§ 2951. Definitions. For the purposes of this article:

1. "Rural area" shall mean any county with less than two hundred thousand population or any town which has a population of less than two hundred persons per square mile or, if approved by the commissioner, any town which has a population of less than two hundred fifty persons per square mile.

2. "Rural health network" shall mean an affiliation of health care providers serving a rural area, pursuant to a contract, joint or cooperative agreement, or organized pursuant to the not-for-profit corporation law and approved pursuant to subdivision fourteen of section twenty-eight hundred one-a of this chapter, which provides or arranges for the provision of health care services pursuant to a network plan to residents of a rural area or the provision of administrative or management services among such health care providers. Such health care services may include, but need not be limited to: acute and tertiary care; medical/surgical care; pre-hospital emergency services; swing bed care; mental health and substance abuse services; physical medicine and rehabilitation; primary and preventive care; home health and skilled nursing care; laboratory, radiological or other diagnostic services; hospice; respite care; illness prevention; or any other outpatient or related services responding to community need or for the purpose of improving community health status. Such administrative and management services may include, but need not be limited to: emergency medical services or other professional training; credentialing, payroll, purchasing and billing services; recruitment of qualified professionals; information management services; medical transportation; quality assurance; risk management; peer review; electronic data sharing; and managed care systems; performance of studies; planning; and solicitation and acceptance of grants, and receipt of reimbursement for planning and coordination of services and coordination of experimental and other payment methods, such as global budget, pooling arrangements, or capitation payments for inpatient hospital services and ambulatory care services provided by the component entities of the network.

3. "Network plan" shall mean a written plan prepared by a rural health

network or rural providers planning to form a rural health network, with the involvement of consumers, submitted initially and updated periodically as needed, to the commissioner for approval to receive grant funds pursuant to section twenty-nine hundred fifty-two of this article.

4. "Upgraded diagnostic and treatment center" shall mean a diagnostic and treatment center established pursuant to article twenty-eight of this chapter which has received such designation pursuant to section twenty-nine hundred fifty-six of this article.