



Rural Residency Consultant Learning Community: *Learn to be a rural GME development consultant from and with your peers 2023-2024*

Approved by the RRCLC Steering Committee January 10, 2023

Purpose:

To establish an iterative learning community over time and across organizations and experience levels regarding the provision of community-engaged, credible, reliable, and up to date consultations to current and developing rural residency programs and their sponsoring institutions, in a variety of specialties.

The Need:

Although there are common principles and rules of accreditation, finance, and governance in graduate medical education (GME) across specialties and settings, **the development and sustainability of GME in rural communities creates unique challenges and opportunities. There are very few individuals across the United States who have deep knowledge and experience in this area**, and most are beyond age 65. As the number of developing rural programs has increased there is an urgent need for younger individuals to acquire the requisite knowledge and skills and for current consultants to continue to build upon and sustain these in a complex and ever evolving GME environment.

Sponsorship:

The Rural Residency Consultant Learning Community (RR-CLC) is supported by a coalition of organizations: (1) The American Academy of Family Physicians' [Residency Program Solutions Consulting Services \(RPS\)](#), (2) [The RTT Collaborative \(RTTC\)](#), and (3) the [Rural Residency Planning and Development Technical Assistance Center \(RRPD-TAC\)](#).

Governance:

The RR-CLC is governed by a Steering Committee consisting of three prior RR-CLC participants and one representative each appointed by RPS, RRPD-TAC, and RTTC. The first three individuals are recruited in January of each year and appointed by the Steering Committee for the following academic year (July 1 to June 30) and continue to actively participate in RR-CLC learning community meetings for another academic year; the latter three are appointed January 1 of each year by their respective organizations and participate only as observers or as requested content experts from time-to-time. This steering committee meets monthly in the week prior to the RR-CLC learning community meeting and is tasked with (1) directing annual recruitment and implementation, (2) reviewing feedback from current RR-CLC participants, (3) planning and coordinating monthly and other learning community meetings, (4) conducting periodic formative and annual summative evaluations, (5) reporting periodically and no less than annually to the sponsoring organizations (including an accounting for any contributed funds), and (6) strategically revising learning community guidelines and procedures as needed.

A new Steering Committee is re-configured yearly, first in January with appointment by the sponsoring organizations. The other three are recruited from the CLC and appointed in April by the prior year's Steering Committee for a July 1 start in the following academic year. In this way continuity is assured from year to year.

Funding:

Participation in the learning community and Steering Committee is voluntary, unless funded through scholarships, in-kind or other contributions from organizations in the sponsoring coalition, or grants. There is no fee for participation. Funds are neither generated by services nor paid to the Steering Committee except as in-kind contributions of release time from the three collaborating entities. Individuals serving on the Steering Committee are only reimbursed for expenses at the discretion of their employer.

Paired Consultation:

Each year individual participants are required to complete a minimum of 8 hours of consulting time, either through a series of videoconferences, or through a single on-site consultation as either the senior or junior consultant in a consultant pair. This consultation is documented in an online survey and reflection.

Annual Cycle of Application, Eligibility, Selection, and Implementation:

Each year in January, current participants are surveyed by the Steering Committee as to their interest in continuing for the next year. New members are recruited and by April a new 12-member RR-CLC cohort of active participants is accomplished through a reconfiguration of the prior year group - by resignation or other attrition, through term limits, or through deliberate diversification by the Steering Committee - and by the addition of new members.

In January of each year, a call for applications is issued by the Steering Committee, with a deadline no later than February 15. The Steering Committee reviews the applications, makes selections, and announces the newly configured RR-CLC no later than The RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting (generally in April) for implementation July 1.

The new group for the following academic year is announced at the Annual Meeting of The RTT Collaborative. Individuals commit to (1) participate for a year, beginning in July of each year with an orientation and potentially an in-person meeting and (2) an additional annual pre-conference to the Annual RTT Collaborative Meeting. Individuals may participate in the RR-CLC for a maximum of 2 years, unless chosen for an additional year as a member of the Steering Committee. Alumni may be invited to attend learning community meetings as content experts, but no one individual more often than twice in a year.

Annually in the last quarter of the academic year, participants complete an evaluation and feedback survey, a self-assessment, and gap analysis/needs assessment regarding needed training in the next cycle. These assessments are summarized annually in concert with the documentation of paired consultations, a list of cases with key learning points and tagged by topic and associated EPA or competency domain, and a summary of the annual pre-conference to the RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting. New CLC participants complete this self-assessment during this same period prior to starting July 1.

Eligibility:

Eligible applicants (1) bring at least five years of GME leadership experience and at least a year of rural GME experience either in practice or leadership, (2) demonstrate a professional interest and commitment to providing consultations to current and developing rural GME programs, and (3) possess a teachable attitude. Anyone who meets these eligibility requirements is considered, including those with no prior consulting experience.

Selection Criteria:

Individuals may self-nominate but are given preference if nominated by any of the three collaborating sponsoring organizations. The RR-CLC Steering Committee chooses and appoints a cohort each year with the intent of achieving a broad diversity of GME experience, specialties, and demographics and assuring some continuity from year to year.

Appointment:

Each invited participant will commit to (1) monthly 90-minute meetings for 12 months starting July 2023, with a 2-hour in-person or online introductory meeting and a 4-hour in-person pre-conference to the RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting, each taking the place of the usual 90-minute meetings, (a total of 21 hours of in-meeting time over the year) and (2) complete assignments of up to an hour per meeting prior to these meetings (up to 12 hours annually). Participants will attend one in-person learning community meeting in association with the RTTC Annual Meeting in April – i.e., near the end of each academic year.

Other in-person events may be planned from time to time, including the possibility of a group consultation with a portion or all of 12 participants, planned and coordinated by one of the organizations in the sponsoring coalition, and perhaps a meeting in conjunction with the annual AAFP Residency Leadership Summit.

Participants will complete a self-assessment prior to the beginning and at the end of each year of participation and will be expected to complete and document one Rural Residency Consultation (either a day on-site, plus preparation and report generation, or a total of 8 hours in video and/or phone consultation with another junior or senior peer consultant and will complete an evaluation, summary log, and reflection of their overall CLC experience by June of each year. The Steering Committee and three sponsoring organizations in the coalition will assist participants in scheduling consultations with a peer.

Each cohort will participate with the Steering Committee in generating topics, finding and presenting cases, and refining the competency domains and Entrustable Professional Activities (EPA's) important to rural residency consultation.

Learning Community Meetings:

Times for learning community meetings is established each April, but currently these meetings are scheduled for the **third Tuesday of each month, 12:00-1:30pm, EST**, except for the first month 2-hour orientation and the month of The RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting, when the in-person pre-conference is dependent upon the planning of RTTC. See attached templates for CLC and Steering Committee meetings.

Learning Methods:

1. Peer mentoring and small group interaction
2. An emergent curriculum structured around the basics of residency design, development, and implementation: (a) the 'roadmap' developed by the RRPD-TAC¹, (b) the basics of facilitative, community-engaged consultation, and (c) learning community participant-generated topics
3. Case presentations that emerge in or are planned for monthly group meetings, and
4. On-the-job peer coaching and learning

¹ Hawes EM, Weidner A, Page C, Longenecker R, Pauwels J, Crane S, Chen F, Fraher E. A Roadmap to Rural Residency Program Development, Journal of Graduate Medical Education August 2020;12(4):384-7.

<https://meridian.allenpress.com/jgme/article/12/4/384/445472/A-Roadmap-to-Rural-Residency-Program-Development>

Potential Scholarships (2023-2024):

Scholarships may be awarded each year by the grant-funded Rural Residency Planning and Development Technical Assistance Center (RRPD-TAC) to a limited number of individuals to cover participation time in the learning community and associated costs (e.g., meeting registration, lodging, and transportation) for the 12-month program. If available, scholarship funds are paid directly to the participants. Costs incurred above the scholarship amount are the responsibility of the individual, not the CLC.

Approved by the Rural Residency CLC Steering Committee, January 10, 2023

AAFP/RPS: Beverly Cline

RRPD-TAC: Emily Hawes

RTTC: Randy Longenecker, MD, Chair

Learning Community Representatives: Darin Bell, Roger Bush, and Bryan Hodge

Attachments:

Steering Committee Meeting Template

CLC Meeting Template