

Rural Development Grants Announced

Posted At : October 29, 2008 10:09 AM | Posted By : Kate Tussey

Related Categories: Health Care, Grants

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development's latest round of grants and loans through the Learning and Telemedicine program strives to increase economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for rural residents through the implementation of telemedicine.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture awarded six recipients in five states \$15 million in loans and grants for telemedicine on Thursday, October 23, 2008. The grants were awarded to rural hospitals and other organizations through the department's Rural Development Office's Distance Learning and Telemedicine program. The program was created to meet the educational and health care needs of rural areas through advanced telecommunications technology. The funds will assist the rural hospitals and medical centers in upgrades to health care delivery services to improve the quality of rural life.

The hospitals and health systems that received the grants and loans are:

- DuBois Regional Medical Center, DuBois, Pa.
- Eastern Maine Healthcare System, Brewer, Maine
- Ellsworth Municipal Hospital, Iowa Falls, Iowa
- Healthsource of Ohio, Milford, Ohio
- Kossuth Regional Health Center, Algona, Iowa
- Spere Memorial Hospital, Plymouth, N.H.
- Unicom, a telecommunications services provider in Alaska

Forty-seven other telemedicine grants were awarded last month. Eastern Maine Healthcare System used their \$800,000 loan to expand its Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system by purchasing medical carts, laptop computers, and software. Kossuth Regional Health Center in Algona, Iowa, used their \$537,532 loan to implement an EMR filing system using high-speed telecommunications lines. Further information on rural programs is available at the USDA Rural Development's [website](#).