



BlueCross BlueShield  
of North Carolina

# MEDICARE

October 2023

## A Way to Help Lower-Income Patients Pay for Internet Service

Please note, this communication applies to Healthy Blue + Medicare<sup>SM</sup> (HMO D-SNP) offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina.

Having reliable internet access is an important part of life. The internet helps us find information and connect with people, including finding and connecting with healthcare providers via virtual visits. However, not everyone can afford it. We share a health vision with our providers that means real change for consumers, and making the internet more accessible is one way we can improve the whole health of our communities.

The Affordable Connectivity Program can help.

### What is the Affordable Connectivity Program?

The Affordable Connectivity Program is a **government program that helps families who may need assistance** pay for internet access. Qualified households can receive:

- Up to a \$30/month discount on internet service.
- Up to a \$75/month discount on internet service if they live on **certain Tribal lands**.
- Up to a \$100 one-time discount on a laptop, desktop, or tablet bought through a **participating internet provider**.

### Who is Eligible for the Program?

A household is eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program if:

- The household income is **200% or less than the Federal Poverty Guidelines**.
- Someone in the household (including a child or dependent):
  - Participates in certain government assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Social Security Income (SSI), the Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, or **others**.
  - Participates in certain Tribal assistance programs, such as Head Start, Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or **others**.
  - Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year.
  - Is already eligible for a **participating internet provider's families who may need assistance internet program**.
  - Already receives a **Lifeline** benefit (another government program providing discounts on internet and phone service).

<https://www.bluecrossnc.com/providers/blue-medicare-providers/healthy-blue-medicare>

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**How do my Patients Apply?**

Your eligible patients can apply for the Affordable Connectivity Program online or by mail. They can also ask their current internet provider if they participate in the program. Direct your patients to learn more at [affordableconnectivity.gov](https://affordableconnectivity.gov).