

Rocky Mountain Health Foundation

Grant Partner Feedback Survey Results and Analysis

April 27, 2026

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It was my pleasure to provide an analysis of the results for this year's Grant Partner Survey. 160 surveys were sent via email to partner organizations that Rocky Mountain Health Foundation (RMHF) supports. Of those, 89 responses were received, which is a 55% return rate.

General Overview

The respondents to the survey shared very strong satisfaction with RMHF's program understanding, support, communication, and approachability.

At the same time, they describe intense financial, workforce, regulatory, and capacity pressures, especially in rural and safety-net service delivery settings. Their most consistent requests for future interaction include flexible, multi-year funding options; continued open communication, and ongoing empathy and partnership.

Specific Question Results

Question #1: How well do you feel RMHF understands the current challenges facing your organization? Most respondents rated RMHF highly, indicating they feel understood.

Average score: 8.83 out of 10

Breakdowns: 46 respondents gave a score of 10

14 respondents gave a score of 9

17 respondents gave a score of 8

9 respondents gave a score between 5 and 7

3 respondents gave a score of less than 4

Question #2: How effectively have RMHF's actions over the past year supported your organization? There was strong consensus that RMHF's actions meaningfully support the organizations served.

Average score: 9.2 out of 10

Breakdowns: 58 respondents gave a score of 10

13 respondents gave a score of 9

8 respondents gave a score of 8

9 respondents gave a score between 5 and 7

1 respondent gave a score of less than 4

Question #3: How would you rate RMHF's communication about its current activities and future plans? Overall, partners value and appreciate RMHF's transparency and frequency of communication.

Average score: 9.21 out of 10

Breakdowns: 50 respondents gave a score of 10

20 respondents gave a score of 9

13 respondents gave a score of 8

5 respondents gave a score between 5 and 7

1 respondent gave a score of less than 4

Question #4: How comfortable are you approaching RMHF staff if/when a problem arises? The survey reflects extremely high trust and comfort with RMHF staff.

Average score: 9.44 out of 10

Breakdowns: 64 respondents gave a score of 10

11 respondents gave a score of 9

9 respondents gave a score of 8

5 respondents gave a score between 5 and 7

0 respondents gave a score of less than 4

The following questions asked for respondents to answer in their own words.

Question #5: What do you most want RMHF to understand about your organization and its current challenges?

There were 79 responses to this question. I utilized AI to identify the main topics of the responses, reflected, below. The predominant themes were:

- 1 Funding instability and financial strain:
 - VOCA (Victim of Crime Act) cuts, Medicaid changes, loss of COVID-era funds, and State and Federal funding reductions are creating severe financial cliffs.
 - Many organizations are struggling just to maintain operations, not expand.
- 2 Workforce Shortages:
 - They are having difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff, especially in rural areas.
- 3 Rural Realities:
 - Statewide policies often don't fit rural contexts
 - Geographic isolation, limited treatment options, and higher costs make rural service delivery uniquely challenging
- 4 Rising Community Needs:
 - Increased demand for mental health, food security, housing stability and meeting basic needs.
 - Immigration enforcement and cost-of-living pressures are worsening client stress.
- 5 Regulatory and Policy Uncertainty:
 - Medicaid eligibility changes, licensing shifts, and unfunded mandates equal operational instability.
- 6 Need for Flexible, General Operating Support:
 - Many grants require expansion, but organizations need core operating funds to keep their doors open.
- 7 Appreciation for RMHF
 - Many respondents explicitly say that RMHF "gets it," is empathetic, and is a model funder.

A few of the comments:

"Immigration enforcement is promoting fear and anxiety for many families we work with. The heightened stress impacts health, family stability, SDOH resource access, child and adult mental health and much more."

"So hard to keep quality professional staff here on the Western Slope."

"...in victim services in particular we anticipate a third consecutive year of cuts in 2027..."

“Unpredictability at the Federal level regarding regulations, grants and Medicaid has added ambiguity and uncertainty to day-to-day operations.”

“People are choosing to be uninsured more than ever. This isn’t sustainable.”

“Hunger is real and food insecurity is increasing in our region.”

“...it seems our donors are being spread very thin, resulting in hard decisions being made in who and how they will be able to give to.”

“Ultimately, we are approaching a time of increased need and fewer resources as SNAP, Medicaid, and critical grant funds are cut on a federal level. Many organizations providing direct services and basic needs are facing funding cliffs”

Question #6: What advice or suggestions would you offer RMHF at this moment?

There were 71 responses to this question. I also used AI to identify the main topics of the responses. The predominant themes were:

- 1 Overwhelming Appreciation:
 - The majority offer thanks, not advice. RMHF is characterized as responsive and caring, flexible, and deeply supportive.
- 2 Continue Flexible, Multi-year Funding:
 - Multi-year general operational support is seen as essential during times of instability.
 - The respondents request continued or expanded flexible funding streams.
- 3 Maintain Open Communication and High-Touch Approach:
 - Partners value the accessibility and want continued check-ins, transparency and relationship building.
- 4 Support for Capacity Building:
 - Staffing stability, administrative infrastructure, and transportation are recurring needs.
 - Some request help connecting with other funders or potential collaborators.
- 5 Rural-Specific Considerations:
 - RMHF is encouraged to advocate for rural exemptions or tailored implementation pathways in statewide policy initiatives and changes.
- 6 Create More Peer Connection Opportunities:
 - Executive Director convenings, break-out groups and cross-grantee collaborations are highly valued.

A few of the comments:

“To continue open communications with grantees...”

“Continue to be flexible with your funding ...”

“Continue to reach out to us, because we may feel reticent to “bother” foundation staff with our concerns but we are always glad to talk with them.”

“We encourage RMHF to continue to prioritize multiyear, flexible funding, at least for the duration of the current presidential cycle.”

Overall Summary:

The survey responses paint a consistent picture that RMHF is deeply trusted, highly valued, and seen as an exceptional partner.

Partners are facing historic levels of financial and operational pressure, especially due to federal and state funding cuts, workforce shortages, and rising community needs. They rely heavily on RMHF’s flexibility, empathy, and multi-year support to stay afloat.

Feel good comments:

“I want to say first and foremost that RMHF is one of the most well-run foundations anywhere. The constant communication and collaboration,is refreshing and helps partners feel they aren’t alone.”

“They do understand - it SHOWS. It really shows.”

“THANK YOU for your thoughtful partnership, the actions you have taken to support your grantees and address urgent needs.....and for the care and heart with which you approach your work.”

“One of our favorite foundations to work with. We talk to others about how you do it and I’m eternally grateful.”

“Just a shout out for our grant representatives. They are empathetic and helpful... are tapped into other statewide initiatives and larger funders.”

“You are a leader among peers in trusting and supporting grantees.”

“Just a class organization in heart and in practice.”

“The staff of RMHF are nothing short of amazing. Transparent, caring, realistic individuals who don’t over complicate things. Plus, they inject a little fun into things.”