



Incorporated in 1979 as the Rural Wisconsin Hospital Cooperative, RWHC has received national recognition as one of the country's earliest and most successful models for networking among rural hospitals. Today, the work continues as the renamed Rural Wisconsin *Health* Cooperative responds to the needs of its diverse members and their communities.

RWHC serves as a catalyst for statewide collaboration as a progressive, creative force on behalf of all rural health constituencies. Owned and operated by 35 non-profit rural acute, general medical-surgical hospitals, RWHC's charge is twofold: advocacy for rural health at the State and Federal levels, and shared service development for member hospitals as well as external customers. The Core Values of *trust, collaboration, creativity, excellence, joy, openness, personal development, productivity, and responsibility* continue to define the work of RWHC and its members.

The tenants of advocacy and shared service have benefited one another over the years. Since its inception, RWHC has maintained a philosophy of “together, we are better”, working collaboratively to represent the smaller rural hospital arena as an important stakeholder at the policy maker's table. Initiatives from CAH Status development, through Rural HIT have benefited from RWHC's expertise in crafting rural health policy. Today, that expertise continues to shape the landscape of rural health services in America.

Shared services have grown through collaborative efforts, and continue to provide sustainable alternatives to our rural partners both in Wisconsin, and the Country. At the heart of RWHC service line development is the desire to be an *affordable and effective option* for rural health organizations in the areas of; *quality, finance, HIT, specialty clinical services, and reporting compliance with regulatory agencies*. RWHC's business model gives us the opportunity to deliver services that are innovative and reliable, yet affordable for the smaller hospital. With more than 30 years of experience, RWHC continues to be recognized as a leader providing shared services to smaller hospitals.

Continued growth has led to RWHC establishing three additional stand alone business entities. First, the RWHC Network was established to negotiate HMO and other insurer contracts. The Network assists rural members in talking with one another negotiating contracts without violating antitrust laws. The RWHC PHO was founded to work with hospitals and physicians on issues surrounding Medicare Advantage programs. And finally, in 2007 RWHC and Member hospitals founded the RWHC Information Technology Network, a 501(c) 3 organization delivering shared HIS/EMR services.

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