Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)

- Historic federal investment to strengthen rural health systems
- $50 billion over 5 fiscal years, 2026-2030
- **State-driven transformation with federal partnership and oversight**



Balancing Accountability & Flexibility

- Significant federal investment → high accountability
- Strong stewardship expectation for public funds
- States must meet both state and federal requirements
- Detailed proposal review and approval required



Where Things Stand & How To Prepare

- Many states are refining implementation plans
- Funding not fully flowing yet – iterative engagement with CMS

- Great Plains Telehealth Network States
  - Iowa
  - Minnesota – Subscribe for News on the RHTP
  - Nebraska – Subscribe for Updates
  - North Dakota – Department of HHS RHTP Website
  - South Dakota – Department of Health RHTP Website
  - Wisconsin – Subscribe for Updates

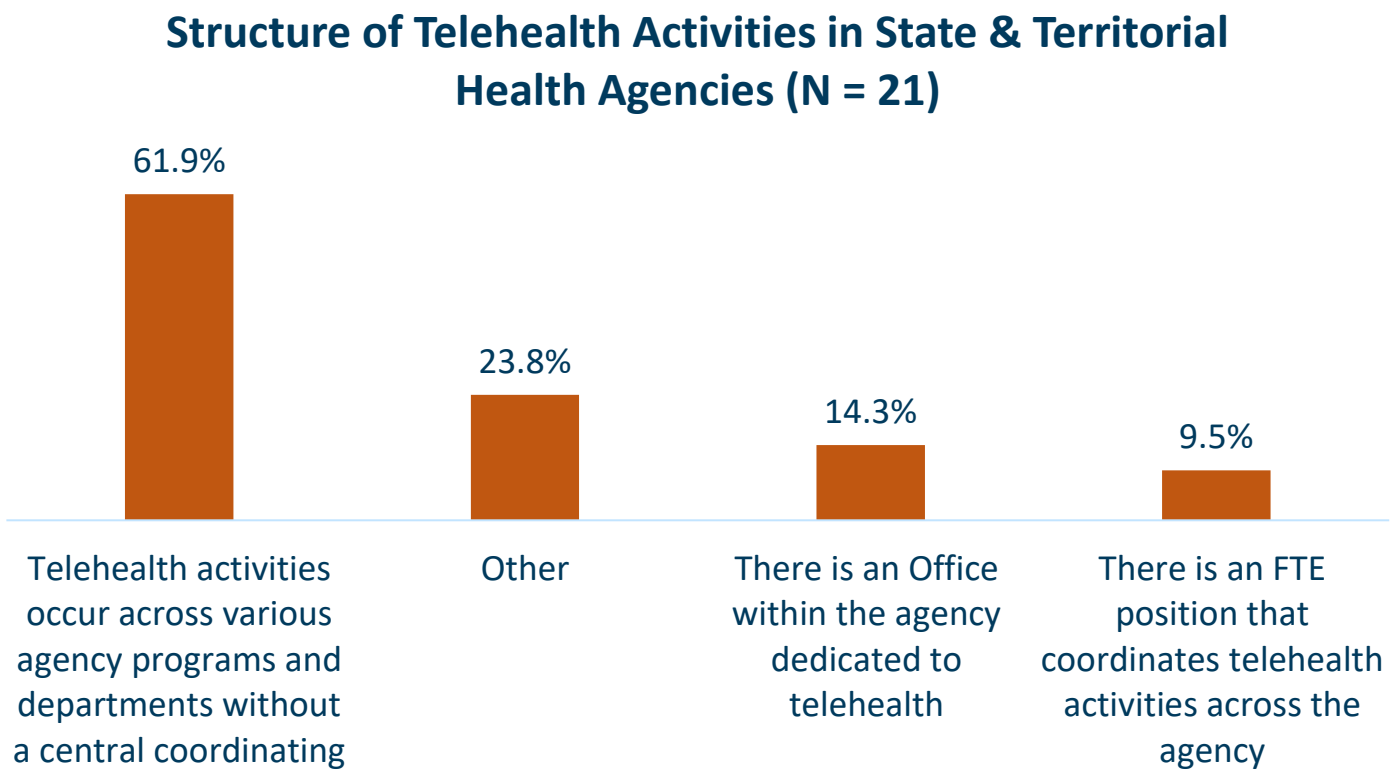
- Learn from existing rural health models
- Identify evidence-based practices
- Strengthen future RFP responses



State & Territorial Health Agency Telehealth Activities & the Rural Health Transformation Program

April 2026

Structure of Telehealth Activities



Other:

- Participation in statewide telehealth committee meetings through the university.
- Telehealth services were utilized during the pandemic and are currently paused.

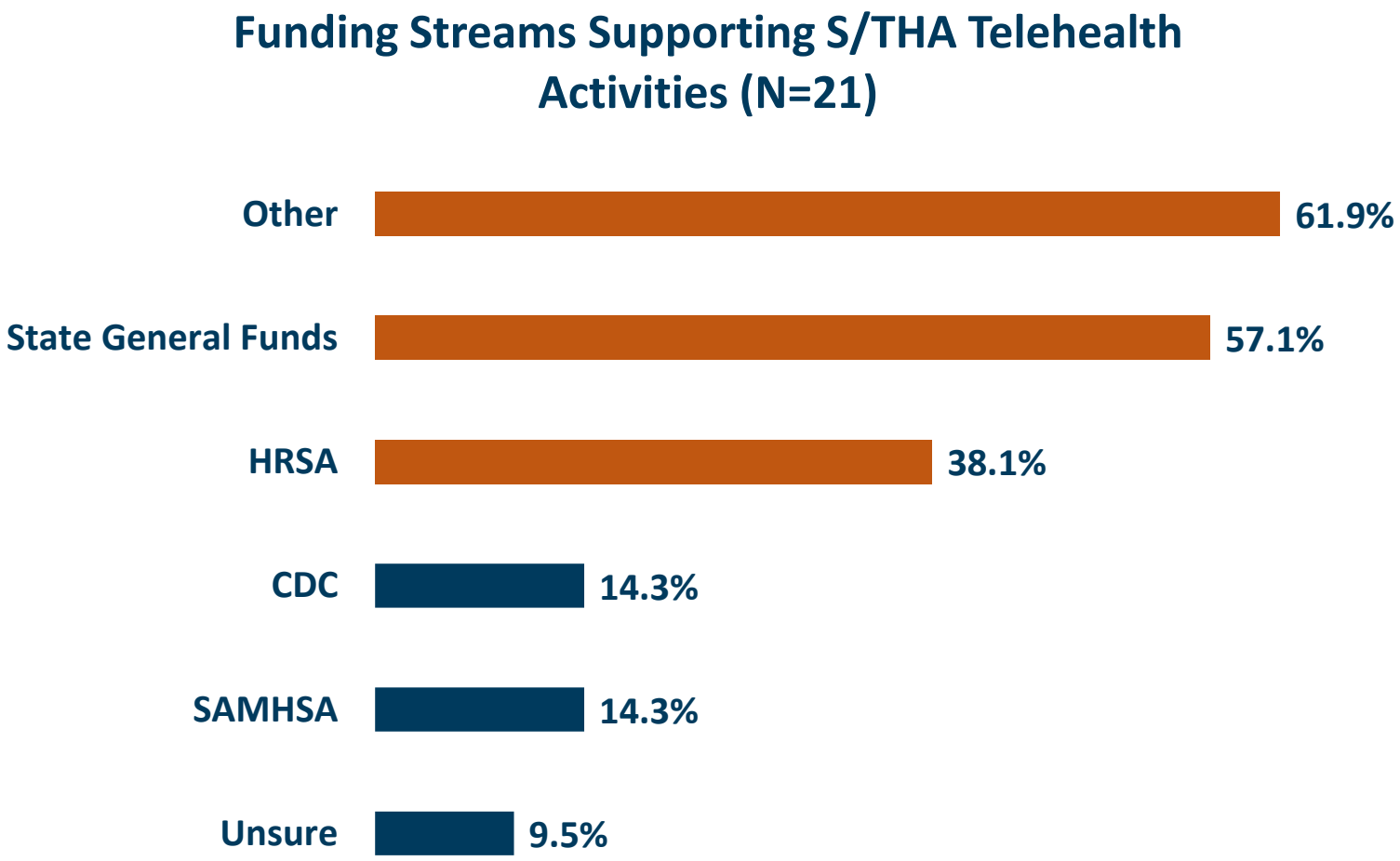
Telehealth & Data Modernization

Almost **50%** of respondents indicated that the telehealth and informatics teams in their agency work together on shared strategies. The following are ways they work together:

- Data modernization planning and data collection
- Data analysis and dashboard creation
- Designing technology first clinical workflows and workflow optimization
- EHR setup and telehealth capabilities

Source: 2026 ASTHO Telehealth Needs Assessment

Funding for Telehealth Activities



Anticipate changes to this given the focus on telehealth and digital strategies in the **Rural Health Transformation Program.**

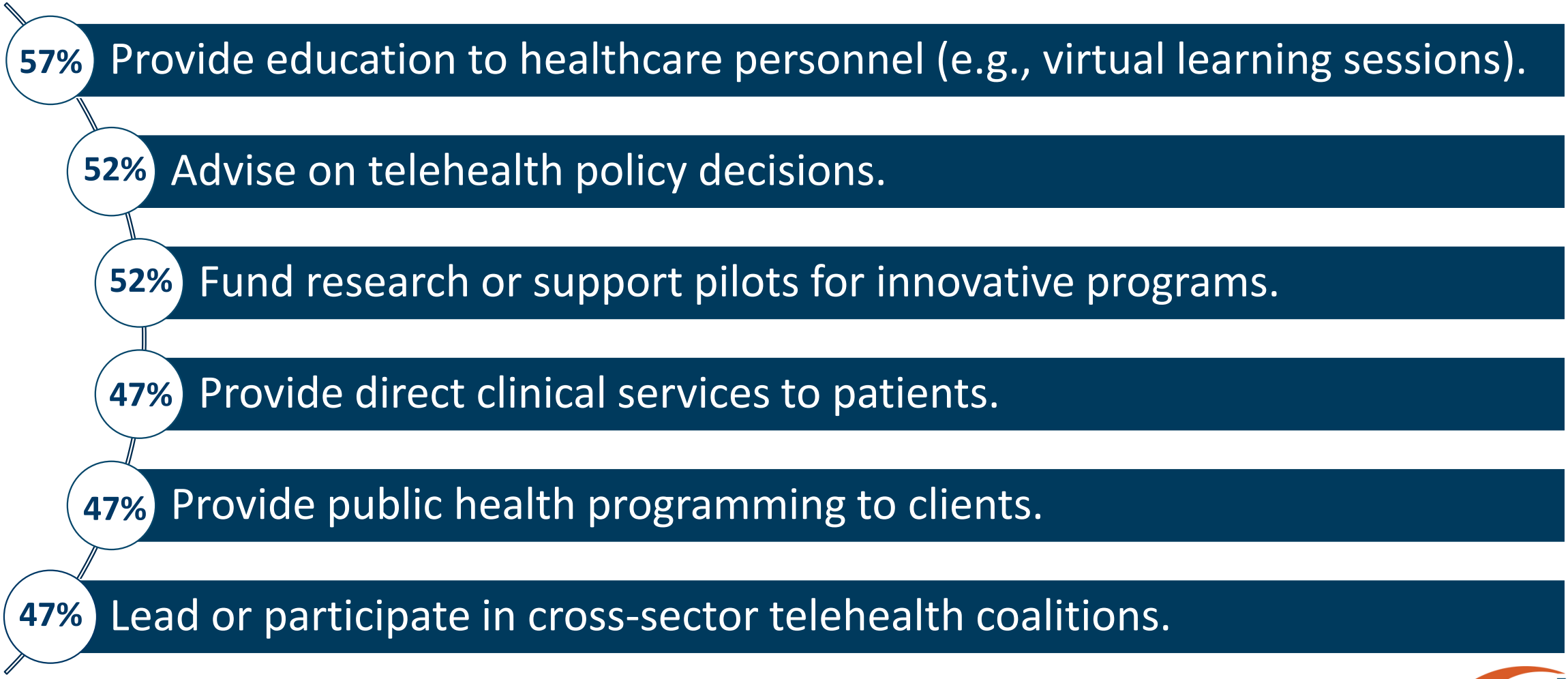
"Other" Funding Streams:

- Opioid Settlement Funding
- Foundation grants
- Other federal funding (e.g., USDA, CDC Public Health Infrastructure Grant)

Source: 2026 ASTHO Telehealth Needs Assessment

How Health Agencies Are Using Telehealth

N=21



Source: 2026 ASTHO Telehealth Needs Assessment

47% Provide direct clinical services to patients.

Clinical Services Delivered (N=10)

- Substance use disorder assessment & treatment
- Mental health counseling & prescribing
- Maternal and child health services
- Nutritionist consultations
- HIV/AIDS prevention, screening, & counseling
- Chronic disease treatment

Management of Service Delivery (N=10)

- 6 S/THAs directly manage clinical service delivery.
- 4 S/THAs directly manage clinical service delivery and contract with local health agencies to manage service delivery.

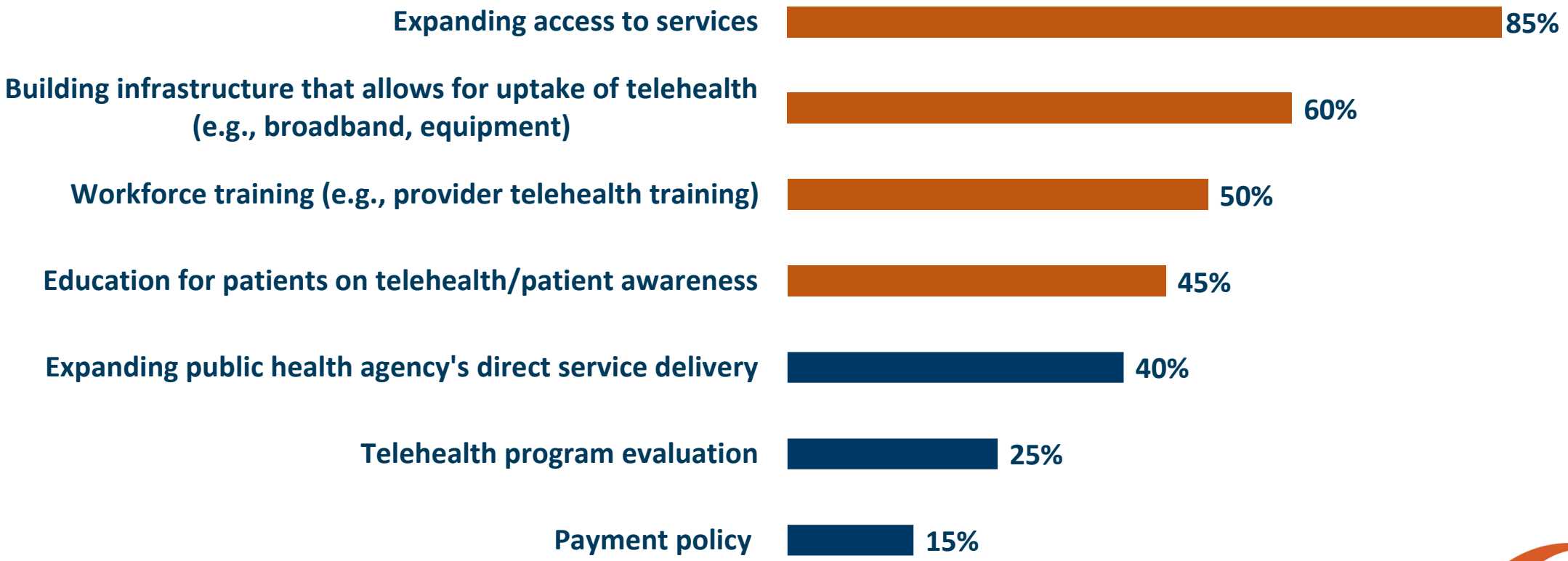
S/THA as an Employer (N=10)

- Clinical psychologist
- Clinical social worker
- Community health worker
- Nurse midwife
- Nurse practitioner
- Physician
- Physician assistant
- Registered nurse

Source: 2026 ASTHO Telehealth Needs Assessment

S/THAs most-reported telehealth goals are to expand access to services, build infrastructure, and educate patients and providers.

Health Agency Telehealth Goals (N=20)



Source: 2026 ASTHO Telehealth Needs Assessment

Digital Health in the Great Plains Region

*Great Plains region states are prioritizing telehealth and digital solutions in **RHTP plans.***

Access Foundation	Community Sites	Virtual Clinical Care	Home & Field Monitoring	Data Backbone
Connectivity as a central component. • Broadband investments • Hub models with community partners • Investment in telehealth tools	**Telehealth as an opportunity to meet patients where they are.** • Hubs & hub-and-spoke networks • Schools, libraries, tribal and community sites • Pharmacies, veterans offices, mobile sites	**Most states are using telehealth to expand specialty care.** Examples: • Behavioral health • Obstetrics • Chronic disease management • School-based care • Provider-to-provider consultations	**Remote patient monitoring is a recurring tool.** • Mobile maternity care • Treat-in-place models • Telehealth-enabled transport • Crisis response • EMS modernization	**Telehealth is a strategy alongside broader digital modernization.** • HIE/EHR integration • Closed-loop referrals • Shared notes • Data hubs • Dashboard • Quality reporting

Priority Areas by State

State	Most Explicit Emphasis	Key Initiatives
IA	Hub-and-spoke access	Health Hubs; telehealth-enabled maternal/newborn transport; HIE supports referrals and rural-to-hub care.
MN	Provider-to-provider specialty access	Regional telehealth hubs, shared EHRs, community settings, and telehealth tied to MOUD and obstetric care.
NE	RPM & Crisis Response	AI-assisted RPM, EHR-integrated sensors, telehealth crisis response for law enforcement, and broadband partners for community hubs.
ND	Community Pods & Telehealth Adoption Support	Telehealth rooms or pods in schools, libraries, tribal sites; facilitated telehealth for older adults; rural ambulance telehealth and EHR connectivity.
SD	Digital Modernization	Telehealth infrastructure enhancement paired with EHR adoption, Health Link/state HIE, South Dakota Health Data Atlas, and EMS telemedicine.
WI	Collaborative Teleconsultation	Telehealth is part of a digital rural health collaborative with closed-loop referrals; Veterans Telehealth Rooms and broadband investments.

RHTP Themes: Great Plains States

RPM and Home-Based Care

Nebraska and **North Dakota** are most explicit on RPM; **Iowa** and **South Dakota** connect remote care to maternal or chronic disease interventions.

EMS/Transport Integration

Iowa, **North Dakota**, and **South Dakota** make telehealth-enabled transport, treat-in-place, and EMS-telemedicine explicitly a priority.

Community Access Models

North Dakota is the clearest on telehealth pods/rooms; **Iowa** and **Minnesota** focus on hub-and-spoke networks.

Digital Backbone

South Dakota and **Wisconsin** frame telehealth within digital modernization; other states connect telehealth to HIE, EHRs, referrals, and/or shared reporting.

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SOUTH DAKOTA

RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION

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Transformation Strategy Overview

South Dakota Focus Areas:



1. Connect Technology and Data for a Healthier South Dakota



2. Advance the Rural Workforce



3. Keep Healthcare Access Local and Strong



4. Transform Systems for Sustainability

Technology & Data

- Upgrade electronic health records and interoperability
- Expand telehealth and remote monitoring tools
- Improve cybersecurity infrastructure
- Develop a statewide rural health data platform to improve decision-making



Rural Workforce

- Recruitment incentives for clinicians and support staff
- Workforce retention strategies
- Expanding and strengthening the rural workforce
- Rural Health Forward Training Hub to coordinate education and support



Keep Healthcare Access Local & Strong

- Grants to strengthen hospitals, clinics, and local access points
- Maternal and infant health initiatives
- Chronic disease management and community-based care supports



Transform Systems for Sustainability

- Integrated behavioral health models (Collaborative Care, CCBHC approaches)
- Regional EMS system improvements, including data sharing and workforce training
- Support for long-term financial and operational sustainability across rural systems
- Primary care transformation through alternative payment models



Contract and Grant Opportunities

- The state Central Bid Exchange on the South Dakota Bureau of Administration website under the Office of Procurement Management is where opportunities for Request for Proposals (RFP) and Request for Applications (RFA) will be posted. sd.gov/bhra
- Register to bid for contract and grant opportunities on the website.
  - Review your notification options on your profile to receive notifications when new opportunities are released
  - Complete the SB189 Vendor Certification Form
  - Note:“Invitation Only” means the system sends notifications only to vendors registered with the relevant National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP) codes. “Open Invitation” sends notifications to all registered vendors. These labels reflect notification settings only. RHT RFPs remain fully open and publicly accessible to any vendor, regardless of the notification type displayed in the system.
- Log in to this site to browse and view posted opportunities on the Central Bid Exchange.
- Opportunities funded by the Rural Health Transformation Project will have "RHT" in the RFP or RFA number.
- If applying for grant funding opportunities, please ensure you have an active SAM.gov registration that is searchable. SAM.gov
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) will be required on grant applications.

SOUTH DAKOTA

RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION

ruralhealthtransformation.sd.gov

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Minnesota's Rural Health Transformation Program Initiatives



Community-based preventive care and chronic disease management



Recruit and retain talent in rural communities



Sustain access to services to keep care closer to home



Create regional care models to improve whole person health



Invest in technology, infrastructure, and collaboration for financial viability

Technology

Telehealth Activities

- Telehealth Access Points
- Telehealth connections that expand access to specialty expertise
- Rural Telehealth Services Center
- Care coordination support

Implementation of these projects is pending a fully approved budget.

Questions?

