

Frequently Asked Questions –Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

Last Updated: 4/2/2026

General Program Overview

1. What is the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)?

- a. The RHTP is a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), created through the Working Families Tax Cuts Act (WFTCA), designed to transform healthcare delivery in rural communities. South Carolina has been awarded \$200,030,252.32 in RHTP funding for fiscal year 2026.

2. Who is responsible for implementing the program?

- a. Governor McMaster has designated SCDHHS as the lead agency for implementation, oversight, and administration of the program.

Strategic Initiatives

3. What are the five core initiatives of South Carolina’s RHTP?

- a. **Connections to Care** – Expands digital infrastructure by implementing electronic health records (EHRs), remote patient monitoring, telehealth services and a statewide resource database platform to improve care coordination and access
- b. **Leveling Up** – Scales successful pilot programs statewide, focusing on chronic disease management, pediatric care quality and workforce development
- c. **Wellness Within Reach** – Deploys mobile health units, crisis response teams and pop-up clinics to bring care directly to underserved populations
- d. **Shoring Up to Sustainability** – Strengthens rural healthcare systems through targeted investments in workforce recruitment and retention, facility upgrades and provider training
- e. **Tech Catalyst Fund** – Supports rural health technology startups and community-based innovations to drive long-term health and economic improvements

Implementation and Oversight

4. What is the timeline for implementation?

- a. Congress appropriated funding for the RHTP for five federal fiscal years, 2026-2030. SCDHHS anticipates releasing grant opportunities each year federal funding is made available.

5. How will the program be managed within SCDHHS?

- a. SCDHHS anticipates a dedicated RHTP team of eight full-time staff, supported by external compliance partners and stakeholder advisory councils, will manage the program.

6. How will success be measured?

- a. Success will be measured through key performance indicators such as:
 - i. Increased EHR and telehealth adoption
 - ii. Improved chronic disease outcomes
 - iii. Expanded healthcare access points
 - iv. Workforce recruitment and retention metrics

Stakeholder Engagement

7. Was stakeholder feedback considered in South Carolina's RHTP application?

- a. Yes. The Governor's Office and SCDHHS engaged stakeholders to gain greater insight into South Carolina's rural health needs. Stakeholder input was gathered through meetings, site visits, and a statewide webinar. More than 350 proposals were submitted during the stakeholder engagement process, shaping the five initiatives listed above that make up South Carolina's RHTP.

8. Will stakeholders continue to be involved?

- a. Yes. SCDHHS will use existing advisory councils and feedback loops to ensure ongoing engagement throughout the program lifecycle, and will host additional webinars as more information becomes available from CMS.

Sustainability

9. How will the program ensure long-term sustainability?

- a. SCDHHS will ensure long-term sustainability by focusing on one-time, high-impact investments that reduce systemic barriers and can be maintained through existing operational budgets after the grant period ends.

Compliance and Duplication

10. How will SCDHHS avoid duplication of funding?

- a. CMS prohibits the use of RHTP funding to replace or duplicate current funding activities. The agency has conducted a thorough duplication assessment and will require disclosures from all subrecipients to ensure no duplication or supplantation of other federal, state, or local funding.

Funding and Budget

11. How will subrecipients be selected?

- a. Subrecipients will be selected through competitive grant application processes administered by SCDHHS in alignment with initiative goals. SCDHHS and the Governor will consider organizational capacity and alignment with statewide geographic priorities to avoid duplication and ensure efficacy and efficiency of funds.

2026 Grant Opportunities

Eligibility

12. Do applicants need to reside in a rural area of South Carolina to be eligible?

- a. No. Applicants do not need to live in a rural area. However, they must show how their work will directly benefit rural communities and residents in South Carolina.

13. Does the entity applying need to be based in South Carolina?

- a. SCDHHS' goal is to ensure RHTP funds are invested in projects that meaningfully improve health outcomes for rural communities across South Carolina. To achieve this, the agency intends to prioritize funding for organizations that are based in South Carolina and are deeply connected to its rural communities.

SCDHHS recognizes some applicants may be located outside of the state but are partnering with South Carolina–based organizations to deliver services or build capacity; these collaborations are welcome and eligible for support. However, the agency does not intend to direct funds to out-of-state organizations that are seeking to enter the South Carolina market without established, substantive partnerships with local organizations.

14. What is the definition of “rural” as it pertains to South Carolina?

- a. South Carolina aligns to the Health Resources and Service Administration’s (HRSA) definition of rural. Find more information about HRSA’s definition click [here](#).

Applications

15. How do I submit my application?

- a. Submit applications as a single PDF via email to grants@scdhhs.gov, referencing the grant opportunity number in the subject line by June 1, 2026. For more information visit www.scdhhs.gov/rhttp.

16. Can one organization submit an application under multiple initiatives and/or submit multiple applications for one initiative?

- a. Yes.

17. If an organization would like to apply for more than one project, should it be submitted separately?

- a. Yes, each project application must be submitted separately.

18. Is there a limit to the number of projects one organization can submit?

- a. No. However, SCDHHS encourages organizations to prioritize submitting their highest-impact projects for consideration.

19. If an organization intends to submit several projects under one initiative, is it best to submit multiple applications, one for each project, or a single unified application listing several projects?

- a. The eligible organization must submit multiple applications, one for each project.

20. Can one organization receive multiple awards?

- a. Yes.

21. If an organization submits several grant applications, is the final award cumulative?

- a. No. Each awarded application will receive its own funding amount and a separate subaward agreement.

22. How would an organization who has a project that spans both initiatives decide which one to apply under?

- a. The organization would need to split the components of the project into two applications, one for each initiative.

23. What are the priority projects for year one?

- a. Please refer to the grant opportunities found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhttp.

24. What if I have a project that doesn't align with the priority project buckets?

- a. SCDHHS anticipates future grant opportunities will be released each year that focus on additional project areas outlined in South Carolina's RHTP application, contingent on available funding.

25. If a project is not funded in this grant cycle, would it be eligible for resubmission in following years?

- a. Yes, provided there is project and initiative alignment with the future grant opportunities.

26. Does the five-page limit on letters of support mean there is a total limit of five pages regardless of how many letters are included, or does each letter have its own five-page limit?

- a. The page limit applies to the total number of pages submitted. You may include multiple letters, but all letters combined cannot exceed five pages.

27. Are these one-year awards issued over a five-year period?

- a. No. Awards made through the 2026 grant opportunities will remain active only until Sept. 30, 2027.

28. Once awarded, when do you expect organizations to begin work?

- a. Work is expected to begin upon notice of award.

29. Will applications be reviewed and approved on a rolling basis?

- a. No. All applications will be reviewed together with a single award date of July 31, 2026.

30. How will applicants know if they have been awarded?

- a. All applicants, whether they will receive award funding or not, will receive an emailed notification letter on the award notification date. This notification will be sent to the grant coordinator email address listed in the application.

If the grant coordinator changes after submission and before the award announcement, please email the updated information to grants@scdhhs.gov

31. Will organizations be contacted during the review period for clarification or questions?

- a. Applicants may be contacted during the review period if clarification is needed.

Partnerships

32. Can we partner with other organizations to submit a single application?

- a. Yes. SCDHHS encourages strategic partnerships between organizations to make the highest impact in our rural communities.

33. Are applicants required to identify partnership in the application, or can we determine at a later date which entities we will partner with?

- a. Any partnership should be clearly explained and identified in the application. Entities who have not agreed to a proposed partnership should not be included in a project plan.

34. How will SCDHHS distribute funds between entities partnering on a project?

- a. SCDHHS will award funding to the single entity that has submitted the application. This entity must meet the applicant requirements outlined in the grant opportunity.

35. If applying in partnership with other organizations, can the funding limit be exceeded?

- a. No. The funding limits apply to each application, not to the organizations involved.

36. Can South Carolina-based organizations subcontract with organizations outside of South Carolina?

- a. Yes.

Funding

37. Do the funding limits apply to the organization or the individual application?

- a. The funding limits listed in each grant opportunity apply to each individual application with the exception of the healthcare workforce funding limits. The healthcare workforce funding has maximum funding limits per practitioner that an organization will provide incentive payments to. An application for healthcare workforce funding should identify the number of individuals for which an organization intends to receive funding.

38. How long do awardees have to spend funds?

- a. Any awarded funding must be expended by Sept. 30, 2027. Projects extending beyond this date will not be considered.

39. Will prepaid expenses be allowed?

- a. No. Prepaid expenses will not be allowed.

40. If a project would exceed the limit (and thus require supplementary funding outside of RHTP), how should that be communicated to SCDHHS?

- a. This should be communicated through the submitted application in the budget and budget narrative portion. How the applicant intends to supplement their award to cover the remaining cost of the project should be included.

41. Are indirect costs allowed?

- a. No.

42. Is cost-sharing required?

- a. No. There is no cost-sharing or match requirement for these grants.

43. What costs are NOT allowed?

- a. Please refer to the grant opportunities found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

44. How will organizations receive the funding?

- a. Through subaward agreements with the organization and SCDHHS.

45. What are the funding limitations?

- a. Please refer to the grant opportunities found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

46. If funds are not used by Sept. 30, 2027, can funds be carried over into the next federal fiscal year?

- a. No.

Resources

47. Where will the grant opportunities be posted?

- a. Grant opportunities will be posted on the agency's website at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

48. Where can I find the webinar discussing the grant application?

- a. The March 2026 webinar recording and slides can be found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

49. Where can I find more resources?

- a. Click on the following links for more information:
 - i. [CMS RHTP Website](#)
 - ii. [SCDHHS RHTP Page](#)

Connections to Care (SCDHHS – 26 – 001)

50. Who can apply for the Connections to Care grant opportunity?

- a. Please refer to the individual grant opportunity found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

51. Can we use funds to change from our current electronic health record system to a different one?

- a. Yes, for more information please refer to the individual grant opportunity found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

52. Can funds be used to purchase remote patient monitoring equipment, such as blood pressure monitors, for patients?

- a. Yes.

Leveling Up (SCDHHS – 26 – 002)

53. Who can apply for the Leveling Up grant opportunity?

- a. Please refer to the individual grant opportunity found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

Wellness Within Reach (SCDHHS – 26 – 003)

54. Who can apply for the Wellness Within Reach grant opportunity?

- a. Please refer to the individual grant opportunity found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

55. Can RHTP funds support purchases of vehicles and equipment used for health care delivery?

- a. Purchase of mobile units and equipment for the delivery of healthcare services are permissible uses of funds.

Shoring Up to Sustainability (SCDHHS – 26 – 004)

56. Who can apply for the Shoring Up to Sustainability grant opportunity?

- a. Please refer to the individual grant opportunity found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

57. Does this grant allow funding for renovations and/or improvements to the building or space where services will be provided?

- a. Yes, for more information please refer to the individual grant opportunity found at www.scdhhs.gov/rhtp.

58. Would a proposed construction project need to be completed by Sept. 30, 2027?

- a. Yes.

59. Are Healthcare workforce grants restricted to Physician and/or APRN/PAs incentive programs?

- a. Yes.