

Application Guide and Frequently Asked Questions



Upper Peninsula Rural Health Clinic CHW Recruitment and Retention Opportunity

Michigan Center for Rural Health | Rural Health Transformation Program

Application Process Overview

- Review this Application Guide and Frequently Asked Questions, the Eligible and Ineligible Uses of Funds Guide, and the Upper Peninsula CHW Recruitment and Retention Application.
- Attend the informational webinar on October 9th, 2026 at 11 am.
- Complete and submit the application by October 30, 2026.
- Applications will be reviewed using the eligibility, program priority, and selection criteria described in these application materials.
- Award notifications will be issued to selected Certified Rural Health Clinics located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.
- Selected clinics will work with MCRH to finalize a clinic-specific workplan, performance measures, CHW recruitment and implementation approach, sustainability plan, and budget.
- A subcontract agreement must be fully executed before approved grant-funded hiring activities, project activities, or expenditures begin.
- MCRH will provide ongoing technical assistance, shared learning opportunities, implementation support, monitoring, and reporting guidance throughout the funding period.

About This Opportunity

The Michigan Center for Rural Health (MCRH) will award funding and provide implementation support selected Certified Rural Health Clinics through the competitive **Upper Peninsula CHW Recruitment and Retention Opportunity**.

This opportunity is designed to expand access to care by supporting each selected clinic in recruiting or identifying, hiring, integrating, and sustaining one Community Health Worker. CHWs may support patient outreach, health education, care coordination, resource navigation, social needs screening and referrals, follow-up, and community-based service delivery.

Participating clinics will develop a clinic-specific CHW role based on local and community needs. Each clinic will establish an appropriate supervision structure, integrate the CHW into its care team and workflows, support clinic-based and community-based service delivery, track agreed-upon measures, and develop a plan for long-term sustainability.

MCRH will provide individualized technical assistance to support CHW recruitment, onboarding, training coordination, supervision, workflow integration, community partnerships, performance measurement, reimbursement readiness, retention, and long-term sustainability.

Application period: Open through October 30, 2026

Maximum award: Up to \$80,000 per selected Rural Health Clinic

Funding period: Begins after the subcontract agreement is fully executed and the clinic's workplan and budget are approved. All awarded funds must be expended by September 30, 2027.

Eligible applicants: Certified Rural Health Clinics located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula

Where does this funding come from?

This funding originates from the federal **Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)**. Michigan's RHTP award is administered by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

MCRH received funding through MDHHS to expand access to care through CHW placement in Upper Peninsula Rural Health Clinics. MCRH will award funding to eligible Rural Health Clinics through the **Upper Peninsula CHW Recruitment and Retention Opportunity** and will provide participating clinics with technical assistance, implementation support, monitoring, and reporting guidance.

MCRH will serve as the primary point of contact for participating Rural Health Clinics throughout the application, award, implementation, monitoring, and reporting processes.

What support is included?

Selected clinics will receive subcontract funding to support one CHW position and individualized technical assistance from MCRH and subject matter experts. Support will focus on CHW recruitment, hiring, onboarding, training coordination, supervision, care team integration, community-based service delivery, performance measurement, reimbursement readiness, retention, and long-term sustainability.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

Certified Rural Health Clinics located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula are eligible to apply. Clinics that are unsure whether they meet the eligibility requirements are encouraged to contact MCRH at RHTP.MCRH@msu.edu before submitting an application.

Can multiple clinics within the same health system apply?

Yes. Multiple eligible Rural Health Clinics within the same health system or organization may apply. However, each participating RHC must submit a separate clinic-level application because each requested award will support one CHW position and a clinic-specific implementation approach.

Each application must identify the participating RHC by name, location, and CMS Certification Number (CCN) and describe the clinic's:

- Community and patient needs
- Proposed CHW role and activities
- Recruitment or identified candidate approach
- Supervision and care team integration plan
- Community partnerships
- Budget and anticipated use of funds
- Sustainability and reimbursement approach

Clinics within the same health system should coordinate internally to ensure that proposed activities, staffing, and expenses are clearly separated and are not duplicated across applications.

Can clinics apply for other RHTP funding opportunities?

Clinics may apply for other RHTP funding opportunities for which they are eligible. Each opportunity has its own application, selection process, workplan, and budget requirements. Activities and expenses must be clearly separated across awards, and the same expense may not be charged to more than one funding source. Any limits on receiving multiple RHTP awards will be identified in the applicable funding opportunity materials.

Receiving or applying for other RHTP funding does not prevent your organization from applying for this opportunity. However, funds may not cover the same expenses already supported by another funding source.

Does a clinic need to have an existing CHW program?

No. Clinics do not need to have an existing Community Health Worker program to apply. Clinics at different stages of readiness are eligible, including those developing a new approach or strengthening an existing program, workflow, partnership, or care team.

Applicants should describe their current capacity, identified needs, proposed approach, and readiness to implement the project. MCRH will provide technical assistance to help participating clinics assess needs, plans, and implement the required program activities.

Does the clinic need to identify a CHW candidate before applying?

A clinic may apply with or without a candidate already identified. The application should describe the clinic's recruitment approach and anticipated timeline. Clinics may hire an individual who is already trained as a CHW or identify a candidate who needs training.

Program Priorities and CHW Role**What will participating clinics be expected to address?**

All participating clinics will be expected to address each of the core priority areas below. Clinics will not be expected to begin at the same place or implement identical activities. Each clinic's approach will reflect its community needs, existing capacity, care team structure, partnerships, and intended CHW role.

- **CHW placement:** Recruit or identify, hire, onboard, and retain one CHW to serve the participating Upper Peninsula Rural Health Clinic and its rural community.
- **Care team integration and supervision:** Establish a clear CHW role, appropriate supervision structure, communication pathways, documentation practices, and connections with clinical and administrative staff.
- **Patient and community support:** Strengthen patient outreach, health education, care coordination, resource navigation, social needs screening and response, referrals, and follow-up based on local needs.
- **Community partnerships and service delivery:** Establish or strengthen relationships with healthcare, behavioral health, social care, and community organizations and support service delivery within and beyond the clinic.
- **Performance measurement:** Track required CHW hiring and implementation milestones, activities, services, and outcomes using tools and guidance provided by MCRH.
- **Sustainability:** Develop workflows, organizational supports, partnerships, reimbursement readiness, and other financing strategies that can help maintain the CHW position beyond the funding period.

What activities may the CHW perform?

The CHW's activities will reflect the clinic's approved workplan, community needs, and applicable training, scope, documentation, and supervision requirements. Activities may include:

- Patient outreach, engagement, and follow-up
- Health education and support for patient self-management
- Care coordination and navigation of healthcare and social services
- Social drivers of health screening support and response to identified needs
- Referrals and connections to community resources
- Closed-loop follow-up with patients and partner organizations
- Community-based outreach and service delivery
- Activities supporting the clinic's efforts to address care gaps and improve access

Will clinics need to partner with other organizations?

Yes. Participating clinics will be expected to establish or strengthen relationships with healthcare, behavioral health, social care, workforce, and community organizations that support the CHW's role and help connect patients and community members with services and resources. MCRH will provide technical assistance to help clinics identify and strengthen appropriate partnerships and referral pathways.

Is the CHW required to work only inside the clinic?

No. This opportunity is intended to support both clinic-based integration and community-based service delivery. The clinic's approved workplan should explain where and how the CHW will serve patients and community members, how community-based activities will be supervised, and how services and activities will be documented.

Can the clinic hire someone who is already trained as a CHW?

Yes. Clinics may hire a candidate who has already completed appropriate CHW training or identify a candidate who needs training. The clinic will be expected to document the individual's training or certification status and confirm that applicable program requirements are met.

How will clinics address these priorities?

Selected clinics will participate in individualized technical assistance and shared learning activities coordinated by MCRH. Support may include periodic learning sessions, webinars, peer discussions, shared tools and resources, and clinic-specific assistance related to recruitment, onboarding, supervision, workflow integration, community partnerships, performance measurement, reimbursement readiness, retention, and sustainability.

Will every clinic implement the same activities?

No. All participating clinics will address the required priority areas, but each clinic's workplan will reflect its patient population, community needs, existing CHW capacity, care team structure, partnerships, staffing, and organizational readiness. Each clinic will develop a distinct CHW role and implementation approach based on local needs.

Funding and Allowable Costs**How much funding is available?**

Selected Upper Peninsula Rural Health Clinics may receive up to \$80,000 each to support one CHW position and approved related project costs. Eligible costs may include salary, fringe benefits, recruitment, onboarding, training, certification, mileage, care team integration, and other expenses directly related to the approved CHW position. **All awarded funds must be expended by September 30, 2027.**

What expenses may be supported?

Funding may support reasonable and necessary expenses directly related to the approved CHW position and included in the clinic's approved workplan and budget. Applicants should review the *Eligible and Ineligible Uses of Funds Guide* for additional information about allowable expenses, expenses that may require additional review, and expenses that may not be supported.

Is a match required?

No. There is no matching requirement for this funding opportunity.

Will funding be provided upfront or through reimbursement?

Funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis rather than an upfront payment. Selected clinics will incur eligible, approved project expenses and submit the required documentation to MCRH for review and reimbursement. Reimbursement schedules, documentation requirements, and fiscal reporting instructions will be outlined in the subgrant agreement.

When can clinics begin hiring and spending?

Selected clinics may begin grant-funded activities and expenditures only after the required subgrant agreement is fully executed and the clinic's workplan and budget have been approved. Expenses incurred outside the approved project period or prior to authorization may not be eligible for reimbursement.

Can funding replace an existing source of support?

No. RHTP funding may not be used to replace existing funding, general funds, or currently funded positions. Funding may be used to develop new activities or meaningfully strengthen or expand existing efforts when the proposed grant-funded costs are new, additional, and directly related to the clinic's approved workplan.

Funds may not be used to pay for expenses that are currently funded, have already been paid, or will be reimbursed by another funding source. Applicants should clearly describe how the requested funding will add to or enhance existing work rather than replace current support.

Application Process

Will there be an informational webinar?

An informational webinar is scheduled for **October 9, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time**. A recording will be made available after the webinar.

How do clinics apply?

Eligible clinics must complete and submit the **Upper Peninsula CHW Recruitment and Retention Application** by **October 30, 2026**.

The application asks clinics to describe the communities and needs the CHW position will serve, the proposed role, recruitment and training plans, supervision and care team integration, community partnerships, implementation readiness and support needs, anticipated results and reporting capacity, sustainability and reimbursement readiness, and the proposed budget.

How will applications be evaluated?

Funding is competitive and will not be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications will first be reviewed for eligibility and completeness.

Eligible applications will then be scored on a 10-point scale using the five criteria below. Each criterion will receive 0, 1, or 2 points.

1. **Rural and community need:** The clinic and community needs identified, the population to be served, and the anticipated benefit of adding a CHW.
2. **Alignment with program priorities:** How well the proposed CHW role and activities align with the opportunity's priorities, including CHW placement and retention, care team integration, patient and community support, community-based service delivery, performance measurement, and sustainability.
3. **Feasibility and readiness:** The clinic's capacity and approach to recruiting or confirming a candidate, hiring, training as needed, supervising, onboarding, and integrating a CHW within the funding period.
4. **Partnerships, anticipated results, and sustainability:** The clinic's community partnerships, expected results, ability to measure progress, and approach to sustaining the CHW position beyond the funding period.
5. **Budget and spending feasibility:** Whether the requested funding is reasonable, connected to the proposed CHW position and activities, consistent with eligible uses of funds, and likely to be fully expended by September 30, 2027.

A score of 0 means the criterion is not addressed, 1 means it is partially addressed, and 2 means it is clearly addressed.

In addition to the application score, MCRH may consider applicable MDHHS needs-based prioritization factors and geographic distribution across the Upper Peninsula when making final funding decisions. Applicants may provide local context when it helps explain needs that are not fully reflected in available data.

What happens after a clinic is selected?

Selected clinics will:

- Receive an award notification and confirm their intent to participate
- Complete subcontracting, onboarding, and compliance requirements
- Work with MCRH to finalize a clinic-specific workplan, budget, baseline and performance measures, hiring timeline, implementation approach, and sustainability plan
- Recruit or confirm a CHW candidate and coordinate training when needed
- Execute the subcontract agreement before beginning approved grant-funded activities or expenditures
- Participate in individualized technical assistance and required shared learning activities
- Track agreed-upon measures and maintain appropriate program and fiscal documentation
- Submit required performance and fiscal reports
- Communicate implementation challenges, requested changes, and technical assistance needs to MCRH
- Develop and implement a plan for long-term sustainability
- Expend Year 1 funds by September 30, 2027, in accordance with the approved workplan, budget, and subcontract agreement

Participating Clinic Expectations

What will selected clinics be expected to do?

Selected clinics will be expected to:

- Identify a clinic lead and qualified CHW supervisor
- Recruit or identify, hire, train as needed, and onboard one CHW
- Define the CHW's role and integrate the position into clinic workflows and the care team
- Support appropriate supervision, documentation, referral processes, community partnerships, and clinic- and community-based service delivery
- Participate in required technical assistance and shared learning activities
- Track agreed-upon measures, maintain required documentation, and submit performance and fiscal reports
- Communicate implementation challenges or requested changes to MCRH
- Develop and implement a plan to sustain the CHW position beyond the funding period

Who should supervise the CHW?

The clinic must identify a supervisor who has sufficient time, authority, and understanding of the CHW role to provide regular guidance and support.

The supervision approach should promote role clarity, appropriate integration into the care team, communication with clinical and administrative staff, professional development, retention, and adherence to applicable training, documentation, and program requirements.

MCRH will provide technical assistance related to CHW supervision, role development, workflow integration, retention, and professional development.

What happens if a CHW leaves during the funding period?

The clinic must notify MCRH promptly if the CHW leaves the position or if the position becomes vacant. MCRH and the clinic will review the circumstances, remaining funding period, recruitment plan, budget, implementation timeline, and any necessary subcontract or workplan changes. Revised activities or expenditures must be reviewed and approved before they are implemented.

Technical Assistance and Shared Learning

What support will MCRH provide?

MCRH will provide and coordinate individualized technical assistance, tools, resources, subject matter expertise, and implementation support throughout the funding period.

Depending on the clinic's needs and approved workplan, technical assistance may include:

- CHW role development, onboarding, and care team integration
- Recruitment strategy and training coordination
- Supervision, retention, and professional development
- Workflow and documentation development
- Community partnerships and referral processes
- Community-based service delivery
- Performance measurement, data collection, and reporting
- Medicaid CHW reimbursement and billing readiness
- Sustainability planning
- Implementation problem-solving

Will clinics participate in shared learning?

Yes. Participating clinics will be expected to engage in periodic learning sessions, webinars, peer discussions, and other shared learning opportunities throughout the funding period.

These activities will allow clinics to exchange strategies, challenges, tools, and lessons learned while receiving support on shared implementation needs. MCRH will also use clinic feedback and experiences to shape technical assistance, resources, and future learning opportunities.

Performance Measurement and Reporting

What will clinics be expected to track?

Participating clinics should anticipate tracking a limited set of measures related to:

- CHW recruitment, hiring, onboarding, training, and care team integration
- Individuals served by the CHW
- Outreach, education, navigation, referrals, follow-up, and community-based services provided
- Progress toward reimbursement readiness, retention, and long-term sustainability

Final performance measures will be established with MCRH during development of the clinic-specific workplan and will align with applicable MDHHS and RHTP evaluation requirements. MCRH will provide reporting tools and technical assistance to support data collection and reporting.

How frequently will clinics report?

Participating clinics should anticipate quarterly performance reporting, along with regular implementation and performance check-ins.

MCRH will provide reporting requirements, templates, timelines, and technical assistance. Fiscal reporting and reimbursement requirements will be outlined in the clinic's subcontract agreement.

Can approved activities, staffing, or budgets be changed?

Clinics must contact MCRH before changing approved project activities, workplans, staffing, hiring plans, or budgets. Changes must be reviewed and approved by MCRH in accordance with the clinic's subcontract agreement and applicable MDHHS requirements before revised activities or expenditures are implemented.

Additional RHTP Funding Opportunities

MCRH is offering additional Rural Health Transformation Program funding opportunities for Rural Health Clinics. Each opportunity has its own eligibility requirements, application materials, selection process, workplan, budget, and agreement requirements.

Clinics may apply for multiple opportunities for which they are eligible. Activities and expenses must be clearly separated across applications and awards, and the same expense may not be charged to more than one funding source. Any limitations on receiving multiple RHTP awards will be identified in the applicable funding materials. Receiving or applying for other RHTP funding does not prevent your organization from applying for this opportunity. However, funds may not cover the same expenses already supported by another funding source.

Discounted CHW Training Opportunity

Eligible individuals who live or work in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and need CHW training may enroll in a nationally aligned certification program offered by Northern Michigan University's Center for Rural Health in partnership with Everyday Life Consulting. The training is available for \$250, discounted from the standard cost of \$1,625. This is a separate, optional opportunity and is not limited to individuals employed by participating Rural Health Clinics.

[Learn more about the Nationally Aligned Community Health Worker Certification Program.](#)

Questions and Contact Information

For questions about eligibility, the application, CHW training, proposed activities, budgets, or technical assistance, contact:

Michigan Center for Rural Health RHTP Team

Email: RHTP.MCRH@msu.edu

Program webpage: <https://mcrh.msu.edu/programs/primary-care/rhc-rhtp26applications>

Dates and funding levels are subject to final MDHHS approval. Funding priorities were determined by MDHHS.

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Completed applications and all supporting documents **must** be submitted by email to RHTP.MCRH@msu.edu before **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on October 30, 2026.**