


Health Care Connect Fund (HCF): Arkansas e-Link Consortium Membership

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Telehealth Innovation Summit - June 30, 2017

What is Arkansas e-Link?

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) applied for \$102 million in broadband economic recovery funds through ARRA to expand and integrate two existing networks:

- Arkansas Telehealth Network
- Arkansas Research and Education Optical Network (ARE-ON)

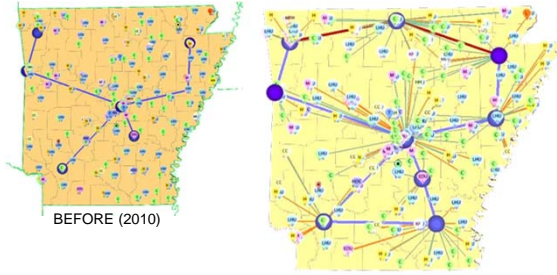
What is Arkansas e-Link

On August 18, 2010, the National Telecommunications Information Administration within the Department of Commerce announced award funding for the Arkansas Health Care, Higher Education, Public Safety, & Research Integrated Broadband Initiative.

The award was labeled "Arkansas e-Link" which is a depiction of this initiative that allows all partners to maintain their own identity.

The award was funded through the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) Comprehensive Community Infrastructure grant.

Arkansas' Connectivity Before & After BTOP




BEFORE (2010)

AFTER (2013)


Getting Arkansas Connected

BTOP Grant – awarded 2010 & administered by UAMS Arkansas e-Link resulted in:

- Sites Connected**
 - 427 Telemedicine
 - 32 Public Higher Education
- Video Equipment Installed**
 - 530 Interactive Video Units
 - 290 Public Access PCs
 - 641 Clinical Assessment Tools
- Broadband Infrastructure Development**
 - 716 Miles Leased (IRUs)
 - 49 Miles Constructed
 - 417 Leased Broadband Circuits



Arkansas e-Link Network



365+ Connected Sites

- 77 Hospitals
- 71 Medical Clinics
- 108 Health Department Clinics
- 46 Behavioral Health Clinics
- 11 Occupational/Physical/Speech Therapy Clinics
- 10 UAMS Pediatrics Kids First
- 8 Centers on Aging
- 5 Pathfinder facilities
- 21 Community Colleges
- 4 Universities

Arkansas e-Link Membership Benefits

- Video access to 1000+ healthcare providers on a dedicated high-speed, HIPAA compliant network
- Access to 40+ hours (monthly) of live continuing education opportunities (free of charge with CE tracking included)
- Training to use the video equipment
- Ability to conference with multiple participants


Arkansas e-Link Membership Benefits

- Technical support for video conferencing equipment and associated peripherals supplied by UAMS, CDH, e-Link
 - 24/7 support for clinical equipment
 - Business hours support for educational equipment
- Usage reports are available to evaluate adoption of telemedicine in your organization
- If your organization currently offers RSPMI services, certification to provide services via telemedicine is available

Telemedicine Reimbursement

Parity provisions for reimbursement of telemedicine-provided physician services

- Patients stay local
- Rural community retains revenue
- Reimbursement by
 - Private health insurance carriers
 - Medicare
 - Medicaid



Rural Healthcare Connect Fund

The RHCF Program provides funding for telecom and broadband services to eligible rural health care providers.

The two major goals of the HCF are to:

- Increase access to broadband for eligible HCPs, especially those serving rural areas
- Foster development and deployment of broadband healthcare networks

RHCF Program Consortia

A consortium is a group of healthcare providers ranging from a single unified health system to a statewide network of different types of entities. Non-rural eligible Health Care Providers (HCPs) may receive support as part of a consortium consisting of a majority rural HCP sites.

In addition, ineligible HCP sites also may participate in a consortium and take advantage of lower contract prices often associated with consortia bulk-buying, but they will not receive RHC funding.

Arkansas e-Link Consortium

Funding year: July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017

- Arkansas e-Link became a RHCF consortium leader in 2014
- As consortium leader, Arkansas e-Link completes all necessary paperwork and files all applications on behalf of Arkansas e-Link members and is legally and financially responsible for activities supported by the HCF Program

Arkansas e-Link Request for Proposal

To achieve the lowest broadband costs available, an RFP seeking competitive bidding for broadband went out to telecom vendors in fall of 2015. As an Arkansas e-Link member, you will benefit from competitive telecom pricing.

RFP Vendors:
 Brocade Communications Systems
 ClearPointe
 General Tech Data (GDT)
 Mountain View Telephone Company
 Ritter Communications
 South Arkansas Telephone Company
 Windstream

RFP 2015-0088 Arkansas e-Link Consortium

- 724 sites were awarded circuits
- Pricing ranged from 1.5 meg to 1 gig
- USAC (up to) 65% savings is estimated to be 533k for eligible entities

Arkansas e-Link Consortium Benefits
 Funding year:
 July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017

- Up to 65% flat-rate discount on all USAC eligible expenses
- 50-58% vendor discounts for business operating broadband, telecom, and network equipment
- Fixed broadband cost for three (3) year period with options for two (1) year extensions
- Sustainable bandwidth for EMR deployment, Health Information Exchange, administrative centers (billing/appointments), and data centers (managed services)

Arkansas e-Link Consortium Eligible Entities

Not-for-profit and public of one of the following entity types:

- Not-for-profit hospitals
- Community health centers or health centers providing health care to migrants
- Local health department or agencies
- Community mental health centers
- Rural health clinics including mobile clinics
- Dedicated emergency room of rural for-profit hospitals
- Off-site data centers and off-site administrative offices
- Post-secondary educational institutions offering health care instruction, including teaching hospitals or medical schools
- Skilled nursing facilities (beginning January 1, 2017)

Arkansas e-Link Consortium
 (Examples of Eligible USAC Expenses)

- o Cable, copper (HCP own)
- o Cable, fiber (HCP owned)
- o Fiber Network Transport Equipment
- o Fiber – Dark
- o Fiber – Lit
- o Fiber – Lit Recurring Costs
- o Firewall (HCP owned)
- o Firewall (leased)
- o Maintenance Contract (3-year)
- o Managed Services
- o Managed Network Services
- o Managed Video Services
- o Network Maintenance
- o Professional Services
- o Network Management Service (Consortium site premises)
- o Network Server (HCP owned)
- o Network Server (leased)
- o Network Server (warranty 3-year)
- o Network Switch (HCP owned)
- o Network Switch (leased)
- o Network Management Services (HCP premises)
- o Routers (HCP owned)
- o Routers (leased Optical Network Equipment)
- o Switches (HCP owned)
- o Switches (leased owned)
- o Wide Area Network (WAN)
- o Wireless Equipment (HCP owned)
- o Wireless Equipment (leased)

Arkansas e-Link Consortium Application Process

- ✓ Sign contract for Arkansas e-Link membership
- ✓ Submit Letter of Agency (LOA)
- ✓ Submit Form 460 (FCC/HCF Eligibility & Registration Form)
- ✓ Select desired member services and sign Order Form
- ✓ Pay Arkansas e-Link membership fee

Arkansas e-Link Consortium Benefits

- Maintenance support for video network
- Infrastructure equipment/software
- Network redundancy
- Network administration and management
- Fiber backbone network co-location facility, rack space, power and inter hub connectivity
- e-Link interactive video maintenance contract
- Video technical support
- Usage reports for insurance billing

Single Funding Request by HCP

- HCP may be a consortium member *and* a single member of the HCF, as long as the eligible services are *not duplicated* for funding
- The single member or non e-Link consortium are responsible for all applicable HCF requirements for funding requests
- HCP may belong to more multiple consortia, as long as the eligible services are *not duplicated* for funding.



For additional information:

- <http://www.arkansaselink.com>
- <http://www.usac.org/rhc>
- <http://learntelehealth.org>
- <http://www.americantelemed.org>
- <http://www.broadbandusa.gov>