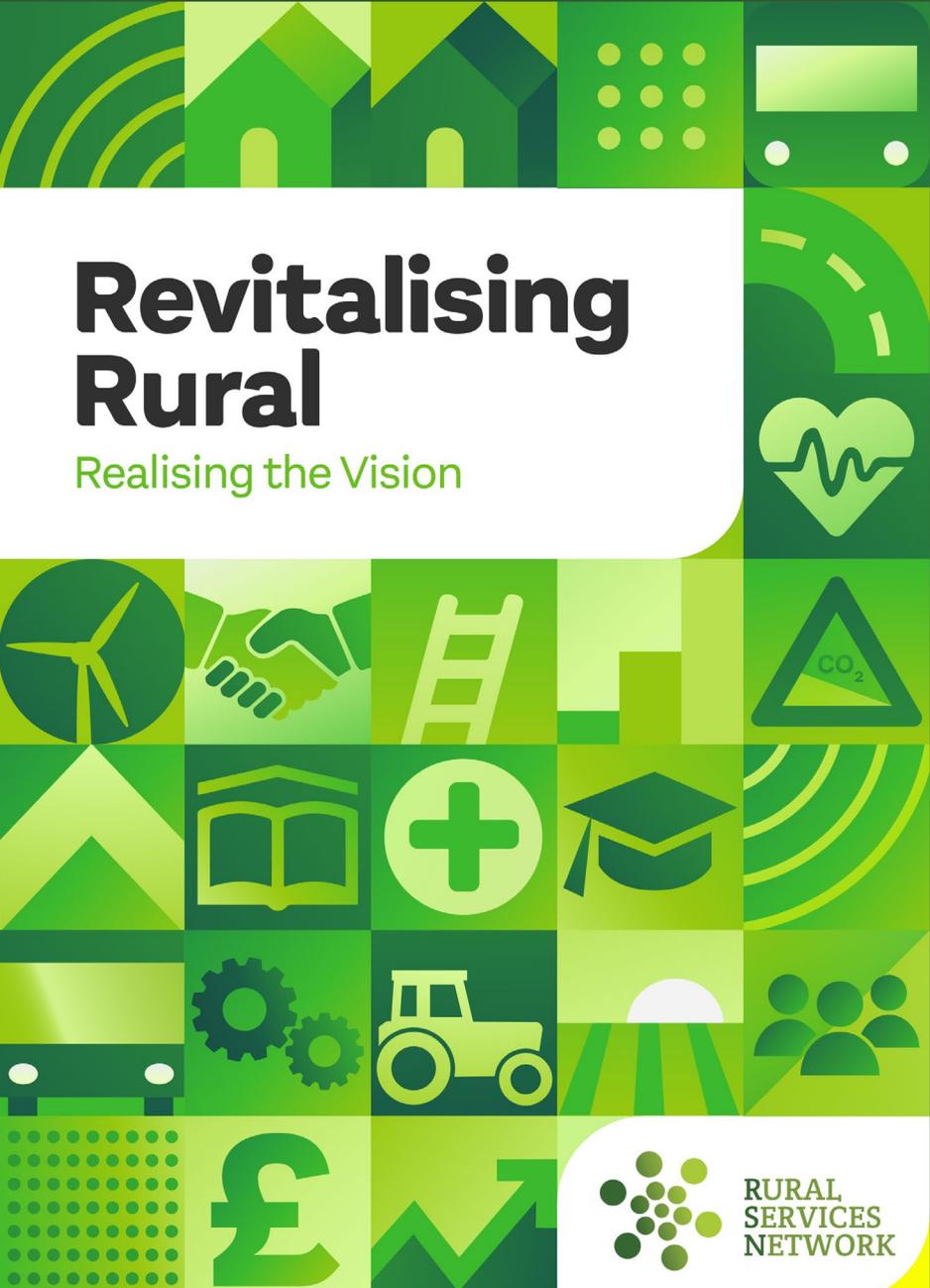




Rural Services Network
Access to Rural
Health and Care
Services





Revitalising Rural

Realising the Vision

We want a fairer distribution of national resources to rural areas and for more nuanced national policies that reflect rural circumstances.



Services are becoming more centralised, creating difficulty where poor public transport

Increasing older population in rural areas



Issues have been identified in recruitment and retention of health services and care workers in rural areas

Increasing reliance on telecare services can create difficulties in areas with poor broadband / connectivity



The rural dimension – funding of public services

Analysis by the Rural Services Network shows that, if compared with their predominantly urban equivalents:



- Predominantly rural local authorities receive **significantly less** grant funding per head to pay for services such as social care;
- Predominantly rural local authorities receive **significantly less** grant funding per head to pay for their public health responsibilities;

The more rural NHS Clinical Commissioning Group areas receive similar funding per head, which does not seem to account for their notably older demographic.

Specific Policy Asks on Access to Rural Health and Care Services



Access and Travel to Hospitals

- Plans should address rural transport issues
- Funding allocations to local NHS areas should be aligned with the costs rural areas face from serving an older aged population
- Hospital building prog should improve access to hospitals in rural areas



Primary and Community Care Services

- Create opportunities to develop health hubs in rural towns
- Should provide range of services
- Local pharmaceutical services need to be retained in rural areas, which may mean supporting dispensing GP surgeries



Public & Mental Health Services

- Both need better resourcing to be more accessible in rural areas
- Historic funding allocations for public health cannot be justified and need urgent overhaul to even out provision

Specific Policy Asks on Access to Rural Health and Care Services



Social Care Provision

- Govt should implement findings of fair funding review to level up provision of social care in rural areas
- Enable improved or more consistent engagement with and commissioning of 'low level' support services for vulnerable rural residents which are typically delivered locally by Vol and community sector



Workforce and Recruitment

- NHS Workforce Plan should include explicit rural dimension
- Pay bonuses should be considered to attract recruits into rural areas with high vacancy and turnover rates
- Training should include rural placement
- Similar issues should be addressed in social care workforce

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