

DATA & ANALYSIS

Unrelenting pressure pushes rural safety net into uncharted territory

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<https://www.chartis.com/insights/unrelenting-pressure-pushes-rural-safety-net-uncharted-territory>

America's rural health safety net has been in crisis mode since 2010. Rural hospital closures, decreasing reimbursements, declining operating margins, and staffing shortages have all coalesced to undermine the delivery of care in communities whose populations are older, less healthy, and less affluent. The mission of the safety net to serve under-resourced communities is unraveling.

The latest research conducted by the [Chartis Center for Rural Health](#) points to a startling new phase of this crisis as rural hospitals fall deeper into the red, "care deserts" widen throughout rural communities, and the increasing penetration of Medicare Advantage could further disrupt rural hospital revenue.

"The fact that 50% of rural hospitals are operating in the red and nearly 420 are vulnerable to closure should serve as an urgent call to accelerate efforts at the state and national levels to reinforce the rural health safety net and ensure access to care for under-resourced and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities."

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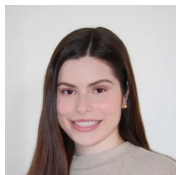
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