January 2026

Welcome to the first edition of the Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program newsletter. This newsletter is designed to share updates on Michigan's RHT program activities, funding opportunities, and partner engagement opportunities, with the goal of promoting transparency, strengthening coordination, and supporting meaningful collaboration across rural communities in Michigan.

Michigan Awarded $173 Million to Strengthen Rural Health

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) was awarded $173,128,201 for FY 2026 by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services under the Rural Health Transformation Program.

The Rural Health Transformation Program is a $50 billion national commitment to improve the health and well-being of rural communities across the country. With this funding, states will implement comprehensive strategies to improve care delivery, support providers and advance new approaches to coordinating health care

services across rural communities. Funding will be allocated over five years, with $10 billion available each year from 2026 through 2030.

Before submitting its application, MDHHS hosted an online survey and two listening sessions to gather input on how the funding could help increase and improve sustainability for rural providers.

Based on this feedback, MDHHS requested funding to:

- Support the development and strengthening of regional partnerships among rural hospitals, clinics and community organizations to improve care coordination, align service delivery, expand access points and promote financially sustainable care models.
- Recruit and retain rural health professionals, behavioral health providers and community health workers. Funds will also promote prevention and chronic disease management training and integrated behavioral health care access.
- Implement technology tools and advance rural interoperability, including establishing a rural technology catalyst fund to support expanding data exchange and increasing adoption of telehealth, remote patient monitoring and technology-driven care coordination tools.
- Establish digital referral networks that connect residents to local care, prevention and wellness resources needed to live healthy lives.

For more information about Michigan's plan for the funding, visit the MDHHS Rural Health Transformation Program website. Additional information about the federal Rural Health Transformation Program is available at Rural Health Transformation Program | CMS.

MDHHS Seeks Members for Rural Health Transformation Advisory Council

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is seeking members to serve on the Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Advisory Council. The advisory council will play a key role in supporting the successful implementation of Michigan's RHT Program, which aims to strengthen rural health systems, improve access to services and support sustainable care for rural communities across the state.
MDHHS is looking for individuals and organizations with experience, insight and a strong commitment to improving rural health. Ideal candidates include leaders from community-based organizations, rural health providers, hospitals and clinics, behavioral health organizations, social service agencies, local public health departments, tribal partners and residents of rural communities.

The RHT Advisory Council will:

- Support development of an engagement strategy to strengthen partner and community input throughout implementation and evaluation.

- Provide actionable guidance to MDHHS to inform decision-making and ensure the program remains responsive to rural communities.

MDHHS invites applications from individuals who:

- Represent or work closely with rural populations.
- Bring knowledge of rural health challenges, community needs or service delivery gaps.
- Demonstrate a commitment to collaborative problem-solving and inclusive partnership.
- Can participate in scheduled meetings and contribute to ongoing implementation activities.

Applicants will be selected to ensure balanced representation across Michigan's rural counties and key stakeholder groups, including health care providers, public health and behavioral health organizations, community-based agencies, tribal health partners, academic institutions, and policy, payer and workforce development entities. Selection will prioritize individuals who demonstrate a clear understanding of rural health challenges and a strong commitment to advancing the mission and objectives of the RHT Program.

The council will convene on a quarterly basis, with additional sessions scheduled as needed. Each quarterly meeting will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

Apply online today to help shape the future of rural health in Michigan. Questions? Email **MDHHS-RHTP@michigan.gov**.

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Rural Health Transformation Program Website

MDHHS
Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

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If you have questions, please Contact Us.