**NCHIT 2022 RFA Virtual Behavioral Health Services Grant Program FAQ**

**This FAQ is built with questions from the Technical Assistance webinar we hosted about the grant program on June 22, 2022, and from emails we have received pre and post the webinar. We will update this document through July 22, 2022 (application deadline) within 24-48 hours so please check back often. \*\*\*If you are experiencing issues receiving your personalized link for the application, please reach out to us at** [**ORH\_HIT@dhhs.nc.gov**](mailto:ORH_HIT@dhhs.nc.gov)

**Q: If awarded, when would funding start?**

When the contract is fully executed – meaning all parties have signed the contract – you may request funds quarterly for related expenses incurred back to March 3, 2021 (if appropriate)

**Q: I see that the awards are non-recurring and there is also a timeframe for use of the funds.  Does this mean that if awarded, the funds could be used anytime in that timeframe (March 3, 2021 - December 31, 2024)?**

Yes, the funds must be allocated by December 31, 2024 but can be used for related expenses through December 31, 2026

**Q: I was wondering if NCHIT RFA 2022 Virtual Behavioral Health Services Grant Program is only for hospitals and if non-profit social services agencies can apply?**

To be eligible, your organization must be a North Carolina hospital: All North Carolina-based hospitals with behavioral health programs that can be expanded to include virtual services in primary care settings, from home, or from another nonhospital setting are eligible to apply. Only one application per hospital system will be accepted.

**Q: Our hospital is in NC but some of our psychiatrists are out of state for the telehealth program. They connect to patients through our hospital telehealth software. Are they an eligible expense?**

Yes, the stipulation of “North Carolina” applies to the applying hospital and the sites and patients served.

**Q: Is an emergency room considered a "non-hospital site"?**

No, the purpose is to reach out to the community from the hospital.

**Q: How many awards are anticipated?**

The maximum award amount is $1,500,000 and the program has $10,000,000 to award. There will be at least 6 awards. More would depend on the award amount requested.

**Q: Are there any limitations on type of behavioral health care delivered (psychotherapy vs. medication management)? Any limitations on behavioral health diagnoses (for example, substance use disorders)? Limitations on age of patients?**

The session law does not identify any limitations on the type of behavioral health care delivered or the age of the patients.

**Q: Would a non-profit safety-net program connected with two hospitals qualify?**

No, only North Carolina based hospitals are eligible for this program.

**Q: Many current projects that I know of focus on Pscyh CoCM, where a psychiatrist is consulting with a community primary care provider about next steps - expanding the reach of psychiatric knowledge to primary care given the limited number of psychiatrists in the state. Can this proposal include this type of activity in addition to patient/psychiatrist visits and would it be viewed favorably? And how will ORH capture this type of activity for this project or is it only counting psychiatrist/patient contacts?**

In terms of reporting, report as much as you can. The triage approach would be acceptable. The more community support that you can include in the application will be the best option.

**Q: Letter of collaboration with MOA, is that for community partners and other health care centers?**

Each agency named in grant should provide a letter of support

**Q: Where will the slides and webinar recording be available?**

The slide deck and the webinar recording will be available on the DHHS ORH Grant Opportunities website at this link: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/about/grant-opportunities/rural-health-grant-opportunities/nchit-rfa-2022-virtual-behavioral-health-services-grant-program>

It could take 24-48 hours after the webinar for these to be available.

**Q: Can hospitals work with their own clinics for this grant?**

Yes, in this case they do not need an MOU, since the clinic is the same organization as the hospital.

**Q: Can funds be used to provide telepsychiatry services (counseling/follow-up visits) from other behavioral health professionals such as LCSW, NPs, PAs certified in behavioral health? Or are the funds strictly for psychiatrist time only?**

Yes, at a minimum, telepsychiatry capabilities must facilitate patient access to hospital-based virtual telepsychiatry services from a primary care provider's office, from home, or from another nonhospital setting. The applicant must demonstrate ability to maintain patient safety and ensure continuity of care. To ensure patient safety and continuity of care, an applicant would include other behavioral health providers outside of advanced practice providers.

**Q: Can you clarify which mandate is being referenced (NC HealthConnex)? Is this referencing existing law in place?**

Yes.Here is the link to the [NCHIEA Mandate](https://hiea.nc.gov/about-us/what-does-law-mandate#:~:text=Under%20a%20law%20passed%20in,Technology%27s%20Government%20Data%20Analytics%20Center.) on the NC HIEA website.

**Q: Can uncompensated care be covered as far as patients that cannot afford out-of-pocket expenses?**

Yes. Uncompensated care is covered through the grant funds.

**Q: Can these funds be used to expand and existing telepsychiatry program. For example, if a hospital has an outpatient telepsych program in their clinic for a certain age range say 55 and up, could this grant be used to expand this service to 18 years and up?**

Yes. The funds can be used to expand existing services to include expanding age ranges.

**Q: Your website lists out the documents we will need to submit in the application, and one of them, #3, is the summary of evaluation criteria and baseline data. Is there any way to get those particular numbers/data the grant will ask for ahead of time?**

The baseline numbers the grant is asking for are specific to your hospital and program. If your hospital currently runs a program, you will enter the information for the baseline. If it does not, then you would enter 0. The summary of the evaluation criteria is again specific to a hospital and application. The application will ask you to step through sections and there are also word doc links to house the narrative portions of the application. The application can be accessed as many times as necessary using the unique link until it is completed up until July 22.

**Q: Can a school of medicine within a health system apply separate for the grant individually and separate from the hospital system it operates under?**

No, applicants must be represented as a hospital, and the school of medicine by themselves are not eligible but can apply with a hospital to complete the telepsych model.

**Q:** **For the documents required for the Virtual Behavioral Health Services Grant Application, is there a timeframe the signature needs to be completed in?**

Yes, documents signed after October 1 of the previous year CAN be used for current calendar year. (i.e., If signed on 10/1/2021, documents can also be used as 2022 provider documents). The documents would need to have been signed on or after October 1, 2021 to be used for this application.

**Q: Would only one hospital within a health system (several hospitals and clinics) apply for this funding?**

Yes, only one hospital in a system would apply. To keep within the legislative guideline, an applicant may not receive more than one grant.

**Q: Are hospital clinics eligible to apply for this grant?**

No, only the hospital may apply but it is encouraged that the hospitals work be used in the telepsch model as originating patient sites (along with a patient’s home, and another non-hospital setting) in an effort to expand services throughout the community.

**Q: Regarding contracting with a psychiatric organization. Is that considered an employee expense, since is program related, or does it fall under services/contract expenses?**

This is a service or contract expense.

**Q: Since we are starting a new expanded project for virtual behavioral health in primary care setting, what are the numbers you are requesting: Projected races served, projected patients served and their insurance status?**

If you have this information available, please include it. If not, please use N/A or 0 as your baseline.