

BJC HealthCare 2022 Network Plan

Consortium Background: BJC HealthCare is one of the largest nonprofit health care organizations in the United States and is focused on delivering services to residents primarily in the greater St. Louis, southern Illinois, and mid-Missouri regions. With net revenues of \$5.3 billion, BJC serves the health care needs of urban, suburban, and rural communities and includes fifteen hospitals and multiple community health locations. Services include inpatient and outpatient care, primary care, community health and wellness, workplace health, home health, community mental health, rehabilitation, long-term care, and hospice.

As a nonprofit health care organization, BJC is the largest provider of charity care, unreimbursed care, and community benefit in Missouri, providing more than \$904 million in financial assistance, education of health professionals, safety net services and community outreach programs in 2018.

The BJC consortium HCPs are all fully owned and operated by BJC and does not include non-BJC members.

Strategy for leveraging existing technology: The IT organization is responsible for planning, developing, and supporting information technology and telecommunications initiatives throughout BJC's hospitals and service organizations.

BJC HealthCare will continue to deploy ethernet access that bundles services in a way that consolidates multiple circuits into a streamlined high-speed link. Voice services will continue to be converted to SIP utilizing the WAN Internet and Ethernet services at all sites. Centralized management and control will reduce costs a key objective of this IT team.

Project management plan: The leadership team at BJC HealthCare is a group of experienced associates working together to identify and direct the priorities of our IT organization through the development and implementation of strategic plans, within the scope of our mission.

- Implementing clinical programs and services to improve access to and quality of health care for patients
- Lowering health care costs and creating additional efficiencies that will be beneficial to patients and the communities served by the member organizations
- Achieving cost savings

Capital and operational budgets are being updated to support proposed 2022-2023 projects. Upgrading bandwidth will be done on a project basis, as needs dictate. Many services have been upgraded during the COVID 19 crisis to manage increased requirements for Telehealth applications.

The network planning and projects are in the department of the Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer. BJC Health Care Information Services Director leads the team that supports network projects. This team leads all activities such as infrastructure refresh, network services review and competitive bidding process. This project is on-going and managed by IT and IT SR Analyst resources.

Annual projects are prioritized based on need and impact to our operational objective to improve healthcare delivery to patients across the enterprise. Short term objectives are prioritized in order of greatest impact to these principals. In 2022 and 2023 BJC will continue to assess cost effective transitioning of non ethernet or fiber-based services to broadband services across the enterprise.

BJC understands that when budgets are finalized; BJC will be responsible for their 35% charges.

Goals and objectives of the proposed network Our goal is to deliver the needed bandwidth and resources to allow our providers and care teams deliver the healthcare that is required of our patients. This includes both data and voice services throughout all our locations in Illinois and Missouri. Voice services are delivered over this same data network to provide centralized control and access to all locations in the enterprise. BJC has a minimum of \$600,000 to continue the implementation of ethernet and broadband services across the enterprise in 2022.

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Strategy for aggregating the specific needs of health care providers: By providing many of our hospitals and rural clinics with stable access to the enterprise patient care resources, we are allowing the transformation of patient care. Investment in this technology and infrastructure are enhanced by the funding received from the RHCD Program. Some of these applications are electronic records access, transmission of large files such as X Rays and MRIs used for patient consultations; collaborative review of medical records and diagnostic information is available across the enterprise. Consolidating and leveraging services on the same broadband infrastructure also reduces the costs of on-going change management for these information networks. This is a network of HCPs in MO and IL.

Description of any previous experience in developing and managing health information technology programs

BJC has a management team that has years of experience in the adaption of innovative technologies for both IT infrastructure and health care applications including the inclusion of wireless topologies across the network. BJCHC is familiar with Telehealth programs and has for example, utilized grants to partner with other local healthcare facilities to be able to deliver network services in many of our locations. Telehealth applications are being improved and made more efficient using standardized approach that is support of emerging industry standards.

All USAC required process and information will be provided through Karon Lysne, President BRE Consulting. BRE Consulting Corp. BRE Consulting Corp is contracted by BJC for the management of all processes that support USAC's RHCD funding programs.

Description of how the supported network will be used to improve or provide health care delivery

The objective of the IT delivery plan is to support and manage growth to accommodate the following projects: COVID 19, Telehealth access to physician off site locations. Access is the key to delivering health care, regardless of location and physical limitations.

While remaining independent, the Collaborative members have a footprint of 6,629 hospital beds spanning Missouri, Illinois, and Kansas, and combined annual revenues of over \$8.5 billion, allowing the members of the BJC Collaborative to focus on:

- Implementing clinical programs and services to improve access to and quality of health care for patients
- Lowering health care costs and creating additional efficiencies that will be beneficial to patients and the communities served by the member organizations
- Achieving cost savings

BJC IT will be evaluating current services and costs throughout 2022 and 2023. The RFP addresses current services at all locations and circuits participating in the consortium.