

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Zika Care Connect?

Zika Care Connect (ZCC) is a program designed to connect pregnant women, caregivers of infants, and families affected by Zika to recommended healthcare services. Zika Care Connect establishes a network of specialty healthcare professionals in at-risk jurisdictions throughout the United States and its territories. The list of healthcare professionals in the Network is accessible via the [Zika Care Connect website](#) and ZCC HelpLine¹. The ZCC website also contains patient resource tools and additional resources to promote linkages between maternal and pediatric services. Specific informational pages have been developed for pregnant women, families with infants with Zika, and healthcare professionals.

Why was Zika Care Connect created?

ZCC was created to improve access to specialty healthcare services for the management of Zika virus infection during pregnancy and outcomes in infants caused by Zika. Improved access to appropriate health services – including diagnostic testing, specialized clinical care, and early intervention and developmental services – might lessen the overall impact of Zika virus infection in pregnancy and improve long-term outcomes for Zika-affected children. The program targets the most important removable barriers to care, as identified by maternal and pediatric care experts. ZCC will help families find specialty healthcare services and identify healthcare professionals whose practice meets their needed. Healthcare professionals can also use ZCC as a resource for coordinating care for patients affected by Zika who need access to other specialists.

Which healthcare specialties are included in ZCC?

ZCC currently includes healthcare specialists in maternal-fetal medicine, mental health, audiology, radiology, pediatric ophthalmology, pediatric neurology, developmental pediatrics, infectious disease, endocrinology, and care coordination.

Which areas of the United States are included in ZCC? Will other parts of the United States be added to ZCC?

ZCC is currently operating in Florida, California, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Virginia, Puerto Rico, and US Virgin Islands. The program is expanding to include Arizona, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Washington. There are no immediate plans to expand ZCC beyond these 20 areas.

¹ The Zika Care Connect HelpLine is accessible Monday – Friday, 9AM – 5PM Eastern Time at 1-844-677-0447 (toll-free) or via email at helpline@zicacareconnect.org.

How are healthcare professionals identified to be included in the ZCC network?

ZCC identifies healthcare professionals that can provide Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-recommended services and practice in areas located throughout each jurisdiction so no patient has to travel too far to see a specialist. To identify these healthcare professionals, Zika Care Connect is engaging:

- Professional associations to disseminate program information to their members in target jurisdictions
- Academic health systems, children's hospitals and other large health systems to take advantage of multiple specialties being available on-site and shared medical records
- State and territorial health departments to connect with healthcare professionals/systems that are part of Title V or other programs for children with special healthcare needs

Voluntary self-enrollment is also available for healthcare professionals to enroll themselves in the Healthcare Professional Network so that all healthcare professionals have the opportunity to become part of this important resource.

What are the qualifications of healthcare professionals listed in the Zika Care Connect provider network?

As part of the enrollment process, healthcare professionals self-report their board certification and licensing status. ZCC staff also search publicly available sources for this information. Additionally, patients are encouraged to verify a healthcare professional's licensing status by contacting the jurisdiction's applicable licensing board.

During enrollment, healthcare professionals are also asked if there has been any disciplinary action against them. In addition, the list of providers for each jurisdiction will be shared with the state or territorial health department for review on an ongoing basis.

Is ZCC providing compensation to healthcare professionals enrolled in Zika Care Connect?

Enrollment in ZCC is voluntary and there is no compensation provided.

Does ZCC assure that healthcare professionals are qualified to perform the required services?

When a healthcare professional enrolls in the network, they answer a series of questions about their practice, based on published CDC clinical guidance and their practice specialty. For example, a neurologist is asked if they are able to see patients under 1 year of age and whether they are able to perform an onsite electroencephalogram, or EEG. If not, they are not enrolled in ZCC. The information is self-reported by the healthcare professional and is provided as a service to help connect patients with CDC-recommended healthcare services.

What is the role of the HelpLine in Zika Care Connect?

The HelpLine is staffed by professionals available to answer questions about the ZCC website and assist patients in finding healthcare specialists that meet their needs. It is intended to help connect patients with healthcare providers rather than provide answers to questions about the Zika virus. Information about the Zika virus can be found at www.cdc.gov/zika.

Does ZCC provide training to participating healthcare professionals?

Participating providers will receive periodic emails with key Zika updates, including new CDC clinical guidance and patient resource tools. There is no formal training offered or required to participate in ZCC.

Is CDC endorsing or recommending healthcare professionals included in the ZCC network?

No. The inclusion of healthcare professionals in the ZCC network does not constitute or imply an endorsement of these providers by CDC. The ZCC network is provided as a service to connect pregnant women, caregivers of infants, and families affected by Zika to recommended healthcare services.

How will healthcare professional information be kept up-to-date?

At least once a year, healthcare professionals will be asked to review their information on the website to ensure it is current. Using a unique code, healthcare professionals can access a portal through the ZCC website to update their information as needed.

What information about the healthcare professional is available through a search on the ZCC website?

Information to help patients identify a healthcare professional to meet their specific needs, such as medical specialty, practice hospital affiliation, languages spoken, insurances accepted, and practice hours, can be found by searching the ZCC website. ZCC maintains this information as a service to families and encourages families to request references and use their own judgment when choosing specialists who provide treatment or services related to Zika.

Does ZCC have information on healthcare professionals that accept Medicaid, Medicare, and other insurance?

Yes. Families can search for healthcare professionals that accept Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance using the advanced search function on the ZCC website. Families should verify the information with the specific healthcare professional prior to scheduling an appointment.

Can ZCC help patients who are uninsured find a healthcare professional that will provide care?

The ZCC website is being expanded to include state- and territory-specific resource pages with information to help those without insurance find a care resource. Information included on these pages is provided directly by the state or territorial health department.

How does ZCC address other barriers to care, such as transportation to appointments or wait times to see specialists?

The state- and territory-specific resource pages on the ZCC website will contain information to help address barriers to care that can be better addressed at a local level.

Are there future enhancements planned for the Zika Care Connect program?

Yes, several enhancements are planned. Specifically,

- A laboratory portal with information on laboratory testing for Zika. This will help healthcare professionals identify laboratories that offer Zika virus testing. It will also include information on the CDC-recommended laboratory testing algorithm.
- A healthcare professional community forum, which will allow healthcare professionals to communicate directly with one another regarding Zika-related care.
- State- and territory-specific resource pages with information on where to go to find additional help with Zika-related healthcare needs.
- A resource page with links to early intervention services available in the ZCC jurisdictions.

What are the roles of McKing, March of Dimes, and CDC on this project?

- CDC contracted with McKing Consulting Corporation to develop the Healthcare Professional Network, database and website to assist pregnant women and families with connecting to specialists. McKing is working in collaboration with the March of Dimes to ensure that network information is available to the public and is developing a sustainment strategy.
- March of Dimes is partnering with McKing to promote Zika Care Connect and to ensure that the Healthcare Professional Network has long-term sustainability.
- CDC has provided funding to McKing and to March of Dimes and is providing ongoing technical assistance.