

Healthcare Planning’s Proposed Model Results by Rural/Urban County Status

At the last meeting, the issue arose regarding how the Agency’s proposed model functions in rural counties. The table below presents the comparison between the combined data across three SDRs and the annual data used in Planning’s proposed model. To identify the counties in each population category in the table, refer to http://www2.census.gov/geo/docs/reference/ua/County_Rural_Lookup.xlsx

The data shows that the Agency’s proposed model does not disadvantage rural counties. In most cases, the opposite occurs. In the two middle categories (counties with 50% - 99.5% rural population), more counties have a need for additional dialysis stations under the Agency’s proposed model than in the model that combined data from three SDRs (“3 SDR” model).

The results of the two models were identical in four of the five counties that are 100% rural. In the remaining county, the 3 SDR model produced a need but the Agency model did not. This result occurred in Jones County where there was a need for 1 station under the 3 SDR model (FMC Dialysis Service of Jones County – the only facility in the county).

Proposed Agency Model: Geographic Differences, by Percentage Rural (n=203 facilities)

% Rural Population, 2010 Census	Number of Counties	Number of Facilities			
		3 SDRs =Yes Annual = No	3 SDRs=No Annual = Yes	No Difference	Total
≤ 50%	36	7	8	97	112
50% - 74.5%	28	2	10	43	56
75% - 99.5%	22	2	4	24	30
100% (n=14)	14	1	0	4	5

Source: http://www2.census.gov/geo/docs/reference/ua/County_Rural_Lookup.xlsx. For further reference see Michael Ratcliffe, Charlynn Burd, Kelly Holder, and Alison Fields, “Defining Rural at the U.S. Census Bureau.” ACSGEO-1, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2016.

Note: The Census Bureau defines geographical areas in terms of urbanization. After defining urban areas, the remaining areas are defined as rural. Both rural and urban areas may cross county lines. From these designations, the Census Bureau calculates the percentage of the population of each county that resides in an area defined as rural or urban. The definition does not rely solely on county population, but also considers land use (e.g., farms, housing developments), population density, and the distance between urbanized areas. The figures in the table come from the 2010 Census; more recent data is not available. It is possible that since 2010, the percentage of the population in rural areas will have changed in some counties. It would only make a difference in this analysis if the change moved a county from one of the four categories to another.