



VA Rural Vitality

On November 5, 2025, on behalf of Governor Glenn Youngkin, the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) submitted Virginia's application to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for funding under H.R.1. The Commonwealth's proposal, "VA Rural Vitality," outlines **transformational initiatives that embody Virginia's locally driven approach to building a more resilient, self-sustaining rural health system**, ensuring that Virginia remains the best place to live, work, and raise a family.

Building on Proven Progress

This application builds on significant progress and measurable results over the past four years:

- Transformed the Commonwealth's behavioral health system
- Reduced fentanyl deaths by 59% in three years
- Reduced maternal health deaths by 49%
- Invested significant new resources in rural communities

The Rural Health Transformation Program offers a historic opportunity to fix a broken rural health care model by addressing root causes, disrupting outdated payment systems, and advancing new solutions powered by AI.

A Shared Vision for Rural Virginia, Driven by Community Voices

Virginia's health agencies led an extensive engagement process to hear firsthand the challenges rural communities face and identify locally driven solutions that shaped this plan:

- 12 listening sessions across rural regions led by Health and Human Resources Secretary Janet V. Kelly, DMAS Director Cheryl Roberts, and State Health Commissioner Dr. Karen Shelton
- Dedicated inbox that received feedback from 200+ organizations, including 350+ ideas
- Direct input from members of the General Assembly

Data, proven models, and these voices shaped the **four key goals and initiatives that define Virginia's approach to rural health transformation** and reflect the Commonwealth's commitment to community input, local leadership, and lasting rural vitality.

Current State	Goals	Draft Initiatives & CMS Priority
Rural providers operate with outdated technologies, minimizing ability to provide truly preventive care	Virginia is at the forefront of health innovation , piloting and scaling technologies focused on behavioral change and bolstering Virginia-based startups	CareIQ <i>Tech Innovation</i>
Rural providers cannot adequately serve patients due to workforce challenges	Rural Virginia has a robust homegrown health care workforce , providing economic opportunity and supporting local health systems	Homegrown Health Heroes <i>Workforce Development</i>
Rural Virginians have limited access to health care services near their homes	Rural Virginians can access high-quality health care , including preventive & specialty care, in their own communities	Connected Care, Closer to Home <i>Sustainable Access</i>
Rural Virginians have remarkably high rates of chronic disease	Rural Virginians are leading healthy lives and lifestyles, thriving in their minds and bodies with a focus on prevention	Live Well, Together <i>Make Rural America Healthy Again</i>



Transforming Rural Health: Virginia's \$1B, Five-Year Investment Plan

CareIQ (\$282.6M) includes the following sub-initiatives:



- **Tech Innovation Fund** - Grows Virginia's health tech ecosystem through grants to start-ups enhancing rural care delivery.
- **Provider Productivity Fund** - Supports adoption of AI-driven decision-support and workflow tools to reduce administrative burden and ease provider burnout.
- **Provider Interoperability Fund** - Helps rural providers modernize EHR systems, strengthen cybersecurity, and advance data exchange to improve coordination.
- **Remote Patient Monitoring (RPM) Fund** - Expands use of continuous monitoring technologies to track patient outcomes in facilities and at home.

Homegrown Health Heroes (\$132.0M) includes the following sub-initiatives:



- **Attract and Retain Physicians** - Expands rural residency slots in high-priority specialties and supports long-term retention through wraparound programs.
- **Allied Health Degrees** - Enables community colleges to launch or expand high-demand health programs by funding essential infrastructure and equipment.
- **Earn to Learn Apprenticeships** - Creates paid, work-based learning opportunities with education institutions and health care employer partnerships.
- **Build Career Pipelines** - Establishes high school health academies to introduce students to allied health careers.

Connected Care, Closer to Home (\$412.0M) includes the following sub-initiatives:



- **Mobile and Hybrid Care** - Expands access to primary and preventive services through mobile units and telehealth.
- **Community Paramedicine** - Funds pilots and startup costs for EMS-led treat-in-place care, preventive visits, and telehealth consultations.
- **Innovative Maternal Care** - Expands rural prenatal and postpartum services with community hubs, mobile units, and telehealth, with a focus on supporting mothers with substance use disorders and preventing rural labor and delivery unit closures.

Live Well, Together (\$124.2M) includes the following sub-initiatives:



- **Food as Medicine** - Supports infrastructure and start-up costs for food pharmacies that provide nutrition education, medically tailored meals, and produce prescriptions.
- **Consumer Tech** - Funds pilots to test and scale digital health tools that support lasting lifestyle and behavioral changes.
- **Active Kids** - Invests in repurposing of community spaces to create multi-use areas for physical activity.
- **Integrated Care for Duals** - Expands outreach and education to help dual-eligible seniors enroll in integrated care plan options.

\$49.2 million will support program operations and oversight including a 13-member office managing implementation, engagement, grants, and data.



United for Rural Vitality: Partnering to Bring Virginia's Vision to Life

The Commonwealth will collaborate with **trusted partners to execute work of this magnitude and importance** while ensuring effective management of funding. Several organizations have been selected to distribute funds across initiatives, and many more will be engaged to implement programs on the ground. Virginia looks forward to CMS's response and to launching this work next year, **partnering with the following entities in rural areas to deliver this transformative vision across the Commonwealth:**

- Rural providers
- Hospitals and health systems
- Federally qualified health centers
- Free clinics
- Federally recognized Tribes
- Digital health innovators
- Community-based organizations
- Other key partners across Virginia's rural health landscape

Below are the partners who will support the Commonwealth in distributing funds for initiatives and establishing partnerships with the entities mentioned:

Organization	Sub-Initiative Administered
Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation	Tech innovation fund
Virginia Health Care Foundation	Provider productivity and provider interoperability
Virginia Hospital Research and Education Foundation	Remote patient monitoring and attract and retain physicians
Virginia Foundation for Community College Education	Allied health degrees
Virginia Works	Build career pipelines
Virginia Department of Education	Build career pipelines
Virginia Center for Health Innovation	Leads the independent evaluation of the overall program and measures progress toward statewide goals

This overview represents Virginia's submission to CMS for the Rural Health Transformation Program. Next steps include final initiatives and funding decisions to be confirmed by CMS by December 31, 2025.