

Hilda R. Heady, MSW, ACSW
Senior Vice President and Chair of the Rural Health Research and Policy Group

Hilda R. Heady, a widely-respected expert and advocate for rural health and the health of Veterans in rural America, leads rural health research and policy efforts for Atlas Research as Chair of the Rural Health Research and Policy Group. She also holds adjunct professor appointments with Georgetown University and West Virginia University.

Ms. Heady has spent 38 years working in the field of rural health, community-based health professions training, and rural communities. She formerly served as Associate Vice President for Rural Health at West Virginia University in Morgantown, WV, Executive Director of the West Virginia Rural Health Education Partnerships, and Program Director of the West Virginia Area Health Education Center. She was CEO of a 58-bed rural hospital and director of a birth center. She is also a former President of the National Rural Health Association and served in many leadership positions. She served as a former Board member of the Community Campus Partnerships for Health and received a national Leadership Award from this organization.

Ms. Heady speaks nationally regarding rural values and culture, rural Veterans' and rural health workforce issues. She also gives guest lectures, and manages relationships with leaders and stakeholders across various practice areas and health services research projects.

She focuses on the growing health problems of Veterans, particularly new Veterans returning from conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Her expertise on these issues has led to invitations to testify before Senate and House Committees on Veterans Affairs, the Senate Committee on Aging, and the White House Field Conference on Aging. In 2008, she was appointed to the national Veterans Rural Health Advisory Committee (VRHAC), advising the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Ms. Heady holds a Master's degree in Social Work, the Achievement Award of the West Virginia Hospital Association in 1991; the American College of Healthcare Executives Regents Award in 1991; the Exemplar Award of the West Virginia Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers in 1992; and the Governor's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rural Health in 1996. She received the HRSA Associate Administrator's award in 2005 for outstanding achievement in expanding community based health professions training and the 2006 Lifetime achievement award in Rural Health by the National Rural Health Association.

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