



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

April 1, 2021

Aimee Malia Grace, MD
Director, Office of Strategic Health Priorities
University of Hawaii (UH) System
2425 Campus Road, Sinclair 10
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear Dr. Grace:

The Office of Primary Care and Rural Health in the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) strongly supports the Rural Health Research Center proposal by the University of Hawaii (UH). This proposed Center seeks to focus on rural health workforce policy and health equity, which are priority areas for the DOH. We look forward to working with UH to develop and advance this proposal.

The DOH Office of Primary Care and Rural Health is the coordinating unit within the state of Hawaii for federal, state, and local efforts related to improving health in our rural and medically underserved areas. Our office seeks to improve health equity and expand the access and availability of high-quality health care services in the state of Hawaii. Our two primary goals are to (1) foster the development and equitable placement of health professionals in our rural communities; and (2) engage in and stimulate health policy, planning, and research on issues related to the medically underserved and rural communities¹ – both of which are consistent with the goals of the proposed UH Rural Health Research Center to advance rural health workforce policy and health equity.

The UH Rural Health Research Center would be a welcome addition to our state's armamentarium to address rural health care issues from a policy and health equity perspective. We appreciate working with the UH System Office of Strategic Health Initiatives on the UHealthy Hawaii initiative to leverage the UH System to improve health and health care in Hawaii and the Pacific.

We look forward to continuing to work together to solve rural health needs in our region. Thank you for this opportunity to express our strong support for the UH Rural Health Research Center proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregg Kishaba".

Gregg Kishaba, Rural Health Coordinator
Hawaii State Office of Primary Care and Rural Health

¹ <https://health.hawaii.gov/opcrh/>