



**BILLINGS AREA CHAP  
UPDATE**

**RMTLC HEALTH  
SUBCOMMITTEE**

**NOV 20, 2025**

**DENNIS FOURBEAR, FORT PECK**

# AGENDA

Rural Health Dev. Fund + CHAP

National CHAP Board

Billings Area CHAP Board

CHAP Road Show

CHAP Symposium + other  
learning opportunities



# RURAL HEALTH DEVELOPMENT FUND + CHAP

# RURAL HEALTH DEVELOPMENT FUND

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- One of the key components of the Rural Health Development Fund opportunity is workforce development
- Montana's plan included
  - **Funding to expand education programs to education Community Health Aides, Dental Health Aides, and Behavioral Health Aides (target 200 CHAPs by 2031)**
  - **Creates short-term (2026-2028) Montana Rural Health Center of Excellence to develop and oversee data backed financial sustainability recommendations**
    - WE MUST ENSURE STRONG TRIBAL REPRESENTATION ON THIS BOARD
  - **Funding for expanded residencies and necessary clinical hours which can be used for CHAP education programs**
  - **Funding to expand school-based health systems**
  - **Funding to modernize EHR**
  - **Funding for health technology modernization**

## **Initiative 1 – Develop Workforce through recruitment training and retention - \$117.9 mil over 5 years**

In partnership with Montana Dept of Labor and Industry, OSPI, MSU College of Nursing, Rocky Vista UM College of Osteopathic Medicine, Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine Montana, WWAMI.

### **Increase recruitment of rural health care workforce**

- Early Exposure
- Technical instruction for HC Professionals
- Expand HC apprenticeship programs

### **Expand rural clinical training capacity and opportunities**

- Expand residency training capacity
- Financial incentives and training to attract preceptors and apprenticeship mentors
- Expand rural training tracks

### **Upskill and retain rural health care workforce**

- Supportive services for HC workers in relocating to rural communities
- Invest in advanced clinical, operational and BH training programs

## **Initiative 2 – Ensure rural facility sustainability and access through partnership and restructuring.- \$473.7 Mil over 5 years**

Short-term (2026-2028) Montana Rural Health Center of Excellence to develop and oversee data backed financial sustainability recommendations

- Board-like governance structure to ensure impacted stakeholders have representation and take part in decision making
  - *We need to make sure tribal representation is STRONG on this Board*
- Opt-in program providing incentive payments to rural care delivery systems to implement Montana Rural Health CoE recommendations.

### **Protect and increase access through clinical partnerships**

- Support virtual care availability for rural residents
- Scale intellectual and developmental disabilities telehealth services
- Roll out pediatric virtual care delivery
- Establish sustainable interfacility patient transport coordination system

### **Facilitate vendors and shared services for rural facility cost efficiency**

- Collective access vendors at scale for priority functions including back office and other forms of admin activities and clinical efficiency tools

### **Initiative 3 – Launching innovative care delivery and payment models – \$120 mil over 5 years**

#### **Implement payment and care models that prioritize payment outcomes and access**

- Expand TA for Montana PCPs participating in M'caid value-based contracting
- Strengthen MT's innovative payment and care delivery models

#### **Modern EMS to increase capacity and reach**

- Train community paramedics to provide in-home clinical and wellness evaluations, chronic disease management, and BH interventions (CHAs can do this)
- Invest in foundational emergency services infrastructure (one time funding)
- Pilot a pre-hospital blood administration program

#### **Extending access lower cost care through pharmacists**

- Support limited diagnostic and treatment capabilities in pharmacies.

#### **Increase outpatient services based on MT Rural Health CoE recommendations**

Outpatient site improvement

### **Initiative 5 – Deploy modern healthcare technologies to guide rural health interventions \$108.2 mil over 5 years**

#### **Improve data usability and population health interventions**

- Develop tools that generate actionable and valuable insights
- Deploy monitoring, eval, and continuous improvement programs for interventions

#### **Modernize EHR for rural providers**

- Modernize EHR system
- Support and fund consumer facing EHR modules
- Opt-in model via regional hub “community connect” for interoperability, telehealth capabilities and data sharing, while promoting consumer-facing technologies

# **RHDF + CHAP INITIATIVE 4 – INVEST IN COMMUNITY HEALTH AND PREVENTATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE**

- **Montana included CHAP in INITIATIVE 4. INVEST IN COMMUNITY HEALTH AND PREVENTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE**
- **The state is set to support training and education of 200 CHAP providers by 2031**
- **Funding will be used to cover initial training and development costs for CHAP and to initiate training and scholarship opportunities as needed**
- **Initiative also includes expansion of school-based health care, update of rural HC infrastructure with critical repairs and modernization and invest in rural healthy lifestyles**
- **We should work with our tribal colleges to understand what gaps exist between their existing programs and what they would need in terms of time, funding, and human resources in order to implement these education programs.**
  - (Fort Peck and Rocky Boy have already begun this exploration work and Salish Kootenai college has a DHA education program)



# NATIONAL CHAP BOARD UPDATE

## NATIONAL CHAP BOARD – WHAT IS IT

- The IHS CMO leads the National Community Health Aide Program Board (NCHAPB).
- This board, a permanent national IHS entity, supports Tribal and Federal Community Health Aides (CHAPs), sets minimum standards and procedures, and supervises CHAP Area Certification Boards (ACBs) in the 48 contiguous states.
- The NCHAPB can delegate authority to an ACB to represent an Area establishing or waiting for ACB recognition.
- NCHAPB members include the Chair and a representative from each of the 12 IHS Areas, either from a Federally operated or Tribally operated program.
  - **Dennis FourBear is the representative from the Billings Area**
- The National CHAP Board will approve the baseline standards for all disciplines of community health aide providers – this includes scope of practice, education and training, CE, and supervision requirements

# NATIONAL CHAP BOARD – OCTOBER 22-23, 2025 MEETING UPDATE

- National CHAP Board (NCB) members met in person in Phoenix, AZ (with some attending by zoom)
- The National CHAP Board is in the process of creating and approving Bylaws to govern the operations of the NCB
  - Issues being discussed:
    - Meetings open to the public
      - IHS has agreed that the first open meeting will be in January
    - Transparency and Accountability
    - Tribal Consultation
    - Updates to the IHS CHAP circular to reflect tribal priorities
- **Next meeting via zoom Dec 10, 2025 (closed)**



BILLINGS AREA  
CHAP  
CERTIFICATION  
BOARD UPDATES

# BILLINGS AREA CHAP CERTIFICATION BOARD UPDATES

**The Area Certification Board is one piece of the regional infrastructure we need to successfully employ CHAP providers in our tribal clinics.**

- Currently – the board is going through IHS’s “checklist” for what elements the board needs to demonstrate in order to achieve federal approval
- The Board meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday via zoom for one or two hours depending on the Agenda – Next meeting is Nov 21, 2025 at 10 AM
- The Board needs more participation by Billings Area Tribes
- The Board currently has approved Behavioral Health Aide Standards – we are hoping that the Board can begin work on the Community Health Aide Discipline soon
- We would like to see consultation in the Area on the seating chart and underlying documents of the Billings Area Certification Board in the near future to help inform Tribes in the Area about the work and to get their feedback on the direction of CHAP Implementation in our Area.

# BILLINGS AREA CHAP UPDATES

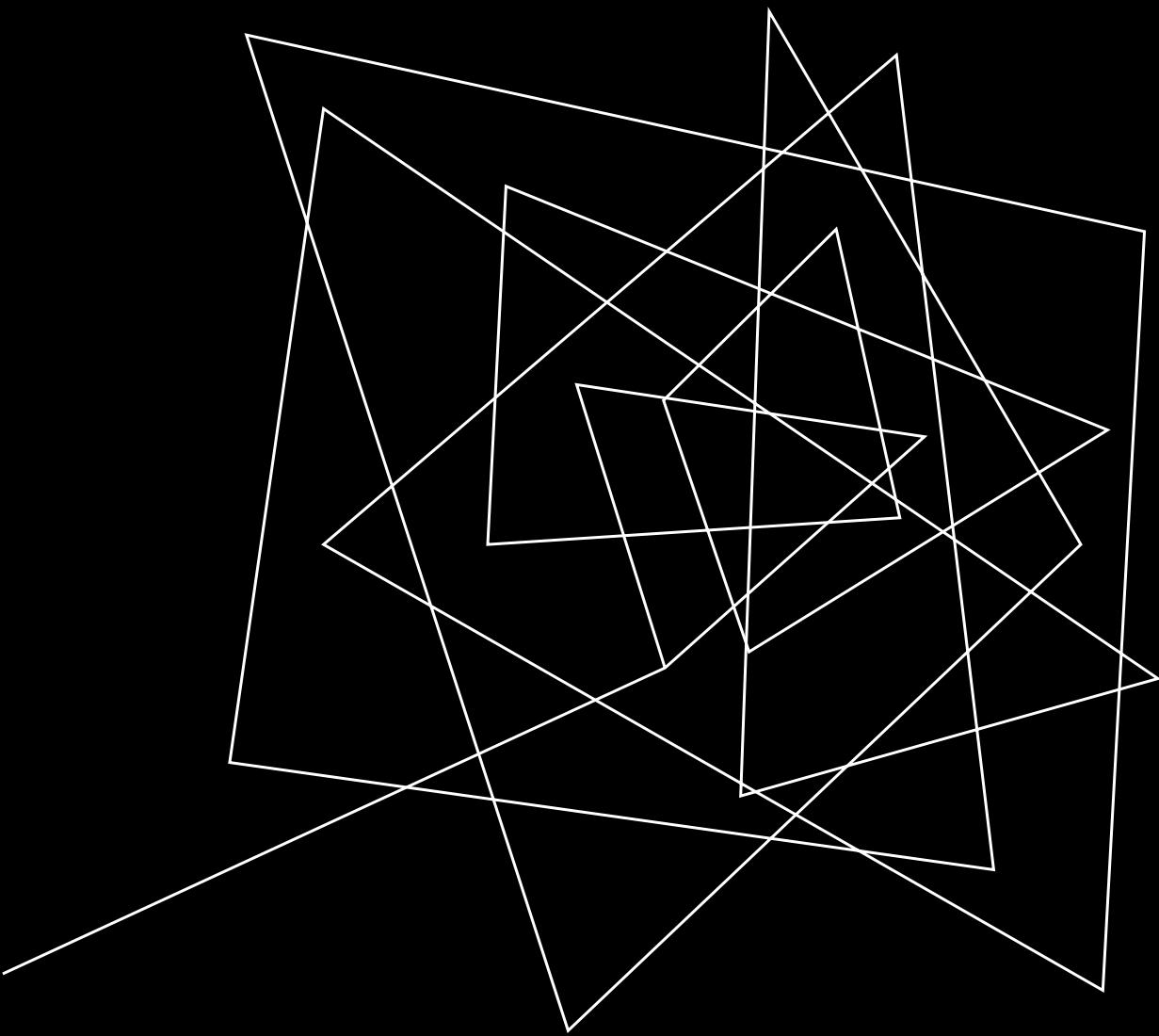
## Medicaid Reimbursement

- The Montana State legislature has directed the DPHHS to submit a state plan amendment to include CHAP Providers as providers in the Medicaid plan.
  - The State of Montana has included a goal of supporting the training of 200 Community Health Aides of all disciplines by 20314
  - DPHHS has not yet begun the work on the State Plan Amendment
    - Tribes will need to advocate for DPHHS to prioritize this work
  - Once the State has submitted the Medicaid State Plan Amendment, the Medicaid agency will need to create billing guides for CHAP Providers and integrate them into the system – this takes time
  - Until this work is complete, it is possible for CHAP Providers to bill underneath their supervising providers – some work needs to happen with DPHHS to put that into place – other state Medicaid agencies are using this interim strategy for billing while SPAs are implemented.

# BILLINGS AREA CHAP UPDATES

## Education Programs

- **Tribal colleges in Montana are exploring BHA and CHA education programs**
  - Two colleges are completing gap analysis of existing programs to build plans for expansion to include CHAP
- **Aaniih Nakoda College has a Billings Area CHAP CB approved BHA education program**
- **Salish Kootenai College has partnered with Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board on a Dental Health Aide education program**
- **Rural Health Transformation Funding focused not only on the education programs for CHAP but also on expanding access to clinical residencies and preceptorships. This infrastructure will also support CHAP education program expansion.**
  - We can (and should be) preparing now to understand what our tribal colleges will need to expand training to include CHAP provider types.



CHAP ROAD  
SHOW



## FORT PECK CHAP TEAM ON THE GO

### **Tribal Colleges and community events**

Christina and Tanya and the Fort Peck CHAP Team are available to come to community events and to meet with your tribal colleges to help spread the word about CHAP

**A primary goal of the Fort Peck CHAP Team is to increase awareness and participation of Montana Tribes in CHAP**

### **Tribal Councils and clinics**

Christina and Tanya and the Fort Peck Team are available to come meet with your clinic leadership, providers, and tribal councils to help spread the word about CHAP and get more Tribes involved with CHAP implementation in our Area.



## SPRING 2026 CHAP SYMPOSIUM – SEEKING SPONSORS

The Fort Peck CHAP Team will be on the road drumming up interest and knowledge around CHAP to get folks excited about the 2026 National CHAP Symposium. This meeting is in the planning phases and will happen in the late spring to bring together national advocates and health care providers implementing CHAP and we'd like to have it in the Billings Area



# THANK YOU

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