

Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

A \$50 billion federal investment in rural healthcare — and what it means for academic family medicine

The Rural Health Transformation Program is a \$50 billion federal investment created under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (P.L. 119-21) to strengthen rural healthcare delivery over five years. Administered by CMS, it gives states flexible funding to address their most pressing rural health challenges — from workforce shortages to behavioral health access to telehealth infrastructure.

\$50B

total investment over 5 years

50

states received FY2026 awards
(Dec 2025)

\$150M–\$280M+

per-state award range (FY2026)

5

core priority areas funded

Five Core Priority Areas

- **Prevention & Access:** Expanding screening, preventive care, and community-based services.
- **Workforce:** Recruiting, training, and retaining rural healthcare professionals.
- **Technology:** Telehealth, EHR modernization, interoperability, and AI tools.
- **Behavioral Health:** Integrating SUD, mental health, and crisis response into rural care.
- **Value-Based Care:** Transitioning rural providers to sustainable, outcomes-based payment models.

What States Are Funding

Common themes across state plans include GME residency expansion (particularly in family medicine, OB/GYN, and psychiatry), loan repayment tied to rural service commitments, EHR modernization and telehealth hub build-out, hub-and-spoke networks for specialty access, mobile health units and community paramedicine, and integration of behavioral health and chronic disease management into primary care.

What This Means for Academic Family Medicine

- Multiple states are funding GME expansion and rural residency pipelines — real partnership opportunities for family medicine training programs.
- States are prioritizing primary care integration with behavioral health, telehealth, and chronic disease management — areas of direct family medicine expertise.
- Rural preceptor incentives are appearing in multiple state plans — financial support opportunities for community-based faculty and preceptors.
- Programs with rural tracks should engage their state health department now to understand partnership and funding opportunities.

How to Engage

- **1. Find your state's plan:** Review your state's RHTP application and FY2026 award abstract via the CMS RHTP webpage or NRHA's State Application Summary Guide.
- **2. Identify opportunities:** Look for GME, workforce, and primary care provisions; identify your state's lead agency (typically the State Office of Rural Health or Medicaid agency).
- **3. Connect & advocate:** Reach out to your state's RHTP lead to explore partnership opportunities and contact CAFM's government relations team for advocacy support and coordination.