Building Alternative Finance Mechanism for Sustainable, Rural Health Payment and Delivery Reform: State Participation Survey

Mathematica, the National Academy for State Health Policy and the Rural Health Redesign Center are launching a new project aimed at supporting the development of rural health care payment and delivery reforms that are sustainable, improve patient outcomes, and reduce costs.

This project will convene states and stakeholders to identify and share practical guidance for rural payment reform, which may include a range of efforts such as total cost of care models, global budgets, and capitated and/or risk-sharing models. This project will complement states' work implementing the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP). Even if payment reform was not explicitly a focus of a state's RHTP grant, its investments may provide support that enables rural health systems to engage with alternative payment models. It is an opportunity for state officials to engage their rural health partners to learn and plan together how to move to more sustainable payment.

We are seeking state teams to participate in the project from now through December 2026. Teams should include at least one official representing a key state office with responsibility for rural health (i.e. public health, Medicaid, state rural health office, etc.) along with key stakeholders. Each state can determine the stakeholders most important to their effort, but may include health care providers, payers (i.e. health plans, carriers, etc.), community-based organizations, and/or employer, etc. Designated team leads are not limited to officials from a state office, but may include an official representing a key provider, payer, association, community organization or other stakeholder that will be involved in these efforts.

As a project participant:

- State teams will be invited to a call series that highlights experts in rural health payment and delivery reform and will include opportunities for state-to-state learning.

- State teams will receive an analytic profile of needs and assets to help better understand their current rural health environment and inform opportunities for future reforms.
- Six state teams will be selected to participate in an in-depth gap analysis comparing activities included in their RHTP with the Future of Rural Health Framework – a national roadmap for addressing the needs of evolving rural healthcare systems. The confidential analysis will identify considerations for how alternative payment models can serve as foundational for future rural payment and delivery reform transformation.

Participant teams must demonstrate:

- Past, current, or emerging interest in implementing rural health care payment reform aimed at improving patient care and outcomes while reducing costs.
- Active engagement or willingness to collaborate with stakeholders including payers, providers, employers and/or other community entities on reforms.
- An awareness of specific needs or concerns of their rural health systems, such as specific population health care needs, provider capacity or shortage issues, or known primary cost drivers.

Please complete this survey to indicate your state's interest in this project. **Completed surveys should be sent to Christina Cousart, ccousart@nashp.org, by the end of the day, Thursday, July 2, 2026.** Please also reach out to Christina if you have any questions about this survey or the project overall.

Team and Leadership Contact Information			
Team Lead:		**State:**	
Title/ Position:		**Agency / Organization:**	
Email:		**Phone:**	
Assistant name and email (if applicable):			
Co-Team Lead (if applicable):		**State:**	
Title/ Position:		**Agency / Organization:**	
Email:		**Phone:**	
Assistant name and email (if applicable):			
Team members (list as many as apply): Please include name, position, agency/ organization, and email.			
Please list key stakeholder leaders your state has or will engage as part of this initiative, including participation in the call series (e.g., payers, providers, employers, etc.). Briefly describe the role they or their organization would play in developing practical, sustainable payment reform approaches. Please include name, title, agency/organization and email.			

STATE EXPERIENCE

(NOTE: Participation is open to all states regardless of current or prior experience engaging in payment reform initiatives. The information requested below will be kept internal and used to help us target the content to state interests and experience.)

Does your state team have experience developing and/or implementing payment and delivery reform initiatives? Y or N

A) If yes, please briefly describe the relevant work your state has engaged in to-date (ex. What type of model did your state explore – total cost of care, global budgets, value-based insurance design, capitated payments, shared risk? Did it target specific payers/providers/communities?). What were the goals of these initiatives? Does/did these efforts include any particular focus on rural communities?

B) If no, how has your state exhibited interest in pursuing alternative payment models in the near future? What are the key factors that have prohibited your state from pursuing these models in the past? What conditions have changed or are changing that make you believe your state is ready to pursue this work?

Briefly describe your state team's key goals for moving to alternative payment models.

Project Participation Interest

What would your team most wish to gain from participation in this initiative? How do you believe participation will support your state?

What components of this project are most interesting to your state team? (check as many as apply)

☐ Cross-state learning via state engagement: Call series featuring state teams and experts designed to Identify common pain points toward implementing alternative payment models and potential approaches to address them

☐ Gap analysis: Assessment of state activities and opportunities in the context of a broader framework for rural health

☐ Analytic profiles: Detailed data reports designed to inform approaches to payment reform

☐ Issue briefs: Resources synthesizing key lessons and strategies for implementing alternative payment in rural settings.

☐ Rural payment reform blueprint: State and stakeholder informed synthesis of key learnings and a path forward for rural payment reform

How does your team envision using any of the components you checked off above? Are there specific outcomes you would like to see from any of the noted project components?