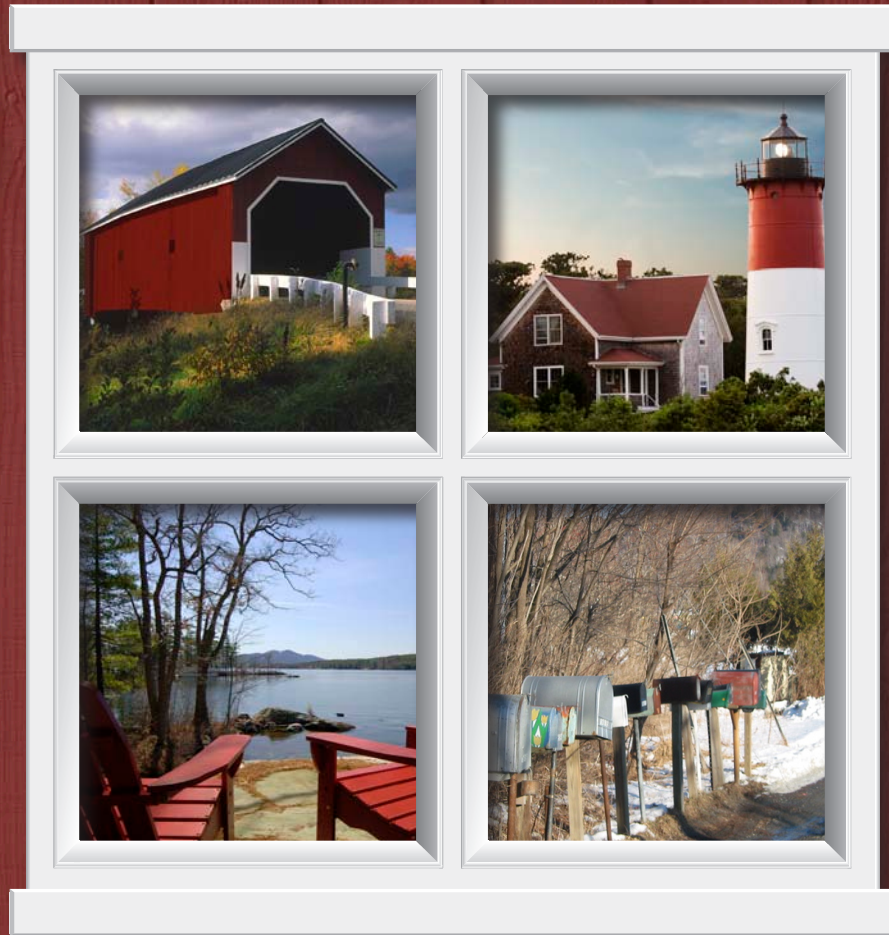
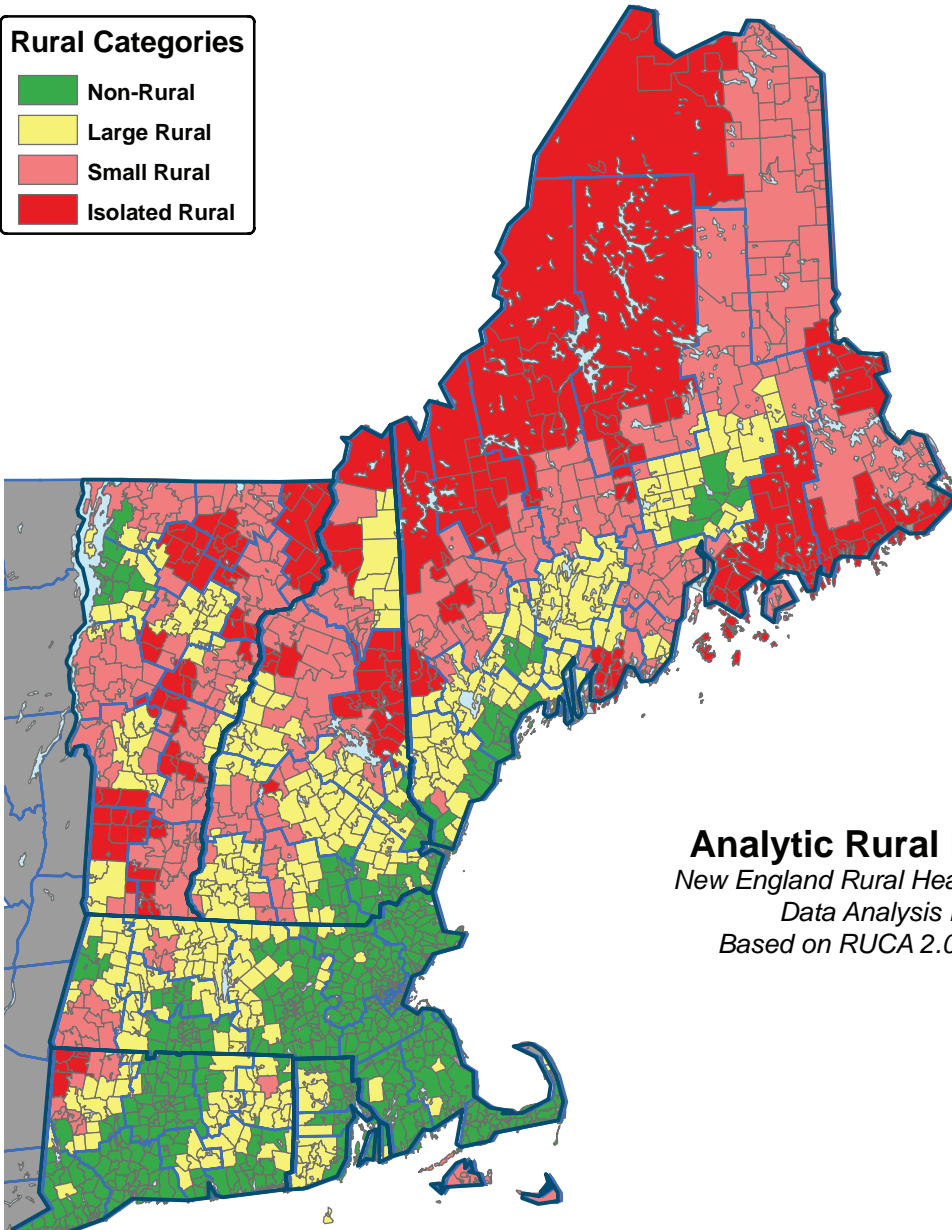
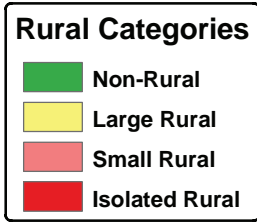


Rural Data for Action



**A Comparative Analysis of Health Data
for the New England Region**



Analytic Rural Definition
*New England Rural Health RoundTable
 Data Analysis Project
 Based on RUCA 2.0 Categories*



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Data Advisory Group

Input and guidance was provided by the work of the Data Advisory Group, which included the following individuals:

Marion Pawlek, Project Director, New England Rural Health RoundTable
Denis Barton, Vermont Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care
Alisa Butler-Druzba, NH Department of Health & Human Services, Rural Health and Primary Care
Carla Lundquist, Rhode Island Department of Health
Barbara Berger, Connecticut Office of Rural Health
Mary Winar, Connecticut Office of Rural Health
Cathleen McElligott, Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health, State Office of Rural Health
John Gale, Muskie School of Public Health, University of Southern Maine
Charles Dwyer, Maine Office of Rural Health and Primary Care

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501 South Street, 2nd Floor, Bow, NH 03304

Eric S. Turer – Analyst/Author
Buffi Girardin – Layout/Design
Cynthia Pawlek – Photography

Contents

Foreward	3
Executive Summary	4
Methods	7
A. A Rural Definition for New England.....	7
B. Analytic Method.....	11
C. Data Sets.....	11
Findings	13
A. Demographic/Socioeconomic Characteristics.....	13
1. Age.....	13
2. Income.....	14
3. Employment:.....	16
4. Education.....	18
5. Transportation.....	18
6. Tourism.....	19
7. Race/Ethnicity & Language.....	20
B. Health Care Delivery System.....	20
1. Provider Workforce.....	20
2. Health Professional Shortage Areas (Primary Care, Dental, Mental Health).....	25
3. Hospitals.....	28
C. Utilization.....	29
1. Primary Care.....	29
2. Hospitalization.....	32
D. Risk Factors.....	34
1. Health Insurance and Routine Care.....	34
2. Personal/Behavioral Risks.....	36
E. Health Status and Outcomes.....	37
1. Overall Health Status.....	38
2. Birth Outcomes.....	38
3. Chronic Disease.....	39
4. Mortality.....	39
Appendix	44
Endnotes	48

Foreward

New England is often considered a somewhat urbanized region, with cities such as Boston, Providence, and Hartford anchoring sprawling and intensively developed communities containing some of the best health care facilities in the world. While there are clearly many developed areas of New England and a wealth of medical resources located there, this fact makes it easy to overlook the significant rural areas and communities within the region and the challenges they face. While rural communities in New England are certainly distinct from the farm belt of the Great Plains or mountains and deserts of the western states, the reality is that New England has a long rural tradition and most of the area can still be categorized as rural.

This report is an attempt to use various data sources to present a picture of rural health in New England, focusing on characteristics of the population and the delivery system, as well as risk factors, and ultimately outcomes for those living in rural areas. While there is much data showing that those living in rural areas experience greater difficulty accessing health care, there is little data that looks at rural New England as a region to explore how those factors play out in this unique area. Because the rural areas of New England are fragmented and split across several states, the regional approach to the study is the key to developing population numbers sufficient to describe the most remote areas.

We do hope that this report will be of value and interest to the various stakeholders in New England's rural health system. It is intended to inform communities, legislators, health care providers, administrators, and other decision makers who are addressing the complex issues related to improving and enhancing our health care system. As organizational, legal, and policy decisions are made with respect to health care, it is important to consider the implications for the portion of the region's population that live beyond the metropolitan areas.



Marion Pawlek
Executive Director

New England Rural Health RoundTable
501 South Street, 2nd Floor
Bow, NH 03304
www.newenglandruralhealth.org
Marion.J.Pawlek@valley.net