

CMS Request for Information: Maternal and Infant Health Care in Rural Communities

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In a letter, PolicyLab responded to a Request for Information from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on how to improve infant and maternal health in rural areas. While CMS had already highlighted many challenges faced by rural pregnant women, new mothers and infants in a previous [Issue Brief](#), PolicyLab highlighted the detrimental role of three additional barriers: social isolation, domestic violence and risks posed by environmental contaminants.

PolicyLab then cited extensive research to recommend the following interventions:

- Expanding mental health and behavioral health services in rural areas
- Supporting efforts to extend Medicaid coverage through one year after birth
- Increasing coordination across systems that serve mothers and children in rural areas
- Adopting an intergenerational approach, and leveraging pediatric settings to address gaps in maternal health care services
- Supporting evidence-based home visiting
- Encouraging social-media based and telephonic interventions

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