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Eric N. Monday, Co-Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and EVPFA



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UNIVERSITY HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

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Agenda

Executive Vice President for Health Affairs (EVPHA) Update

- Rural Health Transformation Program — Birdwhistell and Bush
- Post-Acute Care Strategy — Herceg and Housley
- High Reliability Organization — Slocum and Rose
- FYTD26 June/FY27 July Financial and Operational Update — Collins and Slocum
- Finance Committee Recommendations (FCRs) — Monday
- Privileges and Appointments — DeSimone

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Mark D. Birdwhistell, Senior Vice President, Health Policy

Heather Bush, Dean, UK College of Public Health



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KENTUCKY RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM (RHTP) OVERVIEW

1. Federal
2. State of Kentucky
3. University of Kentucky

KENTUCKY RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM (RHTP) OVERVIEW

KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

Federal

One Big Beautiful Bill Act signed on July 4, 2025



The One Big Beautiful Bill is a Historic Investment in Rural Healthcare

The White House | July 25, 2025

Today's White House [memo](#) "The One Big Beautiful Bill is a Historic Investment in Rural Healthcare" outlines in detail how the President's landmark legislation makes historic investments in vulnerable communities to ensure healthcare options are made sustainable for Americans who rely on these options for their care.

TRANSFORMING RURAL CARE WITH HISTORIC INVESTMENTS AND RADICAL TRANSPARENCY

The Rural Health Transformation Program will provide unprecedented new funding to states for a range of uses designed to make rural healthcare more effective and sustainable for the long term. Collaborating with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), states must submit detailed rural health transformation plans on how these resources will be put to work improving access to healthcare providers in their communities and ultimately improving health outcomes. CMS will monitor implementation and hold states accountable to this plan to ensure resources are appropriately distributed and going to the most deserving, not the most politically connected.

KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

Federal

What is the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP)?

- \$50B fund distributed to states by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) over the course of five program years
- Challenges states to “transform” rural healthcare delivery through innovative/novel initiatives
- **Not** intended to be used for:
 - Constructing new buildings
 - Paying for reimbursable services
 - Increasing preexisting salaries

Strategic Goals of RHTP

1. Make Rural America Healthy Again
2. Sustainable Access
3. Workforce Development
4. Innovative Care
5. Technology Innovation

KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

Federal

ADVANCING KENTUCKY

ADVANCED CARE



Advance subspecialty care for Kentucky and beyond while maintaining a focus on quality, access and value



1) Make Rural America Healthy Again

2) Sustainable Access

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE AND OUR PARTNERS



Comprehensive care strategy for our employees, the immediate neighborhood and our partners across the Commonwealth



3) Workforce Development

DISTINCTION



An academic health system with aligned clinical care, research and education of seven health-related colleges



4) Innovative Care

5) Tech Innovation

RHTP STRATEGIC GOALS

KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

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KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

State

July 29, 2025: Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) calls for stakeholder input



July 29, 2025

Subject: Request for Stakeholder Input on Kentucky's Rural Health Transformation Program

Dear Rural Health Stakeholders,

House Resolution 1 (H.R. 1), passed by the 119th Congress and signed into law on July 4, 2025, will result in difficult challenges for Kentuckians, their access to healthcare, and the stability of the health system upon which they rely. To mitigate these harms and support Kentuckians, we will all need to work well together and we encourage you to collaborate with each other.

The Rural Health Transformation Program, authorized through H.R. 1, presents a time-limited opportunity to improve the quality and accessibility of rural health care across Kentucky. We are including a brief summary of the relevant provisions, but we strongly encourage you to read the full [statutory language](#) to better understand the parameters and intent of the program. The Rural Health Transformation Program is in Section 71.401.

We are eager to receive input from your organizations. We appreciate your ability to gather and synthesize ideas from your members into proposals reflecting shared priorities and innovative thinking. As you consider potential ideas, please be mindful of the following guiding principles:

- Funding is time-limited and must be obligated quickly. Initiatives that require significant development time or ongoing financial support are not well-suited to this opportunity.
- We are looking for transformational proposals, not traditional grant requests, to sustainably improve rural health care delivery systems – especially in ways that can be replicated or scaled.
- Our focus is on improving access, strengthening care quality, and building resilience in rural health care with an eye toward sustainability within current or reduced future resources.
- Program funds are not likely to be used to pay for routine clinical services.

We ask that all feedback and proposals be submitted **no later than August 31, 2025**. Earlier submissions are highly encouraged and greatly appreciated to allow for thorough review and discussion.

Please send your questions, ideas, or materials to ruralhealthplan@ky.gov. Please be aware that all submissions may be subject to public disclosure under open records laws.

We look forward to working with you to make a positive and lasting impact on rural health in Kentucky.

Sincerely yours,

@chfsky | CHFS.KY.GOV

TEAM
KENTUCKY.

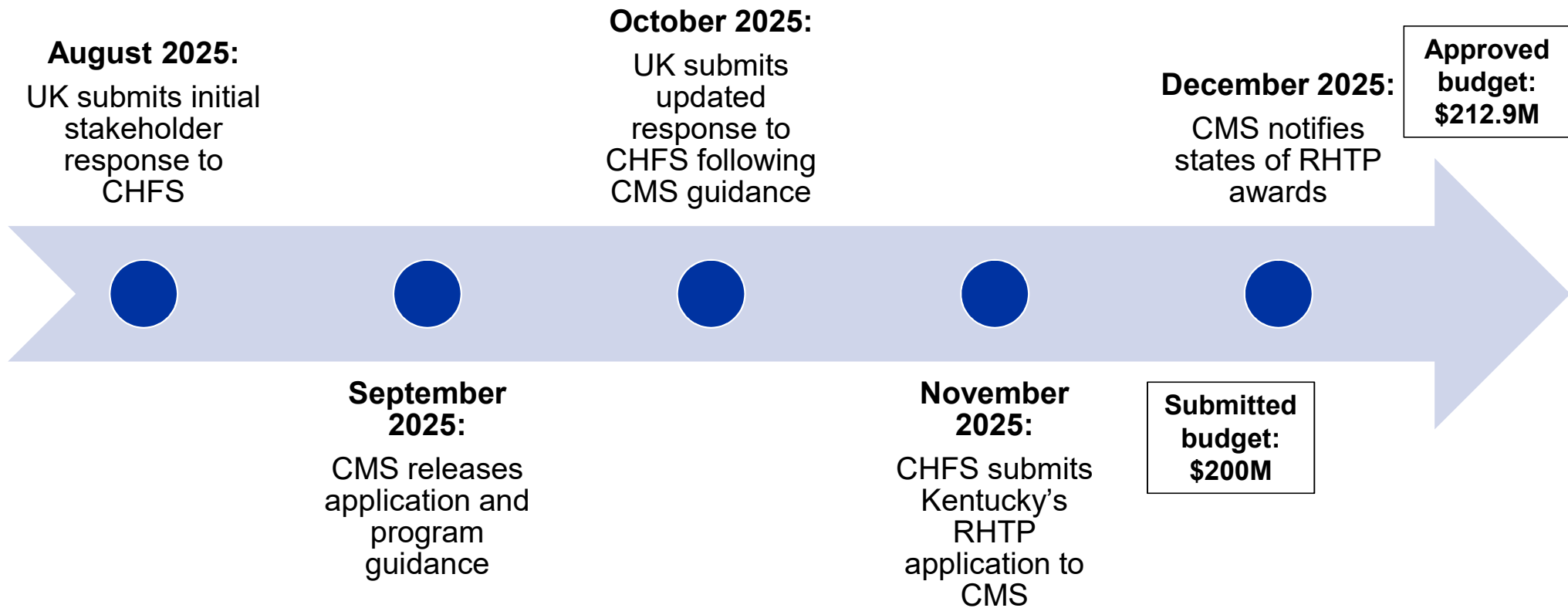
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cc: Advocacy Action Network
Alzheimer's Association
American Academy of Pediatrics Kentucky Chapter
Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky
Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities
Kentucky Primary Care Association
Kentucky Ambulance Providers Association
Kentucky Association of Adult Day Centers
Kentucky Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Kentucky Association of Community Health Workers
Kentucky Association of Counties
Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities
Kentucky Association of Health Plans
Kentucky Association of Independent Recovery Organizations
Kentucky Association of PACE Providers
Kentucky Association of Private Providers
Kentucky Association of Regional Providers
Kentucky Center for Excellence in Rural Health
Kentucky Center for Economic Policy
Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts
Kentucky Dental Association
Kentucky EMS Association
Kentucky Equal Justice Center
Kentucky Fire Fighters Association
Kentucky Health Departments Association
Kentucky Health Resource Alliance
Kentucky Home Care Association
Kentucky Hospice and Palliative Care Association
Kentucky Hospital Association
Kentucky Medical Association
Kentucky Nurses Association
Kentucky Office of Rural Health
Kentucky Primary Care Association
Kentucky Public Health Association
Kentucky Rural Health Association
Kentucky Voices for Health
Kentucky Youth Advocates
Leading Age Kentucky
Mental Health Association of Kentucky
Rural and Underserved Health Research Center
State Independent Living Council
UK Healthcare
UofL Health

KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

State

Leading up to Kentucky's Notice of Award



KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

State

Cabinet for Health and Family Services: Primary RHTP Initiatives



PoWERing Rural Maternal & Infant Health

Increase perinatal and infant care in maternity care deserts through coordinated, telehealth-enabled teams



From Crisis to Care: Integrated EMS & Trauma Response

Enhance skills and resources for pre-hospital care and on-site interventions



Rapid Response to Recovery: EmPATH Model & Mobile Crisis

Expand integrated, technology-enabled crisis care from community response to long-term support



Rooted in Health: Rural Dental Access Program

Improve rural access to preventive dental care and treatment through expanded training and mobile, portable services



Rural Community Hubs for Chronic Care Innovation

Reduce obesity and diabetes rate through evidence-based, community-led strategies

Source: Kentucky.gov

KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

State

December 29, 2025: Kentucky wins big

Gov. Beshear: Kentucky's Rural Health Transformation Plan Accepted In Full, \$212.9 Million Secured

Scottie Ellis
502-564-2611
<https://governor.ky.gov/>

Office of the Governor
501 High Street
Frankfort KY 40601

Beshear administration created proposal in partnership with health partners from across the state

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 29, 2025) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear announced that Kentucky's Rural Health Transformation Plan (RHTP) was accepted in full by the Trump administration, securing \$212.9 million in funding to lessen the impacts of recent federal cuts and help support health care in Kentucky's rural communities. The funding was authorized by Congress earlier this year (2025) and administered by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

"We were pleased to learn of Kentucky's notice of award from CMS related to the Rural Health Transformation Program," said **Mark D. Birdwhistell, senior vice president for health and public policy at the University of Kentucky**. "The University of Kentucky looks forward to partnering with the state and other stakeholders to help transform health in rural Kentucky."

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

University of Kentucky — Budget Period #1: Funded Initiatives

Primary Investigator (PI) in UK College of Medicine
Interim PI: Dr. Becky Dutch

RHTP #1: Rural Health

Homeplace
 PI: Mace Baker
 PM: Michaela Amburgey

AHEC
 PI: Dr. Jim Ballard

**Rural Economic Model and
Sustainable Dev.**

**Public Health and Data
Analysis**

Food as Health

**RHTP #2:
Maternal & Infant**
 PI: Dr. Emily DeFranco
 PM: Olivia Harris

SMILE Program
 Project Lead: Dr. Craig
 Miller
 PM: TBD

RHTP #3: Behavioral Health

EmPATH Consortium
 PI: Dr. Jasinski
 PM: Joey Hickey

TeleBehavioral Health
 PI: Dr. Jasinski
 PM: Joey Hickey

**Collaborative Care
Model**
 Lead: Dr. Penaskovic
 PM: Joey Hickey

UKKD EmPATH Unit
 Lead: Curtis Metzler
 PM: TBD

RHTP #4: Dentistry

Teledentistry / Comp Mobile
 PI: Dr. Ken Nusbacher
 Lead: Dr. Lauren Hedgespeth
 PM: Hanna Foster

Digital Dentures
 PI: Dr. Ken Nusbacher
 Lead: Dr. Rod Fuentealba
 PM: Hanna Foster

OMFS Extraction Training
 PI: Dr. Ken Nusbacher
 Lead: Dr. Travis McMaine
 PM: Hanna Foster

**Dental Hygiene
Program**
 PI: Mace Baker
 PM: Caleb Williams

RHTP #5: RMOCC

RMOCC
 PI: Dr. Andrew Bernard
 PM: Megan / Lacy

EMS Training
 PI: Dr. Blake Davidson
 PM: TBD

Foundational Projects

Vitality Signs
 PI: Svetla Slavova
 PM: Ben Hammerslag

UK RHTP Overview

- Budget Year 1 **awarded over \$20M** to the University of Kentucky
- UK is a **foundational partner** in the program implementation
- Three primary contracts executed:
 - Services (primary programmatic contract)
 - Staffing/Consulting
 - Technology
- UK Research Foundation serves as the contracting entity
- Primary Investigators across colleges, with robust project management support from UK HealthCare Enterprise Project Management Office

KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

University of Kentucky

Continuing to Build on UK's Expertise

Vitality Signs

Coming Soon!

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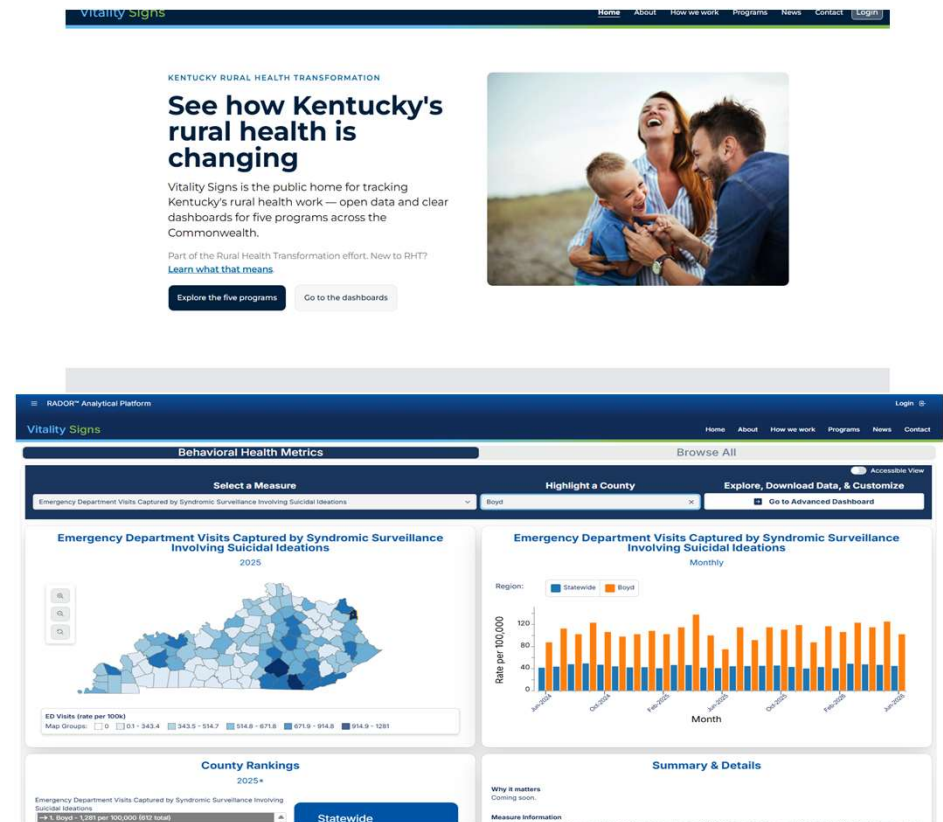


KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

University of Kentucky

College of Public Health: Vitality Signs

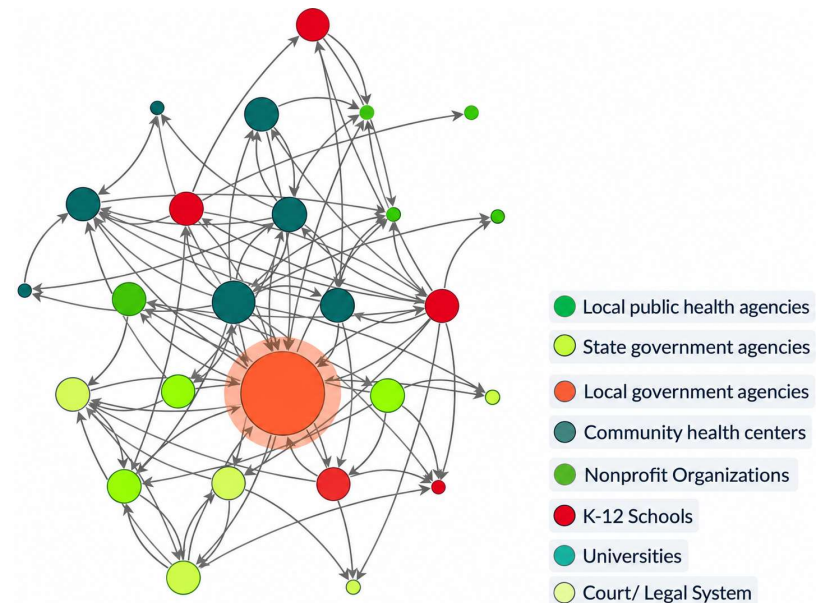
- Vitality Signs is a public-facing dashboard that will be used to track progress of RHTP initiatives
- Built in the RADOR Analytical Platform, developed by UK College of Public Health (CPH)



RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM

CPH Highlight: Systems Evaluation and Support

- Rural Hub Network Analysis: Establishing the core architecture, standardized metrics and Social Network Analysis to map, measure and strengthen cross-sector collaboration across the Rural Community Hubs.
- Systems Evaluation: Consulting on flexible, mixed-methods evaluation approaches and data platform integration to assess long-term community impact.



KENTUCKY RHTP OVERVIEW

University of Kentucky

Working with our partners



Looking ahead: Budget Year 2

- **Tentative Budget Year 2 Notice of Award date: 10/15/2026**
- Currently identified initiatives will continue to move from planning phases to implementation
- Additional initiatives will be added to Budget Year 2
- CHFS priorities for Budget Year 2:
 - Transportation, telehealth, technology, workforce development and scheduling
- UK will continue to be a **foundational partner** to CHFS and other stakeholders

QUESTIONS

