

**North Carolina Healthcare Foundation's North Carolina Partnership for Connected Care (NC-PFCC)
Request for Applications: 2027-2029 Learning and Action Network**

BACKGROUND

The North Carolina Healthcare Foundation (NCHF) is the 501(c)(3) affiliate of the North Carolina Healthcare Association (NCHA). As the convenor of change for a healthier North Carolina, NCHF's mission is to foster and accelerate the collective impact of hospitals, health systems and community partners to improve the health of North Carolinians.

NCHF leverages innovative programming to power system-wide healthcare solutions, redefine the healthcare delivery system, and improve the health and well-being of people in North Carolina and beyond. The Foundation's programs span four areas of focus, each intended to improve healthcare delivery and community health outcomes: 1) Access to Care, 2) Behavioral Health, 3) Rural Health, and 4) Workforce.

Through funding from The Leon Levine Foundation, NCHF aims to strengthen collaboration between hospitals and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). The North Carolina Partnership for Connected Care (NC-PFCC) is one of several programs positioned within NCHF's Access to Care portfolio and will be leveraged to engage existing hospital-FQHC partnerships in developing sustainable, patient-centered partnership models across the care continuum.

OVERVIEW

Building on successful partnerships already operating in North Carolina, the NC-PFCC program seeks to create replicable models that enhance care coordination, address non-medical drivers of health, improve quality and access for underserved communities, and ultimately strengthen the healthcare safety net statewide for the most vulnerable populations.

Through this four-year initiative, NCHF will focus on identifying best practices and resource gaps, advancing sustainable reimbursement strategies, strengthening data sharing and infrastructure, and co-designing practical tools to support scalable coordination. The program is designed to achieve goals in the following phases:

Phase 1 (2026) is a learning phase, establishing a foundation for the four-year program by analyzing national and North Carolina FQHC-hospital partnerships through a literature review and executive interviews. The learnings from this phase are informing the design and launch of future phases.

Phase 2 (2027) earmarks the launch and implementation of the program's Learning and Action Network (LAN). The LAN will focus on five (5) established North Carolina FQHC-hospital partnerships selected for their demonstrated success and alignment. Within the Network, these five dyads will convene for shared learning to further strengthen and sustain their own partnership. They will also help co-design replicable models for future partnerships aimed at improving patient outcomes.

Up to \$87,500 per year for two years (2027 and 2028) will be available to the five (5) FQHC sites, disbursed at the beginning of each implementation year. Funding is intended to support staffing positions such as care coordinator, referral manager, community health worker, RN manager, licensed clinical social worker, etc. If staffing mix is deemed adequate, these funds may be used to support other needed resources in alignment with shared goals of the hospital-FQHC dyad.

Phases 3 (2028 and 2029) In 2028, the program will evolve into a broader Learning Community, welcoming all NC FQHCs and hospitals to join in quarterly educational webinars and networking calls.

With active participation and engagement, a second round of funding will be made available to LAN participants to continue work begun in phase 2. LAN dyads will begin to serve as peer educators/coaches for the Learning Community in phase 3, helping to spread the replicable models and best practices developed in phase 2. The Learning Community will continue through 2029.

Phase 4 (2029) Beginning in 2029, the NCHF Team will partner with LAN dyads to build a case for full FQHC - Hospital investment in grant funded staff position(s) or other resources sourced through the program. Leveraging data on patient outcomes and guidance from the NCHF Return on Investment Advisory Team, LAN dyads will be equipped with the tools, insights, and evidence to sustain impacts of their work beyond the program's conclusion. Tools and insights developed, including specific metrics tracked through the program -- will be shared statewide to promote long-term sustainability across North Carolina.

APPLICATION

Applications for the Learning and Action Network (LAN) must be completed in entirety and submitted in the application portal [here](#) by September 25, 2026 at 11:59 pm for consideration.

Please ensure your application is complete and developed with your FQHC or hospital partner. Within the application portal, submit **one** collaboratively developed and approved application for your joint FQHC-Hospital partnership including the following:

1. Responses to [application questions](#).
2. [Appendix B](#): A budget describing the intended use of grant funds.

Applications will be evaluated using the scoring criteria outlined [here](#). Dyad selections will be announced in early November 2026. Applicants not selected for the LAN will be invited to participate in the Learning Community in 2028.

Submitting this application is solely an expression of interest and does not constitute a binding commitment or legal obligation to enroll in or participate in this program if your application is approved. If approved, you will have the opportunity to review full program details and confirm your participation by executing a participation agreement. This agreement will include the details of your application and requires signature from authorized signatories from both hospital and FQHC partners.

Information submitted as part of your application will remain confidential and will be accessible only to authorized internal staff and selected external reviewers. Access will be limited solely to supporting a fair and rigorous review and approval process for selecting participating LAN dyads. Final selection decisions will be made collaboratively by the designated review committee using a decision matrix including scoring criteria linked above.

More detailed information about the LAN can be found [here](#).

Applicants may direct any questions about the application to the NCHF NC-PFCC team at Hospital-FQHC@ncha.org or reach the Program Lead, Shelby Lassiter, at 919-677-4134.

Submit applications in the [application portal](#) by 11:59 pm on 9/25/26