

# \$300M in Virtual Care Funding Now Available for Services Including eConsults

COVID-19 has limited the ability of healthcare providers to provide in-person care to their patients. With medical facilities at risk of being overwhelmed and citizens encouraged to stay home, timely access to medical care may be harder than ever to achieve.

Virtual care (telehealth) is one of the safest, most efficient ways to provide care during such times, as it allows patients and providers to connect without face-to-face visits. Broadly defined, virtual care is any interaction between patients and caregivers, occurring remotely and using information technologies to maximize the quality and effectiveness of patient care.

[The Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\)](#) has announced \$300 million related to virtual care through two new programs. We encourage member organizations to apply before the funding runs out. The FCC's recent **Report and Order** details these new telehealth programs **supported** by CHIME and are summarized below:

1. [COVID-19 Telehealth Program](#): Established under the recent **Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act**, the program calls for boosting telehealth capabilities in response to the public health emergency with an allotted \$200 million in funding separate from the FCC's Universal Service Fund. Funds will be allocated through competitive grants to eligible providers to purchase certain products and services relating to telehealth capabilities. [Applications](#) are being accepted on a rolling basis and monies are available until they have all been expended, or the public health emergency ends.
2. [Connected Care Pilot Program](#): This is a \$100 million, three-year grant program for providers who propose projects to boost connected care capabilities, particularly to serve low-income or veteran patients. The commission will prioritize applications with existing telehealth programs already in place. The program provides universal service support to providers' costs of delivering connected care services. This Pilot Program is separate and distinct from the COVID-19 Telehealth Program.

Entities eligible to apply for funding are limited to nonprofit and public

healthcare organizations such as:

1. post-secondary educational institutions offering health care instruction, teaching hospitals, and medical schools
2. community health centers or health centers providing health care to migrants
3. local health departments or agencies
4. community mental health centers
5. not-for-profit hospitals
6. rural health clinics
7. skilled nursing facilities
8. consortia of health care providers consisting of one or more entities falling into the first seven

WISE Healthcare is offering assistance and information regarding these programs and the associated applications to healthcare providers interested in using program funding to adopt virtual care technologies such as the [eConsult platform](#) which enables remote access to specialty care by board-certified physicians covering 38 medical specialties. For more information, please contact [info@wise.healthcare](mailto:info@wise.healthcare) or [visit our website](#).

