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# **Connected Care Pilot Program -Best Practices**

January 22, 2025



#### **DISCLAIMER:**

To accommodate all attendees, real-time closed captions will be present during this presentation. We apologize in advance for any transcription errors or distractions. Thank you for your support.

# Housekeeping

- Use the **Audio** section of your control panel to select an audio source and connect to sound.
  - Turn on your computer's speakers, or
  - Use the call-in instructions in your confirmation email.
- All participants are on mute.
- Submit questions at any time using the **Questions** box.
- Slides attached to GoToWebinar Panel and will be posted with the recording to the <u>Webinars</u> webpage.



#### **Meet Our Team**



#### **Simone Andrews**

Senior Communications Specialist | RHC Outreach



#### **Blythe Albert**

Advisor of Program Management | RHC Outreach

# Agenda

- Introduction
- Program Overview and Reminders
- Competitive Bidding
- Submitting Funding Requests
- Invoicing and Reporting
- Best Practices and Resources

## Introduction

- Subject matter experts are available to answer live questions from program participants.
  - Today will focus on the Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP).
  - Send FRN or HCP-specific questions to the RHC Customer Service Center at RHC-Assist@usac.org
  - Please remember to ask your question in the questions box.

# Glossary

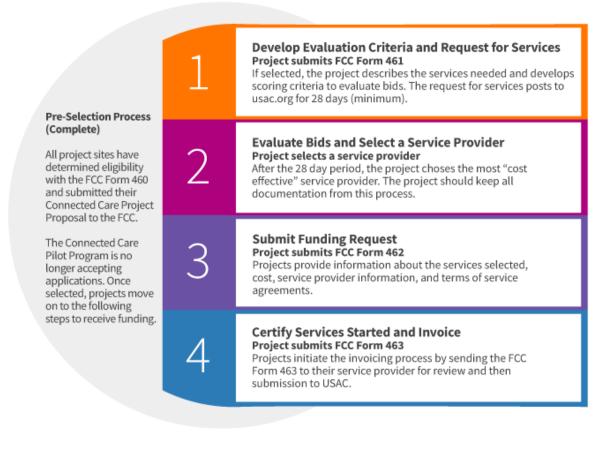
Acronym	Meaning
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
ССРР	Connected Care Pilot Program
FY	Funding Year
HCP	Health Care Provider (Your Site)
HCP Number	Number associated with your site
PAH	Primary Account Holder
FRN	Funding Request Number
FCL	Funding Commitment Letter
ACSD	Allowable Contract Selection Date
SPIN/498 ID	Service Provider Identification Number

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### **Program Overview and Reminders**

#### Connected Care Pilot Program Best Practices

# **Connected Care Pilot Program Funding Process**



\*Note: Each physical site/location must submit its individual FCC Form 460, even if part of a hospital system. A hospital system is not considered one entity; it must form a consortium to apply.

## FCC Order 24-110 – CCPP Deadline Extension

- On October 28, 2024, the FCC released <u>Order DA 24-1110</u> establishing a uniform completion deadline of December 31, 2025, for all projects funded by the Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP).
  - This waiver permits projects to continue using their pre-approved program budgets through the end of 2025 at the latest.
  - All projects may continue to submit forms and receive funding for services rendered through December 31, 2025, rather than being bound by the original project end date that was three years from the project's first funding commitment.
    - Projects must submit all FCC Forms 462 no later than November 1, 2025.
  - Selected projects remain subject to all other CCPP rules including competitive bidding rules, funding request and commitment procedures, data reporting requirements, and document retention requirements.

#### **Important Dates and Deadlines**

- All projects are required to submit anonymized, aggregated data to the FCC regarding their project.
- Each project must submit three reports: one at the end of the project's first year of funding, a report after the second year of funding, and a final report six months after the end of the pilot project.
- Failure to provide the required data may result in either the elimination of the participant from CCPP, loss or reduction of support, or recovery of prior distributed funds.
- Reports are entered in My Portal.

What	Deadline to submit
First Annual Report - Three years from start date on Funding Commitment Letter (FCL)	Six months after first year ends
Second Annual Report	Six months after second year ends
Third/Final Annual Report	Six months after third years ends

## **My Portal**

- All forms and supporting documentation must be submitted to USAC through <u>My Portal</u>.
- To begin, click the **Sign In** button.

Universal Service Administrative C	-	Subscribe Payments	Open Data Sign In	Q
About 🗸 🛛 E-ra	te $\checkmark$ Rural Health Care $\checkmark$	Lifeline $\checkmark$	High Cost $\lor$	Service Providers $\lor$
USAC   Rural Health Care   C Connected Care Pilot Program		ected Care	e Pilot Pro	ogram
Pre-Selection Process (Comple Step 1: Develop Bid Evaluation & Select Services	te) In its Report and O Criteria 2020, the FCC esta Care Pilot Program	In its <u>Report and Order FCC 20-44</u> released on April 2, 2020, the FCC established a new three-year Connected Care Pilot Program which will provide up to \$100 million of support from the Universal Service Fund (USF) to help		Il Resources Care Pilot Program FCC
Step 2: Evaluate Bids and Selec Service Provider Step 3: Submit Funding Reque	defray eligible hea connected care se	Ith care providers' costs of prov rvices and help assess how USF	iding Report and (	Drder FCC 20-44 🖻

# **Accessing My Portal**

Dashboard	
	rders, new certifications have been added to the following forms: RHC - FCC Form 463 a
	1. Service providers are required to submit these annual certifications. For additional in
📸 Upcoming Dates	Rural Health Care
11/23 HCF Office	
11/23 HCF Office Hours Webinar	RHC My Portal - Health care providers must use this section to create and submit required forms for the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program, the
11/23 HCF Office Hours Webinar	
11/23 HCF Office Hours Webinar	submit required forms for the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program, the Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP), and the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program for the FCC Form 460 and all required forms for FY2021 and

## **Account Holders**

- USAC recommends having more than one account holder for your project, there is no limit to the amount of account holders you can have.
- There are three types of account holders:
  - **Primary Account Holder**: Each HCP has one primary account holder. The primary account holder has the ability to sign, certify, and submit forms for an HCP. The primary account holder must be a director, officer, or authorized employee of the HCP.
  - **Secondary Account Holder**: A secondary account holder also has the ability to sign, certify, and submit forms for an HCP. You can designate multiple secondary holders on your FCC Form 460. The secondary account holder must be a director, officer, or authorized employee of the HCP.
  - **Tertiary Account Holder**: Tertiary account holders are third parties/consultants authorized to submit forms on behalf of an HCP. The third party must submit a <u>Third-Party Authorization</u> before they can access My Portal.
- Add secondary account holders in My Portal.
  - Download the <u>Account Holder Guide</u>.

### FCC Form 460 Reminder

- Each location seeking funding under CCPP must have their own approved FCC Form 460.
- Consortia may file forms for all member sites once the consortium formed.
- For more information about consortia, please use the <u>Forming a Consortium</u> tip sheet as a resource.

# **Eligible Services**

Category Eligible Services		Examples		
Patient Broadband Internet Access Services/HCP Broadband Data Connections	New or upgraded broadband connections (whether for HCP or participating patients) necessary for connected care services for CCPP	<ul> <li>Broadband Connections <ul> <li>Digital Subscriber Line</li> <li>Cable Modem</li> <li>Other Copper Wireline</li> <li>Optical Carrier/Fiber to the End-User</li> <li>Terrestrial Fixed Wireless</li> <li>Mobile Wireless (e.g., 3G, LTE, 4G, 5G)</li> <li>Satellite</li> <li>Broadband over Powerline</li> </ul> </li> <li>Firewall Service</li> </ul>		
Other Connected Care Information Services	Services for connected care that capture, transmit (including video visits), and store health care data for connected care. This includes information services with "store- and-forward" technology, patient reported outcome platforms, and remote patient monitoring capabilities to monitor patients.	<ul> <li>HIPAA compliant (or requirement waived) video services</li> <li>HIPAA compliant (or requirement waived) telehealth solutions/packages/platforms, suites of services</li> <li>One-time, annual, recurring monthly costs for information service</li> <li>Licenses, subscriptions, or recurring charges necessary for providers to access or use eligible information service</li> </ul>		

Note: This eligible services chart is illustrative and is not intended to be exhaustive.

# **Eligible Services (continued)**

Category	Eligible Services	Examples	
Network Equipment	Certain network equipment necessary to make Internet service or connected care services for the HCP/Patient for the Connected Care Pilot Program functional (e.g., routers) or necessary to manage, control, or operate a supported broadband service.	<ul> <li>Equipment that terminates a carrier's or other provider's transmission facility and any router/switch that is directly connected to either the facility or the terminating equipment</li> <li>Network equipment that helps manage, control, or operate a supported broadband service (consortia applicants only)</li> <li>Servers used exclusively for eligible broadband services</li> <li>Routers (including at patient's home)</li> <li>Switches</li> </ul>	
Miscellaneous	Various miscellaneous costs associated with eligible services listed above may be eligible for support. Applicants should request eligible miscellaneous services in the same category as the associated service being obtained or installed.	<ul> <li>Installation, Activation, and Initial Configuration (including implementation and integration costs necessary to integrateligible information services with existing systems).</li> <li>Fees and charges that are a necessary component of an elisservice:         <ul> <li>Shipping charges</li> <li>Taxes, surcharges, and other reasonable charges incurred in obtaining an eligible product or service</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

*Note: This eligible services chart is illustrative and is not intended to be exhaustive.* 

# **Ineligible Services**

- End-user devices
- Medical supplies
- Provider (Doctor's) Fees
- Administrative and Personnel costs
- Live Translation Services
- Internal Connections between Provider Sites
- Storage Devices
- IT support
- Maintenance costs

- DocuSign
- VPN Solutions
- Special Construction/Network Builds
- Applications not purchased as part of connected care information service
- Standalone Voice, including VoIP
- Standalone messaging services
- Network Equipment not necessary to make broadband or connected care services functional or manage, control or operate a supported broadband service.

Note: This ineligible services list is illustrative and is not intended to be exhaustive.

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#### **Competitive Bidding**

#### Connected Care Pilot Program Best Practices

## **Request Services – FCC Form 461**

- Selected projects may submit an **FCC Form 461 (Request for Services Form)** to let service providers know what types of eligible services or network equipment you are looking for.
- Service providers use the information on the FCC Form(s) 461 to create a bid to provide those services or equipment.
- Approved Request for Services forms must be posted for a minimum of 28 days on the <u>USAC public</u> <u>website.</u>
  - Once USAC posts the form, the 28-day competitive bidding process begins the next full business day.
  - Those projects using a competitive bidding exemption can bypass competitive bidding for services or equipment that qualify for an exemption.
  - The project and service provider may not enter into an agreement to purchase services until the 28 days are over.
- A weighted set of evaluation criteria must be included on the FCC Form 461.
  - Once the 28 days have passed, projects will evaluate all bids received using this set of criteria to determine the winning bid.

# **Competitive Bidding Exemptions**

- Purchasing services from a master service agreement (MSA) negotiated by a federal, state, Tribal, or local governmental entity on its behalf of you and others, and which was awarded pursuant to applicable competitive bidding requirements;
- Requesting support using contracts previously endorsed by USAC (MSA under the RHC Pilot Program or the HCF Program);
- Using an active multi-year contract designated as "evergreen" for the RHC program (exemption applies for the life of the contract);
- Using a contract approved under the E-rate program;
- Projects seeking support for \$10,000 or less of total undiscounted eligible expenses for a single year do not have to complete an FCC Form 461.

## **Connected Care Pilot Program – Specific Exemption**

- **Pre-Existing Contract:** The eligible HCP already has entered into a legally binding agreement with a service provider for services or equipment eligible for support in CCPP and that legally binding agreement itself was the product of competitive bidding.
  - This exemption applies only when the contract was signed before the applicant was selected to participate in CCPP and the contract was not entered into solely for purposes of CCPP.
  - The prior competitive bidding process must have included public solicitation of bids, or the applicant must have evaluated multiple quotes or bids before signing the contract.

# **Resources for Submitting the FCC Form 461**

- The following resources can assist you with the FCC Form 461 and competitive bidding:
  - Develop Bid Evaluation Criteria & Select Services
  - <u>CCPP Request for Services Summary</u>
  - <u>CCPP Competitive Bidding Exemptions</u>
  - Search Posted Services
  - <u>CCPP Webpage</u>

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#### **Submitting Funding Requests**

#### Connected Care Pilot Program Best Practices

## **Funding Requests – FCC Form 462**

- Once a service provider is selected, the next step is to request funding with an FCC Form 462.
  - The FCC Form 462 provides USAC with information about the services selected.
- All projects must submit all FCC Forms 462 no later than November 1, 2025.
- Projects may receive multi-year commitments:
  - Maximum commitment of three years
  - If a single year commitment is issued, the project must go through competitive bidding each year
- All selected health care providers and their service providers must register with the <u>System for Award Management (SAM)</u>.

# **Reminder – Duplicate Funding**

- Program rules prohibit CCPP projects from receiving funding for the same service for the same sites from more than one FCC program.
- This includes the RHC programs (HCF and Telecom), the COVID-19 Telehealth Program and the Connected Care Pilot Program.
- If you received funding for services in the COVID-19 Telehealth Program, please include the application number and a description of services received in your FCC Form 462 submission.
- If you received funding in either of the RHC Programs, it's helpful to also include information about any funding requests for similar services.

#### **Common Errors**

- Once a funding request is approved, all information entered on the FCC Form 462 must match documentation associated with the FCC Form 463.
- Correction to discrepancies must be made prior to approving an invoice or that FCC Form 463 will be denied.
- Work with your service provider to ensure that information on the bill, invoice, and/or contract correctly reflects the service.

# **Resources for Submitting the FCC Form 462**

- The following resources can assist you with the FCC Form 462:
  - <u>Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP)</u>
  - <u>Submit Funding Requests</u>
  - <u>CCPP Competitive Bidding Exemptions</u>
  - <u>CCPP Equipment Tip Sheet</u>

# **Funding Commitments**

- Once the request for funding is approved, USAC will issue a Funding Commitment Letter (FCL) with details about the commitment.
- If you disagree with any information on the FCL, submit an appeal to USAC before reaching out to the FCC per CCPP program rules.
  - Projects have 60 days from the issuance of the FCL to submit an appeal.
  - For more information, use the <u>Appeals</u> webpage as a resource.
- Projects may install equipment or pay for other supported non-recurring services before the start date but may not invoice for this equipment and services until after the start date.
- Services must be delivered by the service delivery deadline applicable to the funding year of the last day of the funding commitment.
- Projects that seek single year commitments may access their unused funds in future years of the threeyear program period.

# **Example of an FCL**

- General information including:
  - FRN info
  - Listed contact information
  - Funding commitment amount
  - Service provider information
  - Service type information

Funding Commitment Letter (FCL) Date: 11-Oct-2021 Funding Request Number (FRN): Program: Connected Care Pilot Program Funding Year (FY): 2021 Service Delivery Deadline: 30-Jun-2024 Invoice Filing Deadline: 28-Oct-2024 Health Care Provider (HCP) Name: HCP Number: HCP Contact Name: HCP Contact Email: HCP Contact Phone: **Competitive Bidding Exemption:** 

The Rural Health Care (RHC) Division of the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) has completed its review of the FCC Form 462 (Funding Request Form) and supporting documentation submitted on behalf of the HCP referenced above. Based on the information provided, RHC has approved funding for the services described below.

Total Committed Funding: HCP Physical Location:	
Service Type:	Internet Access
Bandwidth:	10.0GB / 10.0GB
Service Provider Name:	
SPIN/498 ID:	
Billing Account Number (BAN)	:
Contract ID:	
Contract Sign Date:	
Contract End Date:	

#### Single Expense Information

Funding Start Date	Funding End Date		Undiscounted Recurring Expense	Total Non- Recurring Funding Amount	Total Recurring Funding Amount	Committed Funding Amount
01-Jul- 2021	30-Jun- 2024	\$0.00		\$0.00		

# **Supply Chain Order**

- As a reminder, when service providers login to <u>My Portal</u> they will see two new supply chain certifications included in the FCC Form 463 and Telecom program invoice.
- The first certification affirms compliance with the <u>Section 54.9</u> prohibition on USF for specified transactions with companies deemed to pose a national security threat. The second certification affirms compliance with <u>Section 54.10</u>, which prohibits the use of any Federal subsidies on any communications equipment and services on the <u>Covered List</u>.
- **Projects with approved FCC Forms 462**: If you requested services or equipment provided or that contain components of products produced by any of the listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries in FY2023, you cannot invoice for these funds. Instead, you should immediately request a <u>service substitution</u>.
- **Projects in the application process:** As you proceed with competitive bidding, please ensure you are not requesting funding for services or equipment from listed covered companies or any of their parents, affiliates and subsidiaries.

# **Supply Chain Order**

#### • <u>Supply Chain</u> webpage

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	USAC   About   Repor	ts & Orders   \$	Supply Chain					
	Reports & Orders		vlaguZ	Supply Chain				
	Annual Report							
	FCC Filings		Since November 2019,	Since November 2019, the FCC has taken a number of actions to protect the national security of the United States, the security and safety of United States persons, and the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain. The FCC has also implemented the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act of 2019 . The FCC's actions can be found at <a href="https://www.fcc.gov/supplychain">www.fcc.gov/supplychain</a> .				
	FCC Orders							
	Supply Chain		Communications Netv					
			Section 54.9) which pr maintain, improve, mc provided by companie	In November 2019, the FCC released the <u>Supply Chain First Report and Order</u> adopting a rule (47 CFR Section 54.9) which prohibits the use of Universal Service Fund (USF) support to purchase, obtain, maintain, improve, modify, operate, manage, or otherwise support equipment or services produced or provided by companies found to pose a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain.				

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# **Invoicing and Reporting**

#### Connected Care Pilot Program Best Practices

# **Reimbursement with the FCC Form 463**

- Invoicing is a two-step process involving the service provider and the project:
  - The project will submit the FCC Form 463 to the service provider, and then
  - The service provider will review, certify and approve the FCC Form 463 and submit to USAC.
- USAC will review supporting documentation before issuing reimbursement.
- The invoice filing deadline is 120 days after service delivery deadline but no later than six months following the conclusion of the project.
- Projects and service providers must register with <u>System for Award Management (SAM)</u>.

## Wind Down Period and Project Conclusion

- Projects may begin receiving funding for eligible expenses upon receipt of an FCL and must begin receiving service no later than six months following receipt of the FCL.
- Per FCC Order DA 24-1110, all projects will end no later than December 31, 2025.
- Projects have an additional six months to wind down and transition to a funding source other than CCPP.
  - During this period, projects can close out invoices, submit final data reporting and conclude all administrative tasks.

# Reporting

- All projects are required to submit anonymized, aggregated data to the FCC regarding their project.
  - Each project must submit three reports: one at the end of the project's first year of funding, a report after the second year of funding, and a final report six months after the end of the pilot project.
- Specific goals for the Pilot Program:
  - Improve health outcomes through connected care;
  - Reduce health care costs for patients, facilities, and the health care system; and
  - Support the trend towards connected care everywhere.
- Failure to provide the required data may result in either the elimination of the participant from CCPP, loss or reduction of support, or recovery of prior distributed funds.
- Projects will enter this information in My Portal.

# **Reporting (continued)**

 Log into My Portal and click Connected Care Pilot Program Annual Reports and Final Report.

Dashboard	
	rders, new certifications have been added to the following forms: RHC - FCC Form 46 1. Service providers are required to submit these annual certifications. For additiona
💾 Upcoming Dates	Rural Health Care
11/23 HCF Office Hours Webinar	RHC My Portal - Health care providers must use this section to create and submit required forms for the Telecommunications (Telecom) Program, the Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP), and the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program for the FCC Form 460 and all required forms for FY2021 and

## **Reporting (continued)**

• Click Start New Report.

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CCPP Information	Collection Report	s						
Welcome to the Connected Care Pilot Progr report, please click on the "Start New Report		PP applications closed on 12/07/2020	). If you were selected to participate in CCP	P, you are required to complet	e two annual reports and a final	I report per CCPP program rules	. To start a	
Q, Search Reports	SEARCH						A T-	a
Report Number	HCP Name	HCP Number	Report Year	Last Updated On	Re.	port Status	Actions	
			No items available					

## **Reporting (continued)**

- Click hyperlink titled **Connected Care Information Collection Reporting Instructions** to download the instructions.
- Select the HCP from the drop-down menu and select the year the report is for.
- Please refer to the <u>CCPP Annual Reports and Final Reports user guide</u>.

Start	General Project Summary	Provider Focused Questions	Patient Experience Questions	Certification
~				
		ng reports; an annual report after their first year of fundin of a particular Project begins on the starting date for that	g, an annual report after their second year of funding, and a fit t Project.	nal report after their final year of
	2 S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S			
You can find a pdf of the full reporting inst	tructions at the link below.			
You can find a pdf of the full reporting inst Connected Care Information Collection Re				
Connected Care Information Collection Re	sporting Instructions			
* Applicant Sales from your a Project Coordinator	sporting Instructions			
• Applicant Salest from your a	sporting Instructions			•

## **Document Retention, Audits, and Protection**

- Documents must be retained for at least five years after the conclusion of their project.
  - Supporting documentation must be available upon request from FCC and/or USAC.
- Projects will be subject to random compliance audits.
- FCC will aggressively pursue instances of waste, fraud, or abuse under their own procedures and in cooperation with law enforcement agencies.
- Duplicative funding is strictly prohibited:
  - Includes RHC programs and the COVID-19 Telehealth Program.
  - Participants shall notify USAC immediately upon discovery of duplicate funding under COVID-19 Telehealth Program or RHC program and USAC will compare funding to ensure participants do not receive duplicative funding.

# **Questions?**

#### **Best Practices and Resources**

#### Connected Care Pilot Program Best Practices

#### **Reminder: Account Holders**

- Please ensure all account holders are up to date for all HCPs.
- We recommend having at least one secondary account holder per HCP.
- Resources:
  - <u>Connected Care Pilot Program</u>
  - <u>Authorizations</u>

## **Reminder: Information Requests**

- You must respond to Information Requests within 14 calendar days or by the deadline listed in the email.
  - Failure to respond to the Information Request will result in a denial.
  - Information requests for CCPP will come from a reviewer using an @usac.org domain address.

#### **Best Practices: Communicating with your Service Provider**

- As a reminder, once your Allowable Contract Selection Date (ACSD) has passed and you've chosen a service provider, include them when you reply to Information Requests via email.
- Ensure your service provider is aware of all the necessary documentation needed for future steps in the application process.
- All bid correspondence should be handled via email for audit purposes.
- HCPs and service providers are required to retain documentation for a period of five years.

## **Online Resources**

- <u>Connected Care Pilot Program FCC Website</u>
- <u>Connected Care Pilot Program Learn</u>
- <u>Request for Services Summary</u> tip sheet
- <u>CCPP Competitive Bidding Exemptions</u>
- <u>Request for Proposal</u>
- <u>Submit Funding Requests</u>
- <u>Equipment in the Connected Care Pilot Program</u> tip sheet
- <u>Review FCL</u>
- Invoice USAC

#### **CCPP Learn Page**

#### Learn

Welcome to Connected Care Pilot Program (CCPP) Learn! Here you will find all the handouts, training videos, and webinar recordings that will assist you in applying to the CCPP. All events and resources are offered free of charge.

#### **CCPP** General Information

- Connected Care Pilot Program FCC Website
- Report and Order FCC 20-44 🗟
- 🔹 Public Notice DA 20-1019 🗟
- Report and Order 21-74
- Application Process Graphic

#### Webinars

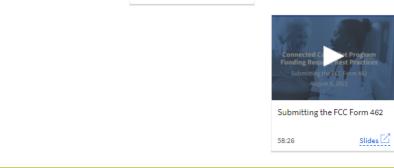




Connected Care Pilot Program Kickoff Slides 🖻 47:08

Connected Care Pilot Program Submitting the FCC Form 461 Information Webinar Slides 🖻

Slides 🖻 60:39 minutes



51:11

#### **RHC Program Customer Service Center**



- Email: <u>RHC-Assist@usac.org</u>
- Include in your email:
  - CCPP in the subject line
  - HCP Number
  - FRN Number

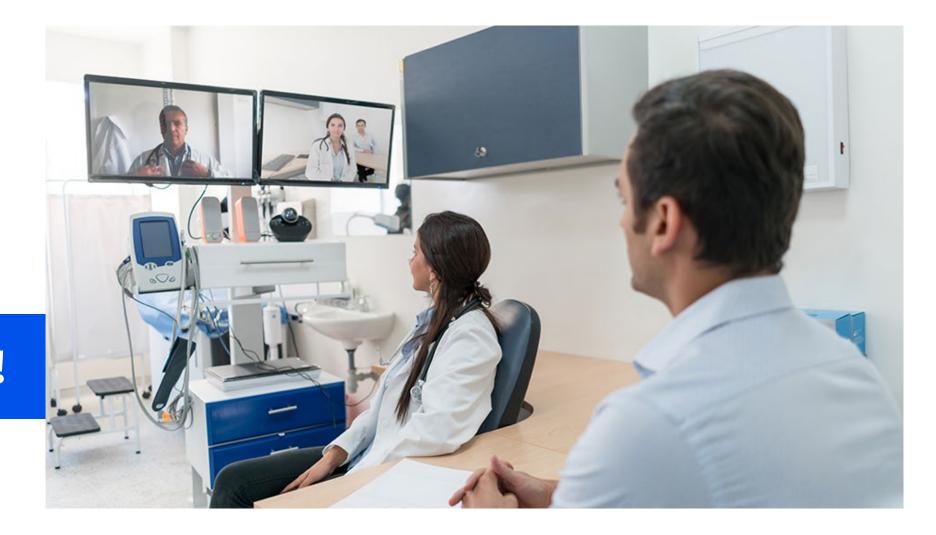


- Phone: (800) 453-1546
  - Hours are 8 a.m. 8 p.m. ET
  - Monday- Friday

#### **RHC Customer Service Center**

The RHC Customer Service Center CAN	The RHC Customer Service Center CANNOT
Answer general questions regarding the RHC Programs and CCPP	Determine eligibility of a specific site or service before an official form submission
Provide account holder information for an HCP	Review a form or document for accuracy before an official submission
Provide clarity regarding FCC Orders	Contact a service provider or other account holder on someone else's behalf
Provide helpful resources and best practices for forms	Provide documents that are not already accessible in My Portal
Assist with My Portal	Transfer a call to a specific form reviewer

# **Questions?**



# **Thank You!**

