

WHEN YOUR PATIENT LIVES IN A RURAL AREA

or

(Yes, there really are rural areas in Florida!)

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Objectives

- Define rural.
- Describe rural socioeconomic and cultural factors
- Highlight rural health disparities.
- Explore rural barriers to accessing health care.
- Examine why NPs should know about rural social determinants of health.
- Discuss unique concerns of rural veterans.

What does “Rural” really mean?

No gold standard definition of rural

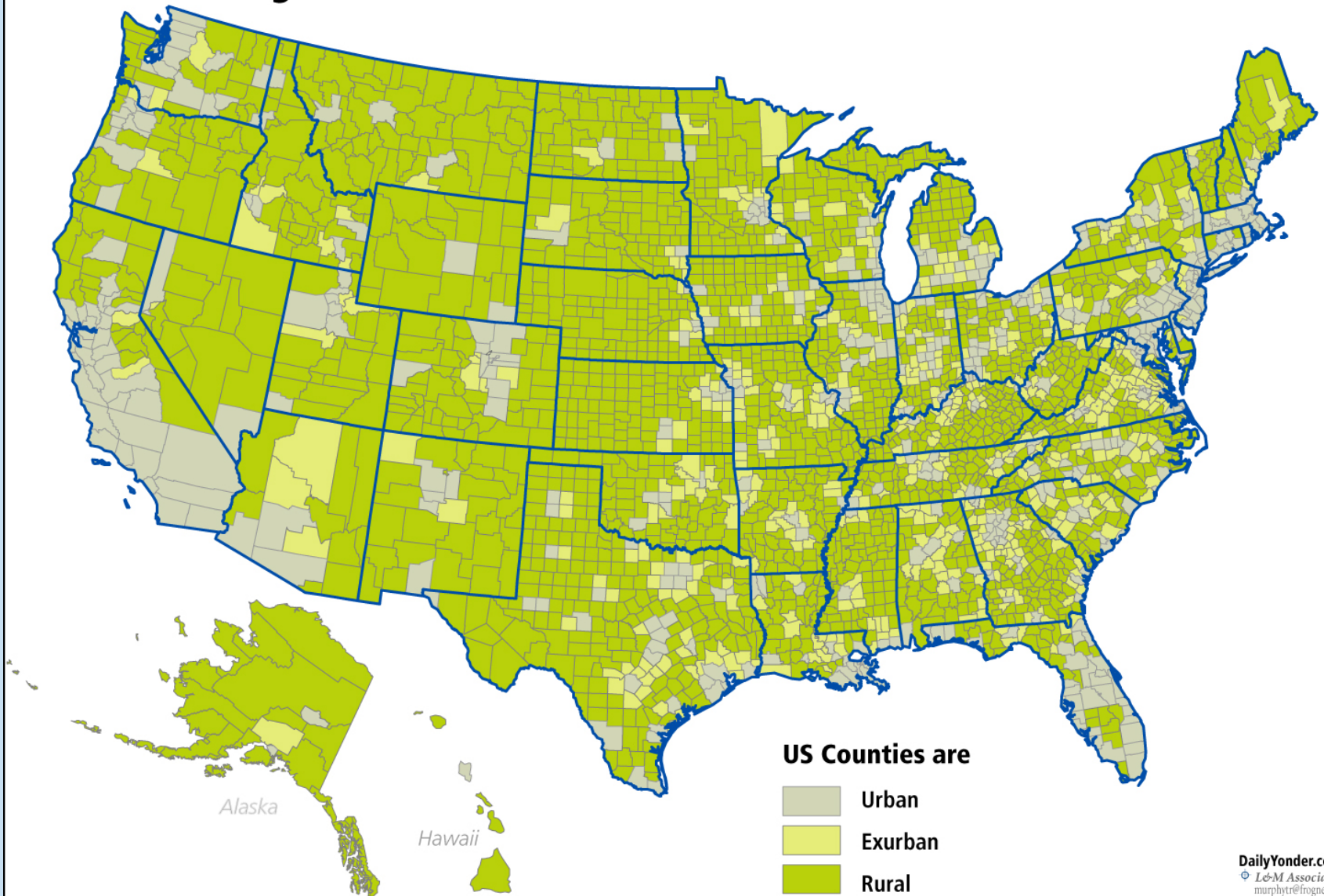
- Subjective –based on personal experiences
- Metropolitan/exurban/non-metropolitan
- Frontier - <6 persons/square mile
- Distance to urban services

Rural Urban Commuting Area Codes (RUCA Codes)

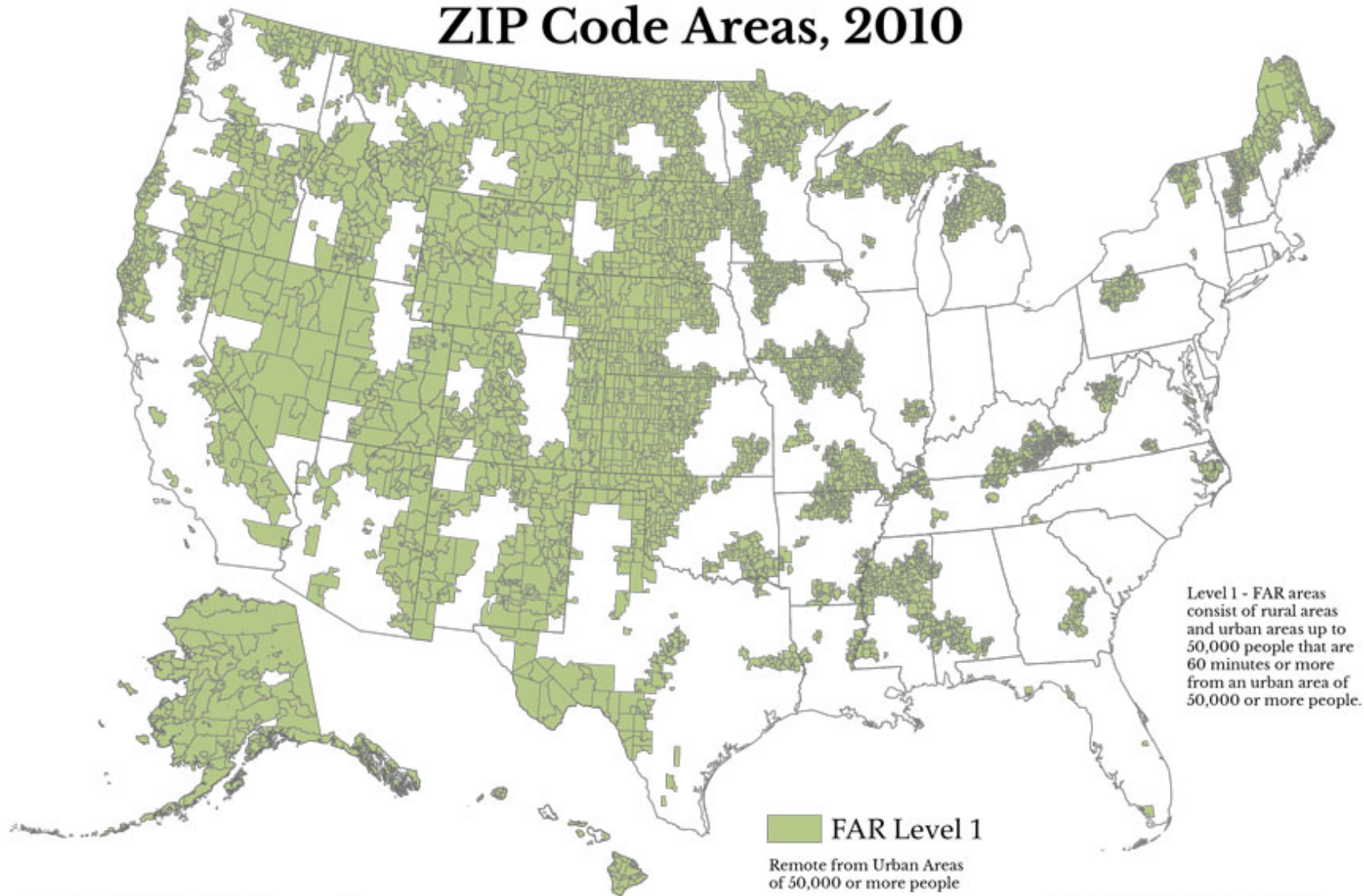
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-commuting-area-codes.aspx>

- Low population/geographic remoteness.
- A continuum - Core metro- frontier/remote
- Florida rural defined <100 persons/square mile
- Other

The Daily Yonder's Classification of Counties



Frontier and Remote (FAR) Level 1 ZIP Code Areas, 2010



*Note: Alaska and Hawaii not to scale

Source(s): Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, April 2015
Based on Census 2010 data.

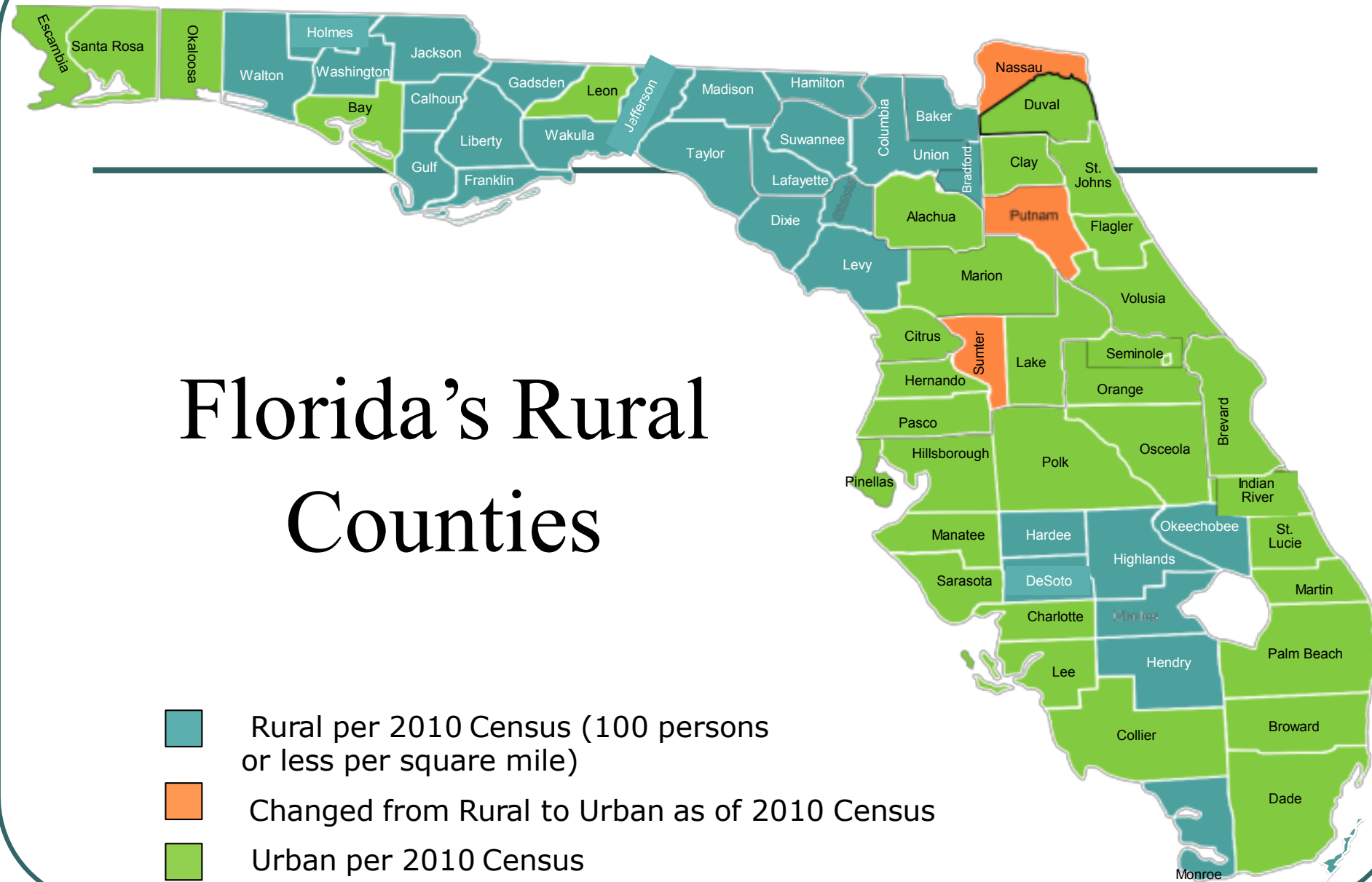
What so rural about Florida?

- FL is fourth most populous state in U.S.; has substantial areas are rural by definition/use
- FL the ninth largest producer of farm commodities in the nation; 30% of FL total land area in farmland.
- In FL, 10% of state set aside for recreation and preservation (state & federal parks, forests, wilderness areas, wildlife preserves, national seashores)
- Rural counties located in FL Panhandle, north central FL, south central portion of FL & FL Keys

Dudley Farm Historic State Park - Alachua County <http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/florida/rural-florida-fl/>



- Rural per 2010 Census (100 persons or less per square mile)
- Changed from Rural to Urban as of 2010 Census
- Urban per 2010 Census



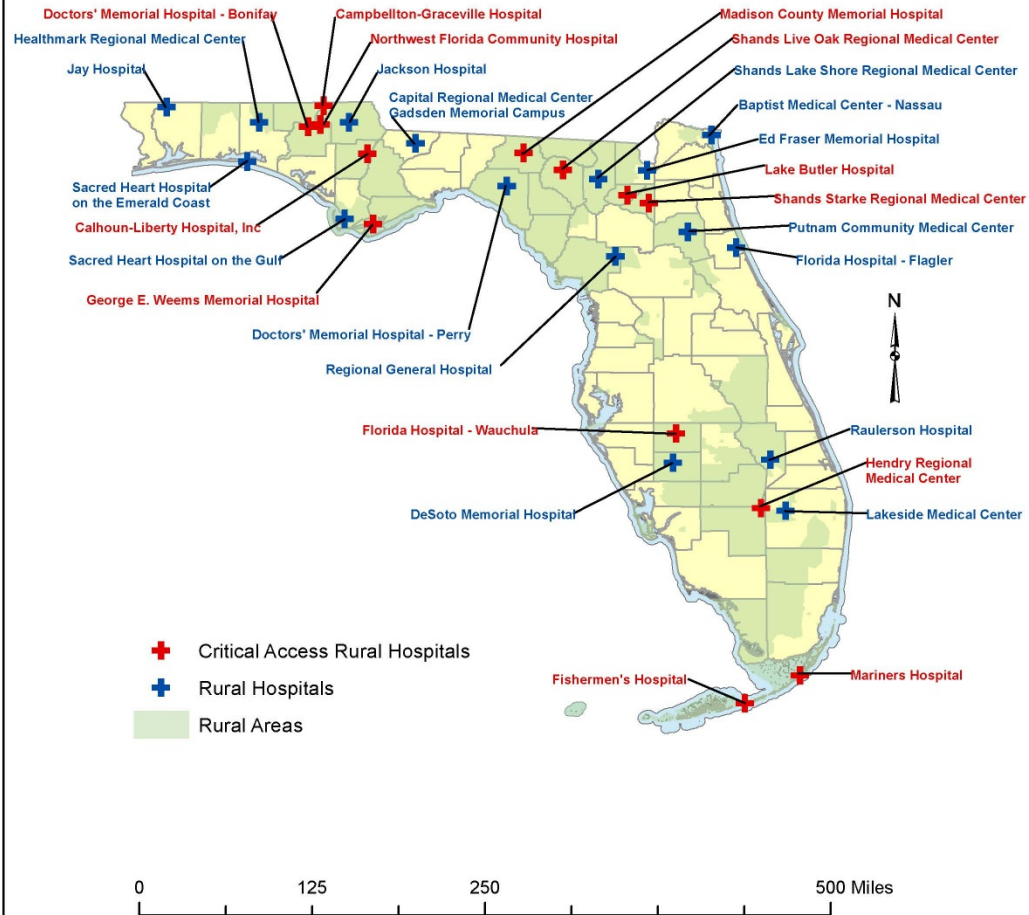
Rural Florida

- About 1.1 million of FL 6 million citizens live in rural counties
- Portions of other FL counties also contain large, rural areas but are not classified as rural.
- Many counties bordering on the Atlantic and Gulf have populations concentrated near the coast; thinly populated interiors (e.g., Collier, Palm Beach, or Escambia counties)
- To take these rural populations into account, several statutory Rural Health Networks include them in their service areas. (St. John's River Rural Health Network)
- Health care facilities in rural FL

Shady Grove, Florida Post Office

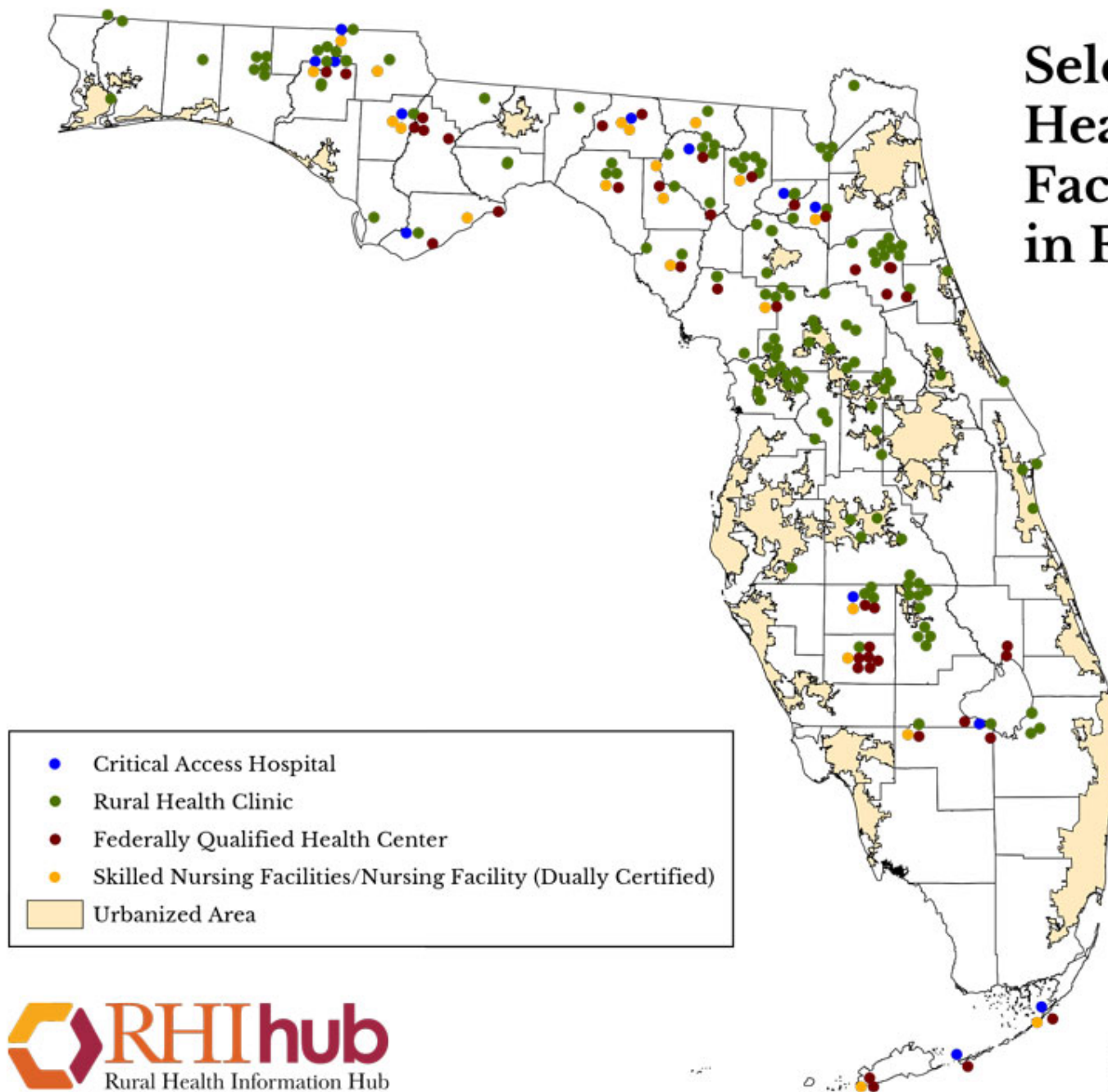


Florida's Rural Hospitals and Rural Areas



Rural areas of Florida are 1) 23 counties identified by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) in the Health Resources and Services Administration, USDHHS, and 2) census tracts based on the 2010 Census in metropolitan areas also defined by the FORHP as rural.
 Sources: Florida Department of Health Office of Rural Health, U. S. Census, U.S Department of Agriculture, HRSA Office of Rural Health Policy
 Data processing and cartography: FSU College of Medicine, Florida Department of Health Office of Rural Health, March 2014

Selected Rural Healthcare Facilities in Florida



Nokota Horse Conservancy

<http://www.nokotahorse.org/cms/>



Demographic Profile in US Rural Areas

Each rural community is unique! In General . . .

- Rural population tends to get older as urbanization decreases (i.e., more rural)
- Elderly constitute 20% of rural population
 - Compared to 15% of urban population
 - Veterans (5+ million live in rural 24.1%)
- In-migration of retirees vs. out-migration of young results in aging rural population
- Communities challenged to provide even basic social and health related services
- Oftentimes outreach services provided by urban

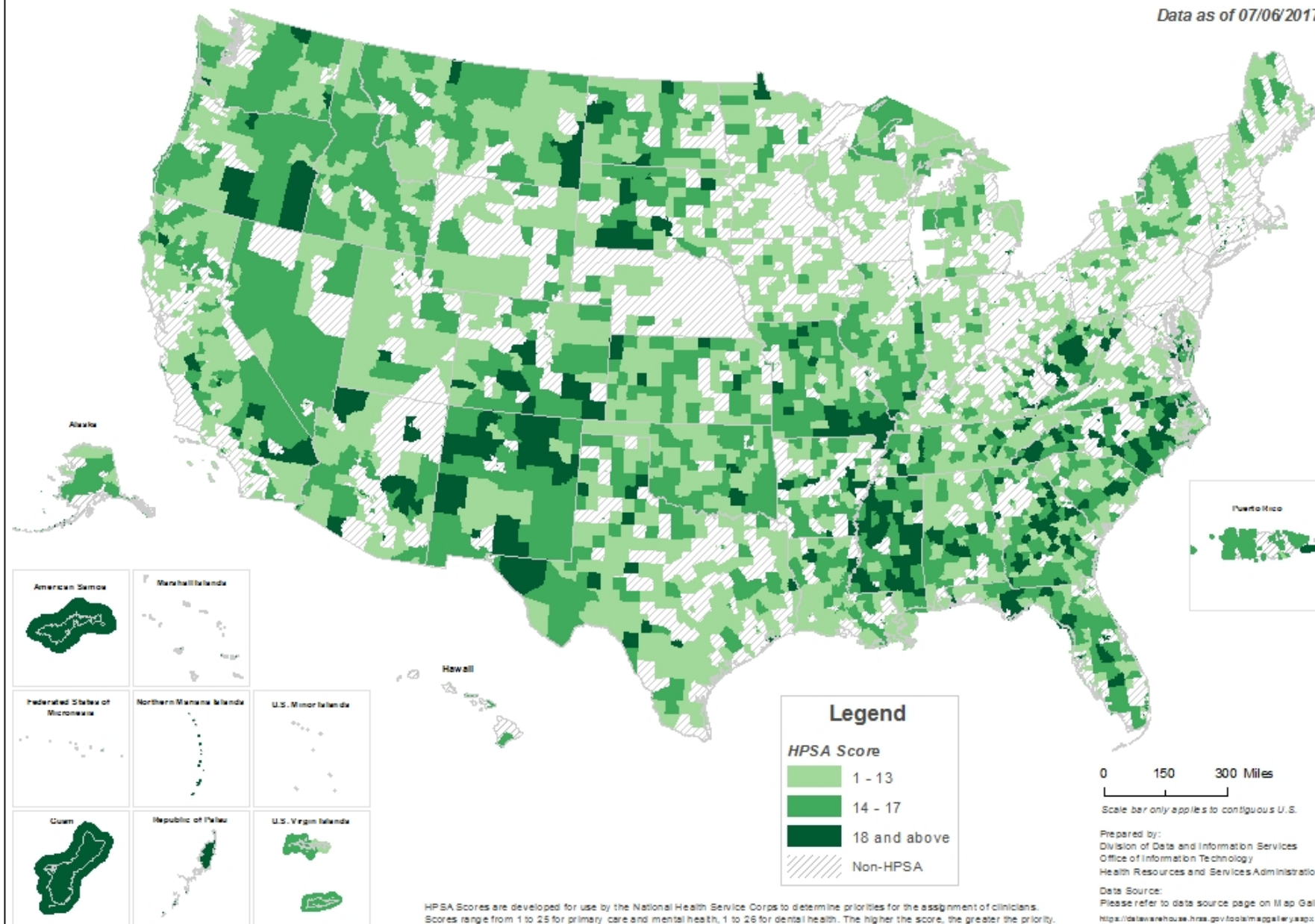
Hwy 78 near Ortona, Florida



What should NPs know about rural residents?

- Limited access
 - To providers & services
 - Transportation challenges
 - A continuum of care
 - Primary, secondary and tertiary health resources
 - Greater number of vulnerable who experience even greater challenges in accessing services
 - Imperative for nurses in rural communities to understand the nature of rural environments to be more effective health care providers.
- BUT --- even more imperative for urban-based nurses who provide care to rural clients, to understand context of the rural environment where the patient lives (i.e. social determinants of health/planning a coordinated continuum of care)

Data as of 07/06/2017



What should NPs know about rural residents?

- Demographics (compared to urban)
 - Higher number of older and young (vulnerable) residents
 - (Often) less educated
 - Higher number of comorbid diagnosis
 - Seek care when they are sicker
 - More likely to be hospitalized/longer time
 - Higher proportion of uninsured (working poor)
 - Pervasive presence of high risk occupations & industries
 - Income/assets 2/3 of national average
 - High proportion of veterans

Informal Social Dynamics



Rural Ethnic Profile

- Varies by region and community
- Minorities comprise 17% of non-metro population
- Geographically concentrated
 - South: African-Americans
 - Southwest: Hispanics
 - West: Native Americans
- Rural Hispanic population grew 70%+ between 1990-2010
- Asian/Pacific Islanders comprise 1% of non-metro residents
- Growing number uneducated, non-English speaking immigrants to work in agriculture & food production

Migrant Farm Workers & Migrant Clinics in Florida



Rural Social Structures

- Informal social structures - however each community is different!!!
- Health professionals may be neighbors or even relatives (diffuse professional/personal identity)
- Community oriented social dynamics
- Perceived threat to anonymity & confidentiality
- (May) prefer to have care from someone they know
- Adherence to more traditional gender roles
- Stigma associated with certain diagnosis
- “What happens in the family . . . stays in the family”
- Attitude of reliance of family/community/local services

Small Town Wedding Dance



Rural Health Disparities

Rural compared to urban

- More likely to describe their health as fair to poor
- Participate less in health promotion, disease prevention, lifestyle behaviors (exercise, seat belt, nutrition, mammograms, etc.)
- Higher infant mortality rates
- Higher accident death rates (40% higher)
- Higher rate of chronic diseases, physical disabilities
- Higher rate of adolescent substance abuse (alcohol, meth, tobacco, etc.)
- Higher rate of obesity, hypertension, certain cancers, asthma, depression
- Varies by community, population-mix, region, occupations

Ocala, Florida Countryside

<http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/florida/rural-florida-fl/>



FYI: Characteristics of Rural Health Delivery Systems

Exceedingly diverse in respect to

- Population profile/health status
- Economic climate/poverty/homelessness
- Proximity to urban area and health care systems

Low population density + lack of critical mass for cost effective enterprise

- Health care facilities with low volume with fixed overhead = Financial fragility

Rural cultural beliefs about health, illness and care seeking behaviors

Lake Alfred, Florida

<http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/florida/rural-florida-fl/>



FYI: Rural Health Delivery Systems

- Lack of specialty services
- Predominately dependent on Medicare
- High proportion of working poor, public assistance
- Many facilities too small to support experienced health care workers and facilities (specialty services)
- Average cost per unit of service is higher
- High(er) reliance on NPs & PAs
- Broader continuum of care in a community associated with improved health status/outcomes
- Nurses highly regarded
- As continuum of care narrows in a community, health status and outcomes decline

Florida Horse Farm

<http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/florida/rural-florida-fl/>



Florida (Panhandle) Frontier Area



Frontier Area in a Western State



Geographical Access Barriers

- Lack of public and/or personal transportation
- Distance to care
 - Time
 - Topography
 - Weather

Cracker Days Rodeo – Felsmere Florida



Socioeconomic Access Barriers

- Lack of adequate health care coverage
 - 74% of small businesses do not provide employee health care coverage
 - High proportion of working poor/uninsured
 - Medicare only (limited coverage)
- Lack of quality services
 - Town too small to support experienced health care workers and facilities (specialty services)
 - Average cost per unit of service higher/not profitable
- High(er) reliance on NPs & PAs –(but often not available; Nurse Practice Act Regulations - vary from state-to-state/region)

The Badlands - Frontier Area



Cultural Access Barriers

- Providers/facilities lack culturally sensitivity (Self-restricts residents utilization of services)
- Providers unaware of rural lifestyle & community preferences
- Health literacy deficits (not understood by providers)
- Language barriers
- Traditional beliefs, therapies, healers; using/paying for health care services
- Veterans perspective about nonveteran care providers

Cracker Day Rodeo – Deland, Florida



Jay Peanut Festival

<http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/florida/rural-florida-fl/>



Florida Rural Health Plan

- The health of Florida's rural residents is an ongoing concern in the Florida Dept. of Health.
- Florida Office of Rural Health identified priority issues.
 - Developed a ***Rural Health Plan***
 - Established policy to resolve issues relating to health and health care services for FL rural residents
- Florida Office of Rural Health
<http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/rural-health/index.html>
- Florida Rural Health Association
<http://floridaruralhealth.org/>

Florida Rural Health Plan Update

Report from Town Hall Meetings



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Levy County – Old Farm House

<http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/florida/rural-florida-fl/>



Florida Rural Health Issues

- Large populations of uninsured/underinsured/working poor live in rural communities; generally exceeding proportions observed in urban communities.
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in rural areas have severe recruitment/retention problems; low pay. Inadequate/no benefits for Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics.
- Disproportionately high mortality rates (compared to urban), selected diseases (diabetes, cardiovascular, hypertension) and condition in particular populations (higher infant mortality, motor vehicle-related injuries/deaths, suicide substance use)

Prairie Rose



Florida Rural Health Issues

- Health personnel, including physicians, nurses, dentists, and other direct service providers are maldistributed across state (surpluses in some urban areas & shortages in rural areas)
- Rural community members often lack physical and/or financial access to dental, mental, and/or visual health services.
- Rural hospitals typically suffer financial hardships due to small community sizes, lack of health insurance in their communities & lower incomes in their communities
- Lower levels of Medicare reimbursement
- Outdated/aging physical plants
- Increasing cost associated with technological innovations
- Increasing cost of pharmaceuticals and other biomedical supplies, equipment

Florida Farmers Market

<http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/florida/rural-florida-fl/>



Characteristics of Rural Nursing Practice

- Generalist role
- Able to function in spite of less immediate access to providers, services, resources
- Greater autonomy
- Caring for an individual and family members for a long period of time (years, several generations)
- Increased use and access to of telehealth services
- Creative

Florida Agriculture



Characteristics of Rural Nursing Practice

- Understand nature of rural environments, social dynamics, local culture (willing to engage in . . . local events)
- Innovative coordination of care in a more austere health care environment
- Able to integrate formal with informal resources
- Possess broad knowledge base to care for individual with an array of diagnosis, across the lifespan
- Comfortable with diffuse and overlapping professional and personal boundary

Florida Horse Farm



Rural Veterans: What do we Know

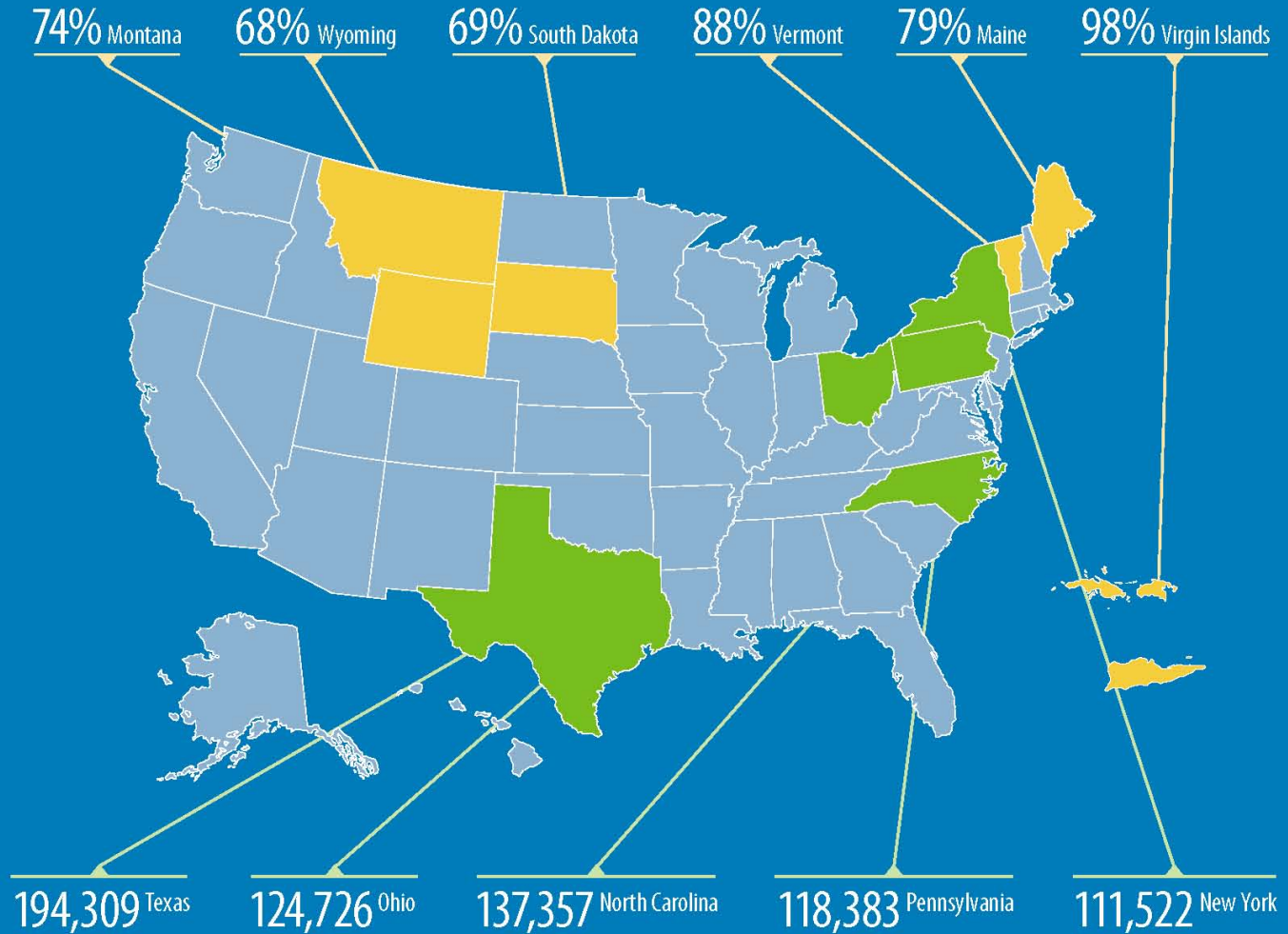
- Perspectives & needs vary by age, gender, political, national and international events when serving
- Of all US veterans, about 25% live in rural areas
- Of all US rural veterans
 - 46% live in the South
 - 26% live in the Midwest
 - 14% live in the West
 - 14% live in the Northeast
- Median age of rural veterans 15 years higher than rural nonveterans; 2 years higher than urban veterans

Rural Veterans

- Rural veteran age increases as level of rurality increases
- Rural veterans living in counties designated as completely rural were the oldest (median age of 66 years)
- Vietnam Veterans – most isolated; less access to VA
- Women Veterans – needs uncertain/less known, few services
 - US Bureau of Census (January 25, 2017) . *Veterans in America*. <https://census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2017/cb17-15.html>
 - Veterans Affairs Administration (August 2016). Characteristics of Rural Veterans 2014: Data from American Community Survey.
 - VHA –Office of Rural Health <https://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/>
 - Florida Department of Veterans Affairs <http://floridavets.org/benefits-services/health-care/>

5.2 million Veterans live in rural communities across the United States.

Highest percentage of rural vs. urban Veterans



Most enrolled rural Veterans by numbers

Florida Veterans Overview

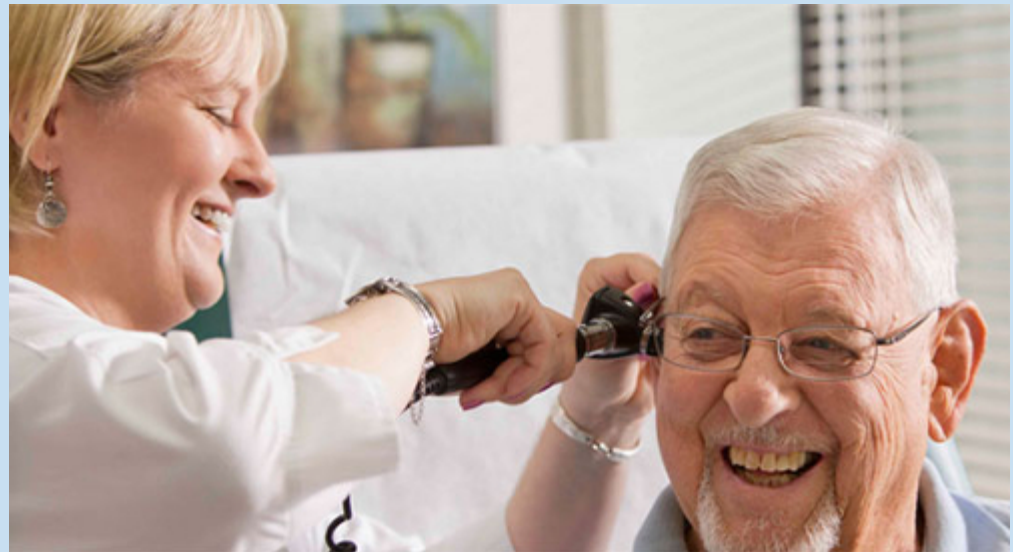
- FL most veteran-friendly US state
- FL 3rd largest population of veterans (1.5 million; 12% FL population 18 years and over)
 - California 1st
 - Texas 2nd
- U South Florida partnered with Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) and University of Pennsylvania to establish National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans
 - Center's Goal: "Develop, promote, enhance policy, clinical care research, and education to improve homeless services so Veterans may live as independently/self-sufficiently as possible, in community of their choosing"
- Women veterans fastest growing veteran segment. Of 21.3 million veterans nationwide, 2 million female veterans
- Florida has 3rd largest population of women veterans (n=154,000 +). Often unaware of eligibility for federal & state benefits, special programs

Fast VA Facts: Florida Veterans (2016)

Total veterans living in US N = 21.3 million

Florida (total) veterans N=1,533,306

- Males n =1,378,486
- Females n= 154,820
- War time n= 1,139,764
- Peacetime n = 393,541
- World War II n= 65,941
- Korean War n= 144,445
- Vietnam era n= 496,526
- Gulf War n= 90,446 (*served 1990 to 9/11/01*)
- Post-9/11 n= 173,469 (*served 9/12/01 to present*)
- 64 years & older n= 773,284
- males n= 737,698
- females n= 35,586



Providing Caring for a Veteran

- VA increasingly use NPs to address Veterans access challenges
- Ask in the initial assessment: “ Have you ever served?”
 - If yes: “Thank you for serving! Can you tell me about your service and health problems?” (e.g., era, location, assignments, disability, etc.)
- Ask: “Are you enrolled in the VA health care system?” If yes, ask for more detail about providers.
- Consider military history when completing the assessment and developing treatment plan
- FYI: Veterans Choice Program (information for providers)
 - https://www.va.gov/opa/choiceact/for_providers.asp

Concluding Comments

Your experiences with rural lifestyle and clients who live and work in a rural environment?

North Dakota Badlands



Canonball Concretions - North Unit

Questions

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