

EHR Funding Program for Behavioral Health/IDD Providers

Limited Funding Opportunity; Apply Between May 1-31, 2018

Background

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Office of Rural Health (ORH) and Division of Medical Assistance (DMA) partnered with the NC Health Information Exchange Authority (NC HIEA) to launch a program to assist behavioral health, mental health, and intellectual development and disability practices with purchasing an electronic health record (EHR) technology and establishing connectivity to the state-designated health information exchange, NC HealthConnex.

Pursuant to North Carolina Session Law 2015-241, as amended by North Carolina Session Law 2017-57, health care providers who accept Medicaid reimbursement for the provision of health care services must connect to NC HealthConnex, which is operated by the NC Health Information Exchange Authority (NC HIEA) within the Department of Information Technology (DIT). Physicians, hospitals, and mid-level practitioners who receive Medicaid reimbursement and who currently have an electronic health record (EHR) must connect by June 1, 2018. All other providers who receive funds from the State for the provision of health care services must connect by June 1, 2019, even if they do not currently have an EHR system.

Who is Eligible?

This program is designed to support health care practices that:

- (i) are Medicaid-enrolled outpatient practices that have an active NPI number in NCTracks;
- (ii) provide behavioral health, mental health, or intellectual and developmental disorder services (See taxonomy list located within the application or FAQs);
- (iii) attest that they have not received funding for EHR adoption or meaningful use;
- (iv) attest that they do not have electronic health record technology or attest that they do have a practice management system as of January 1, 2018, that could be upgraded to an electronic health record;
- (v) for calendar year 2017, had behavioral health, mental health, or intellectual and developmental disorder services providers make up 75% of their affiliated health care providers based on NC TRACKS data.

Note: The NC HIEA strongly recommends that providers choose a vendor from among the list of those that are already engaged in the NC HealthConnex connection process to ensure that they meet the technical requirements for connectivity. If the vendor you're working with is not currently on this list, please provide the [Technical Specs](#) document that requires EHR software that is minimally capable of sending HL7 messages, version 2 and higher.

How To Apply?

Practices that meet the above criteria are eligible to submit an [application](#) via the Office of Rural Health. Applications are being accepted on a first-come, first-served basis between May 1-31, 2018.

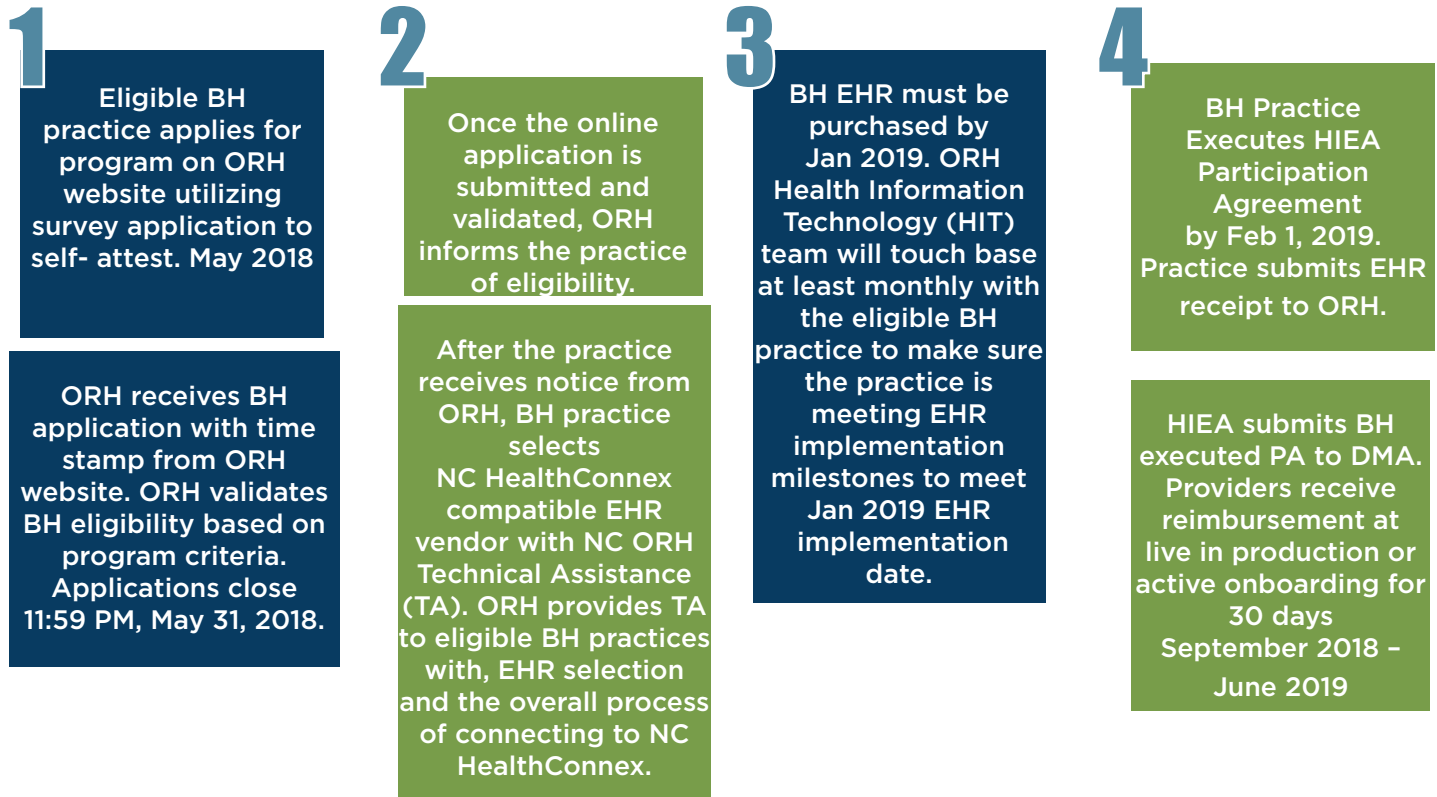
Program Requirements

The practices that are accepted into this program must connect to NC HealthConnex within the agreed upon timeframes prior to the funds being distributed. Eligible practices will be reimbursed for the cost of EHR technology based on Table 1 below. The DMA Office of Health Information Technology (HIT) shall be responsible for validating program eligibility utilizing NC TRACKS and HIT data. Each eligible practice will receive only one payment based on Table 1 for all service locations. Only one [taxonomy code from the list](#) is needed to apply.

Table 1

Eligible Practice with 26+ providers	up to \$20,000
Eligible Practice with 12-25 providers	up to \$15,000
Eligible Practice with 11 or fewer providers	up to \$10,000

EHR Program Attestation Process



Funding

Payments will be made to the practice, not individual providers. As outlined above, practices must apply to the program to be included on the request-for-funding list. Reimbursement for technology purchase occurs:

- (i) once connectivity to the State-designated health information exchange (HIE), NC HealthConnex has been established,
- (ii) or active HIE onboarding for over 30 days, whichever comes first.

Reimbursement will not exceed the total cost of behavioral health EHR implementation and practices must submit a receipt and related EHR vendor contract to the NC Office of Rural Health as verification of EHR purchase. If the amount of funds requested by eligible behavioral health applicants as of May 31, 2018, is less than the total available funds, the application window will be extended by one month then re-reviewed, with this cycle repeated until requested funds exceed total available funds.

What Is NC HealthConnex?

NC HealthConnex is the state-designated health information exchange for North Carolina that is managed by the North Carolina Health Information Exchange Authority (NC HIEA). NC HealthConnex compiles patients' health information to build a more comprehensive electronic health record. It also facilitates conversations between authorized health care providers allowing them to access and share health-related information statewide, to improve the coordination of care.



What Does NC HealthConnex Mean For Behavioral Health?

Many mental health providers do not have access to critical patient information such as labs and allergies, and can be isolated from sharing information with other health care providers. This fragmented care can sometimes lead to delays in an accurate diagnosis or a harmful drug interaction. Today, behavioral and mental health providers in North Carolina are not only encouraged to join NC HealthConnex, it is required. See nchealthconnex.gov for more information.

Direct EHR program questions to the NC Office of Rural Health (919) 527-6473 or email lakeisha.moore@dhhs.nc.gov.
Questions regarding NC HealthConnex? Contact (919) 754-6847 or kenya.servia@nc.gov.