

eBook

COVID-19 Telehealth Program

Highlights of the CARES Act



Highlights of the CARES Act

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Overview:

On April 2, 2020, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a Report and Order that it had adopted on March 31 creating the COVID-19 Telehealth Program to disburse the funds appropriated by the Congress in the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) to boost telehealth capabilities in response to the public health emergency.

President Trump signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act into law to help eligible healthcare providers maximize their provision of connected care services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Access the full document:

<https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-20-44A1.pdf>

Background for connected care services

In the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Rural Health Care Program has two distinct components:

- Telecommunications (Telecom) Program
- Healthcare Connect Fund Program

Wide range of health conditions, including diabetes, heart disease, opioid dependency, stroke, mental health conditions, high-risk pregnancy, and cancer are part of connected care services. Connected care and remote patient monitoring have resulted in improved health outcomes for chronic conditions and significant cost savings for health care providers and patients.

There are two parts to the connected care services:

- COVID-19 Telehealth Program (fund for immediate steps to contain the COVID Pandemic: \$200 million)
- Connected Care Pilot program (funds to support telehealth over long term: \$100 million)

COVID-19 Telehealth Program

- \$200 million fund approved by the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) to boost telehealth capabilities.
- Does not rely on the Universal Service Fund.
- Eligible for providers to purchase products and services relating to telehealth capabilities.
- Can be used to free up other resources for treating both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients and to reduce risks associated with contracting the disease by a patient or a healthcare provider.

Eligible uses:

Purchase of the following:

- Telecommunication services
- Information services
- Connected devices: e.g. Connected pulse-ox monitors
- Services: e.g. Patient reporting platforms

Eligible providers:

- Educational institutions and teaching hospitals
- Community health centers
- Local health departments
- Community mental health centers
- Not for profit hospitals
- Rural health clinics
- Skilled nursing facilities
- Consortia of healthcare providers falling into above categories

Application process and information

- Applications will be accepted beginning Monday, April 13, 2020.
- Applications can be submitted at: <https://www.fcc.gov/covid19telehealth>
- Further application information can be found in the FCC's application guidance.
- Information required with the application:
 - Name, address, county and healthcare provider numbers.
 - Contact information of the individual responsible for the application.
 - Description of connected care services, conditions treated, goals and objectives.
 - Estimated number of patients to be treated.
 - Description of the telecommunications services, information services and devices requested, including total monthly funding requested for each item.
 - Supporting documentation of costs.
 - Timeline and project milestone information.
- Will be subjected to compliance audits.
- Healthcare providers do not need to conduct a competitive procurement process.
- Determine eligibility of your site from <https://www.usac.org/rural-health-care/healthcare-connect-fund-program/step-1-determine-eligibility-of-your-site/> and fill the FCC Form 460 with the Universal Service Administration Company (USAC), if needed.

Evaluation process

The Wireline Competition Bureau will evaluate applications in consultation with FCC's Connect2Health Task Force:

- Not more than \$1 million to any single applicant.
- Monitoring devices that are connected will be funded, no funds for unconnected devices that patients use at home and share results.
- Preferable funding to areas that have been the hardest hit by COVID-19, including low-income populations, provider shortages, rural hospital closures, and limited broadband access and/or internet adoption.

Connected Care Pilot Program

- \$100 million, three-year grant program for providers who propose projects to boost connected care capabilities.
- No limits on the number of pilot projects selected.
- Apply through the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) under WC Docket No. 18-213.
- ECFS: <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs>
- Not an emergency program and different from the COVID Telehealth program.
- Costs eligible to be covered by the Pilot Program include (1) patient broadband Internet access services, (2) healthcare provider broadband data connections, (3) other connected care information services, and (4) certain network equipment.
- Limited to nonprofit and public healthcare providers.
- Eligibility determination from the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) by submitting FCC Form 460.
- Providers with experience providing telehealth or connected care services, or a partnership with a provider with such experience, will have preference. Additionally, applicants targeting veteran and low-income populations will have preference.

Goals and Metrics:

Three explicit goals for the Pilot Program to determine how USF support provided to health care providers for the costs associated with providing connected care services can enable them to:

1. Improve health outcomes through connected care.
2. Reduce health care costs for patients, facilities and the health care system.
3. Support the trend towards connected care everywhere.

Damo Consulting: Healthcare digital transformation advisory

Digital strategy workshops

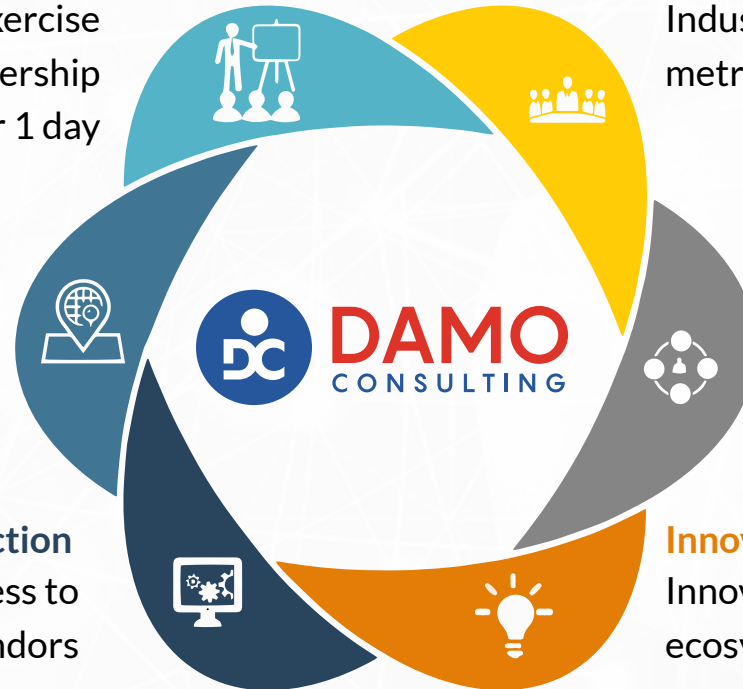
Market overview, brainstorming, group exercise
Participant profile: X-functional senior leadership
Duration: ½ day or 1 day

Digital roadmaps

Develop comprehensive digital transformation roadmaps for the enterprise
Duration: 3-6 months

Technology selection

Conduct research, un RFI/RFP process to identify the right platforms/vendors



Research & analytics

Industry trends, market insights, operational metrics

Business case development

Benefits and value analysis, ROI calculators, investment proposals

Innovation management

Innovation strategy, innovation insights, startup ecosystem research and evaluation

Agile approach that leverages proprietary methodology and frameworks

To learn more about how you can develop a telehealth roadmap and qualify for federal funding

Write to us: info@damoconsulting.net

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Vision

We envision digitally-enabled health systems and technology partners collaborating to deliver a superior care experience and promote better health outcomes for healthcare consumers around the world.

Mission

As a preferred advisory partner and expert in digital transformation strategies, we are committed to supporting healthcare enterprises with digital health innovation while helping technology providers seize the opportunity for growth through the right market strategies.



Damo Consulting is a digital transformation and strategic growth advisory firm serving healthcare enterprises and the technology companies that support them. We specialize in delivering actionable healthcare market intelligence and branded thought leadership for our clients.

USA

1000 Jorie Blvd #200
Oak Brook, IL 60523
Phone : (630) 928-1111, Ext 204

INDIA

No 60, Ferns Residency
K.Narayanapura Kothanur
Bangalore - 560077