Programs under federal health reform aim to tackle the persistent challenges of rural health disparities through expanded access and quality. New investments in rural primary care work force development and changes to rural hospital financing are part of the strategies to improve quality and reduce cost while improving health. State experts will describe how investments in telemedicine are bringing immediate specialized care to remote areas to save lives and reduce unnecessary care and costs. Hear about state successes in teaching patients to effectively manage chronic diseases, showing how integrating information technology, coordinating health providers, and incorporating evidence-based service improvement could diminish rural health disparities.

Presentation by Keith J. Mueller

Keith J. Mueller, Ph.D., is Gerhard Hartman professor and head of the Department of Health Management and Policy at the University of Iowa's College of Public Health. He is also the director of the Rural Policy Research Institute Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis. He has served as president of the National Rural Health Association and as a member of the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services. He has published more than 60 scholarly articles in health services research and policy and received awards recognizing his research contributions. Mueller has directed major health services studies funded by the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. He has testified on numerous occasions before committees of Congress and in other forums, including the Institute of Medicine and the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission.