



Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

Overview of Opportunity and MD's Plan

October 20, 2025

Agenda

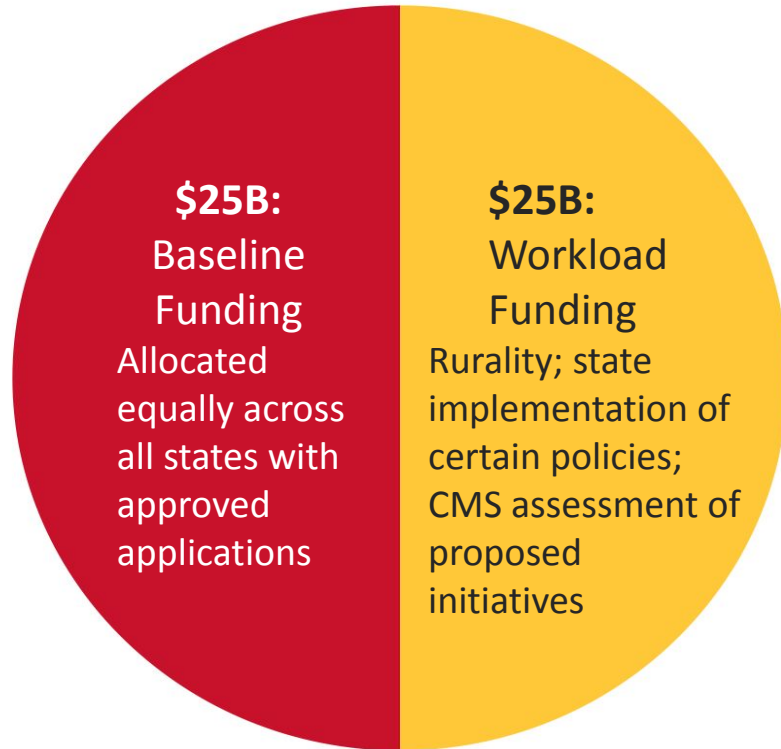
- Overview of RHTP
- What We Heard
 - Community Listening Sessions and Request for Information
- Transformation Framework

Overview of RHTP

Creation of the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

- H.R. 1 (The One Big Beautiful Bill Act, “OBBA”) was signed into law in July 2025.
- OBBA created the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP).
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will administer the program.

Funding of the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)



- \$50 billion over 5 years.
- State could expect to receive at least \$100 million annually
- Funds distributed 2026-2030
- If performance measures are not met, funding can be adjusted down for future years or dollars already spent can be clawed back.

CMS' RHTP Strategic Goals

Make Rural America Healthy Again

Support health innovations and new access points to promote preventive health and address root causes of diseases



Sustainable Access

Help rural providers become long-term access points for care by improving efficiency and sustainability



Workforce Development

Attract and retain a high-skilled health care workforce by strengthening recruitment and retention of healthcare providers in rural communities



Innovative Care

Spark the growth of innovative care models to improve health outcomes, coordinate care, and promote flexible care arrangements

Tech Innovation

Foster use of innovative technologies that promote efficient care delivery, data security, and access to digital health tools by rural facilities, providers, and patients

Required Plan Elements

Strategic Goals: Align with all.

- Make rural America healthy again
- Sustainable access
- Workforce development
- Innovative care
- Tech innovation

* Each funded initiative **MUST** have a sustainability plan.

Use of Funds*: Pick at least 3

- Prevention & chronic disease
- Provider payments
- Consumer tech solutions
- Training & TA for tech-enabled solutions
- Workforce
- IT advances
- Appropriate care delivery
- Behavioral Health
- Innovative care (VBP)
- Capital expenditures & infrastructure
- Fostering collaboration

Plan Elements: Address all.

- Improving access
- Improving outcomes
- Technology use
- Partnerships
- Workforce
- Data-driven solutions
- Financial solvency strategies
- Cause identification

What We Heard

Maryland's Engagement Process

- 17 Local Listening Sessions, covering all State-designated rural counties. 250+ participants.
- >325 RFI responses, received through online survey and email
- Roundtable discussions with:
 - Rural Hospitals (arranged by MHA)
 - Local DSS directors (arranged by DHS)
 - Local Health Officers
 - MD Medicaid Advisory Committee

Themes from the Engagement Process

- Need for sustainable access and innovative care delivery
 - Mobile health; new access points for care; bring care to the patient; value based care
- Importance of developing AND retaining workforce
 - Create local pipelines programs; develop all types of healthcare workers from doctors to community health workers and peer recovery specialists; need incentives to recruit and retain talent in rural areas

Themes from the Engagement Process (2)

- Use technology when possible
 - Telehealth; addressing the digital divide; AI
- Must address social determinants of health
 - Food; housing; transportation
- More to do in chronic disease and behavioral health
 - Prevention and management
 - Continue to fill in gaps in coverage and services

Strength of our Rural Communities

- Neighbor-to-neighbor support
- Robust partnerships and collaboration across sectors and organizations
- Creative, community-led solutions
- Bringing care to the patient
- Food initiatives
- Community Health Workers (CHWs)

MD's Transformation Framework and Plan

MD's Transformation Plan Framework

**Grow MD's
Health Workforce**

**Ensure a World Class
Health System for Rural
Marylanders**

Food is Health

PART 1 - IMMEDIATE IMPACT FUND

Direct funding for specific shovel ready programs, with emphasis on those that create enabling infrastructure or support scaling of key initiatives.

PART 2 - TRANSFORMATION FUND

Competitive grant opportunities to transform health. Each Pillar will have a set of discrete grant programs. Funding “tracks” are informed by community listening sessions and RFI process.

MD's Transformation Plan - *Example Initiatives*

	Immediate Impact Fund	Transformation Fund
PILLAR 1 Grow MD's Health Workforce	Expand services for Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center and AHEC West.	Develop community-based partnerships for health care pipeline and career ladder development
PILLAR 2 World Class Health System	Start-up funds to launch new primary care practices in rural counties and support practice transformation for specialty practices	Build Mobile Integrated Health Partnerships
PILLAR 3 Food is Health	Establish distributed network of cold storage for food system resiliency	Establish Food System Aggregator/Hub (with required IT infrastructure) to support MD farms to feed Marylanders

Staying Connected

- All updates will be posted on MDH's State Office of Rural Health [webpage](#)
- Email: mdh.transformruralhealth@maryland.gov