

VT-SORH Funding Strategy for COVID-19 Rural Response

Tentatively, Vermont sub-grants to rural hospitals will be funded by dividing up SHIP supplemental funding and unobligated Flex funds as follows:

Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP)

COVID-19 preparation and response activities [\$90,000 / hospital]

Cover expenses related to COVID-19 preparation and response, including:

- Convert rooms and wings to isolation areas for patient care
- Purchase equipment and software to expand outpatient telehealth services
- Purchase cleaning supplies and services for decontamination within hospitals
- Purchase personal protection equipment for health care staff

[Rationale: “The intent of this award [sic] these dollars is to be broad and covers COVID related activities; if the hospital can link purchases and activities to COVID related needs then its allowable.”]

Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Flex)

Flex area: 3.3 Population Health – stakeholder and public health expert engagement [\$10,000 / hospital]

Cover expenses related to COVID-19 planning, networking and response, including:

- report bed capacity, patient counts, etc. to State and Federal leadership,
- participate in VHCEP Coalition calls to share info and best practices with peers
- set up drive-up testing sites for patients, health care workers, etc.
- purchase materials, supplies and PPE to collect samples at drive up testing sites