FCC's COVID-19 Telehealth Program Quick Summary

N.C. Department of Health and Human Services

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Of Note

Once made aware of this federal funding for communication devices during COVID-19, MHDDSAS reviewed the attached documents, and consulted with the NC Provider Council. This summary provides an initial understanding that the detailed documents will address should these prove to be funds for which you choose to apply. It is our hope to distill this information herein without implying subject matter expertise about this Telehealth Program fund.

What is the FCC's Telehealth Program?

- $200M in CARES funding available retroactively from 3/13/2020 until 9/30/2020
- It piggybacked on a larger telehealth effort called the Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP) – associated but not the same
- Wireline Competition Bureau and FCCs Connect2Health Task Force provide oversight and application review
- Though OMB isn't yet finished and applications aren't being reviewed, applicants can begin the process and collect their in

What does it fund?

- Medical monitoring devices transmitting to patient and provider
- Telemedicine broadcast or hosting hardware/software
- Telehealth-capable provider and patient devices
- High-speed broadband internet monthly access payments

$1M max/applicant but trying to award to as many as possible

What does it NOT fund?

- **Patient's personal medical devices**
- **Award administration costs or consultation costs to apply, track, or report on award**
- **Device distribution time**

Which entities are allowed to apply?

- Non-profit mental health providers
- Public entities/Health Departments
- “Consortia of health care providers consisting of one or more entities”
- Indian Health Service or Tribal Entities
- Dedicated ER of a rural, for-profit hospitals

What populations/regions are a focus?

- Low income areas
- Rural locations
- Too few providers to handle the COVID-19 crisis
- Clinics sites curtain services or close
- Limited broadband access and/or internet adoption

How to apply

- Fill out FCC Form 460: https://www.usac.org/rural-health-care/resources/forms/
  - Address and contact information and health care provider type
  - Brief explanation as to why the health care provider is eligible under the categories in section 254(h)(7)(B) of the Communications Act
  - National Provider Identifier (NPI)
  - Supporting docs demonstrating provider's eligibility
- Also apply with the Universal Service Administrative Company for a Health Care Provider number that is unique to Rural Health Care

How to apply as a “consortium” representing providers

- All in previous slide
- Lead entity (Consortium Leader)
- Lead entity contact person as Project Coordinator
- Provider sites that will participate in the consortium

What to say in my application?

- Describe connected care services, conditions, treated, and the goals and objectives
- How COVID impacted your area, your patient population, and the approximate number of patients
- Describe how this would free up your resources or prevent, prepare for, or respond for example, facilitating social distancing

What more to say in my application?

- Supporting docs for the costs such as a vendor quote, invoice, etc.
- Deployment timeline of the proposed service(s), platforms, and/or devices
- Tracking measures of the real impact of telehealth-supported services and devices
- Certify HIPAA et.al. compliance

What more to say in my application?

- Describe type and number of services, IT hardware/software and/or smartphone, tablet, etc.
- Total amount of funding and monthly amount for each eligible item
- Describe types of devices, how they're integral to care during COVID-19, and whether they're for patient and/or provider's use
- DOES NOT REQUIRE COMPETITIVE BIDDING PROCESS
- Records retention process for 3 yrs post-award for audit purposes
- Must certify not receiving similar telehealth monies

How and where to file the application?

- **Applications must reference WC Docket No. 20-89, and must be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing ECFS, https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs, see Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings, 63 FR 24121 (1998). All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission**

How will the application be evaluated for award?

- **Areas of the country hardest hit by COVID-19**
- **The rural nature or distance to service provision**
- **Though can ask for up to $1M, unlike CCPP, their goal to award and get help to as many areas as possible**

If awarded, what is expected in terms of administration of the money?

- Awardees will receive monthly electronic invoice process
- Providers will certify they received and used purchased services and/or devices as stated in application
- 6 months after Telehealth Project closes, a report is sent to the WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU

Who to do if help is needed to apply?

- **Contact USAC for specific questions about eligibility and completing the eligibility form (FCC Form 460) via telephone at (800) 453-1546 or via email at: RHC-Assist@usac.org**

Full reference documents will be attached and emailed along with this presentation