



American Heart Association
Bernard J. Tyson
Office of Health Equity



JOURNEYS IN FILM
educating for global understanding

Health
**HELP
WANTED**

**INTRODUCTORY
VIDEO**

DISCUSSION GUIDE

“Heath Wanted: Finding Care in Rural America” introduces viewers to wide-ranging and regionally specific medical issues affecting rural areas across the U.S. Preventive medicine, wellness checks and emergency care are affected when people live in sparsely populated areas or regions with geographical extremes. Shortages of health care workers and limited resources and transportation complicate efforts to provide residents with health care.



The American Heart Association and local and national partners are working together to identify and support a wide range of solutions to improve and transform care for rural Americans.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do lifespans and quality of life compare in rural and urban areas? Based on the film and your personal experience, what factors could contribute to these disparities?
2. In what ways do volunteers and health care workers contribute to a rural community's well-being? What specific actions might be needed in a rural community compared with an urban community?
3. How can residents' knowledge of CPR improve community health outcomes? What are the challenges in promoting CPR training in rural areas? How might these challenges be overcome?
4. There are cardiac and stroke systems of care. How are they similar, and how are they different?
5. How important is recognition of symptoms, especially in cases of cardiac arrest and stroke?
6. Why is preventive medicine important for individual and community health? What barriers do rural communities face in accessing preventive care?
7. How do mental and physical health intersect? Why are mental health interventions crucial for overall well-being?
8. How can rural communities leverage their specific strengths to address health disparities and improve access to preventive medicine?



RESOURCES

- American Heart Association rural health portal: <https://www.heart.org/en/about-us/rural-health>
- American Stroke Association "Quick stroke treatment can save lives": <https://www.stroke.org/en/about-stroke/types-of-stroke/is-getting-quick-stroke-treatment-important>
- AHA issues call to action to address inequities in rural health: <https://newsroom.heart.org/news/american-heart-association-issues-call-to-action-for-addressing-inequities-in-rural-health>
- 2024 Guideline for the Primary Prevention of Stroke: A Guideline From the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association: <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/STR.0000000000000475>

- \$20 million awarded for research to address health challenges in rural areas: <https://newsroom.heart.org/news/20-million-awarded-for-scientific-research-to-address-health-challenges-in-rural-areas>
- AHA-funded rural health research: <https://professional.heart.org/en/research-programs/aha-funded-research/health-equity-research-network-on-rural-health>
- Get With The Guidelines® program for rural hospitals: <https://www.heart.org/en/professional/quality-improvement/rural-healthcare-outcomes-accelerator>



POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Partners could be featured in a panel sharing experiences in the community and offering suggestions to policymakers and residents. Or they could be invited individually to share their work aimed at improving rural community health.

- Local volunteers or workers, such as firefighters, EMTs and other first responders
- Local public health coalitions
- Local schools, churches and volunteer groups that address and support nutrition and housing security, mental health and addiction interventions
- Local health care professionals



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- Have the audience separate into small groups. Have each group create a pictograph or chart of existing resources and identify where the gaps are in health care communication, referrals, continuity of care, etc. Have the groups share their work and together create a final product.
- Create a Post-it note board where people can share their most significant concerns about the local health care environment.
- Organize a CPR demonstration session and share how people can sign up for training.

- Organize a community session focused on recognizing the signs of a stroke “F.A.S.T.” and engaging in immediate response. Tie this to knowledge of the availability of resources in the area: <https://www.stroke.org/en/help-and-support/resource-library/fast-materials>
- Create magnets or other simplified resources, such as postcards, for community members that include important health care information, phone numbers for community support organizations or other helpful resources.
- Share a large map of the area and mark the emergency and other medical services. Include Post-it notes or pins highlighting additional helpful information about these services. Using the map, discuss challenges and potential solutions.
- Brainstorm collaborations to strengthen health care education in the community using resources on the American Heart Association's website. For instance, could electric bills, tax notices or mailers include health and medical tips? Can a grocery store create a blood pressure tracking form with low-barrier tips for healthy eating? Could local schools with a track create evening walking programs for families?