

FCC Offers Guidance to Healthcare Providers Seeking Funding for Telehealth Services

September 28, 2020

The Federal Communications Commission released a [public notice](#) to help eligible healthcare providers apply for funding through the FCC's [Connected Care Pilot Program](#). The \$100 million Connected Care Pilot Program is designed to offset eligible healthcare providers' costs for connected care services, particularly to low-income Americans and veterans. Applications are expected to open soon, and interested entities should familiarize themselves with the application process and begin to gather the materials described below.

Eligible funding

The Connected Care Pilot Program will make about \$100 million available over a three-year period by providing support for 85% of the cost of the following eligible services and network equipment:

- Patient broadband internet access services
- Healthcare provider broadband data connections
- Other connected care information services
- Certain network equipment, such as equipment needed to make a supported broadband service function (e.g., routers)

The Connected Care Pilot Program will not fund devices (including end-user connected devices), medical equipment, healthcare provider administrative costs, personnel costs, network deployment, network construction between healthcare providers, or services supporting connectivity between healthcare provider sites.

Successful applicants will need to pursue competitive bids for eligible services and equipment in accordance with the FCC's competitive bidding requirements and any applicable state or local procurement requirements.

Eligible healthcare providers

The Connected Care Pilot Program is limited to the following types of nonprofit and public healthcare providers in both rural and non-rural areas:

- Post-secondary educational institutions offering healthcare instruction, teaching hospitals and medical schools
- Community health centers or health centers providing healthcare to migrants
- Local health departments or agencies
- Community mental health centers
- Not-for-profit hospitals
- Rural health clinics

- Skilled nursing facilities
- Consortia of healthcare providers consisting of one more entities falling into the other categories

Healthcare providers that have not already been deemed eligible for an existing FCC program, such as the Rural Health Care Program or COVID-19 Telehealth Program, **should obtain an eligibility determination as soon as possible** by filing [FCC Form 460](#) with the Universal Service Administrative Company.

Preparing a Connected Care Pilot Program application

While the Connected Care Pilot Program application is not yet available, applicants should start collecting the following information that the FCC expects will be part of an application:

- **Contact information:** information regarding the healthcare provider(s) seeking funding and the lead healthcare provider if the application involves multiple healthcare providers, as well as contact information for the individual responsible for the proposed pilot project
- **Qualifications:** details regarding the healthcare provider's experience in providing telehealth services, plan for operating the pilot project and documentation of financial health, such as recent audited balance sheets and income statements
- **Project description:** information regarding the primary purpose of the project and the condition the provider intends to treat (such as whether the provider seeks to provide connected care services to address a public health epidemic or to target opioid dependency, high-risk pregnancy, mental health conditions or other chronic conditions such as cancer or stroke). The applicant should also describe the geographic area and expected patient population
- **Technology:** description of the connected care services involved in treating the identified health conditions. If requesting funding for patient connectivity, information regarding the expected level of patient broadband service needed for the proposed pilot program, including necessary speeds and anticipated technologies. The applicant should describe any anticipated information services
- **Costs:** explanation of the estimated project costs, including costs eligible and not eligible for support, and anticipated sources of financial support for costs that are not covered by the pilot program. Applicants should also discuss whether they were awarded funding through any of the FCC's programs and how funding under the Connected Care Pilot Program would be different

The FCC will announce more information in the coming months, including when the application window will open. Cooley's communications practice will continue to follow these developments and can answer questions about the application process.

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