

# Inside Missouri's Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

## ToRCH Care Moves Into Action Across Rural Missouri ...

Dear colleagues and partners,

Over the past month, Missouri's Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) continued moving from planning into active implementation. As we advance RHTP priorities, we are excited to highlight recent progress, key milestones, and upcoming opportunities through the Inside the Missouri RHTP Newsletter.

Since our last update, we have reached several significant milestones in bringing the ToRCH Care vision to life. We launched the Hub Anchor application, creating an opportunity for local organizations and community partners to help lead rural health transformation efforts across Missouri. We also released the Horizon 1 Strategic Minor Renovations funding opportunity, making ~\$30M of RHTP funding available to rural hospitals to strengthen critical infrastructure and preserve access to essential services. Furthermore, we launched the Rural Medical Clerkship initiative to expand training opportunities for future healthcare professionals in rural communities and activated Grant Management operations to support the implementation, oversight, and stewardship of RHTP investments across the state.

Together, these efforts represent an important shift from planning to action as communities begin shaping the local partnerships, programs, and care models that will define the future of rural healthcare in Missouri.

What continues to stand out throughout this work is the strong level of engagement and collaboration occurring across Missouri's rural healthcare ecosystem. Providers, public health leaders, community-based organizations, and local stakeholders are all helping shape how ToRCH Care will operate locally and support long-term improvement in healthcare access, coordination, and sustainability.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to strengthening rural healthcare across our beloved state.

Warm regards,

Joe Miller  
RHTO State Director

## Missouri's RHTP Vision

Every rural Missourian has access to the high-quality care they need through a delivery system that is well aligned, community-anchored, and built to last



# Inside Missouri's Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

## Implementation Milestones by Pillar

We're excited to highlight our latest progress across the RHTP Pillars



### 1. Hub Activation

- Released official Hub Boundaries and Hub Anchor Application, defining Missouri's 27 Hubs across the state and creating opportunities for local organizations to lead rural health transformations
- Published Hub Operational manual – a playbook for onboarding and activating 27 Hubs across the statewide ToRCH care network
- Launched 12 in-person roadshows across rural Missouri and hosted 10+ virtual webinars, attracting 1,200+ attendees, to share the RHTP's vision of sustainably strengthening rural healthcare



### 2. Alternative Payment Models (APMs)

- Launched provider survey and outreach to MO HealthNet managed care organizations to understand existing APM landscape and barriers to adoption in Missouri



### 3. Digital Backbone

- Published the Digital Readiness Assessment report to establish a baseline of the digital landscape and capability gaps across rural providers, and to guide digital backbone investments.
- Established a tiered EHR modernization framework consistent with RHTP outcomes
- Mobilized statewide governance framework and initiated engaging statewide councils to strengthen approach to decision making, governance, and outcome tracking

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## Implementation Milestones by Pillar Cont.

We're excited to highlight our latest progress across the RHTP Pillars



### 4. Rural Health Workforce

- Hosted a webinar in partnership with the Missouri Hospital Association highlighting the Rural Clerkship Development funding opportunity and helping hospitals connect with medical schools seeking student placement sites
- Identified partner organizations to support the launch of training programs across multiple entry-level health career pathways, including pharmacy technicians, doulas, community health workers, and dental hygienists

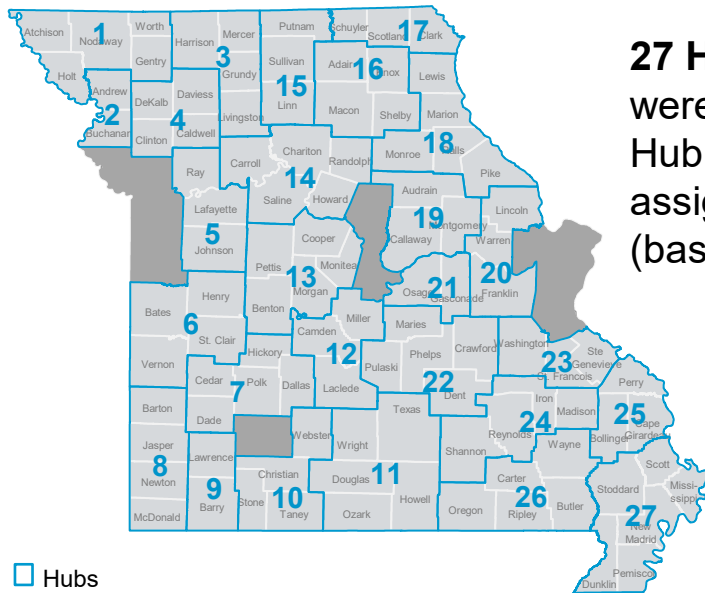


### 5. Provider Transformation

- Launched Horizon 1 funding initiatives for hospitals to preserve access to essential services and strengthen critical infrastructure
- Prepared Horizon 2 Strategic Renovation funding opportunities to help rural providers expand access to care through smart growth and service-line modernization, with focus on maternal, behavioral, outpatient, and diagnostic services  
(The upcoming bid opportunity is expected to be released by the end of July)
- Advanced planning for Remote Patient Monitoring (RPM) and Ambient AI initiatives to support rural providers and improve patient care
- Received vendor responses to the Ambient AI RFI and completed review to inform development of a provider-facing Ambient AI solution menu

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## Missouri RHTP Hub Boundaries



**27 Hubs** and their boundaries were released last month. Each Hub consists of 2-6 counties and is assigned 1-8 RHTP Navigators (based on Medicaid population).

**7 Regional Coordinating Networks (RCNs)** will oversee Hub operations by supporting regional coordination and streamlining implementation across Hubs.

- Hubs
- Rural counties
- Urban counties

## Year 1 RHTP funding dedicated to Hub programs

1. Hubs & RCNs: ~\$50M

4. Workforce: ~\$20M

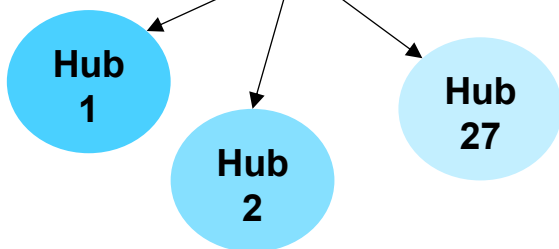
2. APMs: ~\$9M

5. Provider Transformations: ~\$57M

3. Digital Backbone: ~\$56M

6. RHTO Operations: ~\$24M

**~\$15M Discretionary Hub Funding**



**Each hub will receive on avg. ~\$450 - \$650K as discretionary funding; This is additive to the state-wide program funding across pillars**

**Budget subject to change – not final**

Discretionary funding provides Hubs with **flexibility to design and implement programs based on local priorities** within state guidelines.

**This funding:**

- Encourages participation from local providers and community institutions
- Supports community-driven solutions across different regions
- Aligns programs for local needs and ToRCH goals

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## Missouri's First Statewide Digital Readiness Survey

### Background

As part of the ToRCH Care Digital Backbone Pillar, Missouri launched its first statewide Digital Readiness Survey in March to better understand the technology capabilities, needs, and barriers facing rural healthcare providers.

The RHTO received **929 replies** from **12 different types of providers**. Survey responses will directly inform how the state prioritizes Digital Backbone investments and technical support across rural providers.

### The impact of your feedback

#### 1. Identify Needs

Survey responses helped identify technology gaps across rural providers

#### 2. Prioritize Support

Results informed where technical assistance, training, and modernization support may be most needed across Hubs and RCNs

#### 3. Guide Future Investments

Findings helped shape Digital Backbone planning, including interoperability, referral systems, dashboards, and shared data infrastructure

## Key Findings

### Strong Foundation for Digital Health

**Adoption:** 92.4% of responding facilities are connected to an electronic health record (EHR) or clinical documentation system.

### Significant Opportunity to Improve Interoperability and Data Sharing:

33.8% of facilities reported connectivity to a Health Information Exchange (HIE).

### Growing Adoption of Innovative Digital Tools with Room for Future Expansion:

30.8% of facilities reported piloting or deploying Ambient AI technologies.

The results from the Digital Readiness Survey can be found by scanning the QR code below:



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## What We Heard from Rural Communities

### Roadshow Summary

- The RHTO team **hosted 12 ToRCH Care Roadshows** across Missouri, **engaging 500+ local community members** and providers and **answering 300+ stakeholder questions**
- Attendees represented a broad cross-section of rural healthcare and community organizations, including hospitals, FQHCs, pharmacies, behavioral health providers, EMS agencies, LPHAs, and local government leaders
- Governance and local leadership emerged as a key theme, with stakeholders seeking clarity on Hub decision-making and identification of local priorities
- Stakeholders also expressed interest in funding and technology enablement, including long-term program sustainability, interoperability expectations, data-sharing approaches, and digital infrastructure

***“...it’s a blessing to be able to be here to have these discussions and think about what good can come from this for our residents.”***

- an attendee from Hub 10

***“By far, Missouri’s [approach] has been the best.”***

- an out-of-state visitor at the Hub 25 Roadshow



# Inside Missouri's Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

## What We Heard from Rural Communities Cont.

### Commonly Asked Questions from the Roadshows

#### Q: What are some lessons learned from the ToRCH Pilot?

*The strongest lesson from the ToRCH Pilot is that healthcare outcomes improve when providers, public health agencies, EMS, community organizations, and social service partners work together through a coordinated local network.*

#### Q: What is the role of the Hub Anchor?

*The Hub Anchor serves as the local convener and coordinator for the Hub ecosystem. The Hub Anchor brings partners together, facilitates Leadership Board activities, coordinates implementation of local priorities, and helps monitor progress toward community goals.*

#### Q: What is a Leadership Board, and who should serve on it?

*The Leadership Board is the primary decision-making body for each Hub. It helps identify community priorities and guide funding decisions. Membership should reflect the local healthcare and community.*

#### Q: What are Regional Coordinating Networks (RCNs) and how will they support Hubs?

*RCNs provide technical assistance, implementation support, data analytics, and best-practice sharing across Hubs. RCNs help ensure statewide consistency while still allowing communities to tailor solutions to local needs. They also serve as a bridge between Hubs and the RHTO.*



#### Q: How were RHTP Navigator Allocations determined? Where will they be placed?

*Navigator allocations are based primarily on Medicaid population. Unlike Program Coordinators, who are always embedded within the Hub Anchor organization, Navigators may be placed where they can have the greatest impact, as determined by the Hub Leadership Board.*

**HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?**

**SHARE WITH THE RHTO TEAM VIA [DSS.RHTP@dss.mo.gov](mailto:DSS.RHTP@dss.mo.gov)**



# Inside Missouri's Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

## What We Heard from Rural Communities Cont.

### Commonly Asked Questions from the Roadshows

**Q: Do Hub Anchors hold fiduciary responsibility over their Hub Partners and local programs?**

*No. Depending on the funding type, funds will primarily flow through the RCNs. Hub Anchors have no fiduciary responsibility.*



**Q: What can discretionary funding be used for?**

*Hub discretionary funding is to help communities address their highest-priority local needs. These funds may support local coordination activities, workforce initiatives, transportation solutions, behavioral health access, maternal health programs, and other community-defined priorities within State guardrails (details to be included in forthcoming applications).*

**Q: How will ToRCH Care create long-term sustainability after the initial funding period?**

*ToRCH Care is designed to build sustainable systems rather than temporary programs. Investments in care coordination, workforce development, and digital infrastructure are intended to help providers reduce avoidable utilization and improve outcomes. Over time, these improvements are intended to generate savings and support participation in Alternative Payment Models (APMs), creating opportunities to reinvest into local healthcare systems and sustain successful programs beyond the initial funding period.*

**Q: Will the State require all providers to use the same Electronic Health Record (EHR)?**

*The State does not intend to replace existing systems or require all organizations to adopt the same EHR. The Digital Backbone is focused on interoperability – allowing providers and community organizations to securely share information across different systems. The State plans to procure technology solutions that can integrate with existing platforms.*

**HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?**

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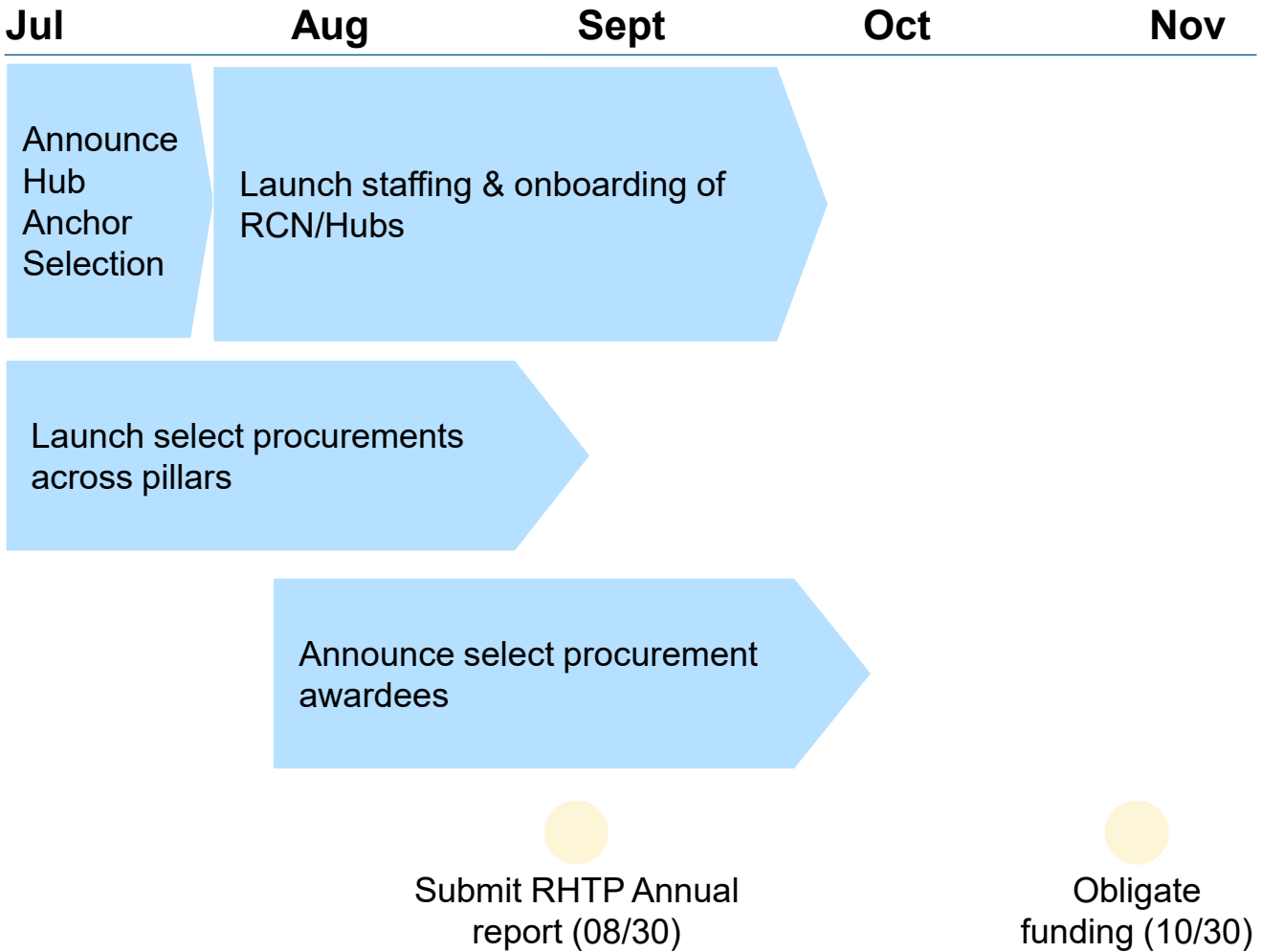


# Inside Missouri's Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

## What to Expect in the Upcoming Months

SELECT MAJOR EVENTS AND MILESTONES (NON-EXHAUSTIVE)  
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

 Milestones  Deadlines



## Ways to stay engaged with RHTP updates

### RHTP Mailbox

Want to be notified?  
Subscribe to our email list to receive regular updates. Have questions or ideas? Contact [DSS.RHTP@dss.mo.gov](mailto:DSS.RHTP@dss.mo.gov)



### RHTP Website

Monitor the RHTP website (<https://mydss.mo.gov/mhd/rural-health>) for briefs across pillars, summaries on key program messages, and answers to frequently asked questions

