

COVID-19 Funds in Rural Practice

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Clinical Setting

- Independent RHC in Rural/Frontier Idaho
- Only clinic in a county larger than the land area of Rhode Island (1,206 square miles)
- Approximately 3500 Active Patients
- One physician, 3 PA-Cs, 2 NPs, 1 CNM
- One LCSW, one PharmD, two CDCESs
- All ages seen including OB, ALF, SNF
- NCQA Recognized PCMH

Clinic Demographics

- Practice Established in 1985
- Designated Independent RHC in 2002
- Race: Caucasian 79%, Hispanic 20.9%
- Sex: Male 43%, Female 57%
- Age: 0-17 27.9%, 18-35 23%, 36-50 16.7%, 51-65 16.3%, Over 65 15.9%
- Medicaid 40% of Patient Visits

Barriers to Using COVID-19 Funds



- Lack of availability of coronavirus-19 testing instruments and test kits
- Needs to be related to treatment of COVID-19

DECISION PROCESS

- We recognized that we already had the Abbott/Alere ID NOW instrument which COULD do coronavirus-19 testing. However, all test kits were being directed by FEMA to district healths. (As of 8/27/2020, our initial order for over \$15,000 in test kits (360 tests) has not been filled.)
- We had internal staff discussions and three immediate priorities were identified: 1) more examination rooms, 2) get rid of carpet and 3) get rid of cloth furnishings.

Immediate Priorities

- 1) More Exam Rooms and a Telehealth Room: We remodeled our south waiting room and an unused office into two exam rooms and a telehealth room.
- Two exam rooms accessible from separate outdoor entrance for COVID-19 patient isolation if needed.
- 2) We had all carpet removed and replaced with a waterproof laminate that is easy to sanitize.
- 3) We replaced all cloth furnishings with chairs that have medical grade vinyl that is easy to sanitize.

Before/After Photos: Exam Rooms



Before/After Photos: Flooring



Before/After Photos: Furnishings



Coronavirus-19 Testing

- Although we have the Abbott/Alere ID NOW instrument, we are still unable to obtain coronavirus-19 test kits. The ID NOW test takes up to 15 minutes.
- We have collected specimens (nasal swabs) to send to our reference lab for coronavirus-19 testing. Turnaround time has varied from 1 to 5 days. We have tested 91 patients with 10 positives to date.
- Our reference lab has stopped doing testing for asymptomatic persons such as those needing a negative test to go fishing in Alaska.

Questions

- Today's news: Abbott BinaxNOW rapid coronavirus-19 test (credit card size kit) for \$5 approved by White House... ???!!!
- Thank you!



COVID 19
RHC's and our
Communities

Mandy Shelast, CRHCP



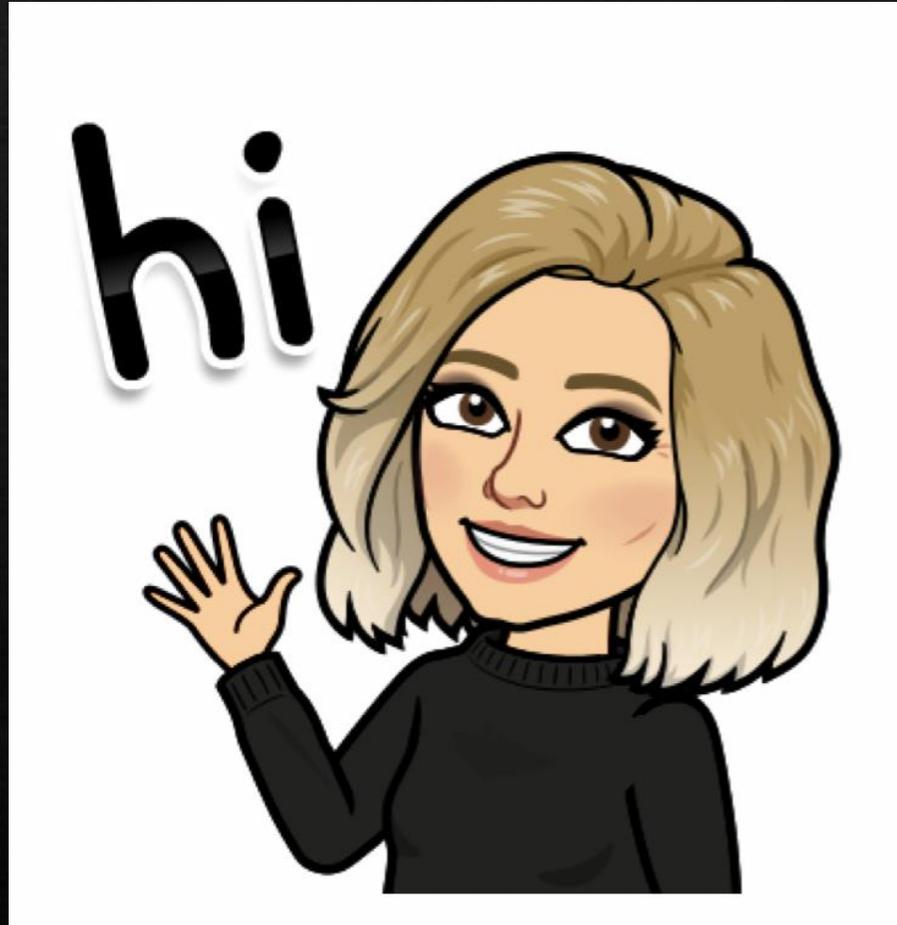
COVID -19 & RHC's

Me & My Communities

COVID 19 Funds

Challenges to Date

Me & My Communities



Me & My Communities



- ~ 173K Residents
- Primarily Geriatric Population
- 17.3 % Poverty Rate
- Average household income of ~\$43K
- Snow fall in 2019 was 283 inches
- 10 Provider Based RHCs
- 4 Parent CAHs
- ~ 150K clinic visits per year
- 98,439 total cases in MI
- 6,417 deaths in MI

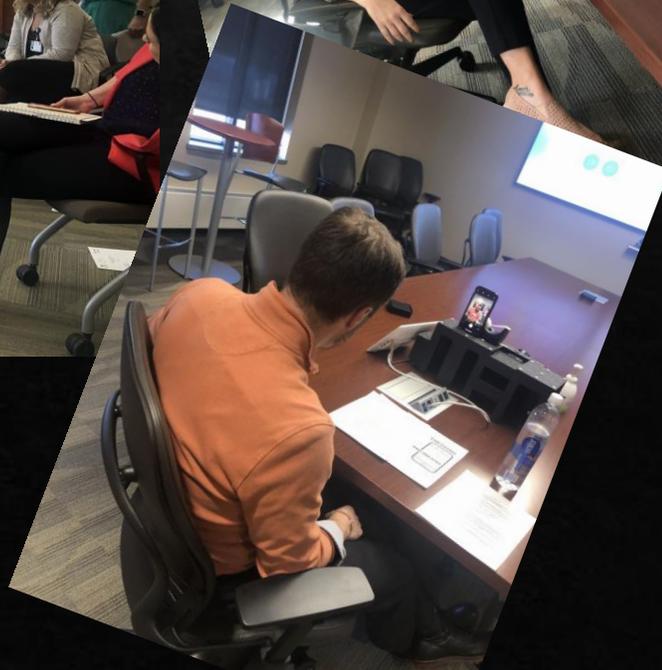
COVID 19 Funds Received

- ◆ Amount of funds
- ◆ 75+ grants including RHC COVID funds
- ◆ Tracking



COVID 19 Funds

What to do with them?



- ◇ How we decided what to do with the funds:
 - ◇ Internal Meetings
 - ◇ Community Meetings
 - ◇ Statewide Meetings
 - ◇ Community and State partnership

COVID 19 Funds Testing Supplies

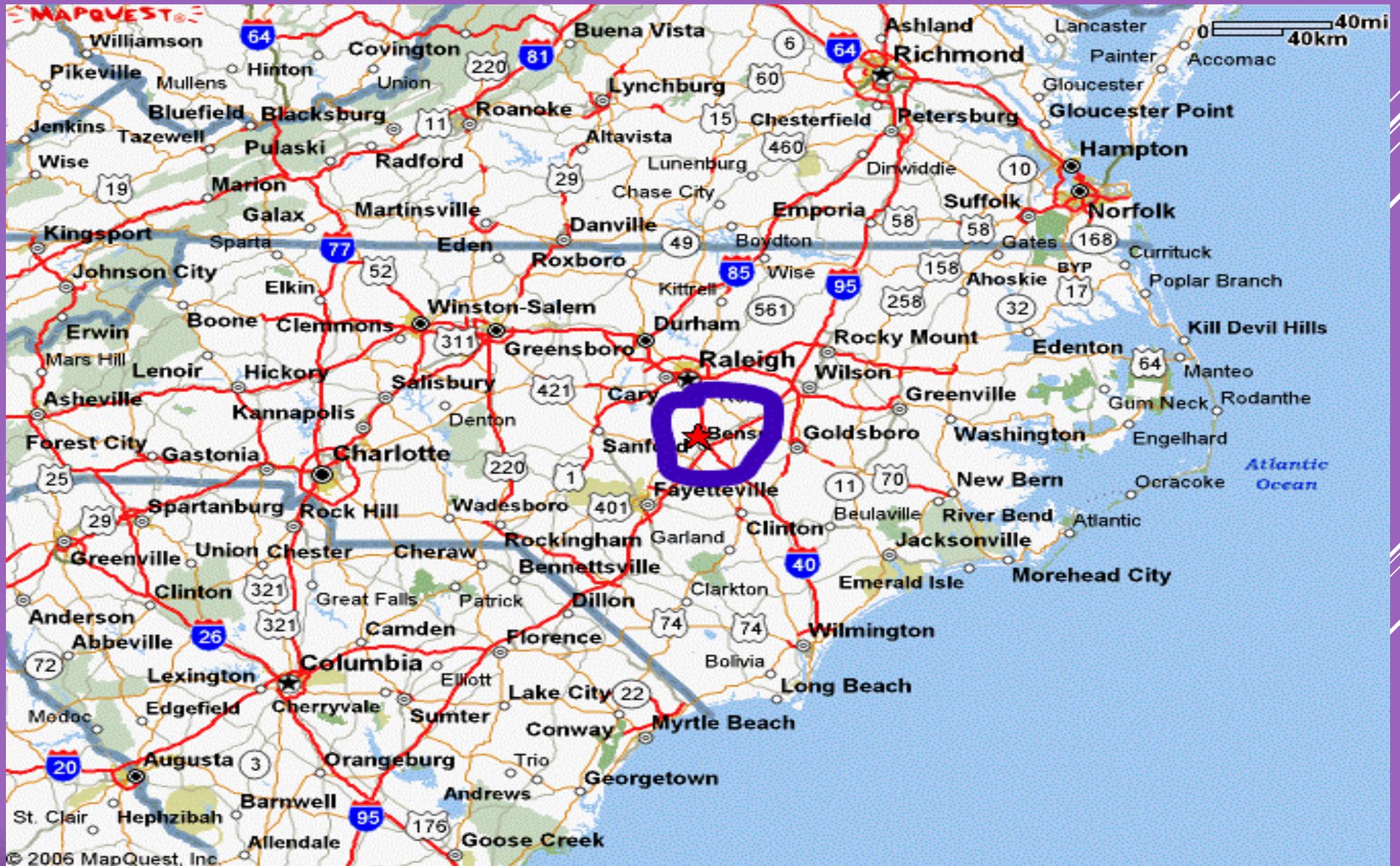
- ◆ What we spent the funds on:
 - ◆ BD Veritor
 - ◆ Cepheid



Challenges to Date



- ◇ Reagent Availability
- ◇ Government Sequestration
- ◇ Testing Capacity
- ◇ University Availability
- ◇ Testing Turn Around/Availability
- ◇ Spending the COVID 19 RHC Funds



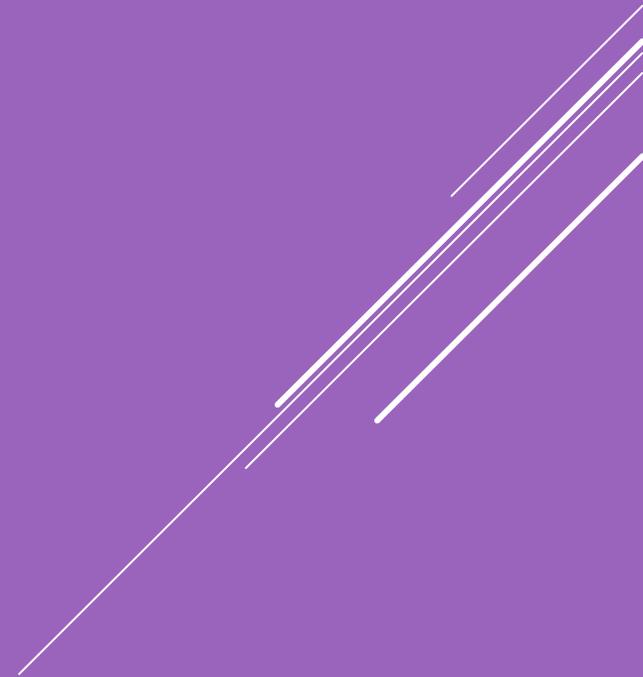
- ▶ Over 90% of Benson Health's patient population resides in either Johnston or Harnett County. 14.4% of the Harnett County, 11.7% of the Johnston County, and 26.9% of the Sampson County populations live below the federal poverty line (<https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx>).

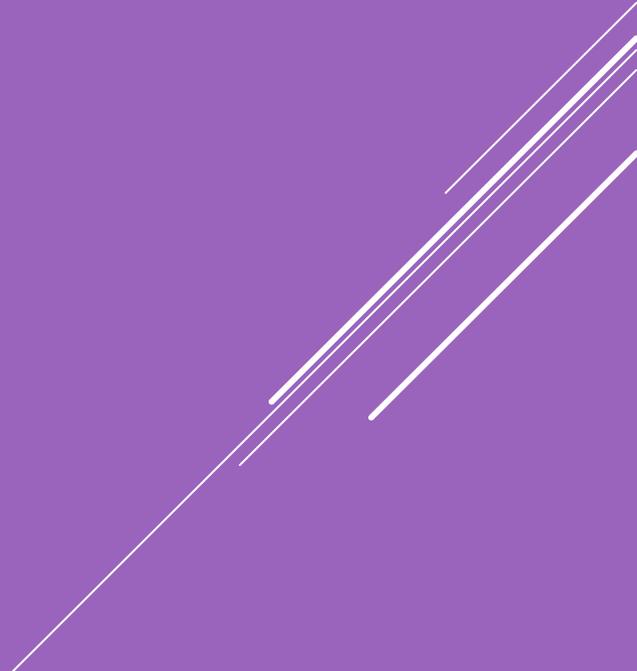
- ▶ In Benson, where Benson Health is located, the poverty rate is even higher – 31.5%, greatly exceeding rates of the Tier 2 counties served by BAMC – 26.9% for Sampson and 14.4% for Harnett.

- ▶ A study by the Triangle J Council of Governments has identified hidden economic distress within Tier 3 counties of Triangle region. In those nine (9) municipalities within Johnston County (Tier 3) were identified has having significant poverty. Those were the towns of Benson, Four Oaks, Kenly, Micro, Pine Level, Princeton, Selma, Smithfield, Wilson's Mills. All of these areas within the service area of Benson Health.

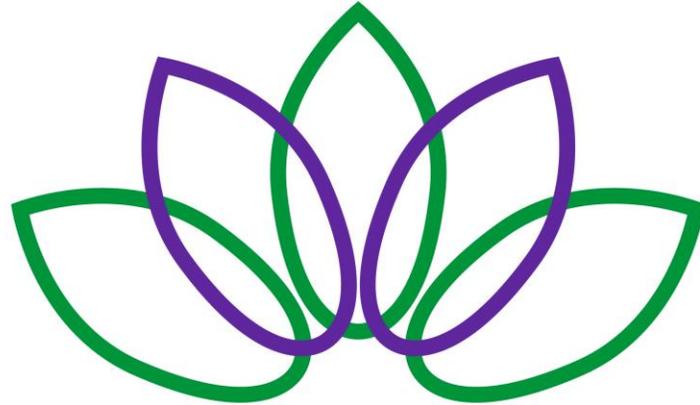
- ▶ While the child poverty rate in Johnston County is 21% (County Health Rankings) the number of children in the Benson community which live in poverty is a staggering 72%.

- ▶ How did you decide on what you were going to do with the COVID-19 money? Did you have internal meetings, external (community leaders, county or state public health officials) meetings?



- ▶ Did you encounter unanticipated problems? How did you resolve them?
 - ▶ Did your plans change as things evolved.
- 

- ▶ Have you spent the COVID-19 (\$49,462) or have you held some for future activity?



BENSON HEALTH
Primary Care for Everyone

Welcome to the

RHC COVID-19 Testing

Technical Assistance Webinar

This webinar is brought to you by the National Association of Rural Health Clinics and is supported by cooperative agreement G27RH39211 from the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). It is intended to serve as a technical assistance resource based on the experience and expertise of independent consultants and guest speakers.

The contents of this webinar are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HRSA.





RHC TA Community Centric Covid 19 Testing

We appreciate your time, consideration, and your service to our rural neighbors.



Powered by NOSORH

**National Association
of Rural Health Clinics**

Funded by: FORHP

Resources provided to participating RHCs include:

- ▶ an individualized strategy to build collaboration
- ▶ resources to develop and implement a comprehensive, community centric COVID-19 testing program
- ▶ comprehensive tools to build RHC capacity
- ▶ customized, in-depth, remote technical assistance (TA) to
 - meet the needs of the RHC and community
 - grow operational and clinical viability
 - provide access to subject matter experts
- ▶ assistance with reporting requirements process

Contact us at rhccovidtestinginfo@nosorh.org

for additional information!

RHC Data Collection Requirement

- From the Terms and Conditions:
 - The Recipient shall submit reports as the Secretary determines are needed to ensure compliance with conditions that are imposed on this Payment, and such reports shall be in such form, with such content, as specified by the Secretary in future program instructions directed to all Recipients.
 - The Recipient certifies that all information it provides as part of any application for the Payment, as well as all information and reports relating to the Payment that it provides in the future at the request of the Secretary or Inspector General, are true, accurate and complete, to the best of its knowledge...



RHC Data Collection Requirement

- The data collection process is still being developed
- Data will be organized at the TIN-level
- Likely to include questions about:
 - How many tests did your Tax ID organization perform
 - How many of those tests were positive
- RHCs and their parent organizations will want to have records of this broken out by month
- We would like the most accurate figures possible but estimates will be allowed
- You are not required to do COVID testing but you are required to use the funds for tests or testing related activities



RHC Data Collection Requirement



- When the system and process is fully approved and ready to go we will have another webinar dedicated to data collection requirements
- We are confident that it will be relatively straightforward and not too administratively burdensome



FAQ Period!

- Please feel free to type your questions into the chat box!
- Nathan.Baugh@narhc.org
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- rhccovidtestinginfo@nosorh.org

