2003 Annual Report
Committee on Rural Health

The Committee on Rural Health (CRH), which reports to the APA Board of Directors and APA Council through the Committee for the Advancement of Professional Practice (CAPP), continued to work on its initiatives to ensure that the behavioral health care needs of rural and frontier Americans are met. The 2003 members of the CRH were: Morgan T. Sammons, Ph.D. (Chair), Anne Cowardin-Bach, Ph.D., Kathy J. Harowski, Ph.D., Elaine LeVine, Ph.D., Richard M. McGraw, Ph.D., Scott Meit, Psy.D, Michael Rigdon, Ph.D., and George P. Taylor, Ph.D.

The Committee met in April for its annual business meeting. It continued its work to support access to care in rural areas through prescriptive authority for psychologists, providing mental health expertise to the National Rural Health Association (NRHA), and integrating behavioral health care with primary health care. The committee also sponsored a Rural Health Forum at the APA Convention in Toronto where psychologists with a rural focus were able to discuss issues affecting their practices.

Discussion at the April meeting focused on the coordination of the CRH priorities with those of the Committee for the Advancement of Professional Practice (CAPP), and in keeping with the CRH Mission and Strategic Plan. The CRH also heard from invited guests including the Executive Director of the National Rural Health Association, the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC), and a Congressional Military Detailee from the Office of Senator Daniel Inouye.

The Committee selected developing a *Prescriptive Authority Source Book: A Guide for States* as its main project for the year. This source book is a convenient compilation of material that has proven to be useful to state, provincial or territorial psychological associations interested in obtaining prescriptive authority (RxP). The source book was distributed to state, provincial and territorial psychological associations to assist in their RxP initiatives.

The CRH continued to provide information, guidance and support to psychologists throughout the country who needed assistance dealing with rural health issues such as loan forgiveness, Mental Health Professional Shortage Area (MHPSA) definitions, resource identification and reference information.

Staff from the Practice Directorate Committee Operations Program assisted the CRH and its work during the year.