

## USAC Rural Health Care – Member Eligibility FAQs

Nysernet has partnered with UAMS e-Link, a consortium of healthcare providers and one of the nation's largest telemedicine networks. Together, we help eligible **public, tribal, and nonprofit organizations** access the benefits of UAMS e-Link.

UAMS e-Link supports qualified consortium members through the application process for the Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF), part of the Universal Service Administrative Company's (USAC) Rural Health Care (RHC) Program. This program provides up to **a 65 percent reimbursement on eligible broadband connectivity expenses** for qualifying health care providers (HCPs).

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What is the USAC Rural Health Care (RHC) Program?

The Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) is a federal program administered by USAC that provides up to a 65 percent reimbursement on eligible broadband connectivity expenses for qualified health care providers and certain higher education institutions.

#### Which organizations are eligible?

Eligible entities include nonprofit urban, rural, and tribal health care organizations such as:

- Postsecondary institutions that provide health care instruction, such as:
  - Teaching hospitals
  - Medical schools
  - Nursing programs
  - Patient care training programs
  - Research focused on patient outcomes
- Community mental health centers
- Community health centers, including those serving migrant populations
- Local health departments or agencies
- Not-for-profit hospitals
- Dedicated emergency departments of rural for-profit hospitals
- Rural health clinics
- Skilled nursing facilities (SNFs)

#### How can Nysernet members access HCF reimbursements?

There are two key steps:

1. Join the UAMS e-Link consortium to access reimbursement eligibility for Nysernet services
2. Apply for and be approved under the Healthcare Connect Fund program

Nysernet and e-Link work alongside you throughout this process—because navigating funding shouldn't be something you do alone.

#### How do I join the consortium?

Complete a Letter of Agency and submit it to the UAMS e-Link consortium. Guidance and support are provided throughout.

#### What is required to become an approved HCP?

You must submit the appropriate USAC forms through the e-Link consortium. They will guide you through each step.

#### Does each campus location need approval?

Yes. Each physical site must apply for and receive its own HCP number.

#### Can members file for other providers under this consortium?

No. This consortium is specific to services eligible through Nysernet.

## Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

### How is funding distributed?

Funding is requested, approved, and reimbursed annually based on USAC program timelines, which are published each year.

### Which Nysernet services are eligible?

Eligible services may include:

- IAS and R&E network connectivity
- Network Infrastructure, including fiber (lit and dark)
- Network management services
- Cybersecurity services

### Is there a deadline to join the consortium?

You can join at any time. However, to participate in a given funding cycle, eligibility must be confirmed before submission deadlines.

### What is the deadline to apply for funding?

Funding requests are typically due March 30 for the following funding year.

USAC's funding year runs July 1 through June 30, so requests are submitted in the spring for the upcoming cycle.

### Is there a fee to participate?

Yes. UAMS e-Link charges a fee equal to 10 percent of your USAC cost savings, invoiced directly to the member.

### How does this affect billing for Nysernet services?

Your billing experience remains the same:

- You continue to receive and pay invoices
- Approved RHC reimbursements are issued after funding is received by Nysernet
- Funds can be paid directly to you or applied to future Nysernet invoices

## Process Overview

1

Eligibility determination

2

e-Link coordination  
with your organization

3

Request for funding/  
application submitted

4

Funding approval

5

Request for  
disbursement

## About Nysernet

We are [Nysernet](http://www.nysernet.org) — a not-for-profit technology partner serving those who serve others across New York State and beyond.

We help organizations connect, secure, and advance their mission through high-performance connectivity, cybersecurity expertise, learning experiences and a member-powered community.

Learn more: [www.nysernet.org](http://www.nysernet.org)

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