

Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

A Summary of Tennessee's



Rural Health Transformation Plan



Acknowledgement

Thank you to the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) for their work summarizing the Rural Health Transformation Program grant applications of all 50 states, including Tennessee.

NRHA is a non-profit membership organization with more than 21,000 members nationwide. NRHA's membership includes nearly every component of rural America's healthcare, including rural community hospitals, critical access hospitals, LTC providers, doctors, nurses, and patients. NRHA works to improve rural America's health needs through leadership in advocacy, communications, education, and research.

www.ruralhealth.us

Executive Summary

The Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP), created under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (Public Law No. 119-21), is a major new federal initiative to strengthen rural healthcare delivery and stabilize essential services. Rural Health Association (RHA) of Tennessee adapted this document from National Rural Health Association (NRHA) (to provide a summary of how Tennessee initially designed and budgeted their transformation strategies.

It should be noted that Tennessee received more funds than they initially requested and is awaiting budget amendment approval

Tennessee's application features 5 "Strategic Pillars" including:

- Make Rural America Healthy Again
- Sustainable Access
- Workforce Development
- Innovative Care
- Tech Innovation

Visit <https://www.tn.gov/health/rural.html> for a full copy of the application.

About RHA

Founded in 1994, The Rural Health Association of Tennessee (RHA) is a not-for-profit 501c3 organization of individuals and organizations committed to improving the health of rural Tennesseans. Our 800+ members of rural primary care providers, school health professionals, mental and behavioral health providers and others who care about rural health, work to affect positive changes in the health and well-being of all rural people in Tennessee. Our mission is to lead the way for a healthy Tennessee through partnerships, advocacy, education, and resources.

For more information or how to join, please visit our website:
www.TNRuralhealth.org or email info@tnruralhealth.org

Tennessee



Tennessee RHTP Webpage: <https://www.tn.gov/health/rural.html>

Initiatives	Specific Activities	Amount Requested
Activating Sustainable Service Lines in Rural Hospital and Healthcare Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support co-location of services; minor alterations and renovation within existing footprint to retrofit underutilized space; acquisition of clinical equipment; staffing supports and retention incentives to 5-year rural service commitments; simulation-based training and credentialing for high-acuity, low occurrence events; development of clinical protocols and workflow redesign; coverage models and on-call strategies; telemedicine. 	\$95,000,000 - \$250,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Unifying Multiple High Impact Efforts to Expand Tennessee's Rural Emergency Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand rural emergency care infrastructure and bring integrated health services directly to residents in hard-to-reach communities. Launch and scale community paramedicine programs in high-need areas. Embed neonatal resuscitation and perinatal readiness into rural EMS operations statewide. Deploy mobile behavioral health units. Build the Tennessee Healthcare Resilience, Integration, and Value Expansion (THRIVE) initiative, representing Tennessee's next-generation model for sustainable healthcare preparedness and rural system transformation. 	\$66,568,795 over the five-year grant period
Direct Access to Public Health, Primary Care, and Dental Services for the Uninsured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Uninsured Adult Healthcare Safety Net Program network. Leverage LHDs in rural counties to align public and private resources, expand high-value direct services, and help patients navigate care. 	\$96,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Expand Rural Access to ADRD Care Through a Hub-and-Spoke Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a statewide resource to improve access to diagnosis and treatment for those experiencing Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD). The hub-and-spoke network to connect specialized clinics with existing neuropsychiatry resources, telehealth, and trained non-clinical staff. 	\$32,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Targeting Efficiency to Improve Access to Leadership Skills and Specialty Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop executive leadership pathways to place trained rural health leaders within priority communities. Expand Behavioral Health Workforce to utilize co-location at high demand locations. Accelerate CHW program to rural communities to improve health outcomes for rural residents. 	\$39,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Enhancing Investments in the Rural Dental Workforce to Improve Oral Health Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend Rural Dental Pilot Program to address persistent shortages of dental professionals in rural and distressed communities; expand provider recruitment, establish new access points, and integrate preventive oral health services in dental HPSAs. 	\$20,000,000 - \$75,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Building a Safer Start for Every Mother and Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund projects to expand maternity care capacity, improve perinatal education and emergency response, and enhance data systems that connect families to services. 	\$144,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Catalyzing Rural Health Value Based Payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand VBP success to rural hospitals, obstetric providers, and dental clinics to strengthen infrastructure, workforce readiness, and quality improvement systems that support sustained participation in VBP. 	\$100,000,000 - \$125,000,000 over the five-year grant period

Initiatives	Specific Activities	Amount Requested
Expansion of Competitive "Rural Health Resiliency Program" Grants for Community Driven Prevention Efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a robust network of providers and community-based organizations to deliver integrated, comprehensive prevention and health services that address the root cause of poor health outcomes. 	\$56,000,000 - \$150,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Competitive Grants for Locally Led-Upstream Prevention, Nutrition, and Active Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide grants to address severe nutrition security issues in rural areas through expanding access to health-promoting environments, nutrition security infrastructure, and evidence-based prevention initiatives. 	\$51,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Develop and Scale Solutions to Reduce Transportation Barriers in Rural TN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a competitive grant program allowing hospitals, critical-access facilities, or other third-parties to apply for funding to implement or expand transportation programs. 	\$9,000,000 over the five-year period
Competitive Grants for Rural Health Technology Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a competitive grant program for rural hospitals, clinics, and networks to implement scalable, interoperable, and secure digital solutions that expand access, strengthen clinical integration, and reduce administrative burden. 	\$76,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Developing a Statewide HIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable seamless data sharing across providers, strengthen emergency and disaster response and reduce provider burden, ultimately enhancing population health management and a more integrated healthcare system that meets the diverse needs of rural communities. 	\$31,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Expansion of Tennessee's Closed Loop Referral System (CLRS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand rural access to the statewide CLRS platform that connects individuals to community-based organizations addressing health-related social needs. 	\$31,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Connection Innovation Offices to Rural Providers to Advance Health-Tech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower rural providers and community partners to adopt, adapt, and scale technology-enabled solutions that improve outcomes and reduce costs. 	\$15,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Establish Statewide eConsult Platform to Improve Specialty Access for Safety Net	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a digital platform that allows PCPs to consult with specialists electronically. • Strengthen the digital foundation of rural healthcare through the expansion of the Healthcare Resource Tracking System (HRTS) and Patient Bed Matching (PBM) platforms. 	\$15,000,000 over the five-year grant period
Building a Comprehensive Rural Health Workforce Pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in physician residencies to retain graduates in rural regions. • Advance rural behavioral health careers. • Provide recruitment incentives to attract providers to underserved areas. • Start early exposure programs in high schools and colleges. • Foster partnerships between urban academic centers and rural universities and offer paid internships and field placements in rural health. • Create mental health first aid training for frontline staff and other health professionals. • Expand an existing learning management system for CE-credit learning across disciplines, allowing providers to continue their professional development in isolated training environments. 	\$52,000,000 over the five-year grant period

Additional Resources

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

NRHA Rural Health Transformation Program Webpage
<https://www.ruralhealth.us/programs/center-for-rural-health-innovation-and-system-redesign/rural-health-transformation-program>

RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF TENNESSEE

www.TNRuralHealth.org

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Tennessee RHTP Webpage: <https://www.tn.gov/health/rural.html>

