



DELAWARE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH (DIMER)

Committee on Rural Health

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

9:00 am – 10:00 am

Hybrid In-Person and Teams Meeting

Meeting Attendance

DIMER Committee on Rural Health Members Attending:

- Nichole Moxley (Chair)
- Kathleen Matt, PhD
- Rachel Hersh, DrPH, MSN-PH, RN
- Joseph Kim, DO
- Kate Smith, MD, MPH
- Janice Lee, MD MMM, FAAFP
- Marshala Lee-McCall, MD, MPH

Committee Members Absent:

Delaware Health Care Commission

- Sheila Saylor, Public Health Treatment Coordinator

Public Attendance

- None

Ms. Moxley (Chair) started the meeting at 10:03 am.

Meeting Minutes

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Moxley requested a motion to approve the March 5, 2025, meeting minutes. Dr. Matt made a motion to approve the minutes, and it was seconded by Jan Lee (DHIN) The committee members made no objections and the minutes were approved. The minutes can be viewed [DIMER Website](#).

Committee on Rural Health Framework Draft

Ms. Moxley stated that in preparing for this meeting, and tasked with what this committee could look like, as we discussed at the last meeting, I sent out a draft version of the of the framework for the committee. The committee reviewed the draft framework for the Committee on Rural Health aimed at improving healthcare access in rural Sussex County. The framework emphasizes a mentorship-driven approach, community engagement, collaborative partnerships, healthcare services expansion, and the use of telemedicine technologies. The goal is to align with DIMER's mission and improve the rural health. Ms. Moxley requested a motion to approve to adopt the framework for the Committee on Rural Health as the

mission. Ms. Hersh made the motion, which was seconded by Dr. Lee-McCall. The committee members made no objections, and the framework for the Committee on Rural Health approved.

Metrics for Evaluation

The group discussed potential metrics to evaluate outcomes related to mentorship, community collaboration, recruitment, pipeline sustainability, and whether these should be initiative-specific or broader. It was agreed to keep these metrics in mind and develop them further as initiatives are defined

Rural Residency Programs

Dr. Matt asked about the status and development of rural residency training programs in Delaware and should that be one of the committee's goals. It was noted that while no fully rural residency program currently exists, some rotations include rural health components. Dr. Lee-McCall advised that she helped develop the rural residency training program at HRSA, and her understanding is to be considered a rural residency it is not a requirement that the whole residency training is in a rural location. The group acknowledged the importance of increasing rural residency training opportunities as a longer-term goal. Dr. Lee-McCall shared insights on funding availability from HRSA for rural areas that could be used for rural residency programs and the challenges posed by residency requirements in rural settings. Collaboration with hospitals and grant opportunities were mentioned.

Pipeline Development via Education Outreach/Career and Technical Education Program (CTE)

Ms. Moxley stated that part of the last meeting was centered around what the committee could do in the short term to get a win, so she looked at the CTE programs in our middle and high schools in Sussex County. A discussion ensued centered on early pipeline development through engagement with middle and high schools in Sussex County. Ms. Moxley noted that most middle schools lack allied health programs, whereas many high schools offer some version of allied health education.

Dr. Kate Smith described DMA's Mini Med School program, an online six-week series exposing students to various health professions through presentations by providers from diverse disciplines. An extension of this program, Delaware Youth Medical Academy (DYMA), offers high school and middle school students additional skill-building sessions such as CPR, suturing, and intubation, with plans to expand these hands-on sessions into Sussex County. The committee expressed interest in collaborating to bring similar programs locally to engage students and offer tangible experiences.

Ms. Moxley asked the committee if they had any thought on how gather interest in healthcare middle and high schools in Sussex County. The committee identified this gap as an opportunity for intervention.

The committee is moving forward with organizing a one-day in-person Mini Med event in western Sussex County this fall, featuring provider talks and skill sessions, to overcome connectivity issues that affect rural Sussex County. This model would enable direct student interaction and engagement. Dr. Marshala Lee-McCall and Dr. Kim offered support and resources to help develop this DIMER-specific outreach program and noted the availability of simulation centers and resources for hands-on learning. Discussions included partnering with school administrators and utilizing existing relationships to facilitate outreach. Dr. Kim said he would help, and asked that the committee provide him with a framework for the one day event and he would take it to the schools. Ms. Moxley expressed the importance of providing translated materials for parents, especially in Spanish or Haitian Creole, although resource constraints were noted. Ms. Hersh stated that her staff would be willing to provide bilingual support to help incorporate language access during sessions.

Engagement and Recruitment Survey

Ms. Moxley proposed distributing a survey to the DIMER board members to assess current recruitment and retention efforts in rural Delaware. The survey aims to identify gaps and create a resource guide for students and families. Ms. Moxley asked the committee if this was something they wanted to entertain. The committee agreed this would be useful as a follow-up to ongoing efforts and to improve communication and volunteer recruitment for educational events. The committee will try to get the survey on the DIMER agenda and the schools, and ask them if they could complete the survey.

Meeting Cadence and Next Steps

The committee decided to meet monthly to maintain momentum, especially to plan the in-person Mini Med event this fall. After considering schedules, the third Tuesday of each month at 2:00 PM was selected for future meetings. Dr. Smith committed to developing a draft outline for the one-day symposium and to sharing updates from ongoing programs such as the upcoming Mini Med session

Next Steps

The committee is committed to focusing on 3 initiatives:

1. Mini Med event in the fall of 2025
 - a. Collaborate with DHSA to speak on financial resources available (speakers from SKMC and PCOM)
2. Integrating and expanding the reach of the Health Occupational Service Alliance (HOSA) out of New Castle County
3. Rural Health Residency Program

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:53 am.

The next DIMER Committee on Rural Health Meeting: June 17, 2025, at 2 PM