



FCC-USAC Webinar

Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) Program

October 28, 2014

Presenters

- **Radhika Karmarkar**
Deputy Chief, RHC Program, FCC
- **Craig Davis**
Vice President, RHC Program, USAC
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Director, RHC Program, USAC
- **Paloma Costa**
Manager of Customer Service and Outreach, RHC Program, USAC

Agenda

- Introductions
- HCF Program Summary
- 1st Year Overview – Funding and Processing Statistics
- My Portal Updates and Improvements
- Customer Service Enhancements
- Best Practices and Tips
- Q&A

HCF Program

HCF Program Summary

- The HCF Program was created by the FCC in December 2012 based on the FCC's experience with the Pilot Program.
- The HCF Program provides a 65% discount on high-capacity broadband connectivity to both individual rural HCPs and to consortia of HCPs that have a majority of rural sites.

- In contrast to the Telecommunications Program, participants in the HCF Program may obtain multi-year funding commitments. Consortia may also obtain support for upfront charges in the HCF Program.
- HCF Program support was available to existing Pilot Program projects starting on July 1, 2013 and to all applicants starting January 1, 2014.

Questions?

Use the “Questions” box in your control panel to submit questions.

HCF Program

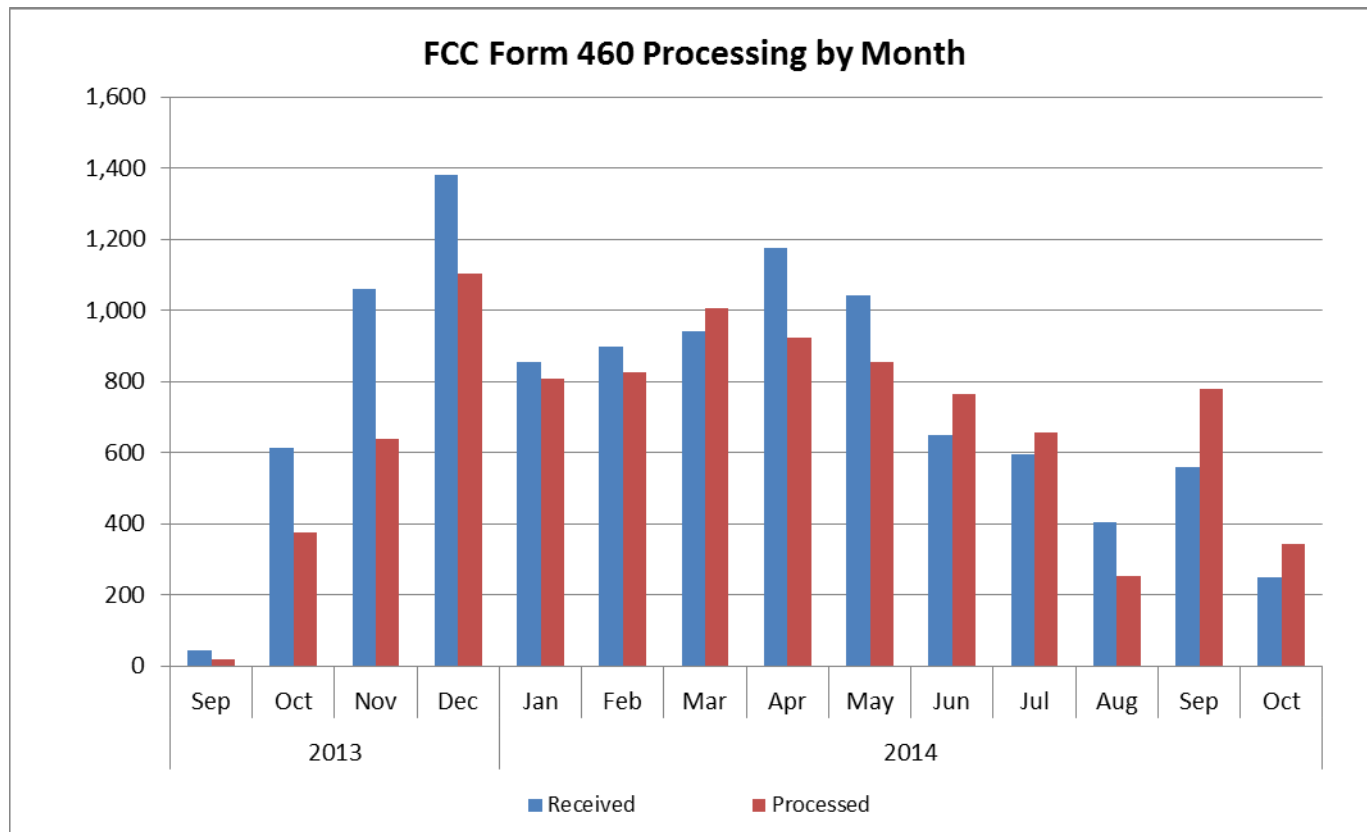
1st Year Overview: Funding and Processing Statistics*

*Statistics as of 10/23/14

FCC Form 460

- Eligibility determination requests (FCC Form 460) for more than 10,512 individual and consortia applicants have been received.
- Eligibility for more than 9,485 individual and consortia applicants has been determined.

FCC Form 460

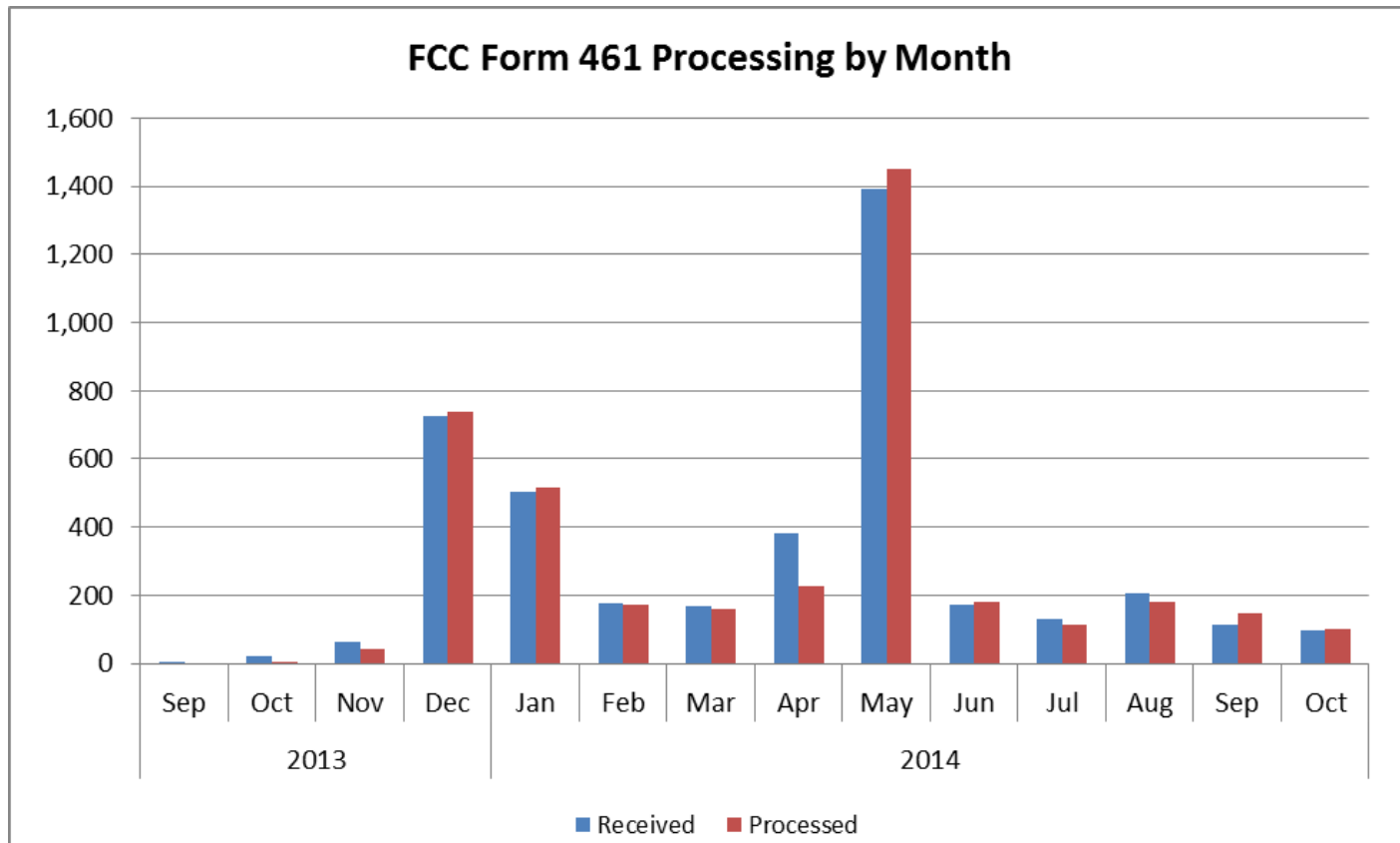


as of 10/21/14

FCC Form 461

- More than 1,550 requests for service (FCC Form 461) were posted on the USAC website for FY2013.
- More than 2,277 requests for service were posted on the USAC website for FY2014.

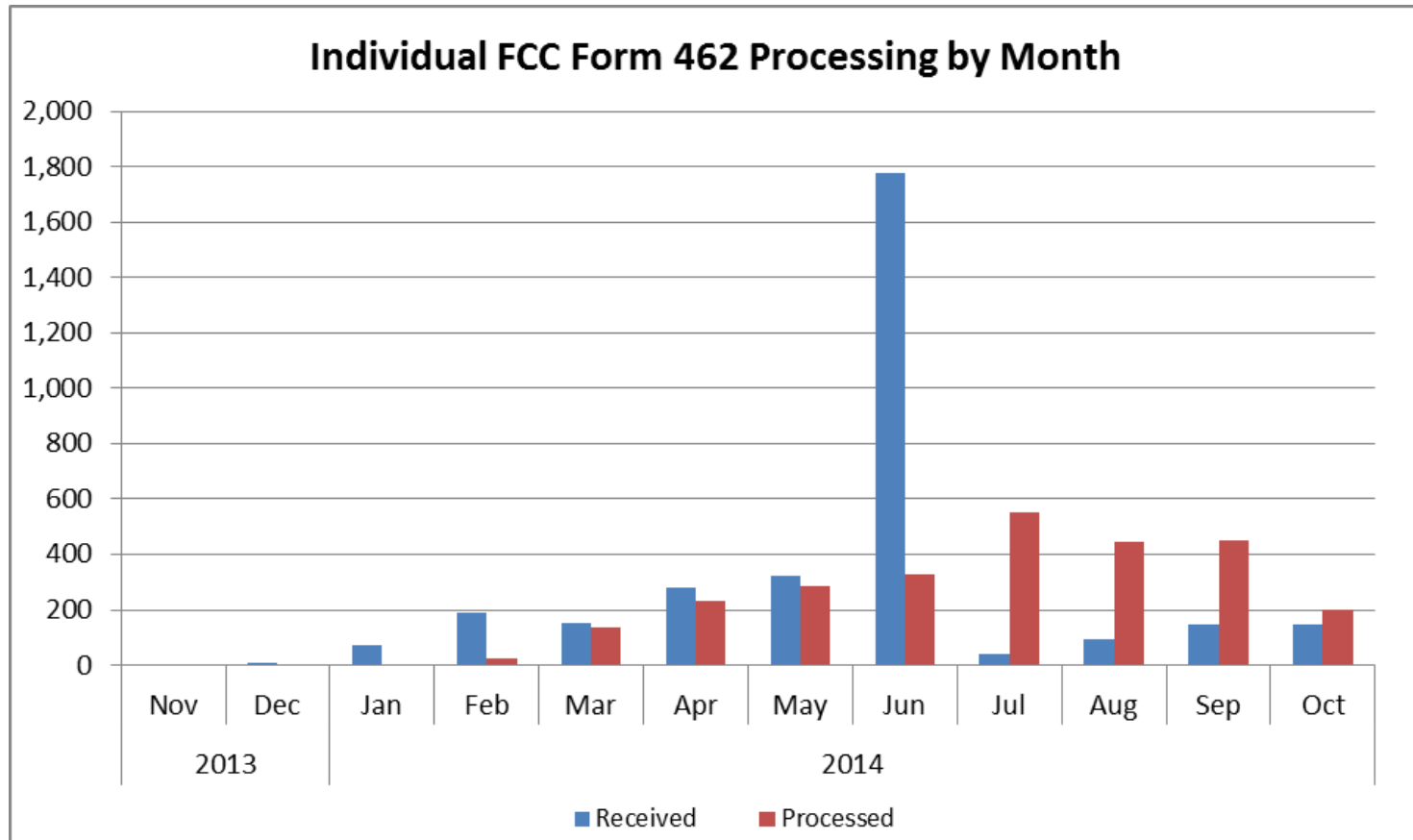
FCC Form 461



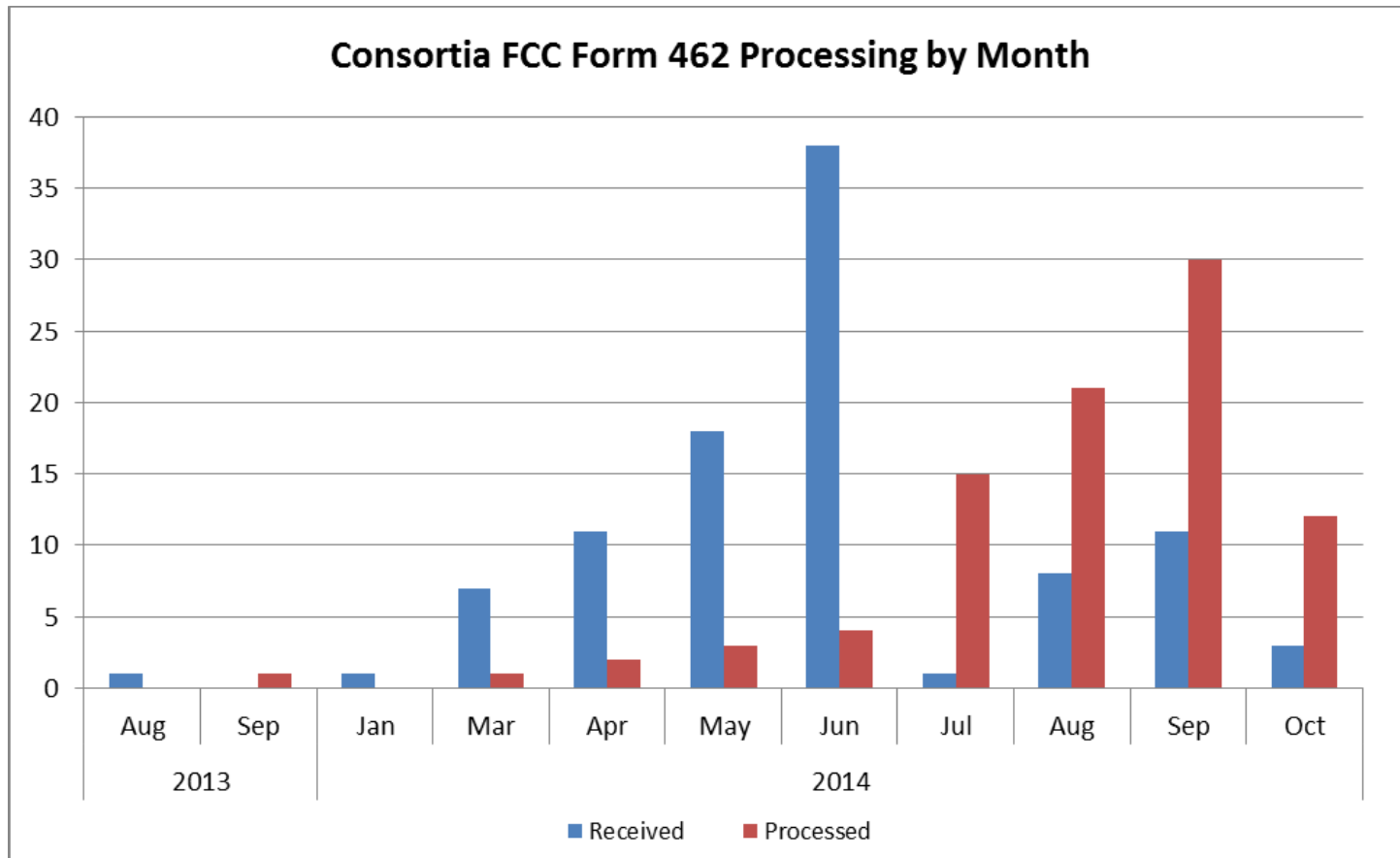
FCC Form 462 (for both FY2013 and FY2014)

- More than 3,300 HCF Program requests for funding (FCC Form 462) were received.
- More than 2,400 HCF Program requests for funding have been processed.
- Commitments of \$39.7 million to consortia applicants
- Commitments of \$13.6 million to individual HCPs
- Disbursements of \$2.1 million to consortia applicants
- Disbursements of \$1.5 million to individual HCPs

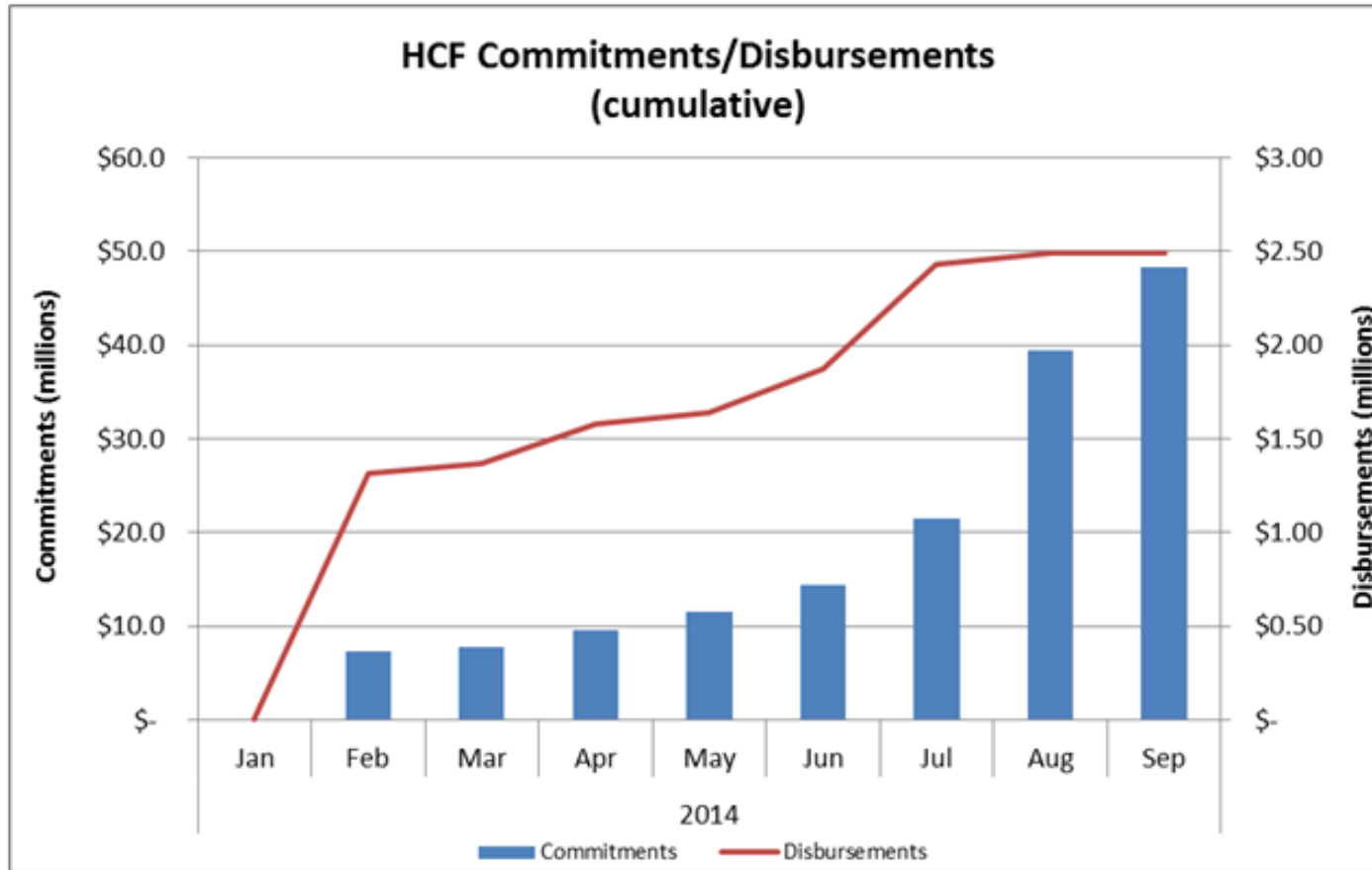
FCC Form 462



FCC Form 462



FCC Form 463



Total Commitments = \$48.3 million

Total Disbursements = \$2.5 million

Progress Toward RHC Program Funding Cap

\$400 million Cap for Total RHC Program Funding	FY2013	FY2014
Total Commitment Requests Received	\$236,462,091	\$60,510,951
Total Commitment Made	\$140,430,986	\$11,663,470
Commitment Requests Received (Telecom Program)	\$147,382,965	\$41,293,314
Commitments Made (Telecom Program)	\$100,531,099	\$3,265,844
Commitment Requests Received (HCF Program – Consortia)	\$64,844,965	\$12,765,895
Commitments Made (HCF Program – Consortia)	\$27,264,941	\$8,340,701
Commitment Requests Received (HCF Program – Individual HCPs)	\$24,234,161	\$6,451,742
Commitments Made (HCF Program – Individual HCPs)	\$12,634,946	\$56,925

* As of 9/30/14

Questions?

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HCF Program

My Portal Update

Recent Enhancements to Address Applicant Concerns

- Addition of more RHC Program staff
 - Dedicated user experience engineer, quality assurance engineer, developers, and systems analysts

Recent Enhancements to Address Applicant Concerns

- Issue: Forms versioning – Newer versions of forms deployed in January 2014 were not backwards compatible
 - Solution: Backwards compatibility has become a requirement for all new development and testing.
 - Outcome: Most of the compatibility issues were resolved by March 2014.

Recent Enhancements to Address Applicant Concerns

- Issue: Unexplained user lockouts started in May 2014
 - Solution: Configuration change in USAC's primary user access management application (Oracle Access Manager (OAM)) supporting E-File
 - Outcome: No more lockout issues after July 2014 deployment

Recent Enhancements to Address Applicant Concerns

- Issue: Service provider portal was not fully functional (manual processing provided)
 - Solution: Service provider portal functionality deployed (early August 2014)
 - Outcome: Invoicing process fully automated and faster

Recent Enhancements to Address Applicant Concerns

- Issue: System outages
 - Solution: Additional servers (virtual and physical) were added, along with increasing the memory capacity with each server. A more robust end-to-end regression testing methodology was introduced along with software code refactoring (making the application code more efficient).
 - Outcome: Minimal unplanned system outages during the Fall 2014

Ongoing Plan for Development

- Make applicant facing changes and back-office verification/approval changes
- Incorporate applicant feedback
- Improve the applicant experience and ease of use
- Decrease processing time of forms

Future Enhancements

- Enable USAC staff to replicate applicant issues real-time (2014 Q4)
 - Outcome: Improve troubleshooting capabilities
- Automate regression testing (2014 Q4)
 - Outcome: Shorten the time between recognizing issues and the deployment of new functionality and bug fixes
- Improve data integrity checks/adding dropdown menus (ongoing)
 - Outcome: Reduce data entry errors, automating approval process, and improving reporting

Future Enhancements

- Allow applicants to make form revisions through My Portal after forms have been submitted (2015 Q1*)
 - Outcome: Reduce cycle time for processing applicant requested revisions
- Add document repository for all documentation and correspondence supporting funding decisions (2014 Q4*)
 - Outcome: Readily accessible audit-related documentation
- Send information requests within My Portal (2014 Q4*)
 - Outcome: Reduce the need to use email products like Microsoft Outlook

*Targeted Completion Date

Future Enhancements

- Add training resources and help within My Portal (2015 Q1*)
 - Outcome: Applicants will not have to go to a separate website to access My Portal training resources
- Develop site and service substitution request tool (2014 Q4*)
 - Outcome: Greater accuracy and reduced processing time for requesting and approving substitution requests.
- Add online applicant reporting tools (2014 Q4*)
 - Outcome: Increase transparency for funding requests status updates, disbursement amounts, etc.

*Targeted Completion Date

Questions?

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HCF Program

Customer Service Enhancements

Enhancements

- Access to specialists for each step of the application process by phone and email (September 2014)
- Addition of Help Desk sub-categories (October 2014)
- Updated phone directory (September 2014)
- Consortia advocate (October 2014)

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Enhancements

- Training feedback loop (continuous) – Examples:
 - Issue: Information about approval process
 - Solution: Development of FCC Form 463 guide for service providers
 - Issue: Calculations of remaining funding were manual
 - Solution: Auto-calculations through My Portal
 - Issue: Restrictions on input of dates on FCC Form 463
 - Solution: HCPs can now enter actual service start dates outside of the funding year

Enhancements

- Addition of more RHC Program staff
 - *Last year: 26 people*
 - *This year: 45 people*

Future Enhancements

- Details about Help Desk categories
- Additional training materials:
 - Welcome packet
 - Guides for all FCC forms
 - Online training videos

Contact Information

- Email: RHC-Assist@usac.org
- Phone: (800) 453-1546

Questions?

Use the “Questions” box in your control panel to submit questions.

HCF Program

Best Practices and Tips

- Submit forms early in order to expedite processing of funding requests.
- Check forms for accuracy before certifying.
- Submit timely and complete supporting documentation
- Promptly respond to USAC's requests for information. Failure to do so may result in a denied funding request.
- Review training resources on the RHC Program section of the USAC website.
- Ask for help.

Submit Forms Early: Important FY2015 Dates

- January 1, 2015 – First day applicants may submit the FCC Form 461 for FY2015
- March 1, 2015 – First day applicants may submit the FCC Form 462 for FY2015
- June 2, 2015 – Deadline for posting the FCC Form 461 to receive full 12 months of funding for FY2015
- June 30, 2015 – Last day applicants may submit the FCC Form 462 and supporting documentation for FY2014

Other Best Practices

- Use latest version of Network Cost Worksheet (NCW)
- See [Q3 RHC Circuit](#) for list of other recent best practice tips

Training Resources: Upcoming Events

- November 12, 2014: Quarterly webinar for HCF Program individual HCPs
- December 11, 2014: Quarterly webinar for the Telecommunications Program
- December 17, 2014: Quarterly RHC Circuit newsletter distributed
- January 8, 2015: Quarterly webinar for HCF Program consortium leaders

Resources

- Healthcare Connect Fund Order (FCC 12-150), located at <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/rural-health-care>,
- The Rural Health Care Program rules, 47 C.F.R. Sections 54.600-680, located at <http://www.ecfr.gov>, and
- The Healthcare Connect Fund Program forms and instructions (FCC Forms 460-463), located at <http://www.usac.org/rhc/healthcare-connect/tools/forms/default.aspx>.

Resources

- RHC Program Latest News
<http://usac.org/rhc/tools/news/default.aspx?pgm=hcc>
- HCF Program Trainings and Outreach
<http://usac.org/rhc/healthcare-connect/outreach/default.aspx>
- RHC Program subscriptions
<http://usac.org/about/tools/publications/subscription-center.aspx>

Questions?

Use the “Questions” box in your control panel to submit questions.

Thank You!

- Thank you for joining us at today's webinar.
- For questions about the RHC Program, email RHC-assist@usac.org or call (800) 453-1546.