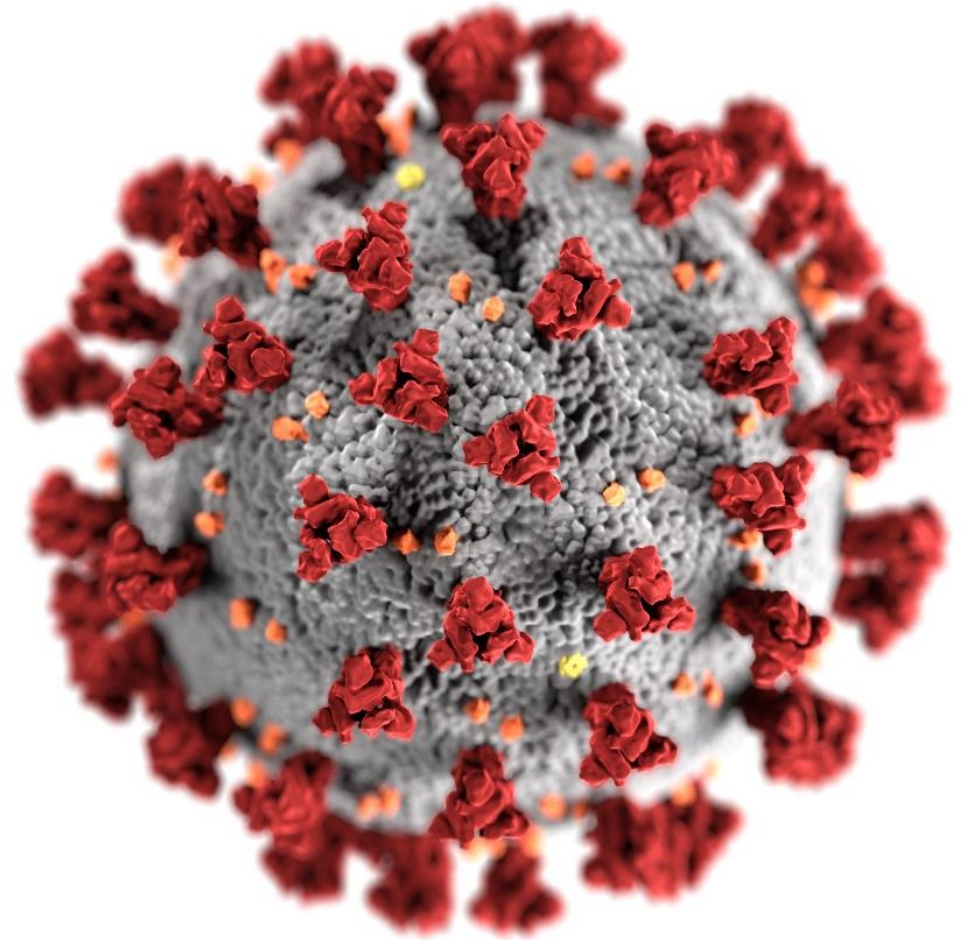
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**Office of the Associate Director for Policy  
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**Deployed to CDC's Vaccine Task Force/  
Vaccine Implementation and Evaluation  
Unit**



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

# Rural: What Is It and Why Focus On It?



# This is Rural



# So is this...



Ulrich-Schad, J. D., & Duncan, C. M. (2018). People and places left behind: work, culture and politics in the rural United States. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 45(1), 59-79.

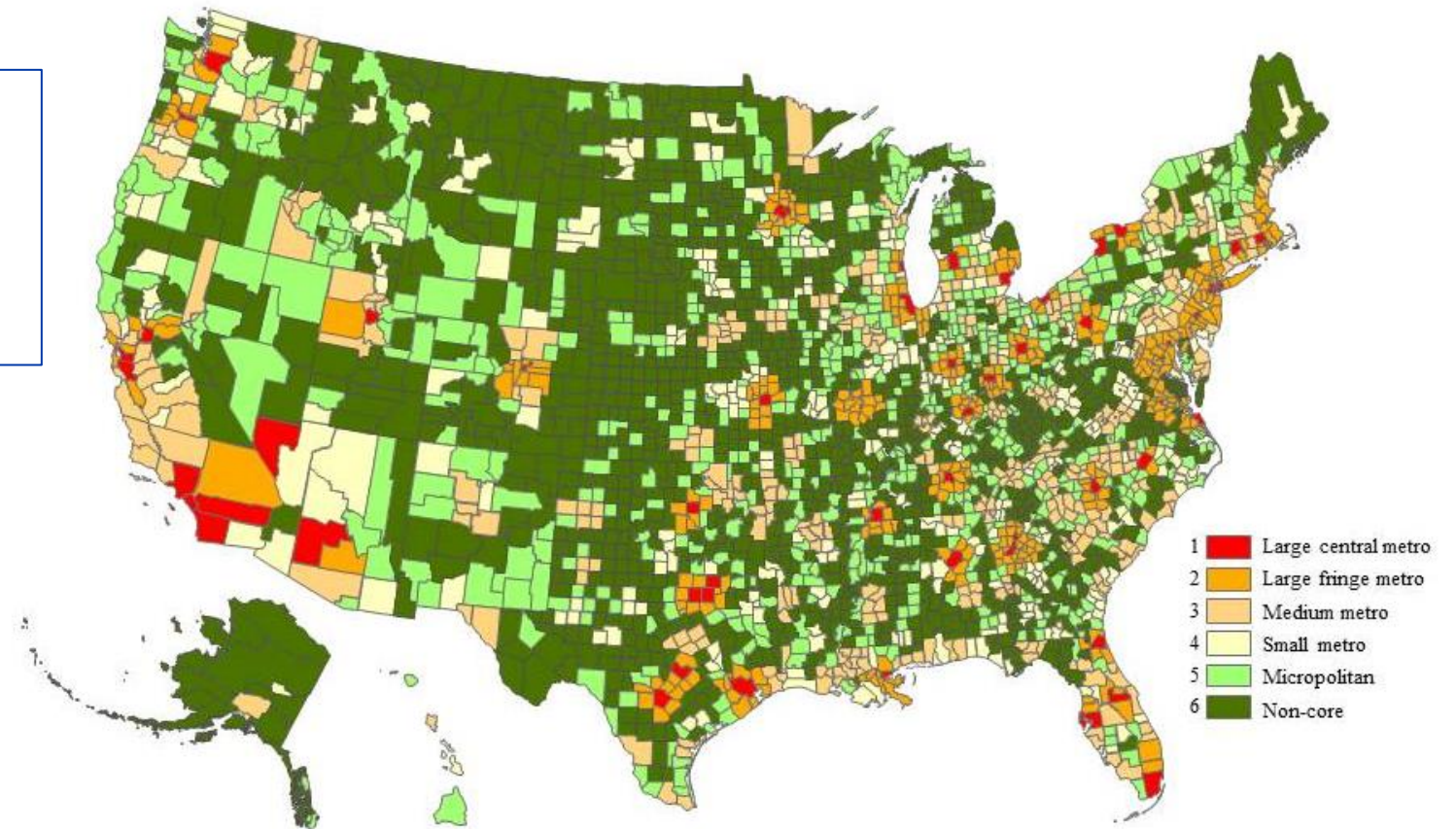
# Rural Counties in the US

## 2013 Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties

Most US counties are non-metro

15% of the population

(15-20%, depending on rural definition)



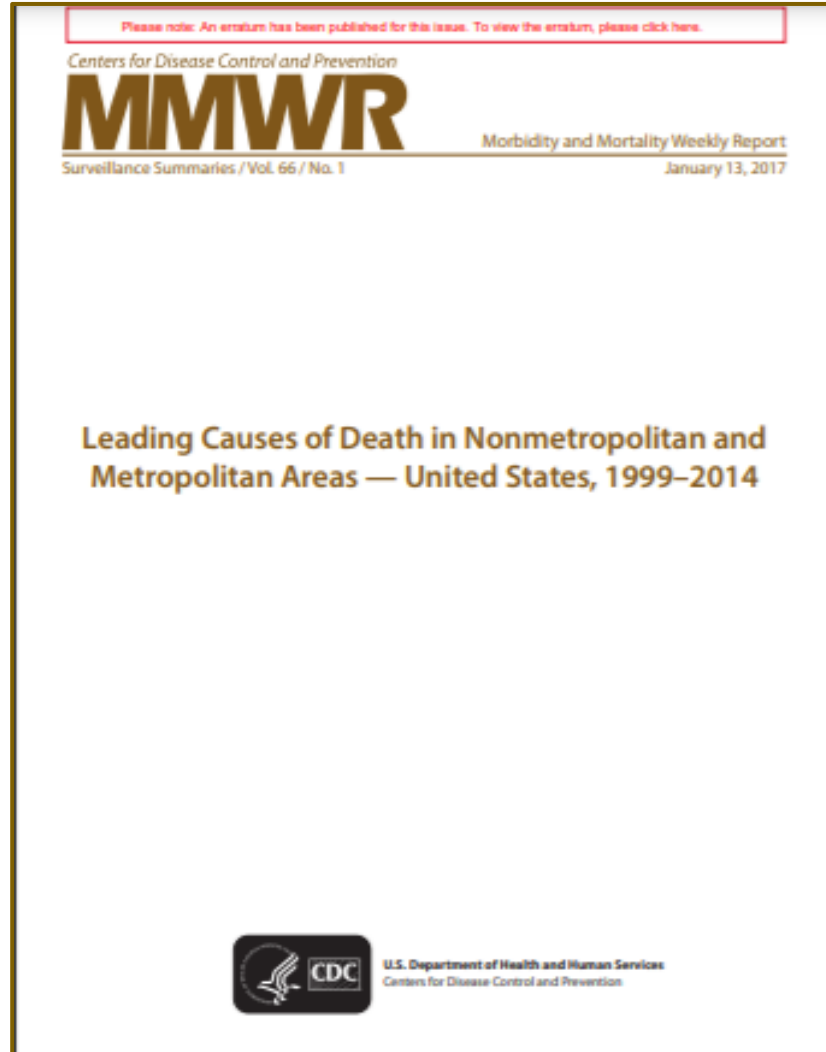
Ingram DD, Franco SJ. 2013 NCHS urban-rural classification scheme for counties. National Center for health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 2(166). 2014. [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data\\_access/urban\\_rural.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/urban_rural.htm)



# What Are Some Rural Challenges?



# MMWR Rural Health Series (2017)



- Leading Causes of Death (1/13/17)
- Reducing Potentially Excess Deaths (1/13/17)
- Health-related Behaviors (2/3/17)
- Children’s Mental Health (3/17/17)
- Diabetes Self-Management Education (4/28/17)
- Air and Drinking Water Quality (6/23/17)
- Cancer (7/7/17)
- BRCA Genetic Testing (9/8/17)
- Passenger Vehicle Deaths (9/22/17)
- Suicide (10/6/17)
- Illicit Drug Use (10/20/17)
- Occupational Air Quality (11/3/17)
- Racial/ethnic disparities (11/17/17)

[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/rural\\_health\\_series.html](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/rural_health_series.html)

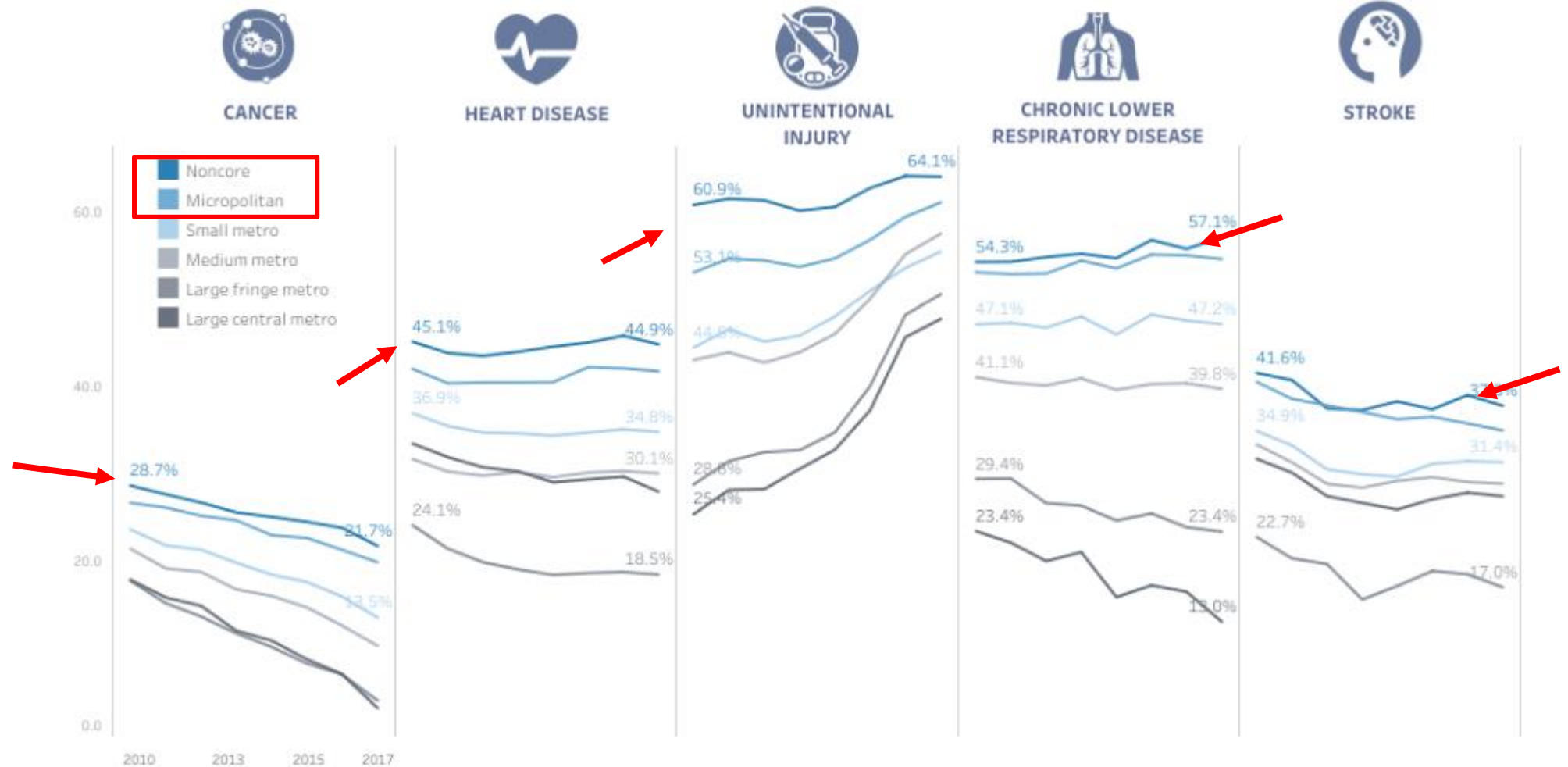


# Causes of Death by Rurality, Trends Over Time

## Potentially Excess Deaths from the Five Leading Causes

Exploring eight years of potentially preventable deaths in the United States, 2010-2017

Percentages of potentially excess deaths from the five leading causes were higher in the most rural (noncore) counties than in the most urban (large central metro) counties



Garcia MC, Rossen LM, Bastian B, et al. Potentially Excess Deaths from the Five Leading Causes of Death in Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties — United States, 2010–2017. *MMWR Surveill Summ* 2019;68(No. SS-10):1–11. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss6810a1>



# Health Disparities Can Be Found in Rural Communities

- **Communities differ in their demographic, environmental, economic, and social characteristics**
- **Nonmetropolitan areas**
  - Have higher rates of cigarette smoking, hypertension, obesity, and physical inactivity during leisure time
  - Have more residents who live in poverty AND
  - Have residents who are more likely to report less access to health care and lower quality of health care



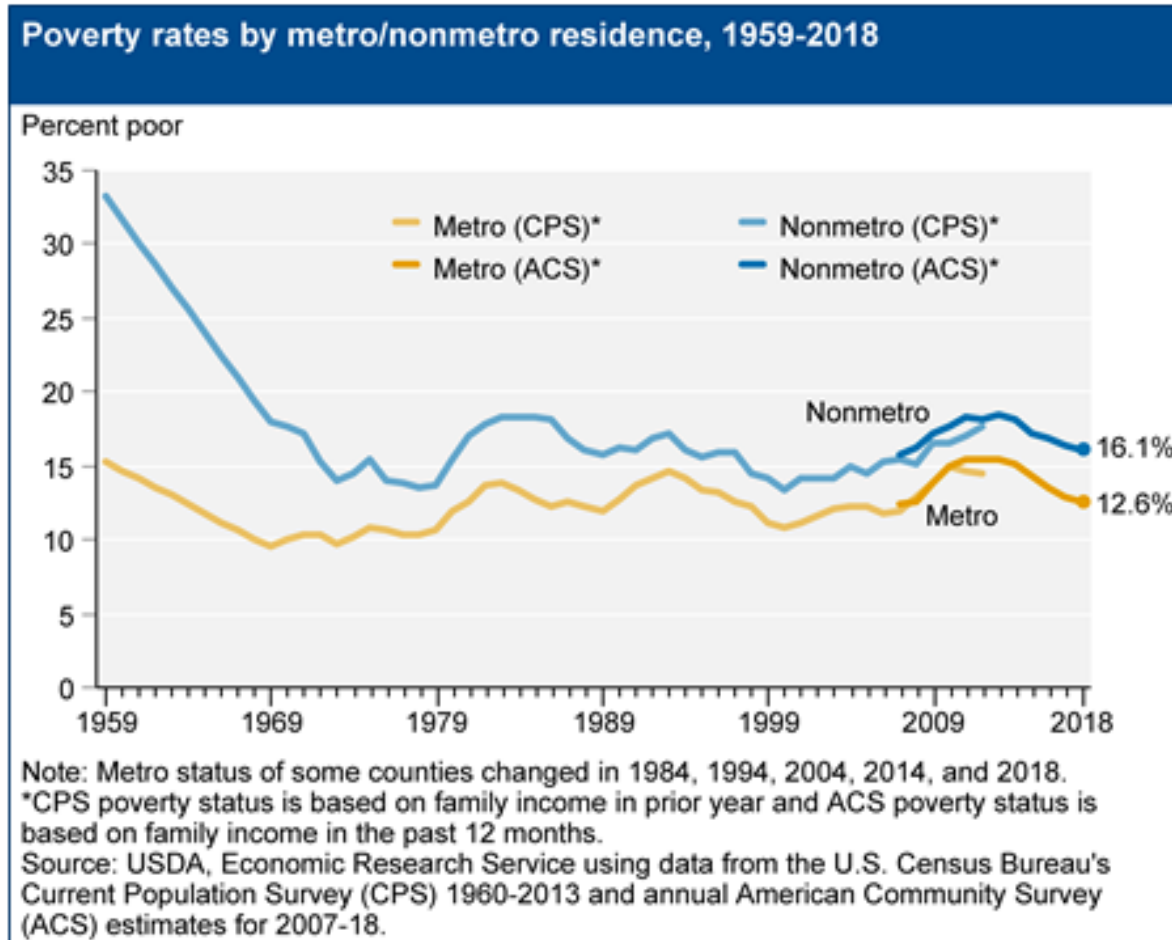
# Barriers to Accessing Health Services in Rural Areas

- Distances
- Transportation
- Health Insurance Coverage
- Health Literacy
- Stigma
- Privacy
- Workforce shortages
- Limited capacity



<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/healthcare-access>

# Rural Poverty



- Gaps persists across:
  - Geographic region
  - Race/ethnicity
  - Family household type
  - Age group



# Rural and COVID-19



Select US, [Region](#), or State:

Select Classification:

**View:**  
 Cases  
 Deaths

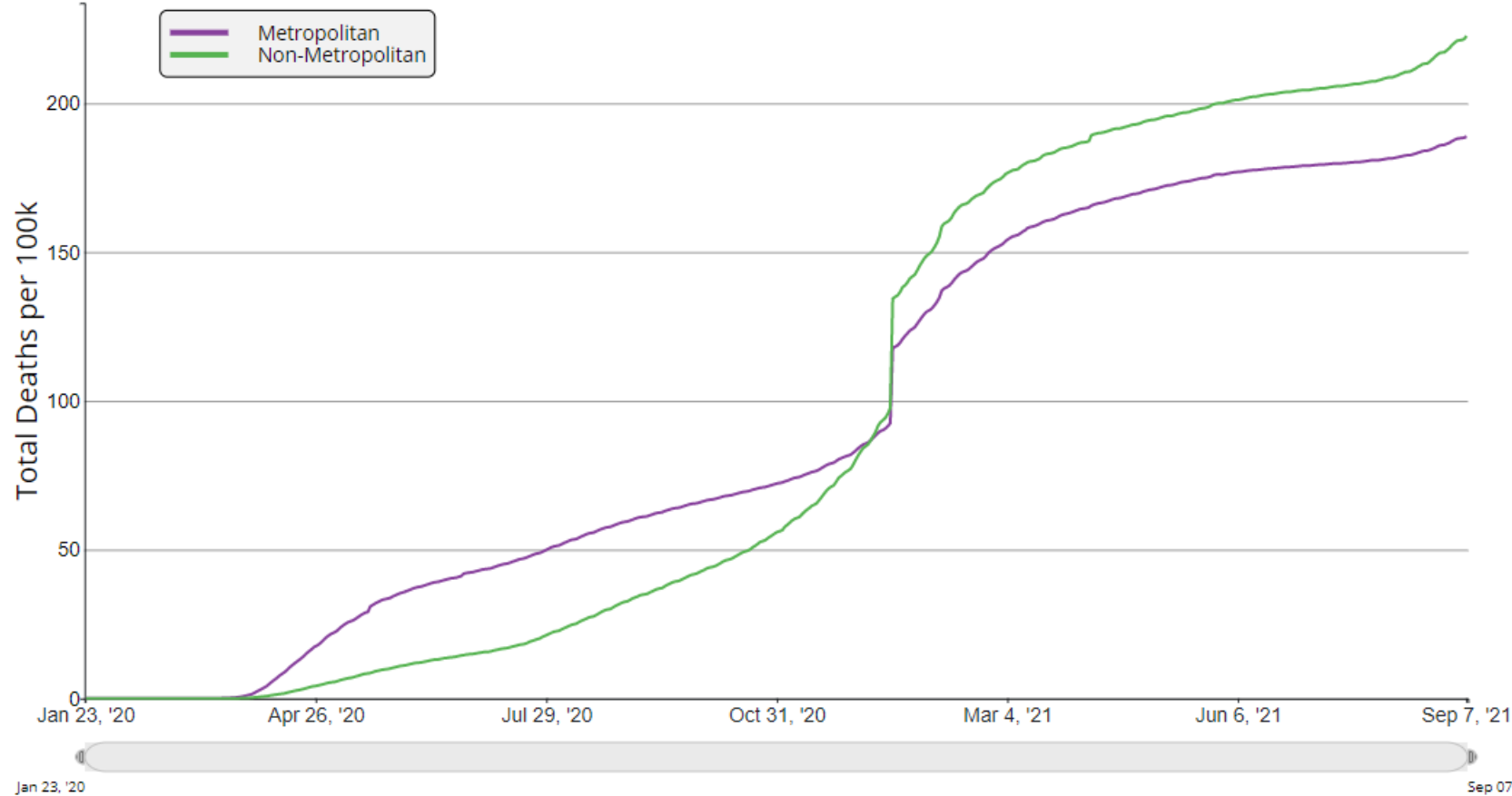
**Measure:**  
 New - 7 Days  
 New - 14 Days  
 Cumulative

# CDC's COVID Data Tracker and Rural: "Demographic Trends" Tab

[https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#pop-factors\\_totaldeaths](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#pop-factors_totaldeaths)



COVID-19 Cumulative Death Rate per 100,000 Population in United States, by Metro vs. Non-Metro



# CDC's COVID Data Tracker and Rural: "Demographic Trends" Tab

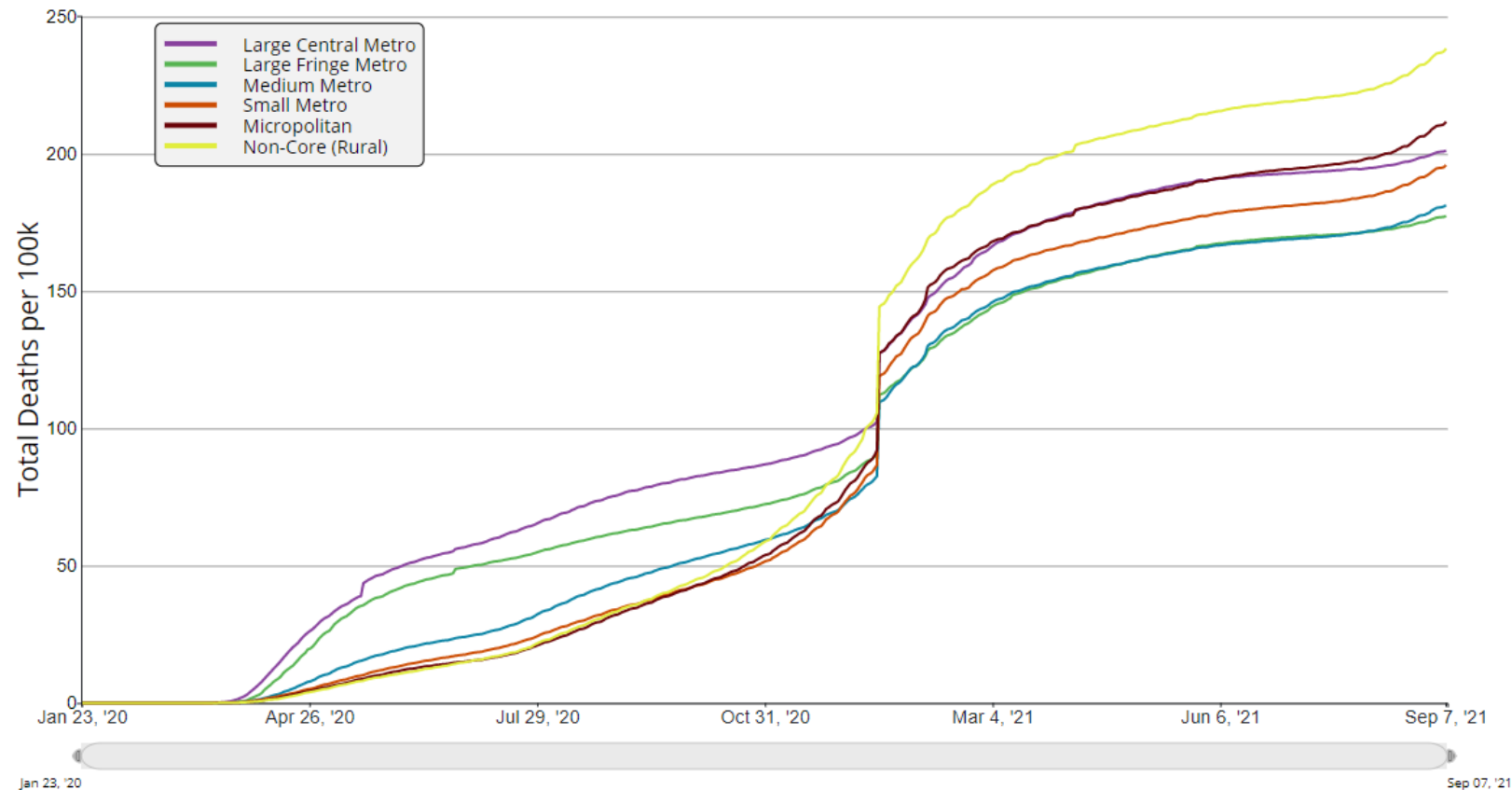
Select US, Region, or State:

Select Classification:

View:  Cases  Deaths

Measure:  New - 7 Days  New - 14 Days  Cumulative

COVID-19 Cumulative Death Rate per 100,000 Population in United States, by County Urban/Rural Classification Type



[https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#pop-factors\\_totaldeaths](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#pop-factors_totaldeaths)

# Vaccination Status and Intent by Demographics - United States

Data Collection Period: August 8 – August 14, 2021 (N= 13,901)

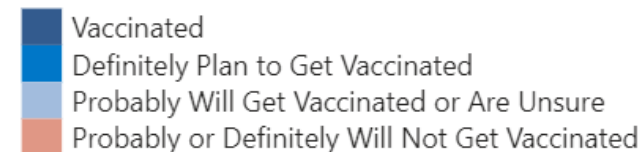
National Jurisdictional

## Overall

**75.1%** are **Vaccinated (71.9%)**  
or **Definitely Plan**  
**to Get Vaccinated (3.2%)**

**8.9%** **Probably Will Get Vaccinated**  
**or Are Unsure**

**16.0%** **Probably or Definitely**  
**Will Not Get Vaccinated**



### All Adults Age 18+



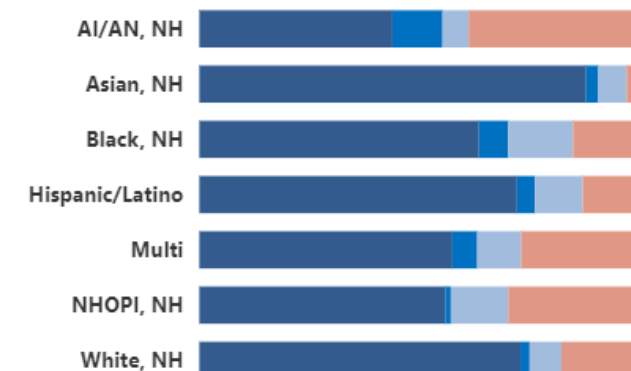
### Sex



### Age



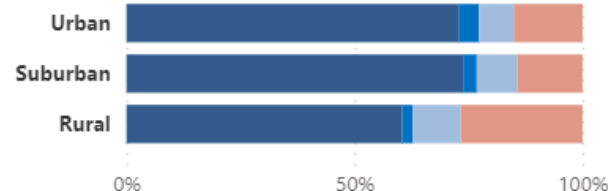
### Race/Ethnicity



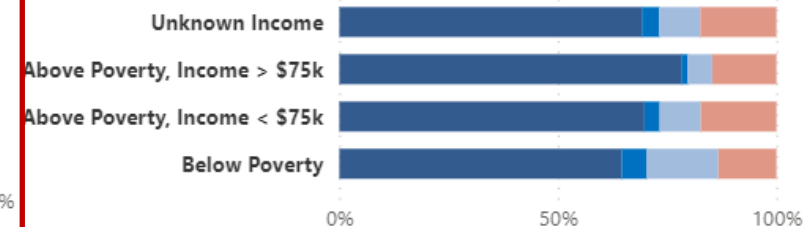
### Health Insurance



### Metropolitan Statistical Area



### Poverty and Income



Weighted Percentage (%)



# Assets and Opportunities



# Assets in rural communities

- Creativity and innovation
- Vetting and approvals might “go faster”
- Values
  - Importance of kinship
  - Independence
  - “The communal individual”
  - Pride of place
  - Trust in neighbors
  - “Native wisdom”
  - Hard-working



Adapted from Kellogg Foundation’s *Perceptions of Rural America* Report (2005) and Richards, K. (2017) What advertisers need to know about values in rural America today, *Adweek*.

# The Importance of Rural Culture and History

- Social connectedness, cooperation, cohesion
- Importance of family and neighbors
- Religious affiliation
- Pride in self and family
- Self-reliance and independence
- Importance of justice, loyalty, and faith
- Regional differences



NORC, 2018. *Leveraging Culture and History to Improve Health and Equity in Rural Communities*. From:

<https://www.norc.org/Research/Projects/Pages/exploring-strategies-to-improve-health-and-equity-in-rural-communities.aspx>

# Getting More Local



# State, County, and City Connections

## ■ State-level Connections

- State Office of Rural Health (SORH) (50 states)  
<https://nosorh.org/nosorh-members/nosorh-members-browse-by-state/>
- State Rural Health Associations (44 states covered)  
<https://www.ruralhealthweb.org/programs/state-rural-health-associations>

## ■ County and City Connections

- NACCHO Directory with COVID-19 Points of Contact  
<https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Local-Health-Department-COVID-19-Directory.pdf>
- National Association of Counties (NACo)
  - Counties Matter: COVID-19 <https://www.naco.org/resources/counties-matter-covid-19>
  - COVID-19 Recovery Clearinghouse <https://www.naco.org/covid-19-recovery-clearinghouse>

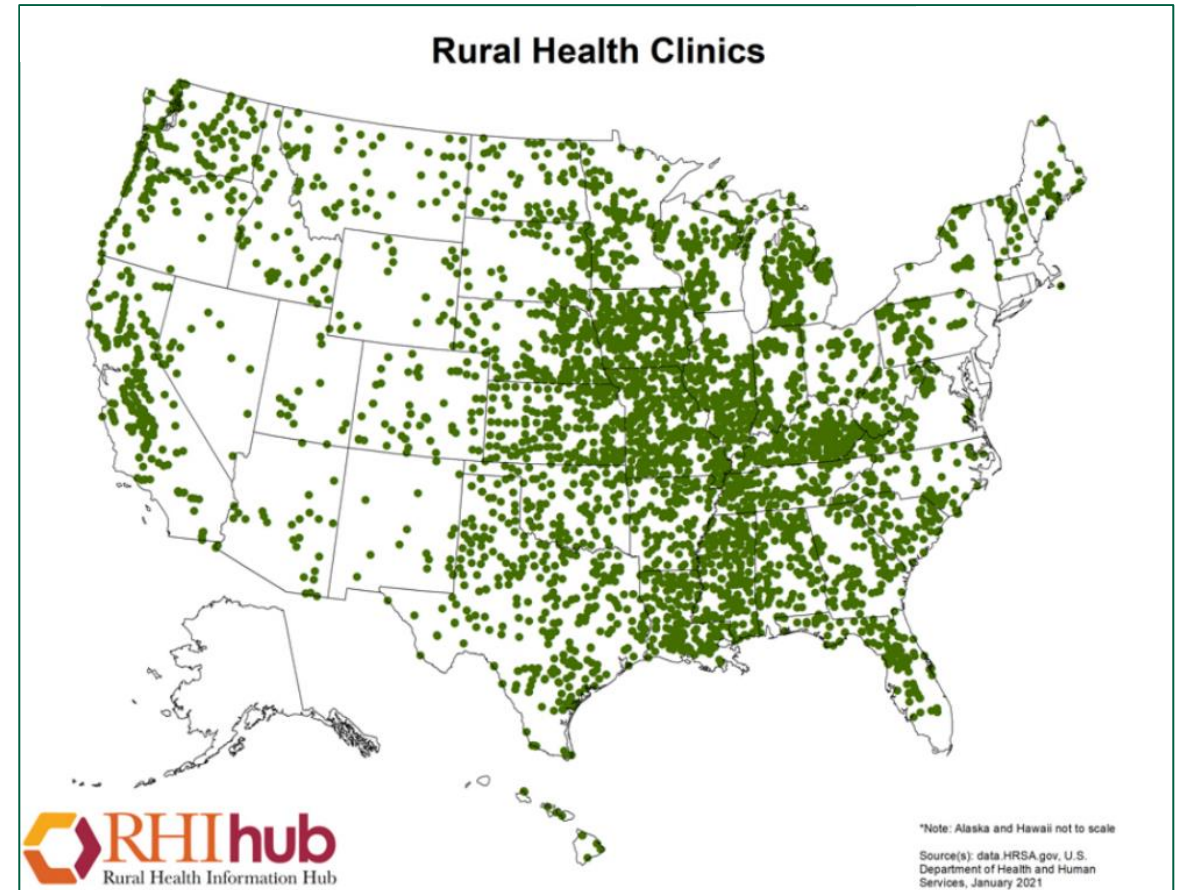


# Rural Health Clinic (RHC) Program

- HRSA Rural Health Clinic Program
  - Testing & Mitigation
  - Vaccine Confidence
  - Vaccinations

For more information:

<https://www.hrsa.gov/coronavirus/rural-health-clinics>



# Funding to States

## ■ Public Health Departments

- Awards ranging \$500,000 to \$50 million
  - Period of performance 2 years
  - COVID-19-related health disparities
  - Advance health equity
    - Racial and ethnic minority groups
    - People living in rural areas
  - 107 awardees, with rural carve-out for each state
- <https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/partnerships/COVID-19-Health-Disparities-OT21-2103.html>



# Funding to States (cont.)

## ■ Immunization Programs

- \$3 billion to 64 jurisdictions to ensure greater equity and access to COVID-19 vaccine <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/COVID-19-Vaccination-Supplemental-4-Guidance.pdf>



# Prevention Research Centers (PRCs) 2019–2024

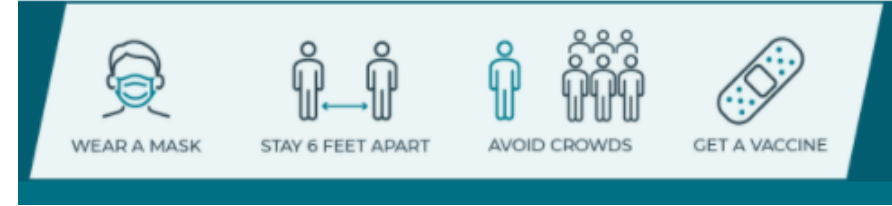


<https://www.cdc.gov/prc/center-descriptions/index.htm>



# Resources





# CDC's Rural COVID-19 Resources

- CDC's Rural COVID-19 webpage <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/other-at-risk-populations/rural-communities.html>
- CDC's COVID Data Tracker <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#datatracker-home>
- Guidance for Agricultural Workers and Employers <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-agricultural-workers.html>
- Relief Healthcare Facilities and Transferring Patients <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/relief-healthcare-facilities.html>
- Printable Resources <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc>
- Easy to Read Materials <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/easy-to-read/index.html>



# CDC's COVID-19 Vaccine Resources (not rural-focused)

- Request a Vaccine Confidence Consultation: [confidenceconsults@cdc.gov](mailto:confidenceconsults@cdc.gov)
- Audience-specific COVID-19 Vaccination Toolkits <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/toolkits/index.html>
- Social Media Toolkit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/vaccination-toolkit.html>
- Myths and Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html>
- Vaccinate with Confidence <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/vaccinate-with-confidence.html>
- 12 COVID-19 Vaccination Strategies for Your Community <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/vaccinate-with-confidence/community.html>



# CDC's COVID-19 Vaccine Resources (not rural-focused)

- Resources for Disproportionately Affected Populations  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/health-departments/disproportionately-affected-communities.html>
- Vaccinating Migrant/Migratory and Seasonal Food and Agriculture Workers  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/health-departments/essential-workers/migrant.html>
- For Providers:
  - How to Talk to Your Patients About COVID-19 Vaccination  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/engaging-patients.html>
  - Clinical Resources for Each COVID-19 Vaccine  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html>



# Communication Resources and Toolkits (rural-focused, non-CDC)

- National Rural Health Association (NRHA) COVID-19 Vaccine Resources <https://www.ruralhealthweb.org/programs/covid-19-pandemic/covid-19-vaccine-resources>
- Rural Health Information Hub (RHIhub) <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/>
  - COVID-19 webpage <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/covid-19>
  - COVID-19 vaccination page <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/covid-19/vaccination>
- National Rural Health Resource Center COVID-19 Vaccine Confidence Toolkit (customizable) <https://www.ruralcenter.org/drchsd/communications-toolkit/vaccine-hesitancy>



# Communication Resources and Toolkits (not rural-focused, non-CDC)

- Public Health Communications Collaborative <https://publichealthcollaborative.org/>
- National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)Vaccine Education Toolkit <https://www.nab.org/vaccine/default.asp>
- deBeaumont Foundation Vaccine Communication Tips <https://debeaumont.org/changing-the-covid-conversation/vaccineacceptance/covid-vaccine-poll-vaccine-communications-tips/>



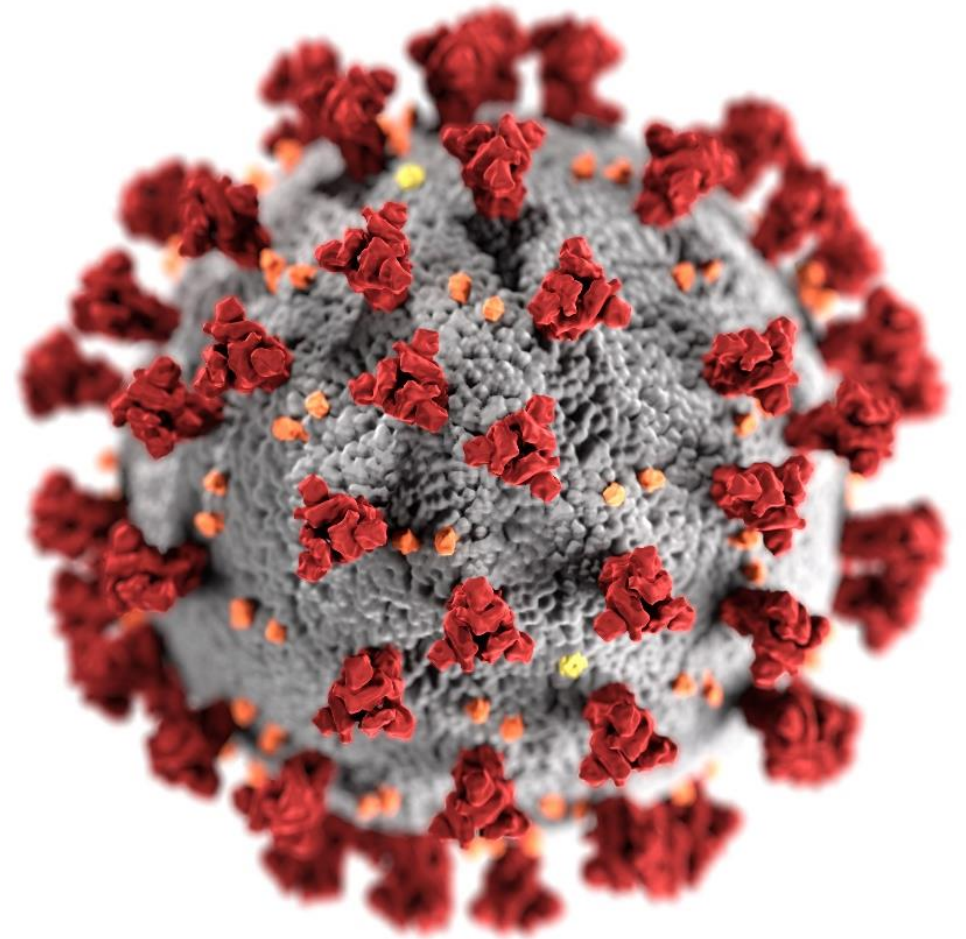
# Discussion



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For more information, contact CDC  
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

