

***Rhode Island Rural Health Transformation Program Application
Project Summary***

Name of Organization: Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS)

Subrecipients: Block Island Health Services; Care Transformation Collaborative of Rhode Island (CTC-RI); Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI); Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns; Narragansett Indian Tribe; Rhode Island Health Center Association (RIHCA)

Project Goals: The Rhode Island Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) will strengthen access to high-quality, sustainable, and community-driven health care for residents of Rhode Island's rural and island communities. The State's vision for rural health transformation is a connected, community-based system that ensures every rural resident can obtain timely, coordinated, high quality care where they live. The program has five mutually reinforcing goals that directly align with CMS' strategic priorities: (1) make rural America healthy again – improve the health of rural residents; (2) sustainable access – expand access to comprehensive, quality, low-cost care; (3) workforce development – strengthen the rural health care workforce; (4) innovative care – accelerate value-based and affordable care models; and (5) tech innovation – integrate technology into rural practice.

Total Budget: \$1,000,000,000 over five years, subject to CMS review and approval

Description of Use of Funds: RHTP funds will be used to implement a coordinated set of 13 initiatives. Investments in community clinical care hubs and rural community health networks (Initiative 1) will link clinical providers, behavioral health professionals, and community organizations to deliver coordinated, team-based care supported by interoperable technology and community health workers. Rural community-integrated and mobile health services (Initiative 2) will bring preventive, dental, and maternal-child health care directly to residents through mobile units and telehealth sites in schools and community learning centers. Accessibility investments (Initiative 3) for rural providers and community spaces will improve physical access and disability-competent care for older adults and people with disabilities.

RHTP funds will also expand rural emergency medical services (EMS) capacity (Initiative 4) through statewide mobile integrated health–community paramedicine, a state EMS academy, and enhanced island EMS operations. Hospital-at-home (Initiative 5) will enable hospitals to safely deliver acute-level care in patients' homes, supported by remote monitoring and EMS partnerships. Behavioral health services (Initiative 6) will be expanded through a 24/7 crisis stabilization center, recovery community centers, and peer navigators linking patients to ongoing care. Oral health access (Initiative 7) will improve through teledentistry triage and the establishment of a special-care dental center at Eleanor Slater Hospital's Zambarano campus.

Place-based investments will strengthen Block Island Health and Human Services (Initiative 8) and Narragansett Indian Tribe health systems (Initiative 9) through home-based care, telehealth, and facility upgrades. The rural workforce program (Initiative 10) will expand training, placements, and recruitment incentives. RHTP funds will support the value-based payment transition (Initiative 11), specifically through incentives and technical assistance to hospitals and primary care practices. Technology modernization (Initiative 12) will fund a state-sponsored electronic health record and grants for health information technology infrastructure improvements, and rural data and workforce tracking (Initiative 13) will build systems to monitor outcomes and guide policy.