



Transforming Rural Health: ADHS Highlights

Arizona Rural Health Conference

June 3, 2026

Today's Focus

- Rural Health Transformation Program
- Arizona Health Improvement Plan
- ADHS Workforce Programs
- Other Rural Health Initiatives





Arizona's RHTP Application

Acknowledgement of Support

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RHTP Application Overview

Arizona **submitted its application** for the Rural Health Transformation Program on November 5th. The state could receive **up to \$200 million per project year period** (a total of \$1 billion over the 5-year grant). Arizona's application featured four initiatives aligned to the program's strategic goals below:

Strategic Goal	Description
Make Rural America Healthy Again	Focus on preventive care, chronic disease management, behavioral health, and prenatal care using evidence-based approaches. Address root causes of poor health and improve long-term outcomes
Sustainable Access	Help rural providers become long-term, reliable access points by improving efficiency and encouraging collaboration across facilities and systems (e.g., better coordinate primary, specialty, and emergency care)
Workforce Development	Strengthen recruitment and retention of health care workers in rural communities
Innovative Care	Promote new ways to deliver care , such as value-based payment models or Accountable Care Organizations, to improve quality and reduce costs
Tech Innovation	Invest in digital health tools, telehealth, data sharing, and cybersecurity to modernize health care delivery



Arizona is awarded **\$166M** per year in funding to implement proposed initiatives & programs

Arizona's RHTP Initiatives

Below are the **4 initiatives** that Arizona is focusing on to address the key challenges related to access to healthcare in rural communities:

Rural Health Workforce Development and Training Program

- **Recruit, train, and retain skilled health professionals** serving Arizona's **rural and Tribal communities** by creating new and expanding existing workforce initiatives
- Create **financial incentives to encourage recruitment and retention** of healthcare professionals, collaborating with universities, colleges, and AHECs, with an emphasis on allied health disciplines

Priority Health Initiatives Grants Portfolio

- Focused on **Behavioral Health & Substance Use Disorder (SUD), Maternal-Fetal Health, and Chronic Disease Prevention & Management**
- **Expand prevention and treatment access** via grant opportunities, including for mobile/digital units, enhancing training, and increasing screening

Making Rural Healthcare Accessible

- Expand access to care in rural communities by deploying mobile units and satellite sites, and expanding telehealth services for **specialty, primary, and preventive care in remote areas**
- Integrate **regional coordination** for referrals, scheduling, and continuity of care, and telehealth-enabled access to improve rural health outcomes

Making Rural Healthcare Resilient

- Implement shared services models to reduce administrative and financial burdens by **leveraging EMRs, HIE, and scaling back-office support**
- Provide **technical assistance** to strengthen rural network **performance and coordination** for better care delivery



Priority Health Initiatives Grant Portfolio: Improving Rural Maternal and Fetal Health

Purpose:

To improve the health and well-being of mothers and babies, before, during, and after pregnancy through coordinated prevention and early intervention

Outcomes:

- Enhanced readiness for rural hospitals to respond to obstetric emergencies
- Expanded access to perinatal mental health consultation & education
- Increased percentage of pregnant women with syphilis linked to care

Maternal & Fetal Health Initiatives

\$5 million per year

- AIM Hospital Safety Bundles Expansion
- OB simulation and other maternal, fetal and infant training
- Perinatal Mental Health Certification Training
- Perinatal Psychiatric Access Line
- Tribal Strategies
- Disease Intervention - Congenital Syphilis

Maternal & Fetal Health: Congenital Syphilis

Goal: Rebuild infrastructure to support congenital syphilis control efforts in rural Arizona.

- Home test kits to promote access to testing
- Communications campaign to promote awareness
- Strengthen state capacity to provide Congenital syphilis subject matter expertise to Tribal Nations and Local Health Jurisdictions:
 - Disease Investigators to link people to treatment
 - Epi team to ensure access to data
 - Provider phone line to support continuity of care
- Strengthen intervention and linkage to care through county contracts

Priority Health Initiatives Grant Portfolio: Chronic Disease Prevention & Management

Purpose:

To strengthen county and regional chronic disease prevention capacity and improve long-term health outcomes

Outcomes:

- Improved rural prevention infrastructure
- Increased rural chronic illness screening opportunities/ events

Chronic Disease Prevention & Management

\$12 million per year

- County Health Department Strategies
- Public Health billing consultant
- Tribal Strategies
- Programs designed to enroll Arizonans in health insurance and connect to services
- Cardiac Arrest Survival

Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OCHA)

Goal: Focus on increasing survival in rural areas for out of hospital cardiac arrest

- Likelihood of survival from OCHA is lower in rural regions. Law enforcement often on scene long before EMS and in time sensitive injury and illness may be primary transporter of patients to hospital
- Managed by the Bureau of EMS and Trauma (BEMSTS):
 - Develop and disseminate curriculum in partnership with University of Arizona on CPR for Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) staff and Law Enforcement personnel
 - Purchase and distribute AEDs across rural regions
 - Support training and dissemination of AEDs to participating communities and Tribal Nations

Provider Upskilling

\$4 million per year

- Community Health Workers/
Community Health Representatives
(CHWs/CHRs)
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)



Community Health Workers

Build Workforce Capacity

- Train and expand the rural and Tribal CHW/CHR workforce

Develop Online Training Infrastructure

- Provide online continuing education and certification support

Strengthen Rural and Tribal Access

- Increase access to conferences and professional development

Sustain and Elevate the CHW/CHR Workforce

- Support long -term workforce infrastructure and partnerships

EMS Workforce Development

GOAL: to increase and enhance EMS workforce across the state in rural areas

- Planned activities include:
 - Development of State Learning Management System for CE and education
 - EMCT, Paramedic Training (service time commitment required)
 - Support for Continuing Education Credits for EMCT/Paramedics
 - Support to bring classes/education to rural regions
 - Improvement to certification portal and system

Provider Liaison Pilot Project

- Provider liaison position at ADHS, AHCCCS and Dept. of Insurance & Financial Institutions)
- Reduce administrative burden, streamline credentialing, resolve provider concerns, and coordinate reporting to agency leadership and RHTP Project Officer





Arizona Health Improvement Plan (AzHIP)

AzHIP 2026 - 2030 Priorities

Access to
Care

Prevention

Workforce
Development

Mental &
Behavioral
Well-being

Vision Statement

Healthy People, Healthy Families, and Healthy
Communities for a Stronger Arizona



Access to Care 2026 -2030 Strategies

STRATEGY 1

Telehealth, Mobile & Hybrid Care Models

Advance digital and mobile delivery systems to meet clients where they are.

STRATEGY 2

Expansion & Reimbursement for CHW/Rs

Formalize the CHW role within the healthcare system to ensure sustainability and enhance impact.

STRATEGY 3

Insurance Navigation & Literacy Support

Assist and/or ease the process of obtaining and understanding health insurance.

STRATEGY 4

Rural & Tribal Infrastructure

Strengthen the healthcare foundation in geographically isolated and tribal areas.

STRATEGY 5

Governance Accountability

Ensure transparency, centralization of efforts, and strategic alignment of resources.

Mental & Behavioral Wellbeing 2026

-2030 Strategies

STRATEGY 1

Youth

Expand supports & education to create resilient youth

STRATEGY 2

Stigma & Awareness

Improve & expand education and awareness of mental health & wellbeing

STRATEGY 3

Community Resilience

Strengthening our communities through education & interventions so they can thrive

STRATEGY 4

Systems Improvement

Implement systems that encourage collaboration across sectors and the state

STRATEGY 5

Housing

Expand/Promote housing resources

Prevention 2026 -2030 Strategies

STRATEGY 1

Health Literacy

Partner with communities across Arizona to co-create and deliver culturally relevant, accessible, and trustworthy health information that empowers individuals and families to make informed decisions.

STRATEGY 2

Immunizations

Strengthen immunization systems, confidence and access to protect communities from vaccine-preventable diseases today and tomorrow.

STRATEGY 3

Chronic Disease

Strengthen community-based prevention and early detection efforts to reduce disease and support long-term health in all Arizona communities.

STRATEGY 4

Maternal & Infant Health

Use data and evidence-based interventions to improve maternal and infant health outcomes, with a focus on access, prevention, and community-informed solutions.

STRATEGY 5

Partnerships

Build and sustain cross-sector partnerships that strengthen local capacity, align resources, and support community-driven solutions across Arizona.

Workforce Development 2026

-2030 Strategies

STRATEGY 1

Recruitment

Cultivate a high-quality, geographically distributed healthcare workforce to ensure equitable access to care across urban and rural Arizona.

STRATEGY 2

Retention

Improve retention of a thriving health workforce.

STRATEGY 3

Collaborations

Engage industry & academic partners to maximize resources.

STRATEGY 4

Systems

Implement system improvements for cultivating resources, policies, and reducing administrative barriers.



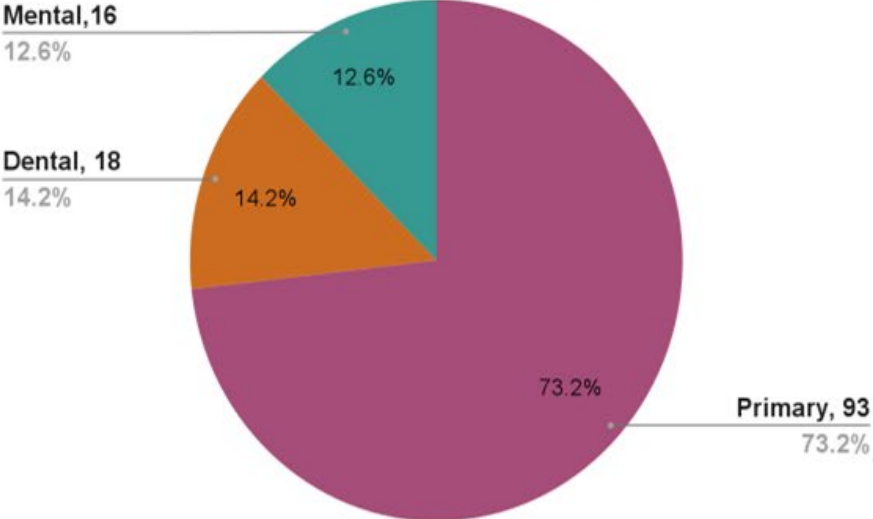
ADHS Workforce Programs

Arizona State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) Eligible Disciplines

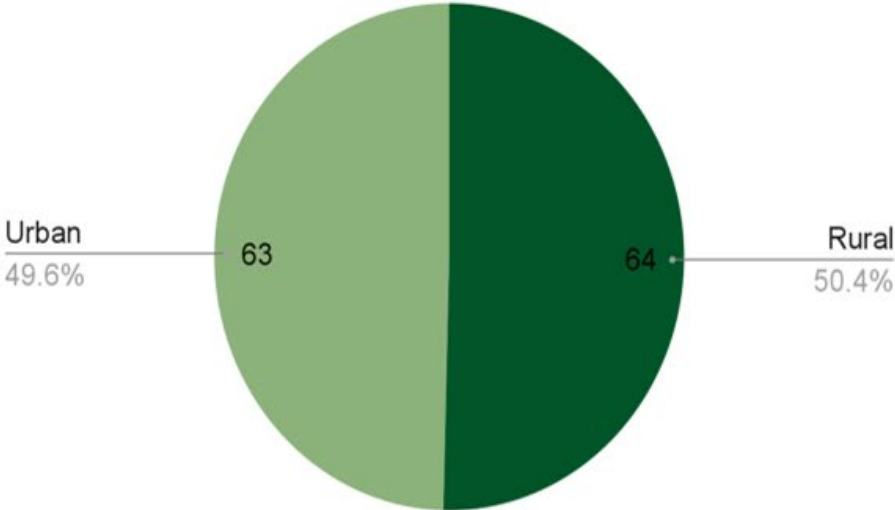
- Physicians
 - Family Medicine, OB/GYN, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Geriatrics, Psychiatry
- Dentists
- Pharmacists
- Advanced Care Providers
 - Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, Certified Nurse Midwives
- Behavioral Health Providers
 - LCSW, LMFT, Psych D, LPC

Arizona State Loan Repayment Program Providers

Discipline Type (n=127)



Rural vs. Urban Site Location (n=127)



State Loan Repayment Program

- **Reductions in federal HRSA funding**
 - Delayed from 9/1/25 to 7/1/26
 - Reduced 35% - from \$1 million to \$654,990
- **Currently 68 people in the program**
- **Application cycle ended June 1, 2026 will award 65 -70 new applicants**



Other Workforce Programs

- **Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program** -
40 providers
 - Supplemental application cycle opens August 1 - August 31, 2026; Next initial application cycle will open late Jan 2027
- **J1 Visa Program/National Interest Waiver** - 119
- **Preceptor grants** - 218
 - Program ends June 30, 2026
- **Nurse Education Investment Program** - 4,373
nursing student seats added as a result of the investment
 - Program ends June 30, 2027





Rural Maternal Mental Health Advisory Committee

Advisory Committee Requirements

- [HB 2332](#)

- Develop recommendations to ensure **availability** of obstetrics, gynecology and maternal mental health **services** in **low -volume** , **high -risk rural communities** .
- Develop Recommendations to:
 - **enhance** and **preserve** the **delivery and access** of preconception, prenatal, pregnancy, labor and delivery, maternal mental health and postpartum care services in **rural hospitals and communities** .
 - **enhance the delivery of and access to evidenced** -based postpartum depression screening and referrals for treatments, including **recommendations** that consider **public and private insurance coverage** , **provider reimbursement incentives** and **pharmacological treatment options**.
- Report due **December 31, 2026**
 - Governor, president of the senate, speaker of the house, secretary of state



AzRx



AZRx - Lower drug costs for Arizonans

AZRx is a state initiative that helps Arizonans save money on their prescription drugs.

Through this initiative, Arizonans can sign up for a free ArrayRx Discount Card that helps to save up to 80% on their medications. It's free, easy to use, and available to ALL residents. There are no age or income limits and no strings attached.

 [Get Your Free Discount Card](#)

What is AZRx?



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azdhs.gov/azrx

Why Choose ArrayRx

Trusted | Transparent | Privacy-Protected



Free to everyone in Arizona. No membership fees, no age or income requirements.



Accepted nationwide. Use at more than 64,000 pharmacies across the U.S.



Covers all FDA-approved drugs and some over-the-counter drugs and diabetes supplies. Includes mail-order and specialty drugs.



Compare prices anytime with easy online tools or the ArrayRx mobile app.



Your privacy is protected. Unlike for-profit discount programs, ArrayRx never sells your data.



State-backed and people-focused. Managed by pharmacy experts and public servants who work for you.



Thank You!

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