

# LORHN news & updates



May 2022

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## COVID-19 Resources



**\*\*Vaccines now recommended for everyone 6 months and older\*\***

**\*\*2nd booster recommended for all 50 years and older or those with immunocompromised systems.\*\***

**[Find a vaccine site](#)**

**[Find a testing site](#)**

**[LORHN's COVID Info & Resources Page](#)**

**[Stay Healthy Sunshine](#)**

**[CDC's Coronavirus Page](#)**

**[Rural Response to \(COVID-19\)](#)**

## Community Meetings

[Request COVID Presentation](#)

Greetings partners and residents,

Our 2021-2022 fiscal year is coming to an end and we are proud of our accomplishments this year, none of which would be possible without our network members, community partners, and hard-working staff. While the COVID pandemic continues to impact rural families and communities in our service area, LORHN has continued to provide health education, care coordination, and linkage to those in need. Below are just a few of our accomplishments this past year.



- Community Health Advocates distributed nearly 1,000 of COVID packets containing educational information and a cloth mask and an offer to link residents to vaccines and boosters (and continues to do so).
- With funding support from the Quantum Foundation, LORHN CHAs assisted residents with applications and helped secure more than \$70,000 for rental assistance and \$5,000 for utility assistance in addition to other health and social services for residents of the Glades communities (Belle Glade, South Bay, Pahokee, and Canal Point).
- LORHN staff have identified, engaged, and linked nearly 100 residents with, or at risk for, substance use disorder with the support services they need (housing, unemployment benefits, food, Healthcare, etc.).
- LORHN started and completed a telehealth assessment for the five county service area, with federal funding support from the US Health Resources and Services Administration. This project positioned LORHN well to compete for additional grant funding to support the expansion and adoption of telehealth throughout our rural service area.
- Community Health Advocates have expanded our community and street outreach efforts to connect with residents and share information about LORHN programs. Several presentations have been offered to inform community members about opioid prescription and street drugs and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you to our board members and community partners who make it possible to do this work in uncertain and challenging times, when our rural communities need a helping hand and accurate health information the most.

We remain committed to serving our communities safely. As another surge of COVID cases is currently taking place, along with other respiratory illnesses, we encourage individuals to practice recommended guidelines to remain healthy and keep families safe.

- Get vaccines and boosters based on the recommended schedule, based on age and health status
- Get a COVID test if you become ill (after 3 days of symptoms if you are vaccinated) and quarantine/wear a mask until results are received.
- Wear a well-fitting mask around others indoors
- Avoid crowds, especially with inside with limited ventilation
- Socially distance when possible

Be well and stay safe,

Andrea Stephenson Royster, MBA, MHS, FACHE  
Chief Executive Officer

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## Partner Spotlight: Pahokee Housing Authority

Pahokee Housing Authority has been an engaged partner with LORHN for several years and has been a strong partner for many programs, including but not limited to chronic disease education, health literacy education, care coordination linkage services, 2020 Census outreach, COVID-19 education, and vaccine linkage, and more. Most recently, Pahokee Housing Authority invited LORHN to provide an opioid awareness presentation at the Community Center in Padgett Island in May 2022.

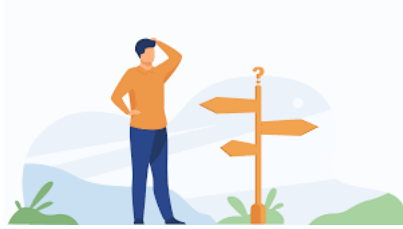


Their goal is to provide residents with as much information possible regarding Pahokee Housing Authority, Inc. mission, programs, and purpose, and to seek feedback to better improve our programs and service.

The programs offered by Pahokee Housing Authority, Inc., embrace the concept of promoting self-sufficiency, asset development, and most importantly, improving the quality of lives of low-income families. Pahokee Housing Authority, Inc. learned early on that this goal is achievable only through community partnerships. To this end, Pahokee Housing Authority, Inc. partners with many community organizations to provide comprehensive services to local families. Pahokee Housing Authority, Inc. extends a special thanks to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (USDHUD), as well as our local community partners who have joined with us to improve the quality of lives for many struggling families.

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## LORHN Community Resource Guides



Knowing where to start looking for help for yourself, a friend, family member, or client can be overwhelming. LORHN has developed a community resource guide for each community of our service area. Every guide includes phone numbers for various county services as well as local medical services, senior services, medical and social support services, food, housing and utilities, pregnancy and childcare, mental health services, and

employment services.

Click each geographic area below to download the community guide. Please share them! Notice something missing? Let us know!

[Western PBC](#)

[Okeechobee](#)

[Hendry](#)

[Glades](#)

[Indiantown](#)

## Community Programs

### Telehealth Assessment & Telehealth Advisory Group (TAG)



How quickly a year flies by! LORHN extends our deepest appreciation to all of the community partners that were involved in the Telehealth Advisory Group for LORHN's rural health network development grant project, funded by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration. LORHN intends to continue engaging TAG members to help advise and guide our work in supporting the expansion of telehealth services throughout our service area.

A critical data point that is still being studied by the state of Florida is current broadband access and strength. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity has an Office of Broadband that is currently conducting a Broadband Availability Map and Internet Speed Test for the state. **If you have not already completed the test (and in different areas of your community) or shared it within your personal and professional network, please do so.** This data will help inform elected officials where infrastructure and funding are needed most.

[Take Speed Test](#)

[View the Map](#)

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## Reducing Opioid-related Overdoses in Rural Palm Beach County



**Refer to LORHN in  
Unite Us**

Community Health Advocates continue to serve Glades residents that are currently using or at risk of using opioids, alcohol, and other substances. LORHN provides assistance to individuals and families to link/re-link individuals into treatment and support services, conduct risk reduction, and link clients with other supportive services.

Help spread the word, educate the community, and help those that need it:

- Schedule an Opioid Awareness presentation
- Share our flyers and educational materials
- Refer clients to our team via Unite Us, phone call, or email.

*\*\*There are no eligibility requirements for the program, it is open to all Glades area residents\**

[Prevent Addiction](#)

[Treatment & Recovery](#)

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## Increasing Vaccine Uptake in Rural South Florida

In partnership with our affiliate organization, Health Council of Southeast Florida (HCSEF), and other community partners in LORHN's service area, Community Health Advocates continue to provide COVID-19 vaccine education and linkage for all rural residents. CHAs are addressing vaccine hesitancy and access barriers for rural residents.



As of March June 28, 2022, the COVID-19 community levels for LORHN's service area are listed below. Vaccines help prevent severe cases that can cause hospitalization and death.

- Palm Beach County - *High*
- Okeechobee County - *Medium*
- Glades County - *Medium*
- Hendry County - *Medium*
- Martin County - *High*

Source: COVIDactnow.org

**NOT FULLY VACCINATED YET?**

Protect yourself, your family, and your community.

**COVID-19 vaccines and boosters are FREE.**

Visit a vaccine site today!  
See listing of vaccine sites on the back

Still not sure...  
Call to join our next vaccine webinar to learn more and get your answers!

 For more information call us at 863.532.3099 | 561.557.9273



**Vaccine Sites in Western Palm Beach County**

**We can help you book your appointment**

**Local Vaccine Sites**  
Openings and availability vary depending on the supply available and community demand, which changes as new variants emerge.

Visit our website for an up-to-date list of vaccine sites in Palm Beach County.



Scan the QR code with your smart phone to be taken to LORHN website.



 **www.lorhn.org**  
863.532.3099 | 561-844-4220 x7

**Homebound Seniors E-mail**  
HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com

**Other Vaccine Sites**  
(visit website for availability & appointments)

**Florida Department of Health**  
C.L. Brumback Primary Care Clinic

**CVS Pharmacies**  
**Winn-Dixie Pharmacies**  
**Walgreens Pharmacies**

**VACCINES.GOV**  
**1-800-232-0233**  
**COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline**  
**1-888-677-1199**

**Request Postcards**

**FREE Health Education Presentations**

LORHN continues to provide health education workshops throughout our service region. Workshops are offered free of charge to all - residents and professionals interested in learning about these topics.



### Understanding Opioids, Addiction, Prevention & Recovery

This one-hour presentation explains what Opioids are and how they affect our brain and body. Participants will learn signs of dependence, alternative therapies available, and recovery resources available.

Team members are available to assist individuals and families one-on-one as well.



### Let's Get Vaccinated

This one-hour presentation explains how COVID-19 vaccines were created, how they work, current vaccine and booster recommendations, and responds to concerns people may have to receive them. The presentation also shares information about key community resources to help those recovering financially from COVID-19.

**Book A Presentation**

## Rural News Articles & Resources



**'One Pill Can Kill': Florida Officials Warning About ISO, New Synthetic Opioid More Powerful Than Fentanyl**



**Rural America May Experience Service Blackouts as Providers Sunset 3G Technology**



*CBS Miami*  
March 16, 2022

[Read Article](#)

*The Daily Yonder*  
February 7, 2022

[Read Article](#)



**Monkeypox case in Florida? Should I be worried, other burning questions about rare disease**

*USA Today*  
May 23, 2022  
Image from CDC

[Read Article](#)



**DEO Announces \$30 Million Available to Florida Rural Communities for Economic Development**

*Florida Daily*  
June 26, 2022

[Read Article](#)

## Upcoming Webinars & Professional Trainings

**Caring for the long COVID Patient |  
Cuidando al paciente con COVID  
prolongado**  
**July 13, 2022**  
10:00 am

This webinar will focus on COVID-19's long-term impact on physical and mental

**Strategies for Distributing Naloxone to  
Rural Communities**  
**July 13, 2022**  
12:00 pm

This presentation will explore the need for naloxone distribution in rural areas and



health as well as the implications for workers, relationships, and family life. We will also address concerns for the future of refugee, immigrant, and migrant communities with long COVID and recommendations for long COVID assessments and currently available treatments

[View & Register](#)

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**Part 1: HIV Management in Rural and Underserved Communities of the Southeast: Tailoring Care and Treatment to Improve Health Equity**

**July 15, 2022**

11:00 am

This webinar will differentiate antiretroviral agents for HIV based on efficacy, safety, adherence potential, and drug-drug interactions, review applying best practices and evidence-based interventions to improve rapid HIV treatment initiation in rural and underserved settings, select appropriate HIV treatment regimens based on current guideline recommendations, clinical evidence, and individual patient factors, Integrate evolving evidence and current guidelines to inform treatment decisions, patient monitoring, and adherence, Utilize evidence-based interprofessional strategies to improve retention in HIV care and adherence among rural and underserved populations

[View & Register](#)

discuss innovative methods and technologies for increasing access.

[View & Register](#)

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# Funding Opportunities

**Sign up** for LORHN's bi-weekly distribution of the GrantStation Insider Content e-newsletter or view LORHN's GrantStation Insider Content e-newsletter **archive page** for previous funding opportunities.

## Funding for Individual & Family Assistance

### **Glades Electric Charitable Trust, Inc. (Glades, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee)**

Almost 70 percent of Glades Electric Cooperative members participate in Operation Round-Up, which helps people in GEC's service area who have exhausted normal avenues of financial assistance. The fund is for deserving individuals and organizations. If you know of people who need and deserve assistance and live within the Glades Electric service area (Glades, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties), encourage or **help them to complete an application.**

### **LIHEAP/CSBG (Glades, Hendry, Highlands, and Polk Counties)**

*Assistance Available: electrical, water, rental/mortgage, gasoline, medical, transportation to medical services, food, HVAC Repair (60+), family self-sufficiency and more.*

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federally funded program that assists high-energy burdened, low-income households with the costs of heating and cooling their homes. Home energy funds are provided once per calendar year and are based on the client's gross income and household size. ALPI's focus of CSBG funding is to support a Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSSP); however, there are limited emergency assistance funds available to help alleviate an immediate crisis. Under the FSSP, an eligible client is provided services through ongoing case management with the ultimate outcome being the enhancement of a family's ability to, ultimately, meet their own needs. **Apply online.**

### **Affordable Connectivity Program**

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program that replaces the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (EBB Program) to help low-income households pay for internet service and connected devices. Only one monthly service discount and one device discount is allowed per household. To receive the connected device discount, consumers need to enroll in the ACP with a participating provider that offers connected devices (Note: not all internet companies offer device discounts.) The internet company will provide the discount to the consumer.

## Regional Grants

### **Virtual Living Room: Create a Place Where Veterans Can Feel at Home**

This is a FRS grant program that blends rural technology, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) resources and local support to encourage veteran use of advanced medical technologies. Virtual Living Room saves veterans travel time and costs while enabling connections to skilled physicians and other providers in the VA medical system such as telehealth and other online resources.

### **COMPASS Initiative HIV Capacity Building Assistance and Training**

Topics include organizational capacity building, stigma reduction, cultural competency, and mental health. *Deadline: ongoing basis*

### **Southeast Rural Community Assistance Loan Fund Program**

Community development loans to local governments, public service authorities, user associations, nonprofit organizations, and other community entities for the development and/or construction of large-scale community projects. *Deadline: ongoing basis*

## **Federal Grants**

### **Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans and Loan Guarantees**

USDA Telecommunications Infrastructure Loans and Loan Guarantees provide financing for telephone and broadband infrastructure in rural areas. Funds may be used to finance broadband-capable telecommunications services, including improvements, expansions, construction, acquisitions, and refinancing. *Applications accepted year-round*

### **[www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)**

Learn about Federal Grant forecasted, posted, and archived grants available via various Federal Government Programs. Grants Learning Center provides information about eligibility, writing, reporting, policies, systems, and more.

## **Community Meetings**

### **Hendry & Glades**

Community Collaborative Meetings

Contact: [Lisa Sands](#)

1st Friday of each month

8:30 am - 11:30 a

### **Okeechobee**

Community Collaborative Council (CCC)

Contact: [Jessica Parrish](#)

4th Tuesday of each month

10:00 am - 11:00 am

### **Western Palm Beach**

P.A.T.C.H.

Contact: [Marcia Bahia](#)

3rd Tuesday of each month

9:00 am - 10:45 am

### **Martin County**

InterAgency Coalition

Contact: [Kim Ouellette](#)

2nd Wednesday of each month

8:30 am - 10:00 am

## **Who We Are**



Lake Okeechobee Rural Health Network, Inc. (LORHN) was formed in 1994 as a non-profit corporation designed to provide for the special and specific health-related needs of the residents, visitors, and businesses in the Lake Okeechobee area; with extended services to Glades, Hendry, Okeechobee, Western Martin, and Western Palm Beach counties.

LORHN was established through Florida legislation (Statute 381.0406) and is one of nine local rural health networks covering the state of Florida. As per Florida statute, the goal of the networks shall be to ensure that quality health care is available and efficiently delivered to all persons in rural areas. Our vision is to promote/provide for the special



and specific health needs of the residents, visitors, and businesses in the Lake Okeechobee area.

LAKE OKEECHOBEE RURAL HEALTH NETWORK | 888-880-8242 | [www.LORHN.org](http://www.LORHN.org)