

Kentucky Rural Health Transformation

October 2026 Update

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October 20, 2026



The Rural Health Transformation Program is a cooperative agreement between CMS and the Commonwealth of Kentucky

Rural Health Transformation Program

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has been awarded funding through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Rural Health Transformation Fund (RHTF). This investment will empower Kentucky to launch and implement its Rural Health Transformation Plan (RHTP) — a community-driven strategy to expand access and improve health outcomes for rural residents across the Commonwealth. [Read Governor Beshear's press release.](#)

About the Program

This project is 100% funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for a total of \$212.9 million in budget year 1 with 100% by CMS/HHS. The Rural Health Transformation (RHT) grant spans five budget periods aligned with federal fiscal years (FY2026–FY2030). Funding is disbursed annually by CMS based on achievement of performance metrics. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CMS/HHS, or the U.S. Government. View the Notice of Funding Opportunity at <https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/360442>

A Healthier Rural Kentucky. Built to Last.



Kentucky Rural Health Transformation

Kentucky Rural Health Transformation (KyRHT) is a five-year federal investment to reshape health in rural Kentucky. Through five interconnected programs, we are tackling some of the challenges that impact rural communities most.

Rural Health Transformation Plan Goals

CMS Strategic Goals:



Make Rural America Healthy Again



Workforce Development



Innovative Care



Tech Innovation



Sustainable Access

Allowable Uses of Funds*

**states must invest in at least three uses of funds*

- Prevention and Chronic Disease
- Provider Payments
- Consumer Tech Solutions
- Training and Technical Assistance
- Workforce
- IT Advances
- Appropriate Care Availability
- Behavioral Health
- Innovative Care

Rural Health Transformation Funding Constraints

Core Funding Exclusions



New construction



Independent Research
and Development



Duplicate billable
services

RHT funding **cannot** be used to replace or duplicate funding or change fee schedules.

RHT Funding must:

- ▶ Emphasize **sustainable system transformation**
- ▶ Support **big, innovative ideas** that are **evidence-based**
- ▶ Facilitate **early wins**, as the state is **at risk to pay back funding**

Five Programs Built to Deliver Better Health for Rural Kentucky



PoWERing Rural Maternal & Infant Health

Supporting mother and baby with tailored care, from pregnancy through year one.



Crisis to Care Program (CTC)

Coordinating EMS and trauma response to match every emergency to the care it needs, every time.



Rapid Response to Recovery (R3)

Shifting crisis response toward coordinated, lasting behavioral health care.



Rooted in Health (RIH)

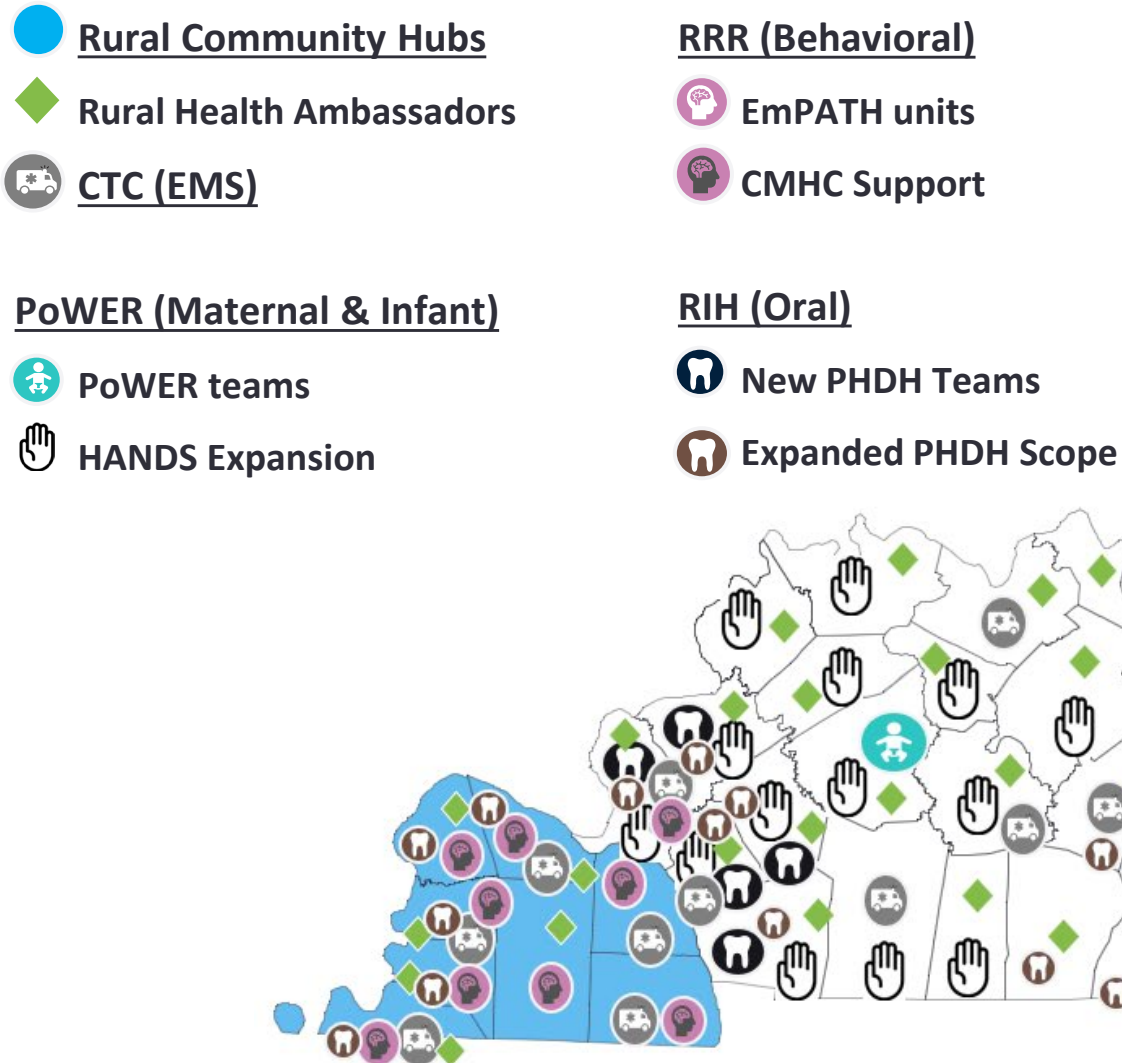
Expanding dental care where it's needed most.



Chronic Care Innovation (CIH)

Reducing chronic illness through evidence-based, community-led strategies.

Activities awarded in the first 9 months



Goal: Increase Access to Maternal and Infant Healthcare in Rural Kentucky



PoWERing

Rural Maternal & Infant Health

Transforming the maternal and infant health care delivery system in rural Kentucky to improve maternal and infant health outcomes

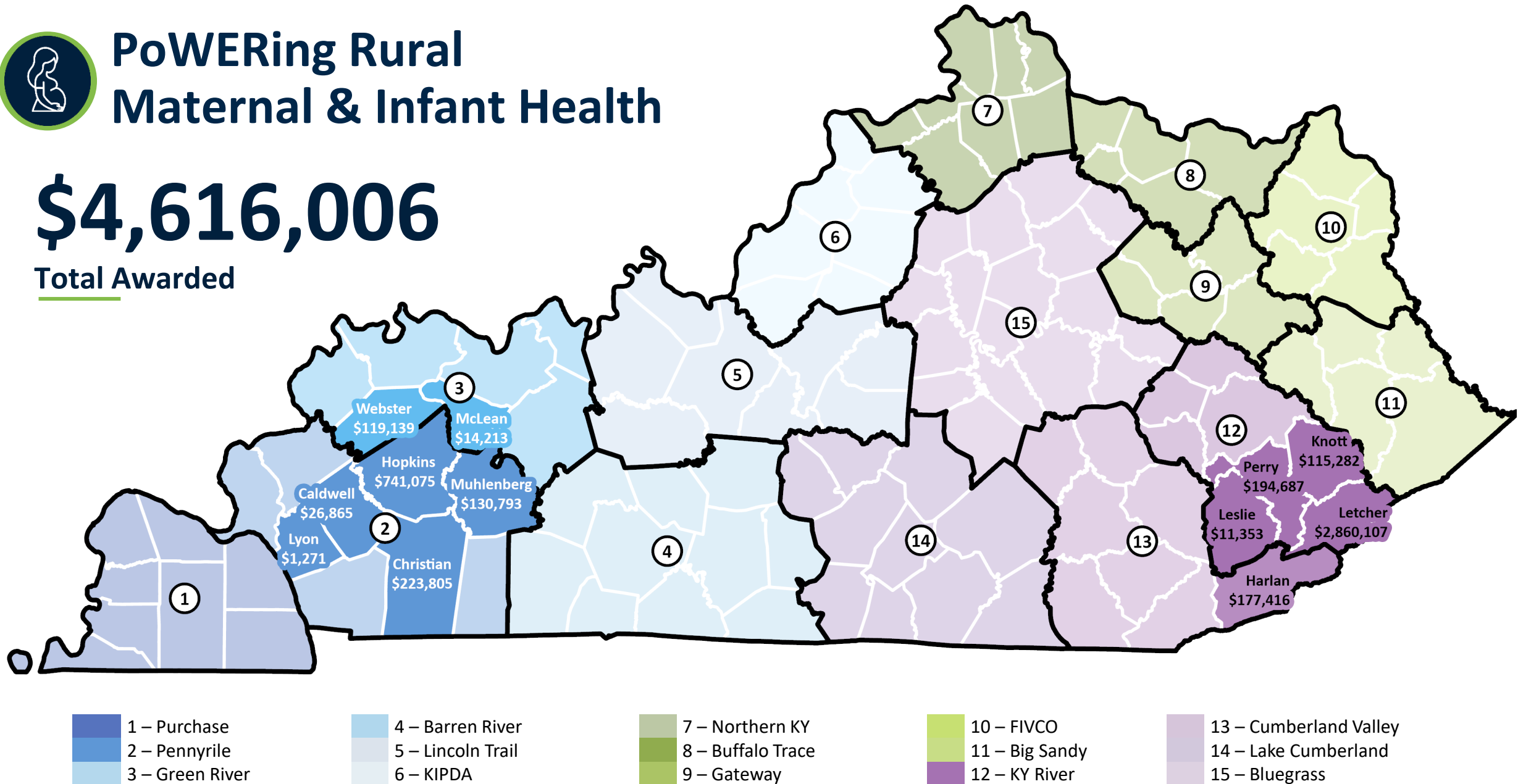
- ▶ **Increasing access to care** through the PoWER Model of Care and community-based teams.
- ▶ **Expanding the doula workforce statewide.**
- ▶ **Growing home visiting capacity** for prenatal, postpartum and early childhood care (HANDS).
- ▶ **Improving emergency maternal and newborn care training** for rural non-birthing hospitals and emergency responders.
- ▶ **Developing a specialized perinatal Community Health Workers (CHWs) certificate.**



PoWERing Rural Maternal & Infant Health

\$4,616,006

Total Awarded



Goal: Faster Help, Fewer Crises and a Clearer Path to Recovery for Rural Kentuckians



Rapid Response to Recovery

Transforming behavioral
health for rural Kentucky

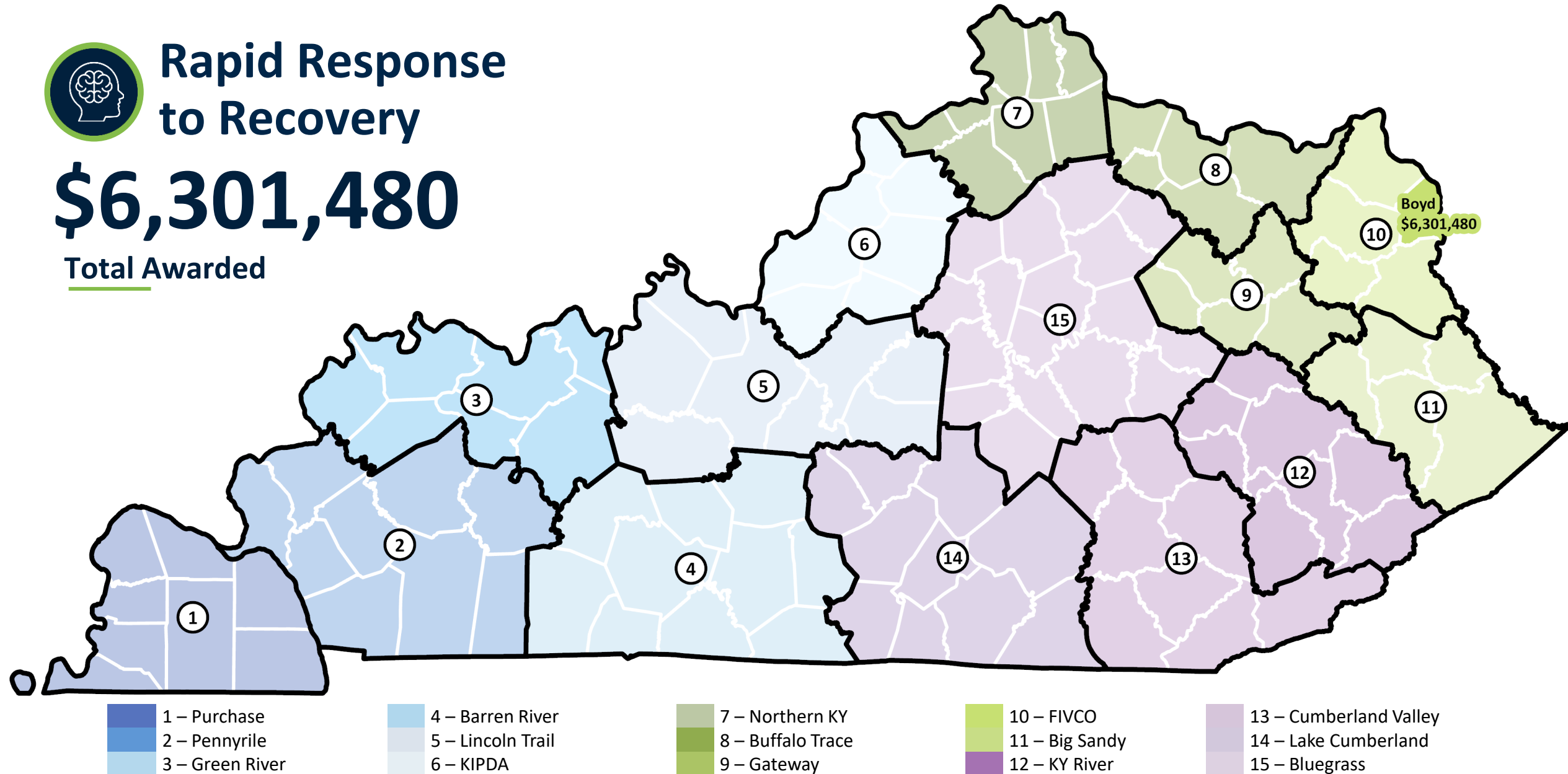
- ▶ Ensuring each patient gets the right care at the right time, **regardless of which door they walk through.**
- ▶ Increasing access to specialty crisis care through **telebehavioral health, response teams** and **EmPATH** units.
- ▶ Building **integrated clinical services** through **community-led partnerships.**



Rapid Response to Recovery

\$6,301,480

Total Awarded



Goal: Bring Routine Dental Care Closer to Rural Kentuckians



Rooted in Health

**Prioritizing oral health through
workforce development and
treatment expansion**

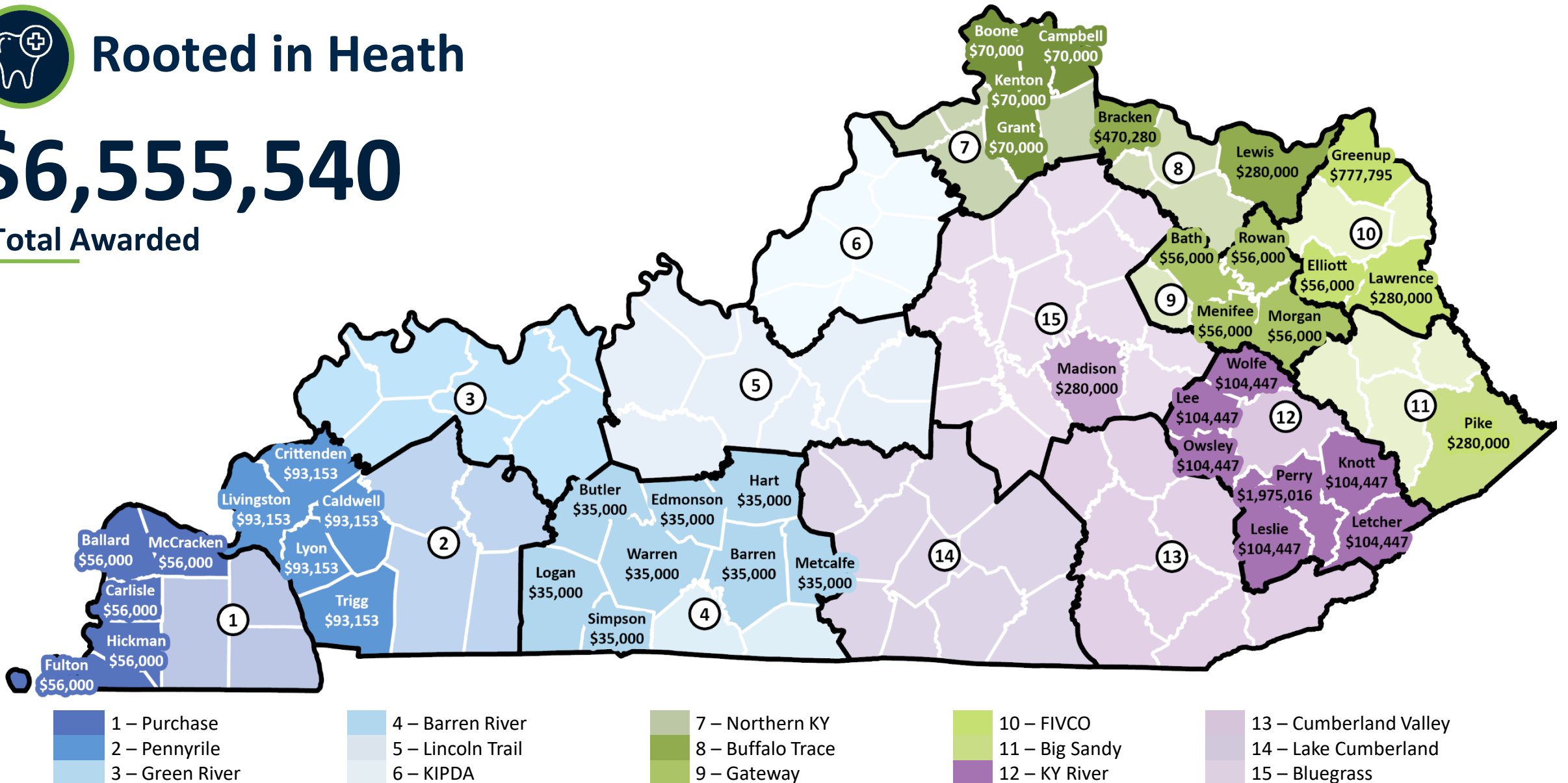
- ▶ Training and placing **more dental hygienists in rural Kentucky communities** so more people have somewhere to turn.
- ▶ **Bringing teledental and mobile dental services to rural communities** so people drive less and get care sooner.
- ▶ Equipping general dentists in rural communities with **advanced continuing education** for surgical extractions to **decrease wait times and referrals**.



Rooted in Health

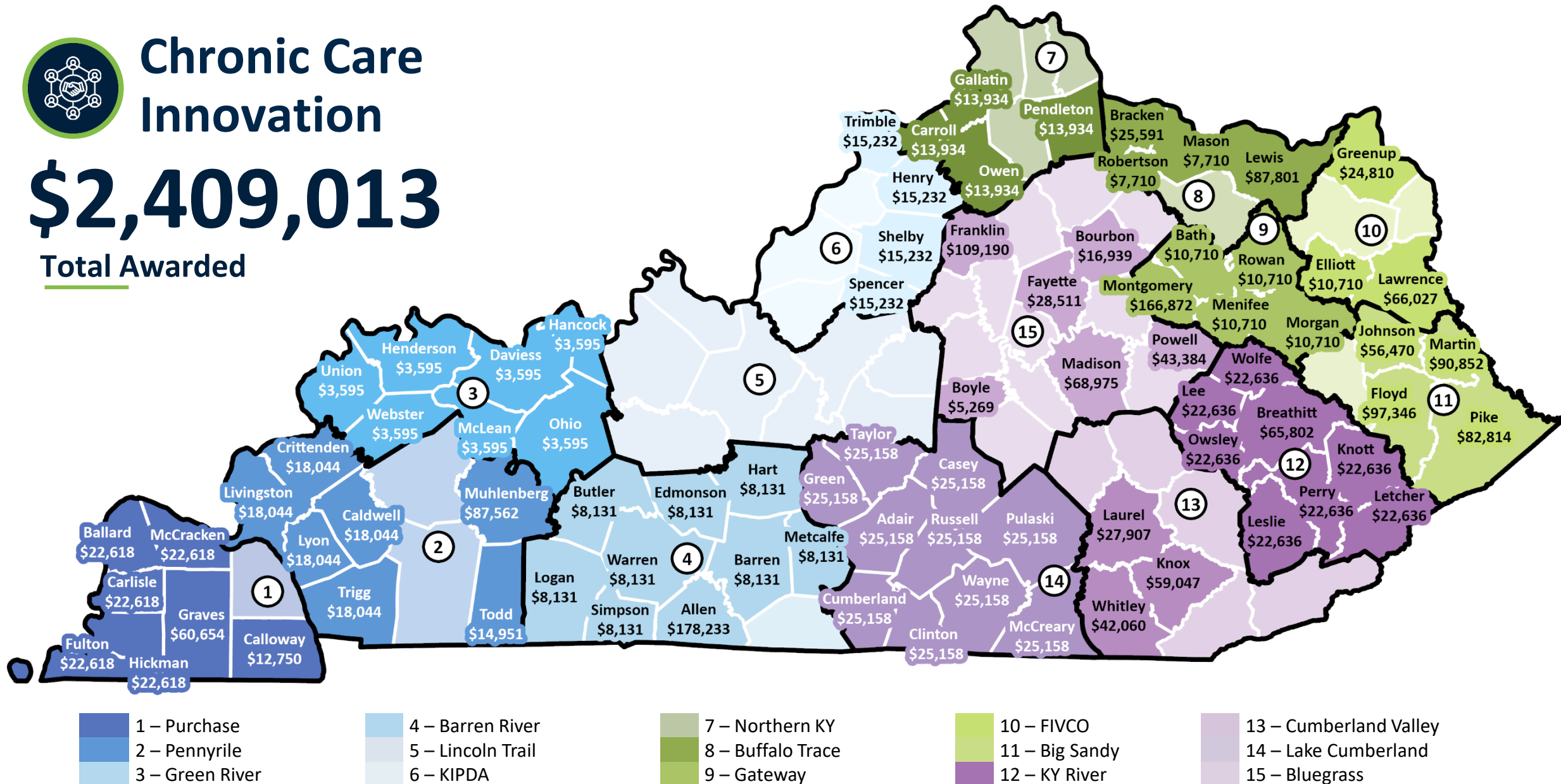
\$6,555,540

Total Awarded





Total Awarded

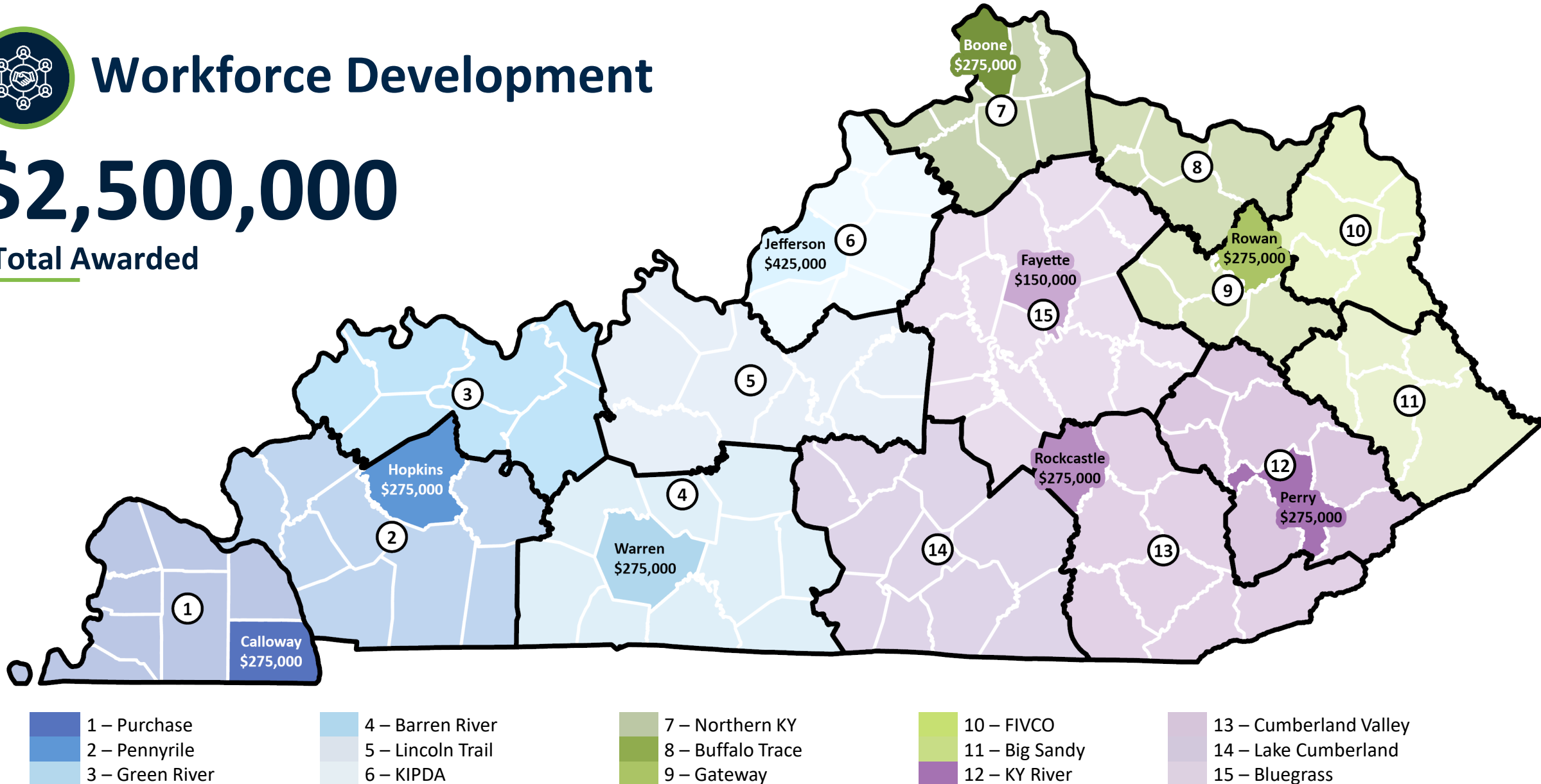




Workforce Development

\$2,500,000

Total Awarded



Statewide KYRHT Activities Under Contract

Clinical

- **\$4,390,605 Teledental Hubs.** all three of Kentucky's Dental Schools: UK, UofL, and UPike *(Spring 2027)*
- **\$6,177,638 Telebehavioral Health Hubs.** UK, UofL, KPCA, Behavioral Health Organizations *(Spring 2027)*

Emergency Response

- **\$9,072,941 EMS Communications and Coordination.** UK, UofL, KPCA *(Fall 2026)*
- **\$477,452 STARS.** EMS care plans for medically complex children UofL, Norton's Children's Hospital *(Winter 2026)*
- **\$2,263,512 988 Communications Platform.** DBHDID, CMHCs *(Spring 2027)*

Data and Technology

- **\$2,248,831 Vitality Signs.** public facing website with community data, UK College of Public Health *(June of 2027; Beta site live now)*

Community Care Coordination

- **\$4,350,743 Clinical Care Coordination.** KHIE – RHT-specific features *(under development)*
- **\$5,190,000 Non-Clinical Resource Coordination.** kynect resources – RHT-funded *enhancements (under development)*

Statewide KYRHT Activities Under Contract (continued)

Workforce

- **\$6,587,732 Dental Hygienists** (Fall 2028): BCTC, Campbellsville, KSU, UK-Hazard
- **\$1,011,172 Expanded Duty Dental Assistants** (Winter 2027): KPCA
- **\$668,534 Advanced Extraction Training for General Dentists in Rural Areas** (Spring 2027): UK, KPCA
- **\$175,000 Doulas** (Winter 2026): Kentucky Perinatal Quality Collaborative
- **\$2,500,000 Pipeline** (Fall 2026): UofL, UK, and all 8 Area Health Education Centers
- **\$2,595,475 Community Health Workers** (foundational Fall 2026):UofL Trager Institute, AKHCAN, UK Homeplace; (specialty certificates Fall 2027): UofL Trager Institute, KPCA, WKU, Volunteers of America, Ky Pharmacy Education and Research Foundation

All Initiatives Score 2.2 on the CMS Checkpoint Model

#	Initiative Name		
1	Rural Community Hubs for Chronic Care Innovations		
Stage 0 – Planning			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
0.1	Establish governance	Yes	0.1 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
0.2	Submit project plan to CMS	Yes	See uploaded Project Plan
Stage 1 – Project Preparation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
1.1	CMS approval of project plan	Yes	CMS email dated 8/22/2026 (not included)
1.2	Launch initiative	Yes	Initiative 1 CCI Checkpoint 1.2 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
Stage 2 – Early Implementation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
2.1	Continue initiative activities	Yes	See CCI tab in uploaded Project Plan
2.2	Achieve at least one post-launch milestone	Yes	See CCI tab in uploaded Project Plan

#	Initiative Name		
2	PoWERing Rural Maternal and Infant Health: Community-Based Teams		
Stage 0 – Planning			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
0.1	Establish governance	Yes	Init 0.1 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
0.2	Submit project plan to CMS	Yes	See uploaded Project Plan
Stage 1 – Project Preparation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
1.1	CMS approval of project plan	Yes	CMS email dated 8/22/2026 (not included)
1.2	Launch initiative	Yes	Initiative 2 PoWER Checkpoint 1.2 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
Stage 2 – Early Implementation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
2.1	Continue initiative activities	Yes	See PoWER tab in uploaded Project Plan
2.2	Achieve at least one post-launch milestone	Yes	See PoWER tab in uploaded Project Plan

#	Initiative Name		
3	Rapid Response to Recovery: EmPATH Model, Mobile Crisis and Telehealth		
Stage 0 – Planning			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
0.1	Establish governance	Yes	0.1 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
0.2	Submit project plan to CMS	Yes	See uploaded Project Plan
Stage 1 – Project Preparation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
1.1	CMS approval of project plan	Yes	CMS email dated 8/22/2026 (not included)
1.2	Launch initiative	Yes	Initiative 3 R3 Checkpoint 1.2 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
Stage 2 – Early Implementation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
2.1	Continue initiative activities	Yes	See R3 tab in uploaded Project Plan
2.2	Achieve at least one post-launch milestone	Yes	See R3 tab in uploaded Project Plan

#	Initiative Name		
4	Rooted in Health: Kentucky Rural Dental Access Program		
Stage 0 – Planning			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
0.1	Establish governance	Yes	0.1 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
0.2	Submit project plan to CMS	Yes	See uploaded Project Plan
Stage 1 – Project Preparation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
1.1	CMS approval of project plan	Yes	CMS email dated 8/22/2026 (not included)
1.2	Launch initiative	Yes	Initiative 4 RiH Checkpoint 1.2 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
Stage 2 – Early Implementation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
2.1	Continue initiative activities	Yes	See RiH tab in uploaded Project Plan
2.2	Achieve at least one post-launch milestone	Yes	See RiH tab in uploaded Project Plan

#	Initiative Name		
5	From Crisis to Care: Integrated EMS and Trauma Response		
Stage 0 – Planning			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
0.1	Establish governance	Yes	0.1 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
0.2	Submit project plan to CMS	Yes	See uploaded Project Plan
Stage 1 – Project Preparation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
1.1	CMS approval of project plan	Yes	CMS email dated 8/22/2026 (not included)
1.2	Launch initiative	Yes	Initiative 5 CTC Checkpoint 1.2 Evidentiary Documentation section in the Master Initiative Attachments PDF
Stage 2 – Early Implementation			
	Checkpoint	Yes/No	Attachment(s)
2.1	Continue initiative activities	Yes	See CTC tab in uploaded Project Plan
2.2	Achieve at least one post-launch milestone	Yes	See CTC tab in uploaded Project Plan

These snapshots are from the Annual Report.

Full plan posted on ruralhealthplan.ky.gov



Snapshot: Checkpoint Evidence

Kentucky Rural Health Transformation

Budget Period 1 Annual Report

CMS Checkpoint Model Evidence

August 28, 2026

Snapshot: Five-Year Project Plan

Initiative I: Chronic Care Innovation (CCI): RCHs, CHWs, and Data and Technology Strategy

Designated Leads: RCH: Allison Adams; CHWs: Ashley Gibson; Data/Tech: Deepak Mirchanani

Key

Stage
Milestone
Task

Status Report

74	Complete
12	In Progress - On Track
1	In Progress - Behind Schedule
78	Not Yet Started

Milestones in red font have been completed					
Checkpoints highlighted in yellow have been met					
Stage	Milestones/Tasks	Target Start	Target Due Date	Status Report as of 7/31/2026	Task Owner
Component					
Stage 0	Planning				
I	Stand Up CCI Teams for RCH, CHWs, and Data/Technology	1/1/2026	7/31/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
	Confirm Convening Organization	1/1/2026	2/18/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
	Select staffing mechanism(s)	1/1/2026	2/1/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Andrew Yunt
	Establish CHFS internal advisors for CCI	1/1/2026	7/31/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
	Kickoff Meeting with A3 leadership team, key partners, and support team (all five initiatives)	1/6/2026	1/6/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
	ADD selection criteria discussion (all initiatives)	2/19/2026	2/19/2026	Complete	Dr. Brent Wright, Andrea Adams
	CCI stakeholder engagement strategy meeting (internal)	1/30/2026	1/30/2026	Complete	Andrew Bledsoe
	UK CPH meeting re: Partner Tool and measuring strength of local networks	2/5/2026	2/5/2026	Complete	Allison Adams
Checkpoint 0.1 Establish governance					
I	Establish Governance	1/1/2026	7/31/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
	Define initiative team operating model and governance structure	1/1/2026	1/27/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
	Establish approval processes and operational decision flows for initiative design, budget, and execution	2/10/2026	5/20/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
	Establish regular cadence for RHIT financial reporting	2/9/2026	5/31/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
	Procure and launch PM tool for initiative tracking and collaboration	4/2/2026	7/30/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
	Compliance sprint to inform the development of the RHIT subrecipient risk assessments process and monitoring plan	6/2/2026	6/30/2026	Complete	Dr. John Langefeld, Tom Walton
Checkpoint 0.2 Submit project plan to CMS					
I	Develop Project Plan			In Progress - Behind Schedule	All Leads
	Refine milestones and flesh out activities in project plan	1/1/2026	6/26/2026	Complete	All Leads
	Submit project plan to CMS for informal review	6/29/2026	7/15/2026	Complete	Andrea Adams
	Dialogue with CMS re: project plan	8/7/2026	8/31/2026	In Progress - On Track	Leadership Team
	Revise project plan based on CMS feedback	8/7/2026	8/31/2026	In Progress - On Track	Andrea Adams, All Leads
	Submit revised project plan to CMS	8/18/2026	8/31/2026	In Progress - On Track	Andrea Adams
Stage 1	Initial Launch (public announcement or at least one contract signed or sub-recipient selected)			In Progress - On Track	
Checkpoint 1.1 CMS approval of project plan					
I	Receive approval of project plan from CMS	7/15/2026	7/31/2026	Not Yet Started	
Checkpoint 1.2 Launch initiative					

Budget Period 2 Notice of Award

**The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
anticipates issuing a
Notice of Award on October 30, 2026.**

Budget Period 2 begins on October 31, 2026.

Full report posted on ruralhealthplan.ky.gov

