**CALL FOR PROPOSALS
This CFP is for a special issue of the *Rhetoric of Health and Medicine* Journal**: “‘Down Home, Down the Street’: Examining Rural Health in the Rhetoric of Health and Medicine”

**Guest Editors: Justiss Wilder Burry** (Tarleton State University), **Melissa Stone** (Appalachian State University), and **Gabriela Ríos** (University of Colorado Boulder)

[The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (2023)](https://www.cms.gov/priorities/health-equity/rural-health) recognizes that more than 61 million Americans live in rural areas, which may include tribal, frontier, and geographically isolated territories. Those who live in these areas face unique and often difficult challenges related to health and healthcare systems. We hold that rhetorical studies are keyed to communities, rhetoric, and health issues that can help advance rural communities and the visibility of health issues. RHM scholars are well-positioned to investigate rural health topics in ways that can benefit rural community members and contribute to rhetorical studies simultaneously, because examining medicine “through the inclusion of humanities” is “an attention to rhetoric itself” ([Ryan, Heifferon, & Fountain, 2020, p. 239](https://ohiostatepress.org/books/titles/9780814214466.html)).

In its simplest definition, “[r]ural health is the study of healthcare systems in rural settings” ([Bacha, 2022](https://mts.intechopen.com/storage/books/9810/authors_book/authors_book.pdf)); however, rural health issues are often complex. Given these complexities, we agree that rhetoric scholars interested in the rhetoric of health and medicine (RHM) are well positioned to help “redraw the boundaries of the field” ([Molloy and Hensley Owens, 2022, p. 3](https://journals.upress.ufl.edu/rhm/article/view/1714)). This special issue of *Rhetoric of Health and Medicine,* titled, “Down Home, Down the Street”: Examining Rural Health in the Rhetoric of Health and Medicine, aims to advance the visibility of rural communities and their relationships with health and medicine access by attending to one central question: How can RHM-focused rhetorical analyses of visibility, awareness, and research in rural communities contribute to the field of RHM and to help improve rural healthcare conditions?

Our thinking about rural health is inspired and motivated by the intention and spirit of *RHM* as a journal that has always worked to “engage and inform other fields and extra-academic practices,” through interdisciplinary and community-based research and writing ([Melonçon & Scott, 2018, p. *v*](https://journals.upress.ufl.edu/rhm/article/view/670)). We believe rural communities should be part of this advancement for change.

The following non-exhaustive themes and questions might point potential authors in fruitful research directions. If you’d like to see more generative questions, we’d be happy to share more.

**Questions to Consider**

**Defining Rural Health**

* What are the connections between rural health and RHM?
* How do rural health concerns intersect with community visibility & health justice topics?

**Public Health**

* How can larger health policies and initiatives support rural ones?
* How do rural communities navigate public health crises surrounding access, disinformation, and disease treatment or prevention?

**Health Awareness**

* How do state and federal entities determine what issues are most valued and important for rural community members? How is this information communicated?
* How can a transnational perspective inform rural health?

**Health Education**

* How can rhetoricians and technical communicators participate in technical documentation and information design for rural health resources?
* What types of cooperative initiatives and/or opportunities can assist college students who attend colleges and universities in rural areas??

**Infrastructural Challenges**

* How do rural health communities interact with technological platforms and modalities?
* How do rural community members think about privacy, protection, and sharing of health information?

**Researching in Rural Communities**

* How can research in rural communities directly benefit rural populations?
* How can RHM methodologies advance more equitable responses to intersectional issues?

This special issue welcomes traditional research articles, but also welcomes proposals for the journal’s other genres including persuasion briefs, dialogues, commentaries, and review essays. If you have other ideas that are outside of the genres listed, please feel free to submit them for review. ​​These submissions could include conversations with health practitioners, rural health narratives around care and access, methodological development for research with rural communities, interdisciplinary projects that focus on helping rural communities and their health concerns, and reviews of nontraditional essays and written papers.

This special issue will be co-edited by Justiss Wilder Burry, Melissa Stone, and Gabi Ríos. Special issue proposals will undergo anonymous review and will be ranked by this team and members of the journal’s editorial board, and manuscripts will undergo the same rigorous peer review process as regular submissions.

**Details and Tentative Timeline**

* Email any questions to Justiss, Melissa, and Gabi at **rhmruralhealth@gmail.com**
* Submit proposals (500–1000 words excluding citations) to **rhm.journal.editors@gmail.com**
* Proposals Due: **Nov. 15th, 2023**
* Decisions Sent: **Dec. 1, 2023**
* Drafts Due: **March 15th, 2024**