

Purchase District Health Department Selected to Lead Local Efforts for New Program Supporting Healthier Rural Communities

Paducah, KY (October 7th, 2026) – [Purchase District Health Department](#) (PDHD) has been selected to lead the Rural Community Hub for the Purchase region as part of the [Rural Community Hubs for Chronic Care Innovation Program](#). The statewide Rural Community Hubs program is part of [Kentucky's Rural Health Transformation](#) (KY RHT).

The Rural Community Hubs program is designed to create a more coordinated approach to chronic disease prevention and management in rural communities across the Commonwealth. The initial focus is on diabetes and obesity, with an opportunity to expand into other chronic diseases over the course of the five-year opportunity.

PDHD was selected as the Hub Lead Organization through a competitive application process. As the Hub Lead Organization for the Purchase region, PDHD will coordinate the activities of a Rural Community Hub serving Ballard, Calloway, Carlisle, Fulton, Graves, Hickman, Marshall, and McCracken counties. Together with partners across public and private sectors, PDHD will identify community needs and develop local strategies to address obesity and diabetes.

KY RHT is a five-year federal investment that empowers states to strengthen rural communities by improving healthcare access, quality, and outcomes by transforming the healthcare delivery ecosystem. Throughout the grant period, the Purchase region will be eligible to receive up to \$10 million in federal funding for the Rural Community Hubs program to support community health initiatives and Hub operations.

“The Purchase District Health Department is thrilled to have partnered with the Calloway County Health Department, the Graves County Health Department, and the Marshall County Health Department as a unified initiative of health departments to comprehensively address the obesity and diabetes needs of our communities with amazing cross-sectional partners throughout our region,” said Kaitlyn Krolkowski,

Public Health Director at PDHD. “This funding allows us the opportunity to implement innovative and transformational programs and initiatives that we have only been able to dream about in the past.”

Kentucky Rural Health Transformation

KY RHT is housed within the Kentucky Department of Public Health and is part of a five-year federal investment to reshape health in rural Kentucky. Through five interconnected programs, KY RHT is tackling the challenges rural communities face in maternal and infant health, dental care, diabetes and chronic disease, behavioral health crisis response, and emergency services. KY RHT is working to develop the health care workforce, improve care coordination, and expand access to care so every rural Kentuckian has the opportunity to live their healthiest life and every community can thrive.

Rural Community Hubs

The Rural Community Hub program will establish “Hubs” in all area development district regions, starting with a phased rollout in the Big Sandy, Lake Cumberland, and Purchase regions. KY RHT and the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky will support the Hubs throughout their work.

The Rural Community Hubs will bring together providers, schools, employers, faith communities, government agencies, and more to unite around a common agenda. There will be shared goals, shared measurements, and a coordinated plan for addressing things like access to healthy food, stable housing, and safe places for people to move and gather. The Hubs will also use innovative digital tools and data to reduce duplication and keep community health efforts connected over time.

Diabetes and Obesity in Kentucky

Diabetes and obesity are costly chronic diseases. According to the [2025 Kentucky Diabetes Report](#), diabetes cost our state an estimated \$6.1 billion in 2023, and our diabetes mortality rate was 30% greater than the national average. Chronic disease is hard to address when resources are organizations are working in isolation. Rural

Community Hubs transform fragmented care into organized support, helping Kentuckians stay healthier throughout their lives.

Organizations in the Purchase region interested in joining these efforts should contact PDHD.

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>.

Purchase District Health Department

The Purchase District Health Department (PDHD) is a local health department whose jurisdiction includes Ballard, Carlisle, Fulton, Hickman, and McCracken counties. The mission of the Purchase District Health Department is to provide environmental, preventive, curative, and health maintenance services to area citizens. Our primary goal is to have individuals in the Purchase adopt habits and behaviors that support a long and productive life span. This goal can be reached by direct health care, health education and counseling, and enforcement of laws that protect health and the environment.

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