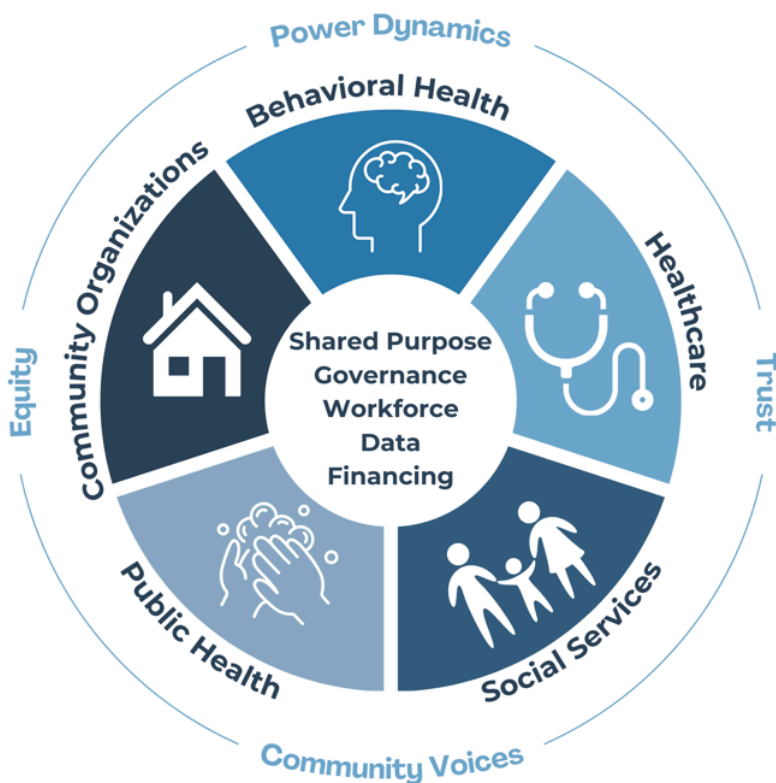


Rural Community Health Improvement Partnership (R-CHIP) Demonstration

A rural health systems transformation initiative

Overview

With increasing evidence of the powerful influence of social needs on health and health equity, health systems and communities in rural Maine are using diverse, multi-sector community partnerships to transform how patients in the health system obtain food, housing, transportation, and other community services as a critical part of their overall health care plan. In three rural regions of Maine, the R-CHIP demonstration sites are working to integrate the often-siloed systems of health care, social service, and public health providers to expand access to needed services, improve health outcomes, and lower the cost of care. R-CHIP builds on similar efforts in other states such as California and Rhode Island but with an exclusive focus on rural communities, where access to resources and services is often limited.



The R-CHIP Model helps rural communities collaborate to make transformational change



Improved

Access to Care
Health Outcomes
Cost of Care

Building the Foundation

For the past 20 months, health care, public health, social service, and other community-based organizations in Kennebec/Somerset, Aroostook, and Hancock/Washington counties have formed regional partnerships to support service coordination and integration needed to meet patients' most pressing health-related social needs (HRSNs). Each site has identified priority HRSNs, developed strategies to address them, and is implementing projects to tackle their community-driven priorities.

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services funded the first 20 months of the demonstration with a federal grant from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *MCD Global Health* serves as the Technical Assistance Hub, supporting a peer learning network, providing project planning support, overseeing an independent evaluation, and helping to secure funding to sustain the work of the demonstration.

Sustaining Progress

Each of the sites established a [regional partnership](#), has strong local leadership and community engagement, and has conducted a [robust Readiness Assessment](#) to identify and prioritize local and regional community and health system needs and strategies.

Focus Areas

- **Aroostook County Community Health Improvement Partnership:** expand and improve healthcare-related access to transportation and social connectedness and belonging.
- **Somerset and Kennebec Counties Community Partnership:** expand and improve cross-sector integration, collaboration, and community voice.
- **DownEast Housing Collaborative:** expand and improve access to and availability of emergency housing, supportive housing, low-income housing, and moderate-income housing and other related HRSNs.
- **Technical Assistance Hub:** provide customized assistance and training, evaluation, and quality improvement; support dissemination and replication of the R-CHIP model.

The demonstration sites are actively soliciting funding for their programmatic activities. MCD Global Health is looking to secure “core infrastructure” funding to sustain the hub/backbone infrastructure of each site as well as the Technical Assistance Hub role that will be critical to the success, expansion, and sustainability of the R-CHIP model.