

Your *First* **STOP** for
Rural Health
INFORMATION



**Planning with Purpose: Leveraging FORHP's Rural Health Network
Development Planning Program for Lasting Community Impact**

Housekeeping

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Rural Health Network Development Planning Program

Planning with Purpose: Leveraging FORHP's Network Development Planning Program for Lasting Community Impact

Grantee Spotlight Webinar

August 20, 2026

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Public Health Analyst
Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP)

Vision: Healthy Communities, Healthy People



Agenda Overview

PART 01

Welcome & Remarks

Opening remarks on the strategic importance of network planning from FORHP leadership.

PART 02

Program Overview

Insights into the Rural Health Network Development Planning Program grant goals.

PART 03

Grantee Spotlights

Former grantees share experiences, lessons learned, and strategies for long-term impact.

PART 04

Q&A & Discussion

Open dialogue and interactive audience Q&A with all featured speakers.

Opening Remarks



Katherine (Katy) Lloyd

Community-Based Division Deputy Director

Network Planning Program Overview

Purpose

Supports the planning and development of integrated health care networks in rural areas that collaborate to:

- ✓  Achieve efficiencies
- ✓ Expand access to, coordinate, and improve the quality of basic health care services and associated health outcomes
- ✓ Strengthen the rural health care system as a whole



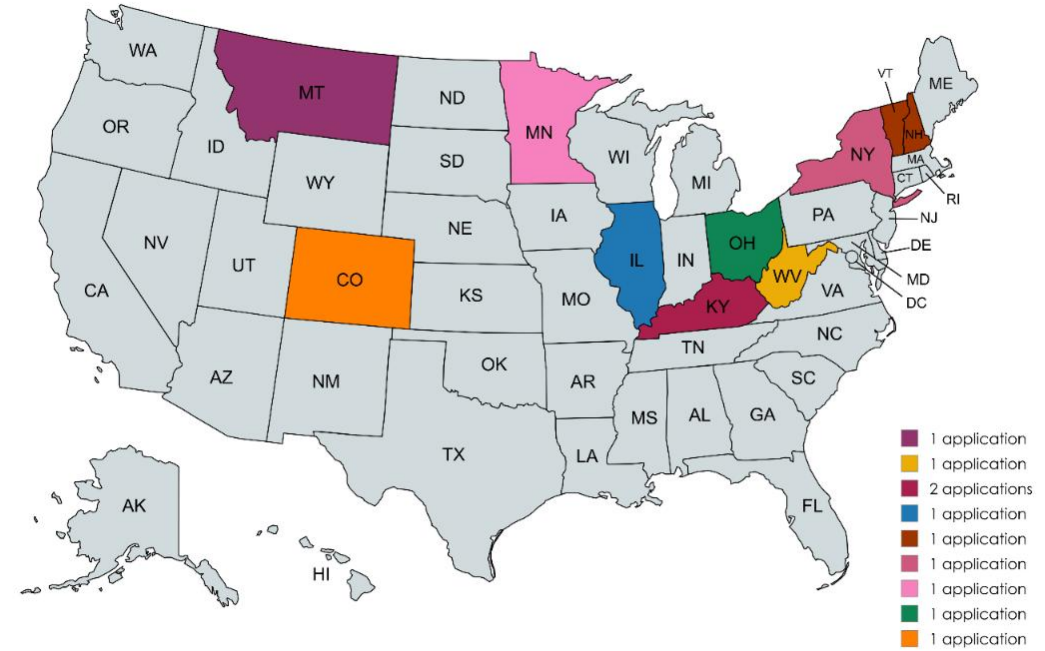
Note: The purpose of this program is to fund planning activities only. Funds cannot be used for the direct provision of clinical services. Planning activities are those that prepare a community to provide direct health services.

Rural Health Network Development Planning Program

FY26 Cohort Representation

Cohort Representation

- **Number of Awards:** 10
- **Award Amount:** Up to 100,000
- **Performance Period:** July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027
- **State Representation:** MT, CO, MN, IL, OH, KY, WV, NY, NH



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Laying the Groundwork for Implementation

Foundational Impact



Building Sustainable Infrastructure: Developing clear governance structures, operational agreements, and shared leadership models necessary for long-term network survival.



Cultivating Partnerships: Leveraging the planning year to unite clinical providers, behavioral health specialists, public health entities, social service organizations, etc.



Transitioning to Implementation: Preparing organizations to move smoothly from planning strategies to active program implementation, expansion, and long-term community health impact.



Network Planning Program Grantee Spotlight

Featured Speakers



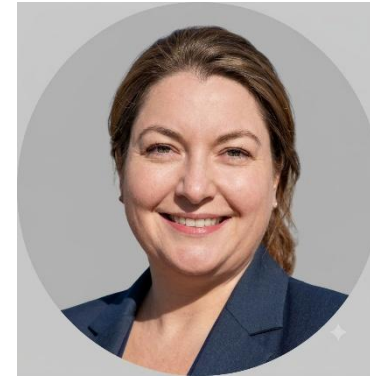
Kim Shuler, LCSW
Chief Operating Officer
Arkansas Behavioral Health Integration
Network



Rachel Blanton, MHA
Arkansas Behavioral Health Integration
Network



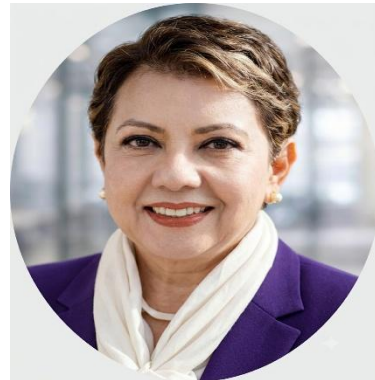
Peter Maney
Executive Director
Recovery Access Montana



Jennifer Rolfes, DBH, MS, MHA
Butte Spirit Center



Joelle Hutson
Coordinator of Community Health
Oswego County Opportunities



Subi Gandhi, PhD, MPH
Professor of Public Health and Co-Director of
the Center for Rural Resilience
Tarleton State University



Amanda Phillips Martinez, MPH
Assistant Project Director
Georgia Health Policy Center



ARKANSAS RURAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ACCESS (ARBHA)



July 2025-June 2026 Cohort

Participating orgs: Arkansas Behavioral Health Integration Network (ABHIN-rural non-profit); three (3) rural independent primary care (Lofton Family Clinic, Marsh George Clinic, River Valley Medical Wellness)

Area of focus: Behavioral Health Integration

Outcomes: 1) strategy related to state health billing; 2) alignment for RHTP; 3) enhanced engagement from other sectors (workforce, government, etc)

Website: <https://abhinetwork.org/arbha-network/>

Recovery Access Montana (RAM)

HRSA Rural Health Network Planning Grant | Planning-Year Overview

Network focus

- Lead agency and partners: RAM is using the planning year to clarify network infrastructure, certification roles, and care-navigation strategy.
- Purpose: build a practical recovery-access network that connects people to the right level of care and strengthens recovery residence capacity.

Two key planning outcomes

- **Compass Care:** develop a 24-hour warm line that triages needs and helps people reach the appropriate level of care using ASAM criteria; supports may include transportation, family education, client advocacy, and referrals.
- **Heartland Alliance:** position RAM as the interim certifying body across 14 additional primarily Heartland states while local state-level certifying bodies are developed.



Two concrete ideas
emerged from the planning
year:
Compass Care
+
Heartland Alliance

*These are planning-year
outcomes: one improves direct
care navigation, and one expands
RAM's certification infrastructure
across the Heartland.*



Rural Mental Health Network

North Central Texas • Planning Year Summary

Brown • Comanche • Erath



Lead Agency & Partners

Led by Dr. Subi Gandhi (PI), Co-director, Center for Rural Resilience, in partnership with Comanche County Medical Center (rep: Kristine Bremer), ACCEL Health (rep: Dr. Esther Taylor), and Center for Life Resources (rep: Mr. Joey Smith); Consultants: UT Health Houston (Dr. Shreela Sharma and Heidi McPherson)



Goal & Planning Year

Establish the Rural Mental Health Network (RMHN) to improve mental health outcomes across rural Central Texas through coordinated service delivery, sustainable infrastructure, and data-informed decision-making. The planning year moves through governance/needs assessment → strategic plan development → evaluation/dissemination and is currently in Phase 2.



Key Outcomes



Network Development / Partnership

Formalize a regional behavioral health coalition and governance structure uniting core partners across the three-county service area.



Focus Area / Future Activities

Develop a data-informed strategic plan — guided by a regional care-coordination barriers assessment (staff capacity, patient transport/no-shows, outdated resource directories) — to guide sustainable, coordinated care beyond the planning year.

Oswego County Integrated Delivery Network; New York



Key Outcomes:

We...

Asked the hard questions...

After nearly a decade of planning and development, we determined that the Independent Practice Association structure no longer aligned with New York's evolving healthcare and value-based payment landscape.

Preserved the network, not the structure...

The Board approved pursuing dissolution of the Independent Practice Association while transitioning its collaborative functions into the Rural Health Network of Oswego County, providing a more stable and sustainable organizational home for the work.

Built for what comes next...

By integrating into the Rural Health Network of Oswego County, the network can build on an established backbone with broader cross-sector participation, greater organizational stability, and the capacity to grow collaborative rural health efforts beyond the grant period.

Oswego County Opportunities — Community-based organization - Grantee

Oswego Health — Health system / hospital

ConnexCare — Federally Qualified Health Center

Farnham Family Services — Behavioral health / substance use disorder treatment and prevention provider

Catholic Charities of Oswego County — Community-based organization

St. Luke Health Services — Long-term care/skilled nursing

Fireside Chat

