



# Healthcare Connect Fund Program

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# Quarterly Webinar for Consortia

July 14, 2015

## 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 will be posted to the training archive web page

## Important Caveat

This is just a general overview and starting point for applicants.

- Every applicant's situation is different
- The presentation does not cover every program requirement
- The presentation does not cover requirements for service providers and consultants

It is essential to read the following documents carefully as you proceed through the planning and application process:

- 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. Section 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>.

Consult the FCC and USAC websites for additional resources.

## Presenters

- Annabeth Wonch - Outreach and Customer Service
- Lisa Pilgrim - Eligibility
- Aida Kebere - Consortia
- Phil Vestergaard - Invoicing

## Agenda

- Funding Update: Progress Toward the \$400M Cap
- Eligibility Best Practices
- Competitive Bidding and Funding Commitments
- Invoicing Best Practices
- My Portal Improvements and New Features
- Program Update

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# **Funding Update**

<b>\$400 Million Cap for Total RHC Program Funding</b>	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>FY2014</b>	<b>FY2015</b>
<b>Total Commitment Requests Received (Telecom and HCF Programs)</b>	\$190,305,847	\$278,640,454	\$47,922,998
<b>Total Commitments Made (Telecom and HCF Programs)</b>	\$179,465,731	\$181,278,555	\$25,562,100
<b>Commitment Requests Received (HCF Program – Consortia)</b>	\$33,232,152	\$74,978,588	\$12,684,881
<b>Commitments Made (HCF Program – Consortia)</b>	\$33,163,977	\$38,295,946	\$592,006
<b>Commitment Requests Received (HCF Program – Individual HCPs)</b>	\$16,237,193	\$49,430,005	\$2,504,126
<b>Commitments Made (HCF Program – Individual HCPs)</b>	\$16,237,193	\$20,642,370	\$182,882

<b>\$150 Million Cap for Upfront Payments and Multi-Year Commitments</b>	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>FY2014</b>	<b>FY2015</b>
<b>Total Commitment Requests Received</b>	\$41,291,651	\$86,253,208	\$10,804,729
<b>Total Commitments Made</b>	\$40,798,840	\$43,163,757	\$594,281
<b>Total Commitment Requests Received (Consortia)</b>	\$31,654,067	\$69,493,455	\$10,246,160
<b>Total Commitments Made (Consortia)</b>	\$31,585,892	\$36,308,984	\$578,194
<b>Total Commitment Requests Received (Individual HCPs)</b>	\$9,637,494	\$16,759,754	\$558,569
<b>Total Commitments Made (Individual HCPs)</b>	\$9,212,948	\$6,854,772	\$16,087



HCF Program Funding Requests	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015
Total Funding Requests	2,840	6,409	148
Total Funding Requests (Consortia)	56	243	14
Total Funding Requests (Individual HCPs)	2,784	6,166	134

HCF Program Disbursements	FY2013	FY2014
Total Disbursements Made	\$21,985,833	\$5,990,396
Total Disbursements Made (Consortia)	\$12,650,768	\$3,519,248
Total Disbursements Made (Individual HCPs)	\$9,335,065	\$2,471,149

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# **Eligibility Best Practices**

## Informing USAC of Changes

- Applicants are required to notify USAC if any information on the FCC Form 460 changes.
  - A revised FCC Form 460 must be filed to change information such as the site address, legal entity, or eligible entity type.
  - Please email [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org) if either the non-profit or eligibility status changes.

## Duplicate HCP Numbers

- When filing a new FCC Form 460 for a site, please be sure that no existing HCP number exists for that location.
  - Applicants can access HCPs that are listed as “Available.”
  - HCPs that are listed as “Active” currently have account holders assigned to them.
  - The same HCP number should be used for all RHC programs.
  - Please email [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org) if you have questions regarding availability of an HCP.

## LOA/TPA Guidance & Requirements

- Many LOAs and TPAs have already expired or will expire within the coming months. These authorizations must be current in order for the authorized party to continue to file on behalf of an HCP.
- Updated TPAs and LOAs should be emailed to [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org). The new LOA/TPA should be re-executed and updated with a new authorization end date.

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## **Competitive Bidding/Funding Commitments Best Practices**

## Site and Service Substitution Guidance Available Now

- Instructional video on new tool available in My Portal and on our [website](#)
- Step-by-step instructions will also be posted
- Remember, applicants are required to provide supporting documentation with each site and service substitution request.

## Pilot Program Update

- Pilot Program projects need to double check their funding commitment end date against the contract end date, it is possible that the Funding Commitment Letter (FCL) and contract end may not match.
- Please be mindful of your Pilot invoice deadlines as well. Your invoicing deadline is six months from the end of your funding commitment, which can be found on your FCL.



## Annual Reports

- Annual reports must be filed on or before September 30 for the preceding funding year.
- Each consortium is required to file an annual report for FY 2014 (July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015) in which it receives support from the Healthcare Connect Fund and Pilot programs.
- Approximately 95% of the annual report for both HCF and Pilot consortia will be auto populated.

## Best Practices

- The FCC Form 461, RFP, and evaluation criteria all need to match, failure to do so will lead to denial or withdrawal of FCC Form 462.
- Circuit start and end locations cannot be represented as the same address on the Network Cost Worksheet (NCW).
- If a circuit is terminated or disconnected, the applicant must notify USAC.

## Best Practices

- Vendors or service providers participating in the competitive bidding process are prohibited from assisting with or filling out a service request.
- Potential bidders must have access to the same information, and must be treated in the same manner.
- All bidders must be evaluated based on the bid evaluation criteria listed on the FCC Form 461.

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# **Invoicing Best Practices**

## Draft and Submitted Invoices

- When an invoice is submitted or created as a draft:
  - Line item becomes N/A
  - Reduces the line item remaining commitment
- Manage and track drafts carefully
- Monitor status of submitted invoices

## Invoice As Much As You Can

- Our recommendation is to invoice for the full commitment, year, or month with all line-items on the same invoice (no future)
- Using this method will result in:
  - Simpler calculations of invoice amounts
  - Easier reviews for service providers and USAC
  - Reduced chances for potential mistakes
  - Reduced effort for everyone involved

## Service Provider Crediting

- Service Providers must certify the following:
  - I understand that the vendor must apply the amount submitted, approved, and paid by USAC (Column P - USF support amount to be Paid) to the billing account of the health care provider(s) and FRN/FRN IDs listed on this invoice.
- Neither the FCC nor USAC tracks or monitors the funds that are credited back to sites.
- Please make sure to communicate with service providers to establish a credit schedule after invoicing and ensure timely crediting by the service provider.

## Invoice Denials

- Common errors leading to denials include:
  - Over-invoicing billing periods
  - Invoicing for billing periods before or beyond the funding commitment period
  - Not meeting the invoice deadline
- The RHC Program team will always send an email explaining the denial reason and how to correct
- For invoices of ten or more line-items, USAC will return this as a draft into the applicant's queue
  - This is a new process and will soon be available for all invoices



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# **My Portal Update**

## LOA Functionality

- Consortium applicants can now submit the LOA/LOE to add member HCPs to a consortium without having to submit a revised consortium FCC Form 460.
- Applicants can upload an LOA/LOE, add member HCPs to the LOA, and submit the LOA under the “My LOAs” tab.
- Applicants have 15 calendar days to submit the LOA after the participating member FCC Form 460 has been submitted. If the LOA is not submitted within the 15 days, the FCC Form 460 will be withdrawn.

## Remove Member HCPs from Consortium

- Consortia project coordinators are now able to remove member HCPs from their consortium who are no longer participating in the consortium.

## Details Added to Form Denial Notifications

- The FCC Form 460 and FCC Form 462 denial email notifications now list "Denial Reasons" with specific information about the denial.

## Multi-Expense FCC Form 462 Validation Error Grouping

- On multi-expense FCC Forms 462, applicants will now see validation errors grouped into an expandable list, sorted by expense item for clearer organization

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# Program Update

## Account Representatives

- The Rural Health Care Program has implemented an account representative model.
- Once you have an approved consortia FCC Form 460, you will be assigned an account representative.
- If you are in the process of creating a consortium and have not yet filed a consortium FCC Form 460, but would like an account representative, please contact Donald Lewis at [dlewis@usac.org](mailto:dlewis@usac.org).

## FCC-USAC Webinar: July 21, 2015

- Hear updates about funding commitments, forms processing, and plans for My Portal development.
- The webinar also includes the opportunity to provide program feedback and have questions answered by the FCC and RHC Program staff directly.
- Register [here](#).

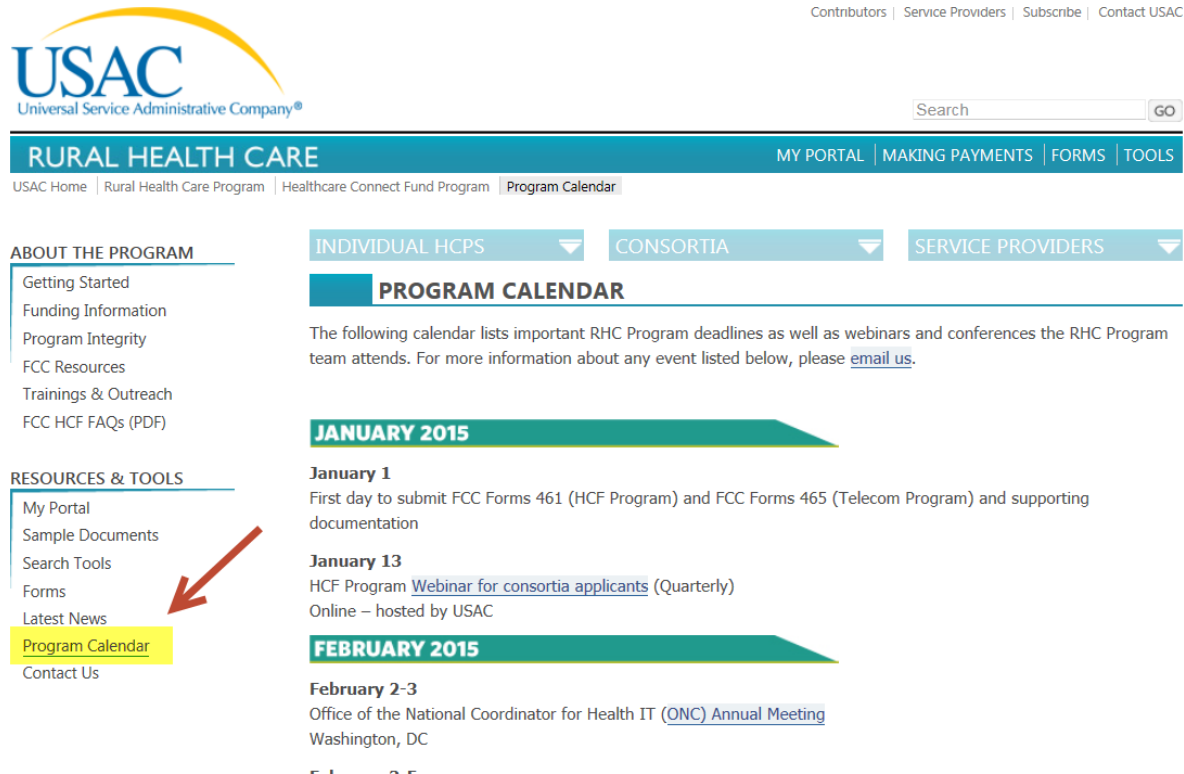


## New Tools for Applicants

- Site and Service Substitution video available now, and guide coming soon.
- LOA/LOE Submission Guide
- LOA/LOE/TPA pages available now

## RHC On the Road

- New RHC Program Calendar



The screenshot shows the USAC Rural Health Care Program Calendar page. At the top right, there are links for Contributors, Service Providers, Subscribe, and Contact USAC. Below the USAC logo is a search bar with a 'GO' button. The main navigation bar includes 'RURAL HEALTH CARE' and links for 'MY PORTAL', 'MAKING PAYMENTS', 'FORMS', and 'TOOLS'. A secondary navigation bar lists 'USAC Home', 'Rural Health Care Program', 'Healthcare Connect Fund Program', and 'Program Calendar'. On the left, there are two menu sections: 'ABOUT THE PROGRAM' with links like 'Getting Started', 'Funding Information', 'Program Integrity', 'FCC Resources', 'Trainings & Outreach', and 'FCC HCF FAQs (PDF)'; and 'RESOURCES & TOOLS' with links like 'My Portal', 'Sample Documents', 'Search Tools', 'Forms', 'Latest News', 'Program Calendar' (highlighted in yellow with a red arrow), and 'Contact Us'. The main content area has three tabs: 'INDIVIDUAL HCPS', 'CONSORTIA', and 'SERVICE PROVIDERS'. The 'PROGRAM CALENDAR' section is active, showing a list of events for January 2015 and February 2015. The January 1st event is the first day to submit FCC Forms 461 and 465. The January 13th event is a quarterly webinar for consortia applicants. The February 2-3 event is the ONC Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

# Questions?

## Thank You!

- Thanks for joining us at this webinar
- Sign up for reminders in the subscription center
  - Go to [www.usac.org](http://www.usac.org) and click “subscribe” in the upper-right corner, then select the webinar
- Submit suggestions for the next webinar to [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org)
- Additional questions?
  - Email [RHC-Assist@usac.org](mailto:RHC-Assist@usac.org)
  - Call (800) 453-1546