Rural Health Transformation Program

Webinar

October 2, 2025

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PRELIMINARY

The Rural Health Transformation Program is a federal funding opportunity that will disperse $50B to states over five years

- Funding initiative within the One Big Beautiful Bill Act to provide $50B to states over five years for rural health
- Emphasis on **sustainable, innovative transformation** of rural health in America
- States must submit an application by **November 5, 2025**. The amount of funding Montana receives will depend directly on the quality of this application
- We are therefore working on an expedited timeline to consult with stakeholders and develop our application

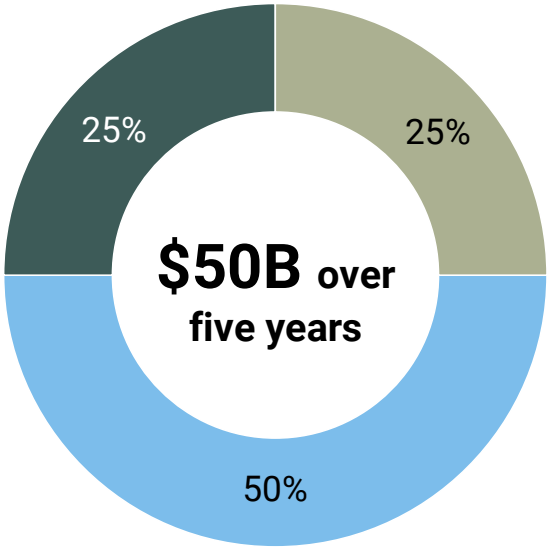
PRELIMINARY

The $50B of RHTP funding will be distributed among States through three components

Distribution of funds

A. Rural facility and population

$12.5B will be distributed among States based on a pre-determined set of demographic data



B. Technical quality

$12.5B will be distributed among States based on the contents and quality of their application

Baseline funding

$25B will be equally distributed among approved States

Source: CMS Rural Health Transformation Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (Funding Opportunity: CMS-RHT-26-001)

PRELIMINARY

The RHTP RFI generated a massive response which we have been reviewing in detail

DPHHS received **120+ responses** to the RHTP RFI, including:

- Hospitals and healthcare providers
- Community-based organizations
- Tribal representatives
- Professional associations and universities
- Industry groups

Major themes included:

- Improved **direct healthcare delivery**, workforce training, and behavioral health (BH) integration
- Innovative support models to deliver **wraparound services** such as transportation, job coaching, and community health
- **Culturally-relevant regional cooperation**, workforce development, health programs, and collaboration with Tribes
- Leveraging universities and associations as **conveners** to improve standards, provide training, and support systemic change
- Novel **digital platforms**, telehealth expansion, and data-driven management solutions to improve access and efficiency in healthcare services

Thank you for your input! We welcome continued suggestions through our website at ruralhealth.mt.gov.

Source: Montana DPHHS RHTP RFI submissions

PRELIMINARY

DPHHS is developing a RHTP strategy that aligns with CMS priorities, maximizes potential funding, and addresses Montana's specific needs

Potential initiatives are being evaluated against the following:

CMS priority rural health outcomes[1]

- Chronic disease prevention and management
- Increased access to primary care / BH / EMS
- Rural facility financial stability
- Reduction in cost of care
- Increased patient / provider access to data

Factors that will score points for funding

- Population health
- Health and lifestyle
- Rural provider partnerships
- EMS improvements
- Talent recruitment
- Medicaid payment incentives
- Dual-eligible members
- Remote care services
- Data infrastructure
- Consumer-facing tech

Our current rural health priorities

- Healthcare workforce development
- Service delivery model innovations
- Rural provider financial stability
- Population health analytics development

Per CMS, funding MAY NOT be used for new constructions, cosmetic upgrades, or supplanting current funding.

1. Outcomes explicitly outlined in NOFO and emphasized in CMS 2025 strategy materials (CMS Innovation Center)

Source: Internal DPHHS discussions, CMS Rural Health Transformation Program Notice of Funding Opportunity, CMS Innovation Center

PRELIMINARY

DPHHS is selecting and developing initiatives that will score highly on the RHTP rubric that will be used for scoring

Criteria	0-4pts	5-9 pts	10-14 pts	15-20 pts
Strategy	Small, incremental changes	Modest changes	Major transformative potential	**Structural transformation** of rural health delivery
Workplan and Monitoring	Unclear implementation plan	Some level of detail	Clear, feasible workplan; stakeholder roles identified	**Detailed, creative**; robust governance
Outcomes	Vague, not measurable	Reasonable, specific, measurable	Well-supported, directly linked to outcomes	**Ambitious, evidence-backed**, transformative
Projected Impact	Limited effect on rural residents	Fair, but unclear substantiation	Significant, clear impact	**Statewide, transformative** structural change
Sustainability beyond year 5	Not supported or plausible	Somewhat plausible	Plausible with moderate support	Detailed plan or **self-sustaining**

Total: 100 points across scoring criteria; achieving full points captures maximum weighting of initiative factor

Source: CMS Rural Health Transformation Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (Funding Opportunity: CMS-RHT-26-001). Link: CMS RHTP

Public Input

- To provide verbal comment, please raise your hand (icon at the bottom of your screen).
- We will call on people in the order of hands raised. You will need to Unmute yourself when Zoom prompts you.
- Please limit your comments to one minute.

- To submit written comments or questions, go to ruralhealth.mt.gov
  - Submit questions via RHTP Questions Form
  - Submit comments via RHTP Feedback Form

Conclusion

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