

MONTANA HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

ACTION PLAN

September 2026 – August 2031

ENGAGE

Engage partners from across Montana in driving solutions for addressing Montana's healthcare needs.

Engage Strategies	Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Indicator of Success
Strengthen and expand the Montana Healthcare Workforce Advisory Committee's engagement and membership.	Explore funding to support staffing options to lead MHWAC (e.g., dedicated staff, shared FTE, or backbone support).	MORH/AHEC	Fall 2026	Defined and funded staffing model or FTE
	Define roles and responsibilities for staff supporting MHWAC (e.g., coordination, communications, implementation tracking)	MORH/AHEC	Winter 2026/7	Written role descriptions developed
	Explore and, if appropriate, establish a Steering Committee or similar guiding group to help advance implementation of the Healthcare Workforce Strategic Plan, support coordination between meetings, and help prioritize work for the full advisory committee.	MORH/AHEC	Winter 2026/7	Backbone organization(s) identified
	Identify opportunities for in-person meetings or convenings that could strengthen partnerships among healthcare workforce stakeholders.	MORH/AHEC	Winter 2026/7	In-person meeting calendar drafted

Develop and adopt a formal charter or framework for the Montana Healthcare Workforce Advisory Committee (MHWAC) that clarifies the purpose of the group, its role in advancing the Healthcare Workforce Strategic Plan, and how the group will operate.

MORH/AHEC

Spring
2027

Charter
developed

	Establish ongoing coordination with the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) by identifying designated representatives responsible for sharing updates, opportunities, and workforce-related information between RHTP and the Montana Healthcare Workforce Advisory Committee (MHWAC).	MHWAC	Fall 2026	Representative(s) identified
Leverage and mobilize collaborative relationships to expand resources and funding for workforce solutions.	Crosswalk priorities and metrics across key initiatives, including the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) and Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) workforce initiatives, to identify alignment opportunities and ensure coordination with the Montana Healthcare Workforce Strategic Plan.	MHA, ORH, DLI	Spring 2027	Crosswalk drafted
	Identify a lead organization/group to host a centralized clearinghouse of healthcare workforce funding opportunities.	MORH/AHEC, MHA	Winter 2026/7	Organization identified
	Develop and maintain a centralized clearinghouse of healthcare workforce funding opportunities, including federal, state, and private foundation sources, to help partners identify and pursue funding aligned with workforce priorities.	MORH/AHEC, MHREF (MHA)	Spring 2028	Clearinghouse developed
Build enduring partnerships with tribal communities to strengthen healthcare workforce efforts.	Establish coordination with the new Montana American Indian Area Health Education Center (AHEC) to ensure alignment between American Indian AHEC activities and the Healthcare Workforce Strategic Plan, particularly in efforts supporting tribal workforce pathways.	MORH/AHEC	Fall 2026	Outreach conducted/ incorporation into MHWAC

Leverage statewide communication mechanisms to align partners, share information, and incorporate ongoing feedback.	Identify and map existing statewide communication channels used by healthcare workforce partners (e.g., newsletters, listservs, convenings, partner networks) to determine how information about workforce initiatives can be shared more consistently.	MHWAC	Fall 2027	Communications map developed
	Develop a coordinated approach for sharing workforce updates and opportunities through existing partner communication platforms.	MHWAC	Winter 2027/8	Communications method and cadence established
	Explore and/or support the development of a centralized repository or “one-stop” location where partners can access information about healthcare workforce programs, training opportunities, meetings, and funding resources across the state.	MHWAC, DLI	Spring 2028	Communications repository created

RECRUIT

Support and expand pathways into Montana’s health education programs and healthcare professions

Recruit Strategies	Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Indicator of Success
Expand and enhance healthcare pathway programs for	Work with the MUS ApplyMT platform to explore adding an option for students interested in healthcare careers to receive information about training programs and pathway opportunities.	OCHE	Spring 2027	Survey updated

secondary students to increase awareness and preparation for healthcare careers.	Develop and maintain a statewide list of healthcare pathway programs, camps, and training opportunities available to secondary students to better understand capacity and improve coordination across programs.	MHWAC, AHEC	Winter 2026/7	List created
	Expand HOSA chapters into additional Montana schools.	HOSA	Summer 2027	# of new schools
	Increase AHEC pipeline activities (e.g., REACH camps, MedStart, and other pathway programs) and explore opportunities to expand participation among rural and tribal students.	AHEC	Summer 2027	# of new opportunities offered
Increase outreach and partnerships with secondary schools to connect students to training programs, job shadowing, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities.	Collaborate with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) health science career specialist to better understand existing data collection and plans for additional data collection.	MHWAC	Fall 2026	Meet with DLI
	Coordinate with the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) health science specialist to strengthen connections between healthcare workforce partners and secondary school career and technical education programs.	MHWAC	Fall 2026	Meet with OPI
	Develop a relationship with the Montana Post Secondary Educational Opportunities Council (MPSEOC) for future outreach activities.	MHWAC	Fall 2026	Meet with MPSEOC
	Partner with the Montana Post Secondary Educational Opportunities Council (MPSEOC) to explore opportunities to increase healthcare workforce participation in career fairs and outreach events.	MHWAC	Fall 2027	# of new opportunities identified

Partner with healthcare facilities to develop facility-led job shadowing, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities for secondary students.	Coordinate with the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) to understand which aspects of workforce development, job shadowing, internship, and apprenticeship activities may be supported through RHTP and identify opportunities for this work to complement those efforts.	MHWAC	Winter 2026/7	Strategic priorities aligned
Increase rural clinical training opportunities by supporting host sites and reducing barriers for students to train in rural communities.	Coordinate with the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) to understand how rural clinical training expansion and related workforce initiatives are addressed within RHTP and identify opportunities for alignment with this Strategic Plan.	MHWAC	Winter 2026/7	Strategic priorities aligned
	Convene key partners (e.g., healthcare facilities, education programs, workforce partners, and regulators) to discuss the current status of rural clinical training opportunities in Montana, including existing capacity, barriers, and ongoing initiatives.	MHWAC	Spring 2027	Key partner meeting scheduled

EDUCATE & TRAIN

Educate and train Montana's current and future healthcare workforce

Educate & Train Strategies	Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Indicator of Success
Enhance training and support for rural facilities and preceptors to enhance clinical education experiences.	Identify and compile existing preceptor education and training opportunities, including discipline-specific requirements and available support resources, and share this information with rural healthcare facilities interested in hosting students.	MORH/AHEC	Winter 2026/7	List of current opportunities created
Address clinical training capacity limits, including staff burnout and workload challenges, to ensure sustainable student placement models.	Examine how other rural states are addressing clinical training capacity and workforce burnout challenges and identify practices that may be relevant to Montana.	MHWAC	Year 2 (TBD)	Best practices identified/compiled
	Engage healthcare facilities and workforce partners in discussions about staff burnout and workload challenges related to clinical training and student placements to better understand barriers and opportunities for support.	MHWAC	Year 2 (TBD)	Discussion held/themes shared at Montana training or conference
Launch a voluntary designation program recognizing healthcare	Coordinate with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) to understand how potential incentive programs for healthcare training sites may be supported through the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) and explore opportunities to connect a voluntary	MORH/AHEC	Year 2 (TBD)	Incentive programs outlined

facilities as teaching
and training sites.

designation or recognition program for teaching sites with
those efforts.

RETAIN

Retain a competent and skilled healthcare workforce

Retain Strategies	Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Indicator of Success
Expand career advancement pathways through apprenticeships, internships, fellowships, work-based learning, and stackable credentials.	Coordinate with the 406 Jobs initiative to understand current efforts related to career advancement pathways and identify opportunities to align this Strategic Plan with those efforts.	MHWAC	Fall 2027	Strategic priorities aligned
	Review existing soft skills and workforce readiness training programs available in Montana to better understand what currently exists.	MHWAC	Winter 2026/7	List of training programs compiled
	Identify opportunities to connect healthcare employers to the programs and resources (based on the strategy above).	MHWAC	Year 2 (TBD)	Opportunities identified/outreach conducted
Recruit individuals from rural and tribal areas to train, live, and build healthcare careers in the communities they call home.	Support the launch of the American Indian AHEC by helping connect the program with existing healthcare workforce initiatives, training programs, and partner organizations that can help expand career pathways for American Indian students and communities.	AHEC, MHWAC	Fall 2026	Outreach conducted
	Connect with the American Indian Minority Achievement Director at OCHE to explore opportunities to strengthen pathways for American Indian students pursuing healthcare education and careers.	AHEC, OCHE, MHWAC	Spring 2027	Meet with OCHE
	Coordinate with the 406 Jobs initiative to understand activities that may support healthcare career pathways for	MHWAC	Fall 2027	Strategic priorities aligned

	rural and tribal communities and identify opportunities to align this Strategic Plan with those efforts.			
	Compile a list of existing workforce programs and outreach efforts that support rural and tribal healthcare careers.	MHWAC	Winter 2026/7	List of existing opportunities compiled
	Determine if workforce programs and outreach efforts are reaching capacity and identify opportunities to improve utilization (based on the strategy above).	MHWAC	Summer 2028	Capacity assessment completed

SUSTAIN

Sustain Montana's healthcare workforce through secured funding, resources, and data-driven evaluation

Sustain Strategies	Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Indicator of Success
Explore statewide strategies to enhance clinical placements, including assessing capacity, identifying gaps, and reviewing best practices for management models.	Identify method and lead for gathering baseline information about clinical placement coordination across Montana.	MHWAC	Winter 2026	Baseline data collected

Support efforts to fund workforce initiatives and programs.	Monitor emerging statewide initiatives to understand how they may support workforce recruitment and retention efforts and identify opportunities for collaboration or promotion through this group.	MHWAC	Fall 2027	Awareness and information sharing
	Convene workforce partners to share information about current and anticipated funding opportunities and identify ways to better align funding strategies and reduce duplication or competition for similar grant opportunities (e.g., standing agenda item during MHWAC meetings).	MHWAC	Spring 2027	Funding sources identified
Maintain a statewide repository to share promising practices, best practices, and funding resources.	Maintain and enhance statewide healthcare workforce repositories and funding resources to disseminate best practices and identify growth opportunities, including ongoing updates based on partner needs and integration of relevant resources.	MHWAC	Fall 2028	Funding opportunities and best practices identified
Support systems development to track health professionals throughout their educational and career paths.	Coordinate with OCHE to better understand existing workforce tracking systems and explore opportunities to utilize available data to inform workforce planning and evaluation efforts.	MHWAC, OCHE	Fall 2027	Evaluation systems identified