

## **North State Jobs First – Health Sector Activation Plan Strategic Overview Narrative**

### **Target Sector Strategy Brief Overview**

**Health Sector: Working toward a healthy North State population by building a robust, adaptive healthcare workforce focused on prevention in parallel with treatment.**

Healthcare is a leading employer in all 10 counties of the North State region and holds potential as a top industry for growth and innovation in the North State region. However, the region lacks a sufficient healthcare workforce, which is critical given the unique and urgent needs of the region including an aging population and extreme climate impacts including catastrophic wildfire and extreme heat. Across nearly all markers, health outcomes are below the California average, with lower life expectancy, more preventable disease, and more substance use and mental health issues than the state average. Additionally, the North State region has higher rates of accidental deaths, drug-induced deaths, motor vehicle accidents, liver disease, suicides, and firearm-related deaths compared to statewide averages. Thus this sector was prioritized for action in the Plan.

The North State Strategic Plan envisions centering the strengths of the people and geography of the region, using a place-based approach (rather than an outside-in approach) to fill workforce shortages. The goal is to build a workforce that is flexible and responsive to the true context of this largely rural region. Healthcare facilities will need to expand to meet growing regional needs, including healthcare services for chronic diseases and elder care, which will create job opportunities in nursing, medical technology, and administrative roles. Telehealth is also a growth area for the North State, with increased innovation opportunities to provide care and expand industry partnerships.

The North State Strategic Plan includes three strategies to advance the Healthcare sector:

**Strategy H–1: Build a robust local health workforce pipeline for the North State.**

- Standardize, formalize, and expand certificate programs to create pathways to employment in health-supporting jobs and to fill health workforce shortages, especially focused on elder care, rural community health work, case management, substance use treatment, and behavioral health.
- Expand incentive programs for mid-level professionals along with MDs and specialists.
- Advance partnerships between health organizations and workforce development entities that can provide funds for on-the-job training and internship wage offsets.

- Centralize a platform to showcase job opportunities and market North State health jobs to K-12 individuals living in the region to grow a pipeline of health workers from within the region, thereby increasing likelihood of retention.
- Expand medical education in the North State through extension programs and a North State medical school focused on rural and Tribal health.
- Explore partnership with organizations such as Futuro Health, which combines soft skill development, technical skills development, and job placement.

**Strategy H-2:** Build on regional assets and advance a culture of health, while using technology to bridge healthcare access gaps.

- Pilot innovative strategies that mesh locally responsive healthcare personnel with professional and technical expertise to increase cost efficiency and provide social support and connection for individuals seeking healthcare.
- Focus on place-based assets and use them as anchor points for innovations. Consider practical application of innovative strategies such as telehealth and infrastructure including adequately equipped facilities.

**Strategy H-3:** Consider health implications and health promotion opportunities in all economic development and regional planning efforts.

- Make strategic and place-based investments in health supporting infrastructure such as community resilience centers, schools serving as community hubs, wellness centers, and health centers.
- Consider the impact on public health across all new infrastructure and planning, including parks, road maintenance, public transport, food systems, and housing.
- Develop a cross-county health promotion partnership and link across multiple sectors.

### **Tactics**

To advance these strategies, the North State Jobs First collaborative will work to (a) build capacity for functioning together as a region across sectors and geographies and (b) nurture specific assistance to individual projects where needed and feasible.

The region will deploy the following Healthcare sector tactics over the next 12–18 months:

#### **1. Activate regional leadership.**

- The collaborative intends to build on the momentum of the Jobs First planning process to foster support and communicate a regional vision for improved economic, social, and climate resiliency. Convenings and convening capacities

will be nurtured to continue building trust across communities and their leaders about the value of working collaboratively as a region and to explore potential structures for ongoing collaboration. North State Together, for example, is an already vibrant regional network focused on education and workforce.

**2. Promote a shared vision.**

- The North State team will conduct follow-up meetings with elected officials and key stakeholders across the 10 counties to share information about Jobs First initiatives and progress in the Healthcare sector, and to explore means of communicating as a region about the North State’s assets, opportunities, and needs.

**3. Inventory healthcare projects in the pipeline and identify technical assistance needs.**

- The team will develop an inventory of Healthcare projects in the region, identifying planning and progress as well as common technical assistance needs.

**4. Foster project-focused support where needed and feasible.**

- Based on the inventory of projects in the Healthcare sector pipeline, the North State team will work to identify common challenges and needs that could benefit from additional technical assistance and work to identify ways to provide such assistance.

**5. Foster connections and interaction across the Plan’s four priority sectors, including Healthcare, Tourism, Agriculture, and Natural Resources.**

- Partners in the North State Jobs First journey have consistently stated they do not want to work in “silos” and seek to work together. Despite working in different sectors, they know they have challenges in common as well as opportunities that could be leveraged and scaled. Their desire to find meaningful ways to tap best practices, share progress, leverage joint opportunities, celebrate milestones, and learn from one another will be nurtured through outreach, communications, field trips, expos, workshops, or other convenings.

## Operating Structure

The region is exploring a twin path to (a) building capacity for functioning together as a region across sectors and geographies and (b) nurturing technical assistance to individual projects where needed and feasible. Staff members from the North State Jobs First convenors – Sierra Institute for Community and Environment and the North State Planning and Development Collective – are exploring options for advancing these two pathways.

This will be an evolving approach because the region has not benefited from the substantial public and civic funding and infrastructure enjoyed by other parts of the state, such as dedicated and ongoing funding for regional planning of multi-county Metropolitan Planning Organizations, substantial philanthropic investment, access to federal financial support through Community Development Financial Institutions, and support through the California Organized Investment Network. In short, the North State faces a notable lack of investment in its nonprofit and business communities as its starting point.

The Modoc College Center Co-op Catalyst project is an example of a potential entry point for regional capacity building and technical assistance. Modoc County is an education desert, located more than 90 miles from the closest California college. The goal of this project, led by Advancing Modoc, is to open two Modoc College Co-op branches that will offer post-secondary education and broadband computer access in Surprise Valley and Newell/Tulelake. The primary focus is pathways in Healthcare, Education, and Human Services. The branches will offer career pathways to high-demand and living wage work in Modoc County. By bolstering and scaling effective regional strategies and projects like this, North State Jobs First will work to overcome substantial regional disadvantage and build on assets it has in place.

Other Catalyst Projects for the Health Sector also offer connecting points for this work around regional capacity building and technical assistance. They include:

- North State Together – Educating Future Environmental Stewards in the North State
- Butte College State Approved Electrician Trainee Program
- Catalyst for Workforce and Community Solutions
- Devices for Digital Literacy

## Resourcing Across the Strategy

### 1. State Grants

**Sources:** California Grants Portal, CDPH, HCAI

**Actions:** Track grant cycles and register on platforms

- Apply for 2–3 grants/year aligned with core services

## 2. Federal Funding

**Sources:** FQHC designation, Need to monitor federal guidelines and funding 2025-2026

**Actions:**

Pursue FQHC status for long-term support

## 3. Philanthropic Support

**Sources:** CHCF, CA Wellness Foundation, L.A. Care

**Actions:**

Submit LOIs (CHCF cycle opens July 2025)

Build partnerships to strengthen proposals

## 4. Bond & Legislative Funds

**Sources:** Prop 1 (behavioral health/housing), rural hospital funds

**Actions:**

Prepare infrastructure plans

Target behavioral health and housing integration

## 5. Rural & Regional Programs

**Sources:** CA Rural Health Initiatives

**Actions:**

Partner with rural agencies

Apply for regional pilot funds

## Dependencies and Risks

- **Workforce**

Relies on a trained, diverse healthcare workforce.

Shortages exist, especially in rural areas.

Dependent on state-supported training and retention programs.

- **Supply Chain**

Medical supplies and drugs depend on global and national supply chains.

Vulnerable to disruptions, especially in emergencies.

- **Technology & Cyber Systems**

Electronic health records, billing, and telehealth rely on stable IT infrastructure.

High risk from cyberattacks.

- **Funding**

Heavily reliant on Medi-Cal, Covered California, and federal ACA funding.

Potential shifts with proposed unified financing models.

- **Public & Behavioral Health**

Dependent on emergency departments due to gaps in community mental health.

Needs better integration of behavioral and physical health services.

- **Local Health Districts**

Provide essential services in rural areas.

Depend on stable public funding and local governance.

## Risks

- **Workforce Shortages**

Limited supply of healthcare professionals, especially in rural and underserved areas.

- **Aging Population**

Increased demand for chronic care and long-term services, straining capacity.

- **Rising Healthcare Costs**

Escalating costs of care, insurance, and pharmaceuticals impacting access and affordability.

- **Health Equity Gaps**

Disparities in health outcomes across race, income, and geography.

- **Mental Health Crisis**

- Insufficient access to mental health services, especially post-COVID.

- **Infrastructure Vulnerabilities**

Aging facilities, limited digital infrastructure, and exposure to natural disasters (e.g., wildfires, earthquakes).

- **Public Health Funding Instability**

Reliance on short-term or emergency-based funding creates long-term planning challenges.

- **Data Privacy & Cybersecurity**

Increased risks of data breaches and cyberattacks in digital health systems.

- **Regulatory Complexity**

Burdensome compliance requirements, especially for smaller providers and clinics.

- **Pandemic and Emerging Disease Threats**

Need for preparedness and rapid response systems to future outbreaks.



**Activation Plan: Tactical Workplan**

<b>Tactic and Overview</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<p><b>Tactic 1</b> Activate regional leadership.</p>	<p>Convene subcommittee for the health sector and include additional practitioners and partners to deepen working relationships, review funded projects, and expand tactics for implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Hosting regular meetings (HRTC, subcommittees, advisory committees).</p> <p>Facilitating peer-to-peer introductions and networking opportunities.</p>	<p>Co-convening Team with sub committees</p> <p>Convening of full HRTC</p> <p>Meetings with key health sector stakeholders</p>	<p>Quarterly through September 2026</p> <p>As needed</p>
<p><b>Tactic 2</b> Promote a shared vision.</p>	<p>Build upon the community capacity workshops completed throughout the planning process. Host workshops in each of the 10 counties to engage the Regional Strategic Plan, connect funded awards with existing and new partners, seek assistance to improve unfunded projects to move toward eligibility for funding or to collaborate with other projects.</p> <p>Develop regular cadence of outreach to entire North State region; newsletter, social media, video projects.</p>	<p>Advisory Committee and HRTC with co-convening team support</p>	<p>Beginning June 2025</p>



<p><b>Tactic 3</b> Inventory healthcare projects in the pipeline and identify technical assistance needs.</p>	<p>Through the community capacity workshops and HRTC meetings, conduct an inventory of needs of individual counties, subregional areas and the entire region.</p> <p>Identify scalable/replicable solutions to share in best practices expo.</p>	<p>Advisory Committee and HRTC with co-convening team support</p>	<p>Beginning June 2025</p>
<p><b>Tactic 4</b> Foster project-focused support where needed and feasible.</p>	<p>Assess funded projects needs and growth opportunities. Identify expertise within the co-convening team, subcommittees, advisory committee, and HRTC members. Review unfunded projects to determine needs and connect with resources.</p>	<p>Advisory Committee and HRTC with co-convening team support</p>	<p>Beginning June 2025</p>
<p><b>Tactic 5</b> Foster connections and interaction across the Plan’s four priority sectors, including Healthcare, Tourism, Agriculture, and Natural Resources.</p>	<p>Complete a best practices expo with regional projects from all key sectors convening in person to share best strategies, programs and practices that can be shared and retooled across sectors. This is a request from our region and breaking silos and sharing best practices that are working within the north state context is a goal of our continued efforts. This expo will be an in person day long gathering.</p> <p>Complete in person convenings including the full regional HRTC.</p> <p>Identify key leaders to facilitate relationships between sectors, for example, natural resources partners focused on tourism or recreation</p>	<p>Advisory Committee and HRTC with co-convening team support</p>	<p>Fall 2025 - in person best practices expo</p> <p>In person HRTC mid-summer</p>



	<p>who can also partner with health sector for multi benefit outcome (e.g. healthy community development, tourism sector growth, improved natural resource management.</p> <p>Identify project with cross sector impact and coordinate regional expertise and capacity to elevate project impact for example community resilience hubs that serve as deployment hubs for natural disaster response and serve as regional healthcare and health promotion hubs.</p>		
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## Goals and Metrics Across the Strategy

### Sector-level outcomes

1. Number of quality primary and secondary jobs
2. Growth in health education institutions and graduates
3. Training and upskilling programs initiated within the region
4. # of cross regional health workforce training partnerships ‘
5. # of cross sector health promoting projects and/or partnerships

### Shorter term progress measures

1. Number / percentage of technical assistance needs adequately met
2. Number and progress of projects in the pipeline (based on inventory)
3. Number and median income of project-related jobs.

### Expectations for reporting progress on measures

1. Quarterly stakeholder gathering
2. Newsletters and storytelling strategy
3. Annual regional in-person meeting of cross-sector leaders (linked with a quarterly regional convening meeting)