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## Rural Health Transformation Grant Opportunities Now Open for Wisconsin Hospitals, Rural Health Clinics and Other Providers

On June 15, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) opened application windows for hospitals, rural health clinics and other healthcare providers to apply for three competitive grant funding opportunities totaling \$40 million from the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP).

The \$40 million in grants is part of the \$203.7 million in federal funds awarded to Wisconsin in the first year of the five-year RHTP.

Two other competitive RHTP grants totaling over \$22 million are also available to the state's rural school systems and technical colleges to develop or expand rural healthcare workforce programs.

Authorized under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, the RHTP is a competitive \$50 billion federal funding opportunity available to all states to strengthen and support rural health care through 2030.

According to DHS, the three grants the agency announced this week are intended to support initiatives in rural and surrounding communities that will coordinate care across fragmented care systems, train and hire more community health workers and support investments in dental technology that improve efficiency and increase access to dental care.

### Coordinated Care Partnership Grants

DHS is releasing funding for coordinated care grants in two phases.

In the first phase, DHS is making a total of \$10 million available for health providers and their community partners to apply for initial six-month planning or pilot grants to establish new or expanded partnership models that coordinate care across systems and sectors in rural communities.

Grant awardees will then be eligible to apply for a full award covering the remaining four years of the program, totaling an estimated \$205 million for all awardees. DHS says it will release the second phase of grant applications for the full award in February 2027.

In its request for application, DHS described several examples of projects involving hospitals or health systems that would be eligible for care coordination grant funds.

Example projects included hospital or health system partnerships with behavioral health providers, school districts and local law enforcement, as well as initiatives to expand transitional care management teams, implement community-based obstetrics care management and integrating behavioral health professionals into rural health clinics.

The deadline to apply for the first phase of coordinated care planning grants totaling \$10 million is August 21, 2026.

### Community Health Worker Grants

Hospitals, rural health clinics and other providers have the opportunity to apply for a grant opportunity of up to \$20 million in the first year of the program to develop or expand community health worker (CHW) programs in rural communities across Wisconsin, according to DHS.

DHS says it anticipates selecting 30 to 50 recipients that will expand or start a CHW program with two or three CHWs each in rural and surrounding communities across Wisconsin, subject to change based on program needs.

Selected rural organizations that are hiring new CHWs will receive estimated awards of between \$400,000 to \$600,000 per year, or \$200,000 per CHW.

DHS says smaller awards of between \$100,000 to \$300,000 may be available for rural organizations that already have CHWs or CHW supervisors on staff or contract with organizations to provide these services. Eligible uses of these awards include strengthening organizational CHW capacity or professional development, building strong referral or tracking systems or testing new payment models.

The deadline to apply for the first year of CHW grants totaling \$20 million is August 7, 2026. Optional letters of intent are due by July 1, 2026.

## Rural Workforce Education and Training Grants

Grants made available through the program will also offer opportunities for Wisconsin hospitals and health systems to join their partners in education to expand health care career pathways and help grow the workforce faster.

Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction (DPI) released a grant opportunity of up to \$41,000 annually to support at least 20 rural schools to develop or expand healthcare and human services career pathways. Hospitals can reach out to their school district with suggestions for how this funding can be use, and how the hospital can help support the ask.

The Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) also has an opportunity of interest to hospitals and health systems. WTCS released a RHTP grant funding opportunity for the 16 WTCS colleges to develop rural health training programs and equip rural training facilities. Year 1 funding is \$22.1 million. WTCS is accepting applications on a rolling basis through August.

This funding could provide an opportunity for hospitals and tech colleges to work together to expand existing apprenticeships in high need professions, like surgical technicians, or to prepare for the upcoming Board of Nursing rules that will allow bachelor's prepared nurses an expanded role as clinical faculty for nursing schools.

## Dental Technology Investment Grants

Dental practices and clinics in rural communities have the opportunity to apply for a grant funding opportunity totaling \$10 million to buy eligible dental technologies that have been demonstrated to increase efficiency, expand access and improve delivery of dental care, according to DHS.

A few examples of equipment eligible for dental technology investment grants include ultrasonic or hypersonic scaling systems, tele-dentistry platforms and portable or mobile dental equipment.

Contact WHA Senior Vice President of Finance & Payment Christian Moran with questions.

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### EDUCATION EVENTS

#### Jun. 23, 2026

Rising Claims, Real Impacts: Wisconsin Hospital Risk Trends and What Leaders Can Do Now

#### Aug. 4, 2026

Seeing the Real Market: Using Claims Enhanced Intelligence to Make Better Strategy, Access, and Growth Decisions

#### Sep. 10, 2026

Caring for Wisconsin's Caregivers: 2026 WHA Healthcare Workforce Well-being Summit