

Application Guide and Frequently Asked Questions



Rural Health Clinic Chronic Disease and Collaborative Care Fund

Michigan Center for Rural Health | Rural Health Transformation Program

Application Process Overview

1. Review this Application Guide and Frequently Asked Questions, the Eligible and Ineligible Uses of Funds Guide, and the Rural Health Clinic Chronic Disease and Collaborative Care Fund Application.
2. Attend the informational webinar on October 9th, 2026 at 11 am.
3. Complete and submit the application by October 30, 2026.
4. Applications will be reviewed using established eligibility, program priority, and selection criteria outlined in the application materials.
5. Award notifications are issued to selected Certified Rural Health Clinics.
6. Selected clinics will complete a readiness assessment and work with MCRH to finalize a site-specific workplan, performance measures, implementation approach, and budget.
7. An agreement must be fully executed before approved grant-funded activities and expenditures begin. All awarded funds must be expended by September 30, 2027.
8. 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 grant funding and provide implementation support to selected Rural Health Clinics through a competitive grant funding process for the **Rural Health Clinic Chronic Disease and Collaborative Care Fund**.

This opportunity is designed to help RHCs strengthen chronic disease prevention and management through coordinated care, population health screening, Community Health Worker (CHW) integration and sustainability, community and cross-sector partnerships, referral and follow-up processes, and evidence-based interventions. For this opportunity, collaborative care refers broadly to coordination among Rural Health Clinic staff, Community Health Workers, healthcare and behavioral health providers, social care organizations, and community partners. It may include shared workflows, coordinated referrals, patient outreach and follow-up, care coordination, and appropriate information sharing across organizations. The term is not limited to a specific clinical Collaborative Care Model.

Participating clinics will develop projects based on local and community needs while addressing required program priorities. MCRH will provide individualized technical assistance to support assessment, planning, implementation, performance measurement, evaluation, and long-term sustainability.

Application period: Open now through October 30, 2026

Maximum award: Applicants may request up to \$300,000 per application, whether the application is for one eligible RHC or includes multiple eligible RHCs under a health system or organization. For an organization-level application, the \$300,000 cap applies to the combined request for all participating clinics.

Grant period: Begins upon execution of the subgrant agreement and ends September 30, 2027. All awarded funds must be expended by September 30, 2027.

Eligible applicants: Certified Rural Health Clinics located in Michigan counties designated as fully rural or partially rural are eligible to apply. Priority will be given to applicants located in fully rural counties.

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 support Rural Health Clinics in strengthening chronic disease prevention, collaborative care, and sustainable care delivery approaches. MCRH will award funding to eligible Rural Health Clinics through the **Rural Health Clinic Chronic Disease and Collaborative Care Fund** 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 funding support and individualized technical assistance. MCRH and its partners will provide assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, peer learning, and subject matter support and access to subject matter expertise throughout the project period.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

Certified Rural Health Clinics located in Michigan counties designated as fully rural or partially rural are eligible to apply. Priority will be given to applicants located in fully rural counties. Clinics should review the [MDHHS RHTP counties resource](#) to confirm eligibility. Clinics with questions about eligibility should contact MCRH before applying.

Can multiple clinics within the same health system or organization apply?

Yes. For this funding opportunity, a health system or organization with multiple eligible RHCs must choose one of two application approaches:

- Submit one organization-level application that includes multiple eligible RHCs; or
- Have each participating RHC submit an individual clinic-level application.

Each participating RHC must be identified by name, location, and CMS Certification Number (CCN). An organization-level application must also explain how the proposed activities and requested funding will be allocated among the participating clinics.

These approaches are mutually exclusive for each clinic. An RHC included in an organization-level application may not also submit or be included in a separate application for the same funding opportunity.

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.

Does a clinic need an existing chronic disease or CHW program to apply?

No. Clinics do not need to have an existing chronic disease or 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.

Project Priority Areas

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 start at the same place or implement identical activities; the specific strategies, scope, and sequencing will reflect each clinic's needs, existing capacity, and community priorities.

- **Cross-sector partnerships:** Establishing or strengthening connections with Michigan Hubs and other healthcare, behavioral health, social care, and community partners to support coordinated, community-driven care.
- **Foundational infrastructure and evaluation:** Establishing baseline measures, identifying gaps in chronic disease tracking, and developing an evaluation and measurement approach to monitor progress and outcomes.
- **Community Health Worker integration and sustainability:** Recruiting, training, supporting, and incorporating CHWs into care teams and workflows to support patient outreach, education, navigation, referrals, and follow-up, while developing strategies for long-term sustainability.
- **Preventive care and chronic disease management:** Implementing or strengthening evidence-based approaches based on clinic and community priorities, including diabetes, hypertension, preventive care, prenatal care, behavioral health needs connected to the proposed project, and other chronic disease prevention and management priorities.
- **Screening, monitoring, and referral coordination:** Strengthening population health screening, routine assessment and risk-factor tracking, care coordination, and technology-supported closed-loop referrals and follow-up to connect patients with appropriate clinical and community services.
- **Sustainability:** Developing workflows, partnerships, staffing and care team approaches, financing strategies, and other supports that can help successful activities continue beyond the grant period.

Will clinics need to partner with other organizations?

Yes. Cross-sector partnership development is a required component of this opportunity. Participating clinics must establish or strengthen collaborative relationships that support coordinated, community-driven care and will be expected to prioritize connections with existing Michigan Hubs and other healthcare, behavioral health, social care, and community organizations serving their area. MCRH will provide technical assistance to help clinics identify and strengthen appropriate partnerships.

Are clinics required to integrate Community Health Workers?

Yes. CHW integration and sustainability are required components of the funding opportunity. Based on existing capacity, a clinic may strengthen the role of an existing CHW and/or recruit, train, and integrate a new CHW into care teams and workflows. Clinics will track CHW outreach, education, referrals, and follow-up and develop a sustainability approach that may include reimbursement and billing readiness and/or other sustainable care team models.

CHWs supported through the project must meet applicable training, credentialing, and continuing education requirements. Grant-funded CHW costs must be new or additional and may not duplicate expenses paid by another funding source.

How will clinics address these priorities?

Selected clinics will participate in an MCRH-led learning collaborative and individualized technical assistance process. Shared learning may include periodic virtual learning sessions, webinars, peer discussions, shared tools and resources, and opportunities for clinics to exchange implementation strategies and lessons learned. MCRH will also meet with clinics individually to review baseline information, identify priorities, address implementation barriers, and refine site-specific plans.

Will every clinic implement the same activities?

No. All participating clinics will work toward the required priority areas, but each clinic's workplan will reflect its patient population, identified needs, existing programs and partnerships, staffing, and capacity. Clinics may develop new activities or strengthen existing efforts based on local and community priorities.

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

Applicants may request up to \$300,000 per application, whether the application is for one eligible RHC or includes multiple eligible RHCs under a health system or organization. For an organization-level application, the \$300,000 cap applies to the combined request for all participating clinics.

Is a match required?

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

What expenses may be supported?

Funding may support reasonable and necessary expenses directly related to approved project activities and included in the clinic's approved budget. For more information, and a list of unallowable expenses, review the *Eligible and Ineligible Uses of Funds Guide*.

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 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 application by October 30, 2026. The application will gather information about the clinic's needs, current capacity, planned approach to the required project priority areas, existing and proposed partnerships, readiness to participate, and anticipated funding needs.

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. **Community and clinic need:** The chronic disease and care coordination needs identified and the populations, communities, or clinic locations that would benefit.
2. **Alignment with funding priorities:** How well the proposed activities address the fund's required priorities.
3. **Feasibility and readiness:** The clinic's capacity to implement the project and participate in required technical assistance, shared learning, measurement, and reporting.
4. **Partnerships, anticipated results, and sustainability:** The proposed partnerships, expected results, ability to measure progress, and initial approach to sustaining successful activities.
5. **Budget:** Whether the requested funding is reasonable, connected to the proposed 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 rurality, geographic distribution, available state and federal data, and applicable needs-based priorities identified by MDHHS when making final funding decisions.

Priority will be given to clinics located in fully rural counties. Applicants may provide local context in the application when it helps explain needs that are not fully reflected in available data.

What happens after a clinic is selected?

- Receive and accept the award notification.
- Complete contracting and onboarding requirements.
- Review or establish baseline measures and work with MCRH to finalize the clinic-specific workplan, budget, implementation approach, and performance measures.
- Begin approved grant-funded activities after required subgrant agreements, workplan, and budget approvals are complete.
- Participate in individualized technical assistance and shared learning activities throughout implementation.
- Track agreed-upon measures, maintain grant and fiscal documentation, and submit required performance and fiscal reports.
- Communicate implementation challenges and technical assistance needs and plan for long-term sustainability.

Participating Clinic Expectations

What will participating clinics be expected to do?

Participating clinics will be expected to:

- Identify a project lead and appropriate implementation team
- Complete onboarding and work with MCRH to establish or confirm baseline measures and develop a site-specific workplan
- Address the required project priority areas
- Participate in required technical assistance and shared learning activities
- Track agreed-upon performance measures and submit required reports
- Maintain appropriate documentation to support grant activities and expenditures
- Communicate implementation challenges and technical assistance needs

- Plan for long-term sustainability

MCRH will work with each clinic to develop an implementation plan based on its identified needs, priorities, and capacity. Clinics will report on required performance measures established for the fund, with additional measures developed as appropriate to reflect clinic-specific activities.

Technical Assistance and Implementation Support

What support will MCRH provide?

MCRH will provide and coordinate individualized technical assistance, shared learning opportunities, tools and resources, access to subject matter expertise, and implementation support throughout the project period.

Technical assistance may include:

- Baseline measures, assessment, workplan development, and evaluation
- CHW integration, reimbursement and billing readiness, and sustainability
- Chronic disease prevention and management
- Community partnerships, care coordination, and referral processes
- Population health screening, data, performance measurement, and reporting
- Planning for sustainability
- Implementation improvement and problem-solving

Will clinics participate in shared learning?

Yes. As part of MCRH's implementation approach, participating clinics will be expected to engage in learning collaboratives, webinars, peer discussions, and other shared learning opportunities throughout the project period. These opportunities will allow clinics to share tools, strategies, implementation challenges, and lessons learned. MCRH will also use clinic feedback and experiences to help shape resources, technical assistance, and future learning opportunities.

Performance Measurement and Reporting

Participating clinics will track a set of performance measures aligned with the required project priority areas.

Measures may include:

- Cross-sector partnerships established or strengthened
- Individuals identified with chronic disease
- Screenings conducted
- Referrals made and follow-up completed
- Individuals served
- CHW outreach, education, referral, and follow-up activities
- Other measures related to clinic-specific project activities

Final performance measures will be established in partnership with MCRH, MDHHS, and the RHTP evaluator. MCRH will provide reporting tools and technical assistance to support data collection and performance measurement.

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 requirements will be outlined in the clinic's subcontract agreement.

Can approved activities or budgets be changed?

Clinics should contact MCRH before making changes to approved project activities, workplans, or budgets. Changes must be reviewed and approved in accordance with the clinic's subgrant 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.

Questions and Contact Information

For questions about eligibility, the application, 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.**