



NORTH CAROLINA

RURAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION



NCDHHS Rural Health Transformation (RHT) ROOTs Hub Community Engagement

NC Association of Local Health Departments

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***Disclaimer:** The North Carolina Rural Health Transformation Program (NCRHTP) is supported by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$213 M in Year 1 with 100% funded by CMS/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CMS/HHS, or the U.S. Government.*

North Carolina's Rural Health Transformation

Our Rural Focus: The NC Rural Health Transformation will focus on geographic areas characterized by low population density and limited access to services and infrastructure. The plan is designed so that every North Carolinian can see the benefit of this work.

3 million+ rural North Carolinians

420+ stakeholders engaged in application development

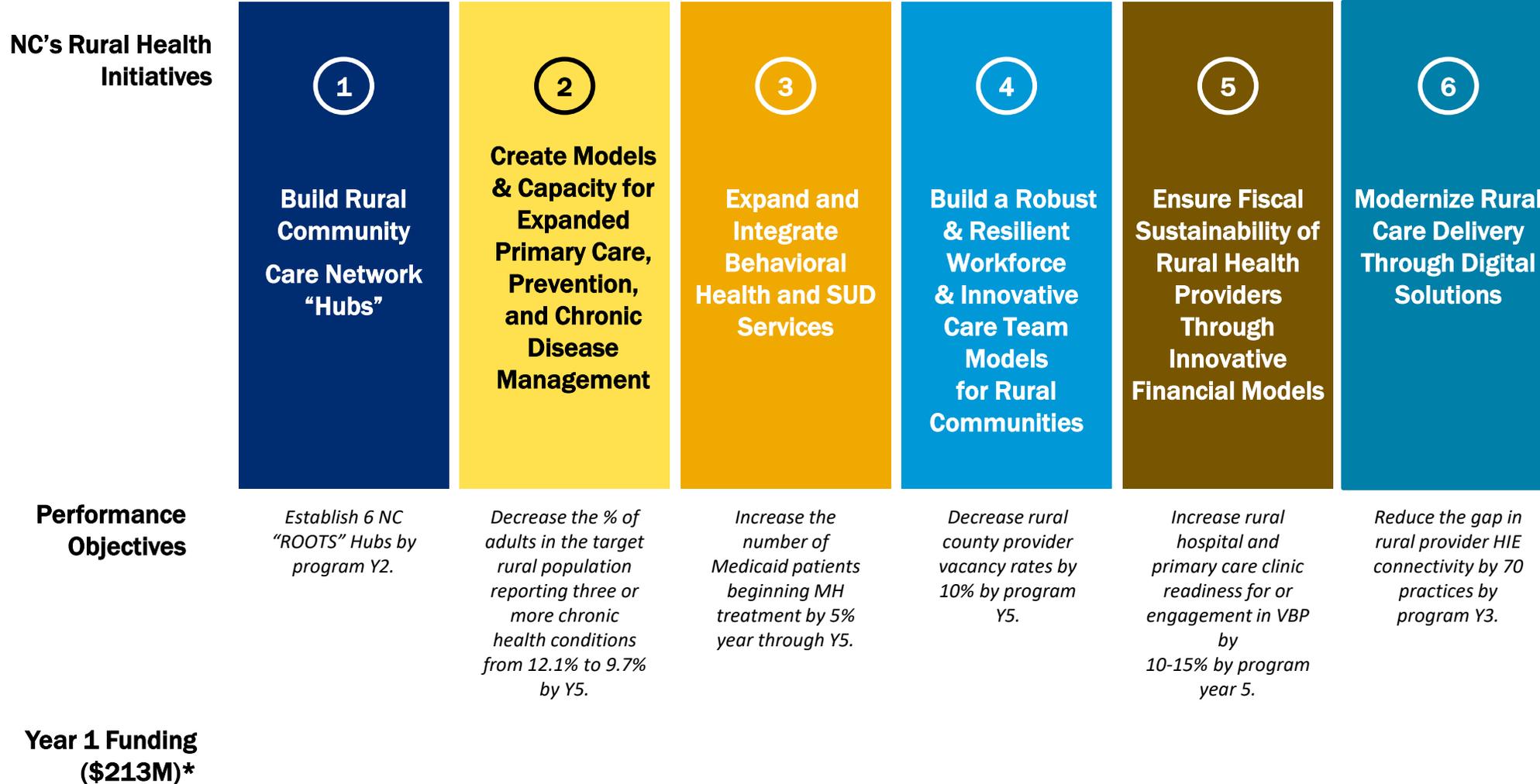
2nd largest rural population in the US

400+ rural health facilities to be reached

6 integrated initiatives addressing workforce, access, technology, behavioral health, chronic disease, and payment models

~\$213 million for Year 1
\$1B in federal investment in NC over five years

The program goals span six initiatives that work together to advance community-designed, community-led innovative solutions that foster independence, improve health, and promote well-being for rural North Carolinians.



Timeline of Funding During the First 2 Years

NC DHHS is using Year 1 to establish foundational infrastructure and fill immediate needs, while laying the groundwork for ongoing, sustainable, community funding in Year 2 and beyond.



Pre-Award Mobilization

Infrastructure + Quick Wins

Year 1 Community Funding Available

Program Management and Governance

- Establish governance structures
- Priority hires
- Align org chart and scope to CMS award/feedback
- Stand up reporting structure
- Establish priority procurement mechanisms
- Create Communications and Engagement Plan

♦ ROOTs Hub RFA

Hub Leads Contracted ♦

♦ BH Infrastructure

Expand Existing BH Workforce Programs ♦

Establish Rural Health Innovation Fund ♦

HIE Provider Connections ♦

NC ROOTS Hubs

- Funding for Primary Care, Prevention, and Chronic Disease Management
- Funding and TA support for workforce initiatives

Hospital and Primary Care Financial Sustainability

- Funding for hospital feasibility studies
- Identify pilot sites
- Release capacity-building funds to pilot sites

Digital Health

- Expand HIE connections
- Establish governance for the NC Rural Digital Health Collaborative (NCRDHC)
- Award funding under the Rural Health Innovation Fund (RHIF)

Behavioral Health

- Funding for additional behavioral health community providers

Stakeholder Communications and Engagement

Initiative 1 - The ROOTs Hubs Responsibilities and Network

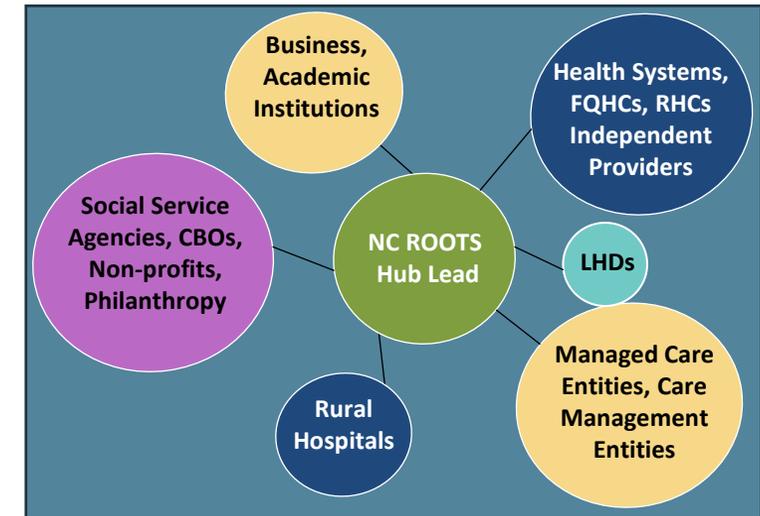
The **ROOTs Hubs** will be responsible for implementing a set of mandatory projects associated with NCRHTP Initiatives defined by NCDHHS with the option to implement additional projects suited to regional needs.

The **ROOTs Hub Lead** will be responsible for the following activities to support the Rural Health Programs:

- 1) Standing up a governance structure and onboarding a network of providers and partners to drive community-led solutioning
- 2) Assess regional needs and set shared priorities and actions
- 3) Provide a Tribal Engagement Plan including decision-making protocols for respecting tribal sovereignty
- 4) Establish standards for how rural residents get connected to care (physical health, behavioral health, social needs)
- 5) Facilitate applications for the network to be awarded funds to implement programs based on the need of the region and alignment to the RHTP grant
- 6) Collect and analyze data to monitor performance and outcomes of programs against RHTP Goals and KPIs

NC ROOTs Hub Network is a diverse set of partners from across sectors that influence health and are invested in making rural North Carolina healthy again. Hub Leads will determine which partners will participate in governance, providing input into the vision for rural health, and apply for funding through the Hub Leads to implement rural programming.

Example of Hub Network Participants



Disclaimer: This slide is for informational purposes only and is not part of the Request for Applications (RFA) or any formal funding solicitation. Program details are preliminary and subject to change. Funding is contingent upon budget approvals, spending authority, and required approvals from CMS. No award or commitment of funds is implied.

NC ROOTS Hub Overview (application)

ROOTS Hub Lead	ROOTS Hub Network
<p>The Hub Lead will establish and oversee the ROOTS Hub, providing centralized management, coordination, and support for the Hub Network to promote preventive health, address chronic disease and root causes of disease.</p>	<p>The Hub Network is a unique set of partners* from across sectors that influence health and are invested in making rural North Carolina healthy again. The Hub Network is administered by the Hub Lead to implement the RHTP initiatives through a series of Hub-defined projects.</p>
<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Hub Leads' responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building its Hub Network, a high-quality network of rural health care entities and other community partners in its region, that have the capacity and expertise to implement RHTP Initiatives at the regional level.• Acting as a coordinating entity to unify and align the Network by establishing the Hub's governance structure, guiding the Hub's regional strategy, and oversee Hub operational roles and responsibilities, in a manner consistent with state guidance.• Hub governing body must include representation from disproportionately burdened communities.• Hub's must incorporate stakeholder feedback into the governance structure.• Hubs are required to solicit ongoing stakeholder feedback.• Stakeholders include, but are not limited to: community members, providers, CBOs, academic and training institutions, CCBHCs and behavioral health providers.• Collaborating with its Network to develop a Hub Action Plan, outlining how the Hub will implement the RHTP Initiatives based on local needs and barriers to accessing care, including preventive services.• Developing a grantmaking and reimbursement infrastructure, outlining payment protocols and procedures, and tracking funds flows for its Network.• Providing technical assistance and training to support the Network in implementing the Hub Action Plan. Areas of technical assistance may include, but are not limited to, managing strategy, data, and communications; distributing funding; and providing practice and technical support.• Measuring the Hub's progress on the Hub Action Plan using a set of shared measure and reporting routinely to NCDHHS.• Overseeing routine monitoring and oversight of the Network to ensure adherence to all requirements.• Sharing progress and learnings with other Hub Leads and adopting best practices throughout the duration of the five-year program period, and beyond.	<p>Hub Network partner responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree to participate in the Hub Network and bring expertise to bear in implementing the RHTP Initiatives within the region• While remaining independent, support the Hub's regional strategy and adhere to any governance requirements as defined by the Hub Lead.• Contribute to the development of the Hub Action Plan for implementing the RHTP Initiatives• Implement the Hub Action Plan within their area of expertise• Adhering to any payment protocols and procedures as defined by the Hub and maintaining accurate accounting of used funds• Participate in Hub-related training and technical assistance efforts• Using information systems as needed to support implementation of the Hub Action Plan• Track and report data to Hub Lead on shared measures assessing the Hub's progress on the Hub Action Plan• Comply with routine monitoring and oversight requirements as defined by the Hub
<p>* While the composition of each Hub Network may vary based on the Hubs Hub Action Plan, it must include rural safety net providers, such as rural hospitals, LHDs, FQHCs, RHCs, independent practitioners, providers, care management entities, and Medicaid managed care organization. Additional partners include, but are not limited to, community partners that have deep knowledge of the issues affecting the community and that can support the Hub, such as CBOs, social service agencies, CHWs, philanthropic organizations, local businesses, and community members themselves.</p>	

Year 1 Funding Through the Hub Leads

Activities and funding are subject to CMS approval and may change

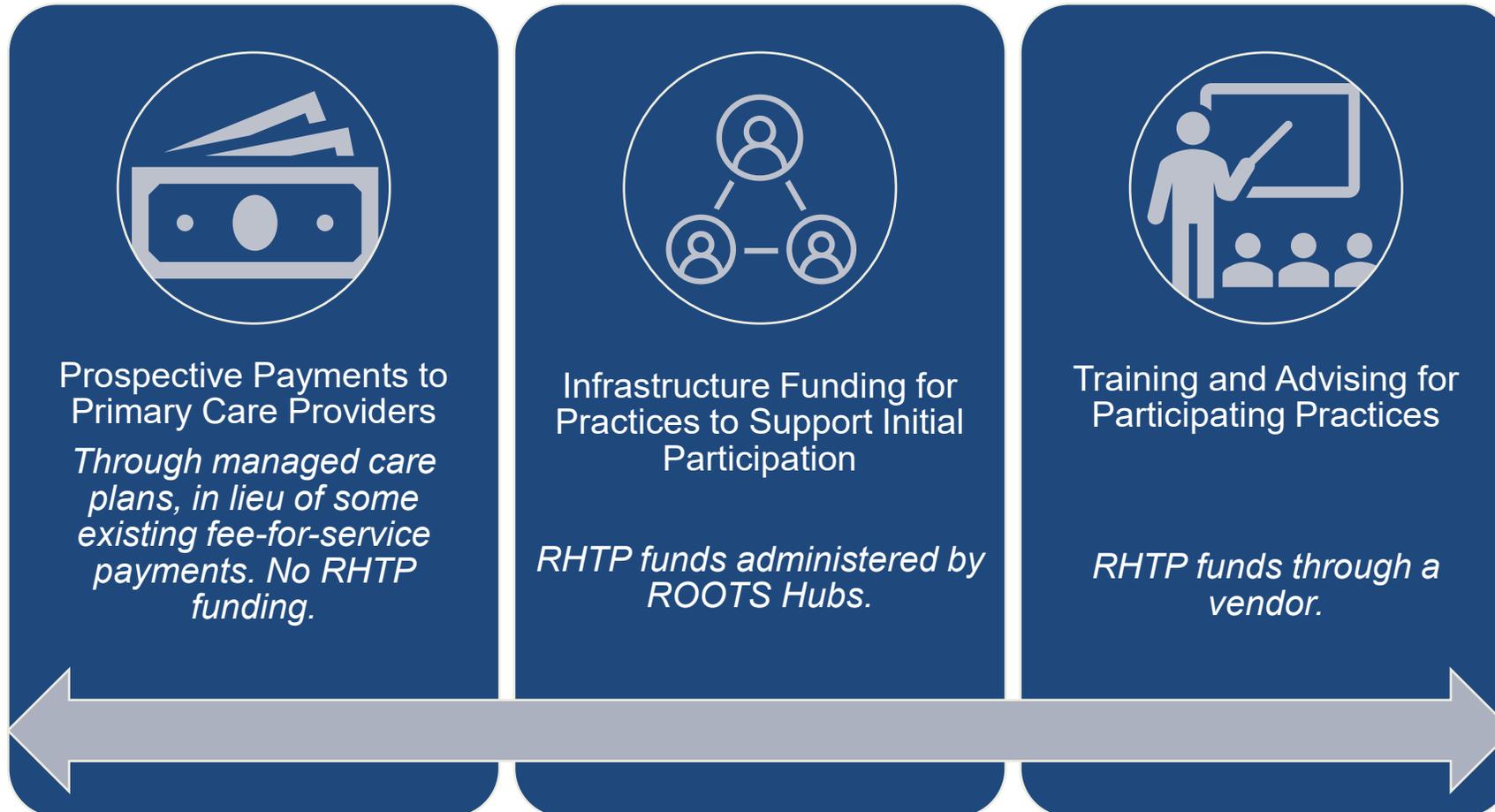
The following opportunities will be awarded through the Hub Leads in Budget Year 1 (January 2026 – October 2026).

Program/Contract	Initiative	Details
ROOTs Hub Lead(s)	1	Hub Leads funding for foundational infrastructure and operations of the ROOTs Hub.
ROOTS Driven Chronic Disease, Prevention, Physical Activity & Cancer	2	Hub Leads funding for chronic disease needs assessment and priority program implementation.
ROOTS Driven Nutrition Access	2	Hub Leads funding for efforts that enable nutrition access in rural communities.
ROOTS Driven Perinatal Health Access Expansion	2	Hub Leads funding for perinatal needs assessment, three required perinatal components, and 1-2 elective components.
Rural Health Workforce Incentives	4	Hub Leads funding to provide incentive packages to rural practitioners.
Workforce Training	4	Hub Leads funding workforce training to address rural health workforce shortages through education, training, and pipeline development.
Hospital Feasibility Studies	6	Hub Leads funding Hospital Feasibility Studies to promote financial sustainability.

In addition to community funding through the Hub Leads, there will be additional funding available during Year 1.

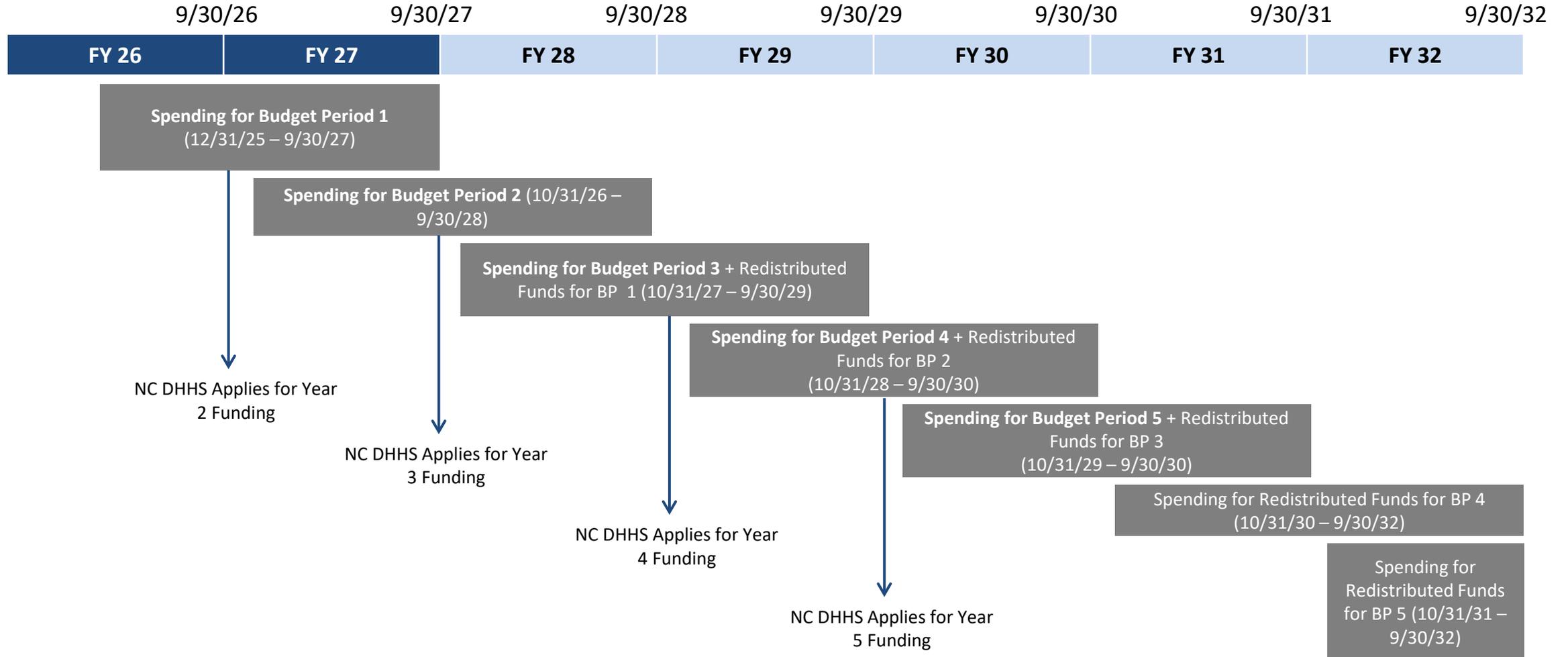
Program Name	Activities	Description
Behavioral health	First Episode Psychosis Program	Expand the Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) model with rural adaptations
	Expand CCBHCs	Expand reach by creating new CCBHCs.
	Mobile OTP and Medication Units	Launching an additional units to support OTP access for remote and rural areas.
	MORES Expansion	Expanding access to MORES in rural counties and linking MORES to CCBHCs.
	EMS MAT Expansion	Expand EMS MAT to an additional counties in rural areas
	Rural Crisis Centers	Integrate new community crisis centers into CCBHCs.
	School Based Health Centers (SBHC)	Expanding SBHCs in rural areas.
	CCBHC Quality Improvement	Launch a statewide QI activity
	NC MATTERS	Expanding clinical coverage for existing program.
Digital Health	HIE Connections	Funding for providers to connect to the HIE
	Rural Health Innovation Fund	Funding for providers to enhance technology maturity and improve outcomes for residents.

NC Medicaid plans to launch a **primary care capitation pilot program** through its managed care plans to test a different way of paying rural primary care practices. Participating practices can apply for **temporary upfront funding** from the RHTP funds to support transition to and initial participation in this new model.



Looking Forward – Ongoing Funding Determined Annually

Over the next 5 years the NC Rural Health Transformation will re-apply for additional federal funding to continue to build on foundational capabilities and sustainable and impactful programs.



Please visit our website – [Rural Health Transformation Program](#). The NC RHTP website contains links to full presentations, recordings, FAQs, and the latest details on funding opportunities.