



HEALTH CARE  
AUTHORITY



NEW MEXICO  
RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION



# RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION (RHT) PROGRAM

Elisa Wrede, Acting Rural Health Director  
May 13, 2026

*INVESTING FOR TOMORROW, DELIVERING TODAY.*

*This project 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 \$211,484,740.89 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.*

## BEFORE WE START...

On behalf of all colleagues at the Health Care Authority, we humbly acknowledge we are on the ancestral lands of the original peoples of the Pueblo, Apache, and Diné past, present, and future.

With gratitude we pay our respects to the land, the people and the communities that contribute to what today is known as the **Great State of New Mexico.**

**Learn more:** About Taos Pueblo at [Taospueblo.com](https://www.taospueblo.com)



*A cloudy morning looking over Taos Pueblo*

Photo provided by [elpueblolodge.com](https://elpueblolodge.com)



HEALTH CARE  
AUTHORITY

*Investing for tomorrow, delivering today.*

## MISSION

*We ensure New Mexicans attain their highest level of health by providing whole-person, cost-effective, accessible, and high-quality health care and safety-net services.*



HEALTH CARE  
AUTHORITY

## VISION

*Every New Mexican has access to affordable health care coverage through a coordinated and seamless health care system.*

## GOALS



**LEVERAGE** purchasing power and partnerships to create innovative policies and models of comprehensive health care coverage that improve the health and well-being of New Mexicans and the workforce.



**BUILD** the best team in state government by supporting employees' continuous growth and wellness.



**ACHIEVE** health equity by addressing poverty, discrimination, and lack of resources, building a New Mexico where everyone thrives.



**IMPLEMENT** innovative technology and data-driven decision-making to provide unparalleled, convenient access to services and information.

# Agenda





- Welcome
- RHT Program Overview
- Program Timeline
- Funding Opportunities
- Application Process
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Key Questions and Next Steps

# Overview of the New Mexico RHT Program





- The New Mexico Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program is a **five-year federal initiative** designed to strengthen rural health delivery across the state
- New Mexico was awarded **\$211,484,740.89 for Year 1** (13<sup>th</sup> highest award nationally)
- Led by the New Mexico Health Care Authority (HCA)
- Focused on access to care, workforce, sustainability, and data to improve health outcomes across rural, frontier, and tribal communities
- Delivered through **five RHT Program initiatives**

# RHT Program At A Glance

## Program Overview

-  Anticipated \$1B+ federal investment over five years
-  Led by the New Mexico Health Care Authority
-  Focused on strengthening rural, frontier, and tribal health systems
-  Designed to improve access, workforce stability, financial sustainability, and data infrastructure

## Program Design Principles

-  Phased implementation over five years
-  Federal compliance and fiscal integrity
-  Structured stakeholder engagement
-  Sustainability beyond grant funding

## Desired Community Impact

- Communities access specialty, maternal, and chronic care closer to home, reducing travel and wait times

---

- More locally trained and retained health care workers support consistent, culturally responsive care

---

- Communities design and implement programs that address their most pressing health needs

---

- Clinics and hospitals receive support to remain financially stable and open

---

- Shared data helps communities target investments, plan ahead, and improve care coordination



## Five Strategic Initiatives

- 1. Healthy Horizons** – Expand specialty care, maternal health, chronic disease management, and digital health access
- 2. Rooted in New Mexico** – Build and retain a rural health workforce pipeline
- 3. Rural Health Innovation Fund** – Fund community-driven rural health solutions
- 4. Bridge to Resilience** – Provide technical assistance services and sustainability support to rural providers
- 5. Rural Health Data Hub** – Strengthen analytics, transparency, and predictive planning

# From Federal Opportunity to Funding Deployment

## 2025 Federal Application Process

**New Mexico Response**

- Stakeholder outreach and RFI
- Developed statewide RHT strategy
- Submitted application aligned to CMS priorities
- Awarded ~\$211M for Year 1 (13<sup>th</sup> highest award)



**Application Released**

- CMS Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) published

**Application Development**

- States developed applications
- CMS hosted technical assistance and Q&A

**Submission Deadline**

- Applications due to CMS

**Award Decisions**

- By December 31, 2025, CMS announced awardees

## 2026 Implementation & Funding Deployment

- Award received
- Governance, staffing, and procurement launched
- RFPs/RFAs released
- Partner selection and engagement

- Year 1 Reporting due August 30, 2026
- Funds must be obligated by October 30, 2026

**Program Initiation**

**Procurement & Contracting**

**Fund Obligation Deadline**

**Year 1 Reporting**

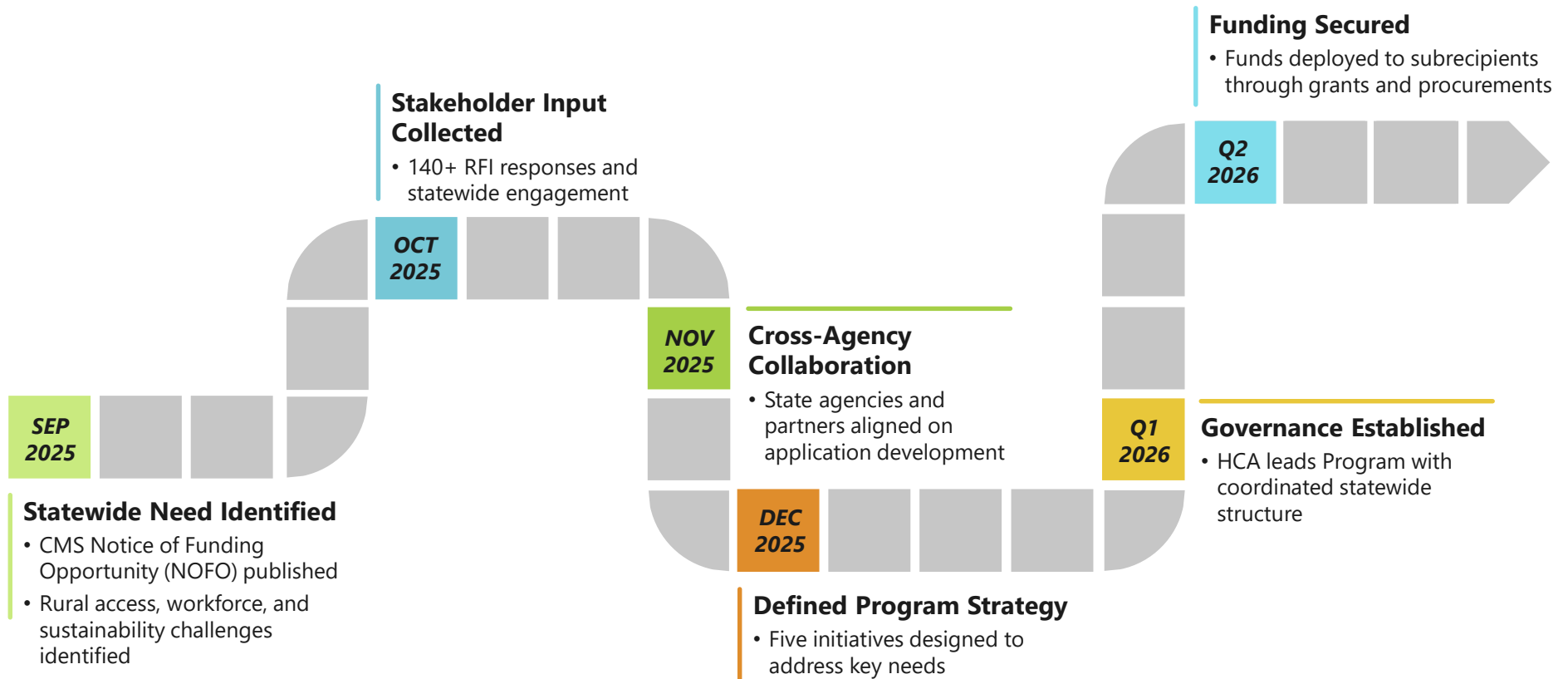
**Implementation Begins**

- Program delivery begins
- Funds must be spent by September 30, 2027

↑  
We are here

# How We Built the Program

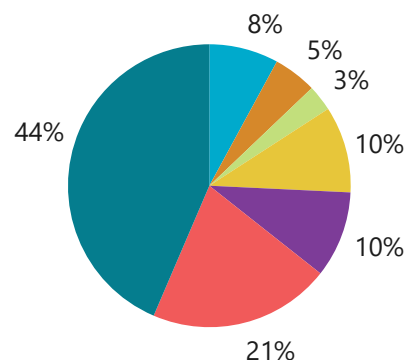
*Built through statewide input, designed for local flexibility, and structured for rapid implementation.*



# What We Heard from Stakeholders Across New Mexico

Based on 140+ responses and 300+ initiatives submitted through a Request For Information (RFI) process

## Respondents by Partner Type\*



\* Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

- Vendor (64)
- Provider (31)
- Other (15)
- Hospital / Health System (14)
- Health Plan (4)
- Association (7)
- Advocacy Organization (11)

## Top Themes Identified

- 1. Access & Care Delivery**  
Expanding reach, specialty care, and whole-person care models
- 2. Workforce Development**  
Recruitment, retention, and new workforce pathways
- 3. Infrastructure & Data**  
Technology, interoperability, and data platforms
- 4. Telehealth & Digital Health**  
Expanding reach, specialty care, and whole-person care models
- 5. Behavioral Health**  
Integrated care, crisis response, and prevention

These themes directly shaped the design and initiatives of New Mexico's RHT Program.



State of New Mexico  
Rural Health Transformation  
Program Application

November 4, 2025

[Available online](#)

# What Success Looks Like

**Care Closer to Home**



**Earlier, Coordinated Care**



**Stable Providers**



**Stronger Workforce**



**Community-Led Solutions**



# Who Benefits from the RHT Program?

## Patients & Communities

Rural, frontier, and tribal communities, including high-risk and underserved populations (e.g., pregnant women, children, older adults, and individuals with chronic or behavioral health conditions).

## Providers & Care Teams

Hospitals, clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), tribal health programs, and long-term care providers.

## Workforce Pipeline

The current and future rural health workforce, including students, trainees, and practicing providers.

## State & Regional Systems

Communities statewide, including regions anchored by urban centers, through regional networks and shared services that strengthen rural access.

# Rural Health Delivery Fund vs. RHT Program

*Supporting immediate needs today while building long-term transformation*

	<b>Rural Health Care Delivery Fund</b> <i>(State Funded)</i>	<b>RHT Program</b> <i>(Federally Funded)</i>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase and stabilize access to care</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transform how rural health care is delivered and sustained</li></ul>
<b>What it Does</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funds services and operations</li><li>• Helps providers stay open and expand access</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invests in workforce, technology, and care models</li><li>• Supports system-wide improvements in access and quality</li></ul>
<b>Who it Supports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providers and communities across New Mexico</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rural providers and communities across New Mexico</li></ul>
<b>Focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stabilizing access and sustaining current services</li><li>• Learn more at <a href="https://www.hca.nm.gov/primary-care-council/rural-health-care-delivery-fund/">https://www.hca.nm.gov/primary-care-council/rural-health-care-delivery-fund/</a></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improving access and redesigning how care is delivered</li><li>• Learn more at <a href="https://www.hca.nm.gov/rural-health-transformation-program/">https://www.hca.nm.gov/rural-health-transformation-program/</a></li></ul>

# RHT Program Five Initiatives

- 1 Healthy Horizons
- 2 Rooted in New Mexico
- 3 Rural Health Innovation Fund
- 4 Bridge to Resilience
- 5 Rural Health Data Hub

*Investing for tomorrow, delivering today.*

# Healthy Horizons

Expanding access to specialty, maternal, and behavioral health care

**\$79M** Year 1 | **\$396M** Total\*

\*Subject to annual CMS approval

## What We Heard

- Patients travel too far for care
- Limited specialists in the State
- Care is hard to coordinate

## What Healthy Horizons Does

- Expand specialty and maternal care
- Enable telehealth and remote care practices
- Improve care coordination

## What Changes We Expect (Outcomes)

- Faster access to care
- Fewer avoidable hospital visits
- Better integrated care
- Stronger rural providers

## How We Bring Healthy Horizons to Life



### Regional Centers of Excellence (CoE)

Six regional hubs anchored to local providers and the RHT Program Management Office



### Local Partnerships

Hospitals, health centers, and community providers working together with the CoEs



### Statewide Support

Tele-mentoring and specialty support across all New Mexico regions

# Rooted in New Mexico

*Building and sustaining a rural health workforce rooted in our communities*

**\$43M** Year 1 | **\$243M** Total\*

\*Subject to annual CMS approval

## What We Heard

- Recruitment and retention of providers is difficult
- Training does not lead to rural placement
- Workforce pipelines are limited

## What Rooted in New Mexico Does

- Expand education and training pathways
- Increase rural clinical placements
- Support recruitment and retention

## What Changes We Expect (Outcomes)

- More providers in rural communities
- Reduced workforce shortages
- Stronger, more stable care teams

## How We Build Our Healthcare Workforce



### Education and Training Partnerships

Universities, training programs, and providers aligned



### Rural Training and Placement

Clinical rotations, residencies, and local placements



### Retention and Career Pathways

Incentives and pathways tied to long-term rural service

# Rural Health Innovation Fund

*Empowering communities to design and lead local solutions*

**\$47M** Year 1 | **\$189M** Total\*

\*Subject to annual CMS approval

## What We Heard

- One-size-fits-all solutions are not always effective
- Communities need flexibility to solve local challenges
- Funding sometimes does not meet local priorities

## What the Innovation Fund Does

- Provider competitive grant funding
- Support community-designed solutions
- Address local health and social needs

## What Changes We Expect (Outcomes)

- More community-led programs
- Strong local ownership
- Sustainable solutions over time

## How We Fund Community Innovation



### Competitive Funding

Opportunities for communities to apply dependent on available funding



### Local Design and Leadership

Projects created and led by communities



### Accountability and Sustainability

Clear expectations for impact and long-term viability

# Bridge to Resilience

**\$26M** Year 1 | **\$128M** Total\*

\*Subject to annual CMS approval

*Stabilizing rural providers and strengthening the systems that sustain access to care*

## What We Heard

- Providers are financially strained
- Care teams lack capacity to improve operations
- Rural providers need additional support

## What Bridge to Resilience Does

- Establish the CRHSI
- Provide hands-on technical support
- Enable shared services & partnerships

## What Changes We Expect (Outcomes)

- Increased stability for rural providers
- Reduced risk of closures
- Stronger regional collaboration

## How We Supports Providers via CRHSI



### Center for Rural Health Sustainability & Innovation (CRHSI)

Central hub for rural provider support and technical assistance



### Hands-On Technical Assistance

Operational, financial, and clinical support



### Peer Learning and Shared Services

Providers working together to solve common challenges

# Rural Health Data Hub

**\$16M** Year 1 | **\$53M Total\***

\*Subject to annual CMS approval

*Using data to improve planning, coordination, and decision-making*

## What We Heard

- Rural providers sometimes do not have data needed
- Data is hard to access or use
- There is a need for more visibility into community needs

## What the Data Hub Does

- Create a shared data platform
- Connect data across systems
- Provide information and tools for decision-making

## What Changes We Expect (Outcomes)

- Enhanced access for data-informed decisions
- Improved system coordination/interoperability
- Greater transparency and insight

## How We Strengthen Data Infrastructure



### Integrated Data Systems

Bringing together existing state and partner data



### Accessible Tools and Dashboards

Making data usable for providers and communities



### Training and Support

Helping users interpret and apply data

# What RHT Funding Cannot Be Used For

- Replace or duplicate payment for clinical services that are reimbursable by Medicaid, Medicare, or other payers
- Supplant existing federal, state, local, or private funding sources
- Cover pre-award costs or unrelated expenses not allocable to the project
- Fund construction, building expansion, or major capital improvements
- Pay for goods or services that are the legal responsibility of another entity (e.g., education, vocational rehabilitation, civil rights obligations)
- Support lobbying or activities intended to influence legislation or policy using federal funds

## Additional project-specific restrictions:

- Funding clinical services that duplicate billable services or alter existing fee schedules
- New construction or large-scale facility expansion projects
- Certain technology and equipment purchases restricted under federal regulations (e.g., prohibited telecommunications equipment)
- Using funds to finance the non-federal share of Medicaid or other programs

Full Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) available online:  
<https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/360442>

\*Slide Updated after 5/13

# Investment & Partnership Approach

## Funding Pathways



### Competitive Procurements

Request for Applications (RFAs)  
Request for Procurements (RFPs)



### Direct Awards & Agreements

State-wide Price Agreements



### Interagency Partnerships

Direct NM state government agreements



### Subawards

Managed through Healthy Horizons and other initiatives



### Strategic Partnership Agreements

Expansion of existing contracts

## Open & Future Opportunities

### Administrative Services Organization (ASO) RFP

Provides administrative and operational support across RHT Program initiatives, including contract management, financial processes, and reporting.

*Submissions Due: May 28, 2026, 5pm MST*

### Center for Rural Health Sustainability & Innovation (CRHSI)

Provides statewide rural provider technical assistance, stakeholder engagement, and implementation support across the RHT Program.

*Submissions Due: June 4, 2026, 5pm MST*

*Additional opportunities will be posted to the RHT Program webpage as soon as they are available.*

# Stakeholder Advisory Committee

*A quarterly advisory body providing input to guide RHT Program implementation*

## Purpose

- Provide structured input on Program implementation and priorities
- Bring perspectives from rural, frontier, and tribal communities
- Support transparency and alignment across stakeholders

## Membership Snapshot

- State agencies (e.g., HCA, DOH, Indian Affairs)
- Providers, community-based organizations, and IHS and Tribal 638 representatives
- Associations and legislative representation
- Rural, frontier, and tribal members

## Structure & Roles

- Meets quarterly
- Coordinated by PMO and CRHSI
- Operates in an advisory capacity
- ~20% of members are community representative
  - Membership reviewed annually

## Participation Opportunities and Meeting Logistics *(In Development)*

*Stakeholder Advisory Committee application process and materials will be shared by HCA.*

*Meeting format and schedule details will be shared following member selection.*

# Stakeholder Advisory Committee – How to Apply

*A quarterly advisory body providing input to guide RHT Program implementation*

**Below are details for the application process for the following groups:**

- Providers - Community-Based Organizations - IHS and Tribal 638 Representatives - Rural, Frontier, and Tribal Members

## Application Process

- Application will be available through HCA
- Interested stakeholders submit application materials
- Applications will be reviewed by HCA leadership
- Final selections coordinated by HCA

## Timeline

Application opens:  
**Mid-June 2026**

## Selection Approach

- Selection based on representation across regions and communities, experience and ability to contribute to program implementation, and balance across stakeholder groups

*Committee membership from state agencies, associations, and legislative representatives will be selected by HCA and do not need to apply.*

# How to Get Involved

## Stay Connected

Visit the RHT Program webpage at  
<https://www.hca.nm.gov/rural-health-transformation-program/>

## Join Engagement Opportunities

Participate in updates, webinars, and stakeholder sessions. Join the RHT Program mailing list by visiting

<https://forms.monday.com/forms/8e030d1aba2d00bf39f496544cea29ae?r=use1>

## Apply for Funding

Access funding opportunities as they become available by visiting  
<https://nmhca-rhttp.submittable.com/submit>

## Apply for the Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Access the application for the Stakeholder Advisory Committee by visiting  
***Application Due to Open Mid-June***

# Questions

*Investing for tomorrow, delivering today.*

# Thank you!

*Investing for tomorrow, delivering today.*