



NETWORK OF CARE

FAQs for Helpline Center Network of Care

This document is intended to support understanding of the Helpline Center Network of Care (HCNC) ecosystem. It provides information and guidance on frequently asked questions related to understanding HCNC, partner participation, client registration and referrals, privacy and data sharing, and reporting and system operations.

Understanding HCNC

What is HCNC?

HCNC is a cloud-based data-sharing ecosystem administered by Helpline Center. HCNC serves as a collaborative software infrastructure that electronically links human service agencies through shared and protected client information with the goal of better serving clients. Check out webpage for an updated list of current partner agencies at <https://www.helplinecenter.org/hcnc/>.

Why is HCNC called an “ecosystem” and what is the HCNC ecosystem?

HCNC is called an ecosystem because it connects multiple data systems, partners, and workflows through shared technology and governance. This integration promotes collaboration, data quality, and secure information exchange. The HCNC ecosystem includes four systems: VisionLink (Community OS), Jotform, Airtable, and Microsoft Azure.

Where is HCNC geographically available

HCNC is currently active in Sioux Falls and Watertown but not limited to those areas. Email hcnc@helplinecenter.org if your agency/community is interested in HCNC.

Who can use HCNC?

HCNC is available to qualified health and human service organizations that sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Helpline Center and follow HCNC standards.

Is there a cost to join HCNC?

Yes. Pricing and participation levels are available by emailing hcnc@helplinecenter.org.

Becoming and Participating as an HCNC Partner Agency

What are the benefits of participating in HCNC?

Participating in HCNC helps agencies streamline referrals and communication, reduce duplicate

data collection, improve coordination and follow-up, and access shared reports and system-wide insights.

What do HCNC partners do and what are their requirements?

HCNC partners enter, manage, and share client data according to system standards, ensuring privacy, accuracy, and coordination through referrals and case management. Partner agencies must follow HCNC privacy and data-quality standards, complete initial background checks for users, and report staffing or access changes within 24 hours.

How would adopting HCNC change my programs or workflows?

HCNC is customizable to fit existing processes.

What are the baseline features of HCNC?

HCNC provides access to baseline features with additional options for higher levels of configuration and customization. Baseline features include basic shared client registration, client profile, and shared client forms including basic program service tracking, simple agency dashboards, shared service history from HCNC partners, shared documents, shared household form, referrals, shared basic shelter and housing information, care plan, and social needs assessment.

What are the levels of partnership available in HCNC?

HCNC offers three levels of partnership. (1) Care Coordination Partners: full configuration for service tracking, custom workflows, and reporting, (2) Referral Partners: use standard features to make and receive referrals, and (3) Data/Integration Partners: exchange data with HCNC.

How does my organization become an HCNC partner?

Email hcnc@helplinecenter.org to express interest or complete an Interest Form on the HCNC website <https://www.helplinecenter.org/hcnc/>.

Client Registration, Referrals, and Consent**Why is registering a client in HCNC beneficial?**

It enables faster, coordinated referrals. Once a client signs a Release of Information (ROI), their information is securely shared across partner agencies, reducing the need to repeat intake details.

Who can be registered in HCNC?

Any client receiving or being referred for services at a partner agency. Clients under 18 require guardian consent. Without a ROI, only the entering agency can view the record.

What happens when I submit a referral through HCNC?

When a referral is submitted, the receiving agency is notified by email, and the referral appears in their “Incoming Referrals” section on their HCNC dashboard.

Is client consent required before making a referral?

Yes, partner agencies must obtain a signed ROI before sharing any client data in HCNC.

Is a client able to receive services if they do not sign the consent form?

Yes. Clients can still receive services from the agency they’re working with, but their information won’t be shared in HCNC. Referrals to other agencies through HCNC require signed consent.

Is a client able to revoke permission to share their information after signing a ROI consent?

Yes. Clients may visit any HCNC partner agency to complete a “Release of Information Consent to Revoke” form. Agencies that have already provided services will still have access to past records but can no longer send referrals. The client’s information will no longer be searchable by agencies that haven’t served them. Partner agencies can help clients complete the revocation form through the HCNC Community Landing Page.

Privacy, Data Sharing, and Security**Who can see and share information in HCNC?**

Only authorized users at HCNC partner agencies can view or share data. By signing the ROI consent form, clients allow these agencies to use and share their information only as needed to provide services.

What client information does HCNC collect and why?

HCNC collects identifying, demographic, and service-related information—such as name, date of birth, contact details, housing status, and service needs—to connect clients to appropriate programs, determine eligibility, track outcomes, and improve coordination among agencies.

What type of information is shared?

Only information necessary for service coordination is shared including identifying information, contact information, demographics, household data, and past service history. Sensitive data such as medical or behavioral health details are limited.

How is client information protected?

HCNC safeguards data through encryption, secure authentication, role-based access, and audit trails for all users. Partner agencies must follow professional standards, accessing records only when directly involved in a client’s care. Certain details—such as case notes, program specifics, and agency-specific assessments—are not shared with all partners.

How does HCNC comply with HIPAA and data privacy standards?

HCNC and all partner agencies follow HIPAA, 42CFR Part 2 (when applicable), and South Dakota privacy laws. The system includes full audit capabilities, and all users must adhere to the HCNC System Manual and data-sharing agreements.

Data, Reporting, and System Operations**What data does HCNC collect for reporting and analysis?**

HCNC gathers both client-level and aggregate data including demographics, service utilization, and referral outcomes. Aggregated data is used to analyze trends and improve service delivery.

How does HCNC ensure data quality and accuracy?

Quality is maintained through training, standardized data entry, and corrective action for agencies that fall out of compliance.

How can an agency access referral or outcome reports?

Partner agencies can view reports within HCNC or request customized reports from HCNC staff.

***For more information or questions on HCNC, please email hcnc@helplinecenter.org or complete an Interest Form on the HCNC website: <https://www.helplinecenter.org/support-programs/hcnc/>.*