U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
HRSA
Federal Office of Rural Health Policy

Fiscal Year 2026 Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Investments

Fact Sheet | November 2026*

The Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) serves as the primary federal agency responsible for directly supporting rural communities. The Office directly serves rural communities across the country to increase access to health care on Administration priorities and advises the Secretary of Health and Human Services on rural issues.

Since its establishment in 1987, FORHP has supported innovative efforts to address health care needs in rural communities. In FY 2026, FORHP invested approximately $418 million in rural America by funding efforts to strengthen health care delivery systems, reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with substance use disorder, and improve the financial viability of rural hospitals and clinics.

ADDRESSING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Through grants, technical assistance to more than 215 community-based organizations and efforts to build the evidence base, FORHP strengthens rural communities' capacity to plan for and provide behavioral health care, including mental health services and opioid and substance use disorder (OUD/SUD) prevention, treatment, and recovery services.

FUNDING: $145 million through the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP)

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - $16.6 million to address the most pressing SUD needs in rural communities, build service capacity, gain strong community buy-in, and develop core partnerships.
  - $85.9 million to support the continuation of behavioral health and SUD services in rural communities, including the establishment and expansion of new treatment and recovery services, and services supporting children, adolescents, and their families.
  - $7.55 million to establish peer support rural health resources and improve health care by building or enhancing the behavioral health workforce in rural areas.
  - $10 million for three Rural Centers of Excellence on SUD to continue to support the identification and dissemination of best practices related to OUD/SUD prevention, treatment, and recovery.
  - $15 million to evaluate the impact of the RCORP initiative and provide technical assistance to RCORP grant recipients.
- **Impact:**
  - RCORP funding has reached more than 2,000 counties across 48 states and three territories.
  - In the most recent grant year, RCORP grant recipients provided direct SUD prevention, treatment, and recovery services to approximately 1.3 million rural residents and ensured that nearly 57,000 rural individuals received medication-assisted treatment for SUD.
  - RCORP grantees strengthen the rural behavioral health workforce, hiring 434 new behavioral health and substance use providers and providing training to over 17,000 behavioral health professionals and paraprofessionals.
  - Sustainability is a priority within the program, with over 83% of recent grantees reporting other sources of funding to continue key activities after their RCORP grant ends.

EXPANDING RURAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

FORHP continues to make investments to strengthen the health care workforce and connect skilled health care providers to rural communities.

FUNDING: Over $11 million through the Rural Residency Planning and Development (RRPD) Program

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Expand the physician workforce in rural areas through the development of new rural residency programs or Rural Track Programs in family medicine, internal medicine, general surgery, preventive medicine, psychiatry, or obstetrics and gynecology.
- **Impact:**
  - Through the RRPD Program, so far 66 programs have achieved accreditation and are projected to create 818 residency positions in rural areas.
  - To date, rural residency programs created under the RRPD Program have enrolled over 850 resident physicians to train in rural settings.
  - Research shows that residents trained in a rural training track have a five-fold greater likelihood of practicing in a rural community.

INCREASING ACCESS TO CARE

FORHP works to increase access to high-quality health care for rural populations through grants to community-based providers.

FUNDING: Nearly $101 million through Rural Health Outreach Programs to increase access to high-quality health care and expand the delivery of services in rural areas. This investment also builds on FORHP's multi-year effort to strengthen rural health networks.

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Approximately $3.5 million through the **Rural Health Network Advancement Program** will help existing rural health networks improve care coordination delivery, maintain access to essential services, and strengthen financial and workforce sustainability through clinical or operational integration.
  - Nearly $3 million through the **Delta Rural Health Integration Network Program** to build integrated health networks that connect rural hospitals, primary care clinics, behavioral health providers, and other essential health care organizations to improve health care delivery in the Delta region.
  - Over $5 million through the **Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement Program** to rural primary care providers of health care services, such as critical access hospitals (CAHs), rural health clinics (RHC) and networks of rural health providers, to support the planning and implementation of quality improvement activities that increase access to high-quality health care services and improve health.
- **Impact:**
  - Rural Health Outreach Programs provided direct services to 572,000 individuals, expanding access to services in over 300 rural counties.
  - Among Outreach Program grantees tracking health status improvement, 98% demonstrated progress on at least one clinical measure in the most recent data collection year.

FUNDING: $29 million to improve access to quality care in the Mississippi Delta Region

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - $12 million through the **Delta States Rural Development Network Program** **(Delta States)** to provide direct health care services and technical assistance to address the leading causes of avoidable death in rural Mississippi Delta communities.
- **Impact:**
  - Delta States funding will support 214 rural communities in eight Delta States. Recipients of this program continue to show health status improvement in one or more health areas, such as reductions in diabetic hemoglobin A1c scores (HgbA1c), blood pressure scores, tobacco use, and body mass index (BMI).
- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - $10 million through the **Delta Region Community Health Systems Development Program** to provide technical assistance to enhance the health care delivery of small rural hospitals and rural health clinics in the Mississippi Delta.
- **Impact:**
  - 30 small rural hospitals, rural health clinics, and federally qualified health centers received free

technical assistance from industry experts, to improve their finances and improve access to care.

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - $3.5 million to the **Delta Health Systems Implementation Program** to improve health care delivery by implementing projects to improve the financial sustainability of rural hospitals.
- **Impact:**
  - 10 small rural hospitals received direct funding to complete projects to enhance and improve their financial stability that is sustainable post-Federal investment.

FUNDING: $12 million through the Black Lung Clinics Program (BLCP)

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Reduce morbidity and mortality among active and retired coal miners from occupational lung diseases, including Progressive Massive Fibrosis, through quality medical care, outreach, education, and benefits counseling. The Black Lung Data and Resource Center supports these efforts by collecting and analyzing data and strengthening clinic operations through technical assistance.
- **Impact:**
  - The BLCP served over 7,400 coal miners in Appalachia and the western United States. These services include over 5,700 chest x-rays, and over 3,000 benefits counseling encounters for federal black lung program benefits in the most recent project year. The program reported that 47% of miners seen in Black Lung Clinics this project year have black lung disease.

FUNDING: $1.8 million through the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program (RESEP)

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - RESEP grantees implement cancer screening and education programs, share information on radiogenic diseases and the importance of early detection, screen eligible individuals for cancer and other radiogenic diseases, and provide appropriate referrals for medical treatment.
- **Impact:**
  - This RESEP funding supports eight awards in five states to increase screenings for radiogenic diseases and connect affected individuals to needed medical and support services.

ADVANCING MATERNAL HEALTH CARE

FORHP works to improve maternal health outcomes in rural communities by supporting access to quality prenatal, obstetric, and postpartum care through targeted grants, technical assistance, and partnerships with rural providers and community organizations.

FUNDING: $15 million through the Rural Maternity and Obstetrics Management Strategies (RMOMS) Program

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Increase access to maternal and obstetric care in rural communities.
- **Impact:**
  - The rate of early births (before 37 weeks of pregnancy) among women participating in an RMOMS program was lower than the national average for rural areas. A lower rate of early births is a better outcome for this measure.
  - The awardees have enhanced and expanded care coordination of high-risk pregnancies, telehealth, patient navigation, and direct service initiatives to improve access to maternity care and support services.

FUNDING: $2.2 million through the Delta Region Maternal Care Coordination (Delta MCC) Program

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Increase access to care for pregnant women and new mothers during and after pregnancy in the Mississippi Delta region.
- **Impact:**
  - Awardees collectively improve access to care for pregnant women and new mothers during and after pregnancy in approximately 38 rural Delta counties across three Delta Region states: Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee.

- The first year of the Delta MCC Program was a planning year, in which awardees were primarily focused on formalizing partnerships with network partners and strategically planning for the launch of new maternal health programs, rather than implementation of direct services. During the first year of the program, the Delta MCC cohort collectively served approximately 230 women.
- During this time, awardees made early progress in connecting women with comprehensive prenatal care to identify and address risk factors and improve birth outcomes. Throughout the first year of the program, approximately 88% of women received a blood sugar screening and approximately 92% of women received at least one mental health screening during pregnancy and/or postpartum.

INCREASING THE RURAL INFORMATION AND EVIDENCE BASE

FORHP supports research programs that aim to increase the amount of publicly available, policy-relevant research to assist providers and stakeholders at the federal, state, and local levels to better understand health and health care problems faced by rural communities. This research informs and is regularly cited in Medicare rulemaking, Congressional testimony, reports by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, and is also shared with key Congressional Committees.

FORHP also connects the public, providers, and stakeholders with rural health information, tools, and resources through the Rural Health Information Hub.

FUNDING: $6.6 million through the Rural Health Research Program

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Regularly update the public resource that monitors and tracks the number of rural hospitals across the country that have closed completely or converted to another type of facility that provides only non-inpatient care.

SUPPORTING RURAL HOSPITALS

Rural hospitals play a critical role in the rural health infrastructure, providing essential care to small, isolated, or remote communities.

FUNDING: $54.8 million to support small rural hospitals across the country with funding to states

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - $31.9 million through the **Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility (Flex) Program** to work with states to assist CAHs in improving financial and quality performance through voluntary reporting.
  - Within Flex, there is a nearly $2 million initiative for eight states to strengthen the quality workforce in rural emergency medical service agencies over five years.
- **Impact:**
  - Supported over 1,300 CAHs in 45 states in implementing quality improvement strategies, adopting innovative service models, stabilizing their finances, and navigating regulatory requirements.
  - Through the Flex Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Project, 79% of CAHs improved in at least one quality measure.
- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - $22.9 million through the **Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program** to enable states to support small, rural hospitals through investments in hardware, software, and training.
- **Impact:**
  - Over 1,600 small rural hospitals across 46 states received assistance to help pay for costs related to delivering value-based care.

FUNDING: $24.7 million through the Rural Provider Assistance Program

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Provide direct financial support to eligible hospitals facing structural payment disadvantages to retain health care providers and preserve essential health services.
- **Impact:**
  - 132 rural hospitals across 13 states will strengthen their health care workforce, sustain essential health

services, and ensure continued access to care in the communities they serve.

FORHP funds several free technical assistance programs to help rural hospitals improve and/or maintain continued access to health care services.

FUNDING: $20 million to build capacity for small, rural hospitals to provide high-quality, efficient care

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Support hospitals and strengthen health care delivery across the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and Delta Regional Authority (DRA) regions, as well as nationwide, through initiatives that improve rural hospitals' operational efficiency, financial stability, and long-term sustainability, including the **Rural Hospital Stabilization Pilot Program**.
- **Impact:**
  - 74 small rural hospitals and rural health clinics received technical assistance to improve their finances and the quality of the care they provide.

FUNDING: $11.5 million to the 50 State Offices of Rural Health

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Provide technical assistance to rural communities to leverage state and federal resources, funding, and information.
- **Impact:**
  - 36,000 (unduplicated) clients received technical assistance directly from State Offices of Rural Health.

FUNDING: $5 million to support technical assistance around the new Rural Emergency Hospital (REH) provider type

- **Program Activities Summary:**
  - Help hospitals explore REH to see if it is a feasible option for a rural community that cannot support inpatient services.
- **Impact:**
  - 112 rural hospitals received technical assistance through the **REH Technical Assistance Center**.

HRSA-Supported Resources:

- Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
- Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Funding Opportunities
- Rural Health Information Hub
- Rural Health Research Gateway
- FORHP Rural Eligibility
- HRSA Data Warehouse for Rural Health Investments and Grants
- FORHP Rural Hospital & Rural Health Clinic Technical Assistance Finder
- Rural SUD Info Center

*All data presented in the fact sheet reflect the most recent year available.