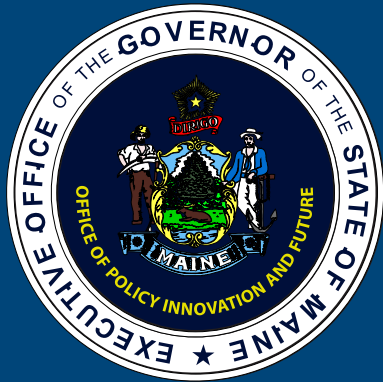




MAINE

RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION



Rural Health Transformation Program

Health Care for ME Conference

September 2026

Agenda / Objectives

- Overview
- Maine's RHTP Components
- RHTP Budget & Obligation
- Year 1 Provider Funding Opportunities

Acknowledgement of Funding

This program is supported by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$190,008,051 with 100 percent funded by CMS/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CMS/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Overview

Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

Creation

- Federal H.R. 1 enacted in July 2025; will result in many high-impact changes to health care coverage
- RHTP included in H.R. 1 as federal initiative to bolster rural health

RHTP Funding

- Total of \$50B over 5 years (2026-2030)
- Program managed by US Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Two-part funding allocation
 - Part 1: \$25B allocated evenly across all states (\$100M min per state each year)
 - Part 2: \$25B allocated differentially to states based on rurality and CMS' scoring of proposals
- RHTP funds must be used quickly, with states expected to demonstrate results
 - States must use funds by end of 2nd fiscal year after funds distributed (i.e. Yr 1 funds by Sept 30, 2027)
 - Unused funds within stated time limits will be redistributed to other states

Federal RHTP Goals

Make Rural America Healthy Again

Sustainable Access

Workforce Development

Innovative Care

Technology Innovation

Federally-Approved Uses of RHTP Funding

(States required to select 3+)

1. Evidence-based prevention and chronic disease interventions
2. Payments to providers for care delivery (no more than 15% of total)
3. Consumer-facing digital health tools
4. Training/Technical Assistance (TA) for tech-enabled solutions
5. Rural clinical workforce recruitment and retention
6. Software, hardware, TA for major IT upgrades
7. Right-sizing rural health systems across the care continuum
8. Access to substance use treatment and mental health services
9. Innovative care models (value-based, alternative payment models)
10. Capital expenditures and infrastructure investments in existing rural health care facility buildings and infrastructure, subject to federal RHTP funding restrictions
11. Initiating, fostering, and strengthening local and regional strategic partnerships

Maine's RHTP Components

We Envision a Future Rural Health System that...

✓ **Bridges the Rural Divide:**

- Where one lives no longer dictates health outcomes or access to care
- All Mainers have tools to make healthy choices and live healthier lives, and rural communities have information, choices, and flexibility to create their own local, data-driven solutions

✓ **Provides Seamless Delivery:**

- A stronger rural healthcare workforce, innovations, and technologies ensure convenient, accessible and effective care
- Care is available to rural Mainers when they need it, where they need it

✓ **Offers Efficient, Incentive-Aligned Systems:**

- Communities come together to reduce fragmented service delivery
- Value-based payments move us beyond fee-for-service, ensuring dollars go further
- Rural health systems are strong and sustainable for future generations of Mainers

Maine RHTP Overarching Performance Goals & Metrics

- **Living Healthier Lives:**
 - *ME RHTP Metric:* Improve rates of well-controlled blood pressure (BP) among individuals in rural areas with high BP
- **Improve Quality of Healthcare Delivered:**
 - *ME RHTP Metric:* Reduce 30-day all-cause readmission rate
- **Getting Care When Mainers Need It:**
 - *ME RHTP Metric:* Decrease non-financial barriers to care
- **Increase Durability of Rural Care Options:**
 - *ME RHTP Metric:* Improve financial health of rural hospitals

Five Initiatives, Each Comprised of Multiple Proposed Activities

Initiative 1 **Population Health:** Promote timely access to high-quality care

Initiative 2 **Workforce:** Strengthen Maine's rural health workforce

Initiative 3 **Technology Innovation:** Modernize rural care delivery with digital health technology

Initiative 4 **Access:** Bridge the healthcare affordability gap for rural Mainers

Initiative 5 **Sustainable rural health ecosystems:** Address financial instability of rural providers

Initiative 1: Population Health

Empower rural Mainers to achieve their own healthy living goals: Adopt and expand proven population health solutions that promote timely access to high-quality preventive, primary, chronic, and specialty care across the lifespan.

Proposed Activities

- Expand alternative sites of care
- Deploy evidence-based practices
- Strengthen rural Maine's nutrition education infrastructure
- Expand Community Paramedicine programs
- Expand Community Health Worker and Peer Support programs
- Support access to mental health and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) support

Initiative 2: Workforce

Expand the Supply of Care: Grow Maine's rural healthcare workforce across continuum of care

Proposed Activities

- Train, recruit, and retain healthcare clinicians and allied health professionals
- Strengthen local talent pipelines
- Develop and deploy a Healthcare Workforce Data Dashboard
- Invest in mobile training labs and simulation centers
- Pilot new models in rural workforce transportation

Initiative 3: Technology Innovation

Expand the Supply of Care: Spread technology & innovation that connects every community to advanced care

Proposed Activities

- Expand telehealth services, supports, and infrastructure
- Support data integration and the reliable exchange of healthcare data
- Expand the use of consumer-facing health technology tools
- Enhance Electronic Medical Records (EMR) systems
- Create Maine Rural Augmented Intelligence (AI) Hub to support rural providers in adopting today's AI technologies
- Establish Rural Health AI Innovation Institute to promote development of new AI technologies purpose-built for rural populations

Initiative 4: Access

Ensure care will be available & affordable: Support access to healthcare for rural Mainers otherwise unable to afford it

Proposed Activities

- ~~• Issue provider payments for uncompensated care delivered by FQHCs, hospitals, and CCBHCs*~~
- ~~• Issue provider payments for provision of Essential Health Benefits to uninsured population*~~
- Implement more efficient and user-friendly MaineCare Provider Enrollment technology
- Improve coordination and leveraging of existing transportation infrastructure to assist rural Mainers to meet their health needs through technology and mobility planning
- Improve consumer-friendly transparency tool on state-based marketplace to improve access to and create competition for more affordable care plan options

**NOTE: These two activities were included in Maine's original proposal but were not allowed by CMS; Maine has moved funds for these activities to Initiative 5: Sustainable Rural Health Ecosystems*

Initiative 5: Sustainable Rural Health Ecosystem

Ensure care will be available & affordable: Ensure a sustainable rural health care ecosystem by addressing persistent financial instability facing rural healthcare systems

Proposed Activities

- Improve hospital financial stability through tailored hospital financial management, planning and targeted investment
- Conduct rural regional health ecosystems planning and implementation
- Develop and provide support for providers to participate in multi-payer alternative payment models; **this will include funding specifically to support providers' work to transition to Advanced Payment Models (APMs)**
- Strengthen Maine's interfacility non-emergency transport system
- Expand access to high-acuity, non-inpatient hospital care for children with complex behavioral health needs

RHTP Budget & Obligation

Maine RHTP – Revised Yr1 Budget Allocations

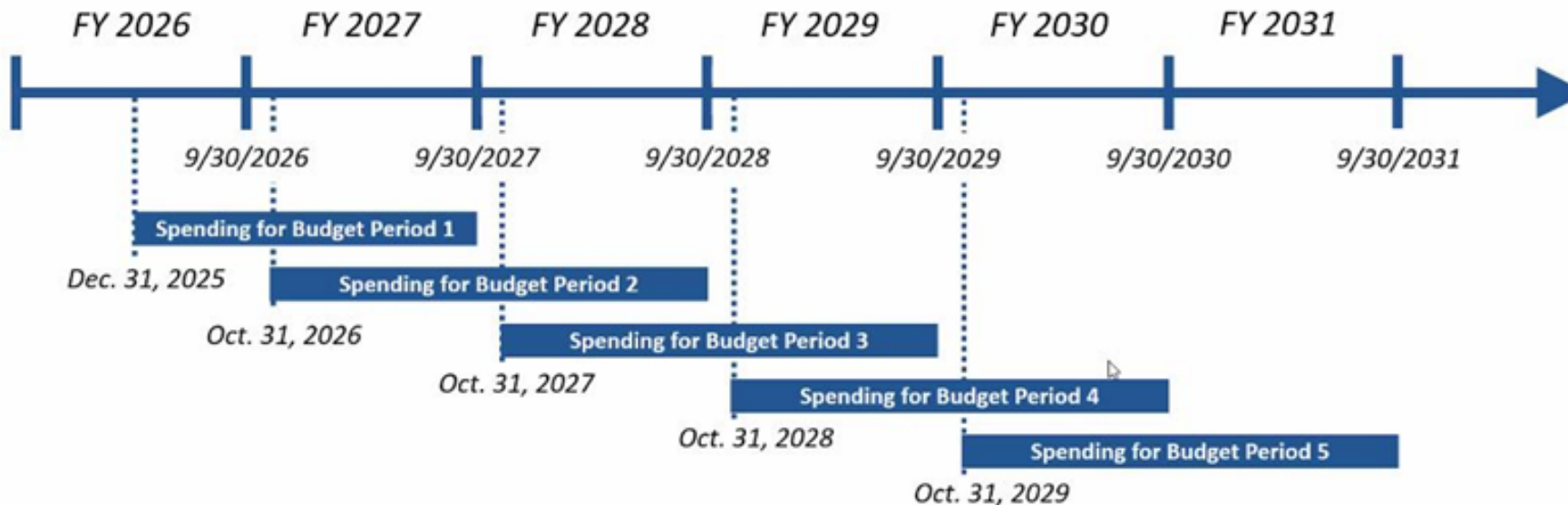
- **ME RHTP Budget Allocation by Initiative (Year 1):**
 - Technology & Innovation: \$47.5M
 - Sustainable Rural Health Ecosystems: \$38M
 - Workforce: \$35M
 - Population Health: \$33M
 - Access to Care: \$30.6M (with \$28.5M moving to provider APM transition payments)
(Central program administration & oversight: \$3.9M)
- Subtotal of initiatives: \$188,141,877
- GRAND total w/ Indirects: \$190,008,051

RHTP Fund Distribution & Spending Timeline

Funds Distribution and Use Deadlines

For each budget period, recipients will have until the end of the following fiscal year (September 30) to spend awarded funding

- Recap: Budget Period 1 will start on December 31, 2025, and Subsequent Budget Periods will start on October 31 of each fiscal year



Year 1 Provider Funding Opportunities

Three Provider Funding Opportunities (YR1)

Initiative 3 **Technology Innovation:** Funds to hospitals, provider organizations for EMR replacements, upgrades, enhancements
(\$30M)

Initiative 5 **Sustainable Health Ecosystems:**

- Funds for 11 financially at-risk hospitals to receive tailored hospital financial management & planning support, targeted investments
(\$30M)
- Funds to support provider organization transitioning to Alternative Payment Models (APMs)
(\$28.5M)

How Did We Come to Our Strategy Recommendations?

- 1 Defined provider eligibility & secured CMS approval on general approach
- 2 Explored needs among providers serving rural communities
 - Discussions with EMR experts
 - Meetings with ME Primary Care Assn, ME Hospital Assn, Alliance for Mental Health & Addiction, & RHTP Advisory Committee
 - Reviewed potential projects & needs compiled by partners
- 3 Assessed feasible strategies for Year 1
 - Explored how other states are allocating & distributing provider funds
 - Reviewed procurement considerations

Step 2: RHTP Provider Funding Opportunities – YR1 Eligible Providers - Defined (CMS Approved)

Provider Type	EMR Funds \$30M	APM Transition Funds \$28.5M	Hospital Efficiency Funds \$30M
CAHs & General Hospitals with dedicated ED	X <i>(Including hospital-owned primary care practices)</i>	X <i>(Including hospital-owned primary care practices)</i>	11 rural hospitals at highest risk of financial instability
FQHCs	X	X	n/a
Rural Health Clinics	X		n/a
Independent Primary Care Practices Located in Rural Areas	X		n/a
CCBHCs	X	X	n/a
Opioid Treatment Programs	X		n/a

Implementing Maine's RHTP Initiative

Questions?



For More Info...

- Check [Maine RHTP webpage](#) for updates
- Contacts:
 - RHTP Dir: Kristen McAuley:
Kristen.McAuley@maine.gov
 - Lisa Letourneau MD, MPH:
Lisa.Letourneau@maine.gov
- Sign up for ME RHTP listserv:
 - [Click to reach ME DHHS communications page](#)
 - On landing page, enter your email address and verify CAPTCHA message
 - On DHHS “Quick Subscribe” page, scroll down list to find “Rural Health and Primary Care”, click box for “Rural Health Transformation Program”
- CMS [RHTP webpage](#)

The screenshot shows the official website for the Maine Rural Health Transformation Program. The header includes the state of Maine logo, the department name, and navigation links for Agencies, Licensing Services, Help, and Search. A search bar is also present. The main content area is titled "Rural Health Transformation Program" and features a large logo with the word "MAINE" and "RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION" below it. The page is divided into several sections: "Strengthening Rural Health Care Across Maine" (describing the program's goals and funding), "Why Rural Health Transformation Matters" (listing challenges in rural areas), "Our Vision" (stating the program's purpose), "Program Overview" (providing a brief history and mission), "Maine's Five Strategic Initiatives" (detailing the program's focus areas), "Population Health" (summarizing the program's impact), "Key Objectives" (listing specific goals), and "Workforce" (discussing the program's role in the healthcare system). On the right side, there is a sidebar with "Email Updates" (a sign-up form), "Press releases & blogs" (a list of recent news items), and "For more information" (a list of links to additional resources). A "Timeline" section at the bottom right provides a chronological overview of the program's progress.

STATE OF MAINE
Department of Health and Human Services

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DHHS → Rural Health Transformation Program

Rural Health Transformation Program

Strengthening Rural Health Care Across Maine

Maine's Rural Health Transformation Program is a five-year federal grant program designed to improve health outcomes, expand patient access to care, strengthen the health care workforce, advance innovation, and support sustainable rural health systems.

Supported by an initial \$190 million (Year 1) federal investment, the Program will help Maine's rural communities, providers, and partners implement solutions that improve care today while building a stronger health system for the future.

Why Rural Health Transformation Matters

- More than 690,000 Mainers live in rural communities.
- Rural residents experience higher rates of chronic disease and behavioral health challenges.
- Many Maine communities face shortages of health care providers.
- Access to care can be limited by geography, transportation, and workforce constraints.
- Rural hospitals and providers face significant financial pressures.

Maine's Rural Health Transformation Program is designed to address these challenges and improve health outcomes across Maine.

Our Vision

A future where:

- Geography does not determine health outcomes.
- Rural Mainers can access quality care when and where they need it.
- Maine's rural health system is strong, resilient, and sustainable for future generations.

Program Overview

What is the Rural Health Transformation Program?

The Rural Health Transformation Program is a five-year federal grant program designed to strengthen rural health care systems and improve health outcomes in communities across all 50 states. Maine's program focuses on strategic investments that support Maine patients, providers, communities, and health care workforce.

Maine's Five Strategic Initiatives

Maine's Rural Health Transformation Program is organized around five strategic initiatives designed to improve health outcomes, strengthen the rural health workforce, continue the modernization of care delivery, expand access to services, and support the long-term sustainability of the state's rural health system. Together, these initiatives guide investments and activities that will benefit rural communities across Maine.

Population Health

Summary: Improve the health and well-being of rural Mainers by expanding access to preventive, primary, specialty, behavioral health, and chronic disease services closer to home. This initiative focuses on helping people stay healthy, managing health conditions earlier, and addressing root causes of health disparities through community-based care models and evidence-based interventions.

Key Objectives

- Expand access to preventive and primary care services
- Increase availability of behavioral health and substance use treatment
- Support healthy lifestyles and chronic disease management
- Strengthen community-based care models
- Improve health outcomes through evidence-based practices

Workforce

Email Updates

Sign up to receive the latest news and updates about Maine's Rural Health Transformation Program.

Email Address

Submit

Press releases & blogs

- [Maine DHHS Releases \\$30 Million to Strengthen Rural Hospital Resiliency](#)
- [Maine DHHS Announces \\$12M Partnership with UNE to Expand Rural Health Initiatives](#)
- [Maine DHHS Announces \\$30M to Modernize Electronic Medical Record Systems](#)
- [Governor Mills Statement on Rural Health Transformation Program Award](#)
- [CMS announces State award decisions](#)
- [State launches robust public engagement process](#)
- [State files application for the RHTP](#)

For more information

- [Maine RHTP Project Narrative](#)
- [Maine RHTP FAQ.pdf](#)
- [Maine RHTP Rural Definition and Eligibility](#)
- [H.R. 1 Budget Reconciliation Bill - federal bill text](#)
- [Rural Health Transformation Program - CMS program website](#)
- [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#)
- [Public Webinar Slides - Sept 2025 \(PDF\)](#)
- [Public Webinar Slides - March 2026 \(PDF\)](#)

Timeline

- **July 4, 2025:** H.R. 1 budget reconciliation bill signed, appropriating \$50 billion in funding for the RHTP over five years
- **September 15, 2025:** CMS releases RHTP funding application (Notice of Funding Opportunity) for states
- **September 17, 2025:** Public input process opens
- **October 1:** Public comment through website closes
- **Nov. 5, 2025:** State applications due to CMS
- **December 29, 2025:** CMS announces State award decisions
- **2026 onward:** CMS provides continuous monitoring and support to states