

Colorado Medicaid eConsult

Provider and Community Experience
Subcommittee

March 13, 2025

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COLORADO

Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

Agenda

- eConsult Overview
- Available Specialties
- eConsult Progress Update
 - February 1, 2024 - February 28, 2025
- Policy Update - Specialty to Specialty Feature
- How to Participate

eConsult Overview

- Colorado Medicaid eConsult is celebrating its **1-year anniversary!**
 - The platform launched on February 1, 2024
- Safety Net Connect (SNC) is the selected vendor partner who developed HCPF's eConsult platform.
 - SNC is responsible for enrolling and onboarding all users to the platform.
- Treating Practitioners can use approved 3rd party eConsult platforms beyond Colorado Medicaid eConsult, giving providers greater flexibility and options.
 - HCPF opened the billing codes to allow any provider to bill Fee for Service (FFS) for eConsult, which helps expand access to specialty care statewide.
 - Approved Third-party eConsult Platform Criteria can be found in the Billing Manual

eConsult Overview Continued

Colorado Medicaid eConsult is a **free**, web-based platform: Only a **web browser** and **internet connection** are required - no software installation is needed.

Platform also supports Single Sign On (SSO) and data integration with capable Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems.

What is an eConsult?

Electronic consults, or eConsults, are asynchronous (store and forward) clinical communications between a primary care medical provider (PCMP) and a specialty provider (specialist). PCMPs can use the web-based Colorado Medicaid eConsult platform to transmit secure eConsult requests to specialists.



A Health First Colorado patient comes to the clinic with medical issues that require a Specialist's advice

The PCMP logs onto the Colorado Medicaid eConsult platform and submits a clinical question

A Specialist reviews the submission and closes the eConsult by providing clinical guidance

The PCMP reviews the clinical guidance and signs off on the eConsult

The PCMP schedules a follow up with the patient to go over the plan of care

Benefits of eConsult

- **Improved Access and Faster Treatment:** eConsults provide quick specialist input for Treating Practitioners, enabling faster treatment decisions and proactive condition management averting unnecessary in-person specialist visits.
- **Stronger Provider Relationships:** By enhancing communication between providers and specialists, eConsults reduce unnecessary referrals, improve collaboration, and ensure timely, effective care with fewer missed appointments.
- **Cost Reduction:** eConsults lower healthcare costs by preventing unnecessary high-cost specialty visits and acute care incidents, while enabling better management of conditions through improved provider coordination.

Available Specialties

Adult Specialties (21)

Addiction Medicine Allergy/Immunology Cardiology Dermatology Endocrinology	Gastroenterology Geriatric Medicine Hematology/Oncology Hepatology Infectious Disease	Nephrology Neurology OB/GYN* Orthopedics Otolaryngology (ENT) Pain Medicine	Physical Med/Rehab Psychiatry Pulmonology/Sleep Med Rheumatology Urology
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Pediatric Specialties (15)

Allergy/Immunology Cardiology Dermatology Developmental Peds	Endocrinology Hematology/Oncology Infectious Disease	Nephrology Neurology Orthopedics Otolaryngology (ENT)	Psychiatry Pulmonology Rheumatology Urology
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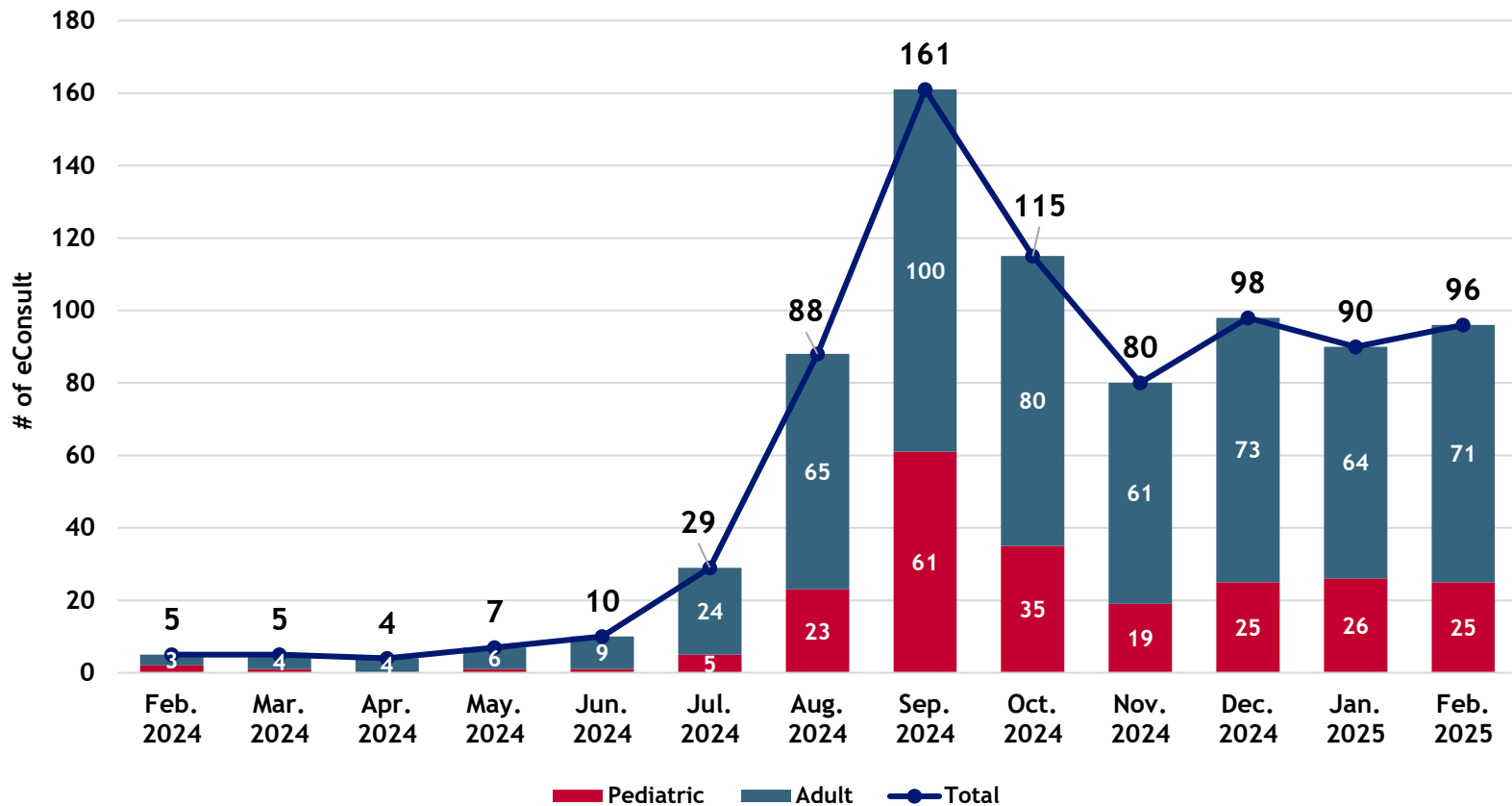
*OB/GYN is available for adolescents ages 14 and up

Currently Recruiting: Peds Gastroenterology

eConsult Submissions 2/1/2024 - 2/28/2025

Utilization **increased** in July, August and September, supported by dedicated funds allocated by HCPF to the RAEs to encourage and promote eConsult.

The red bar represents **pediatric eConsults (224)**, while the teal bar represents **adult eConsults (564)**. In total, **788 eConsults** have been submitted to date (2/1/24 to 2/28/25)

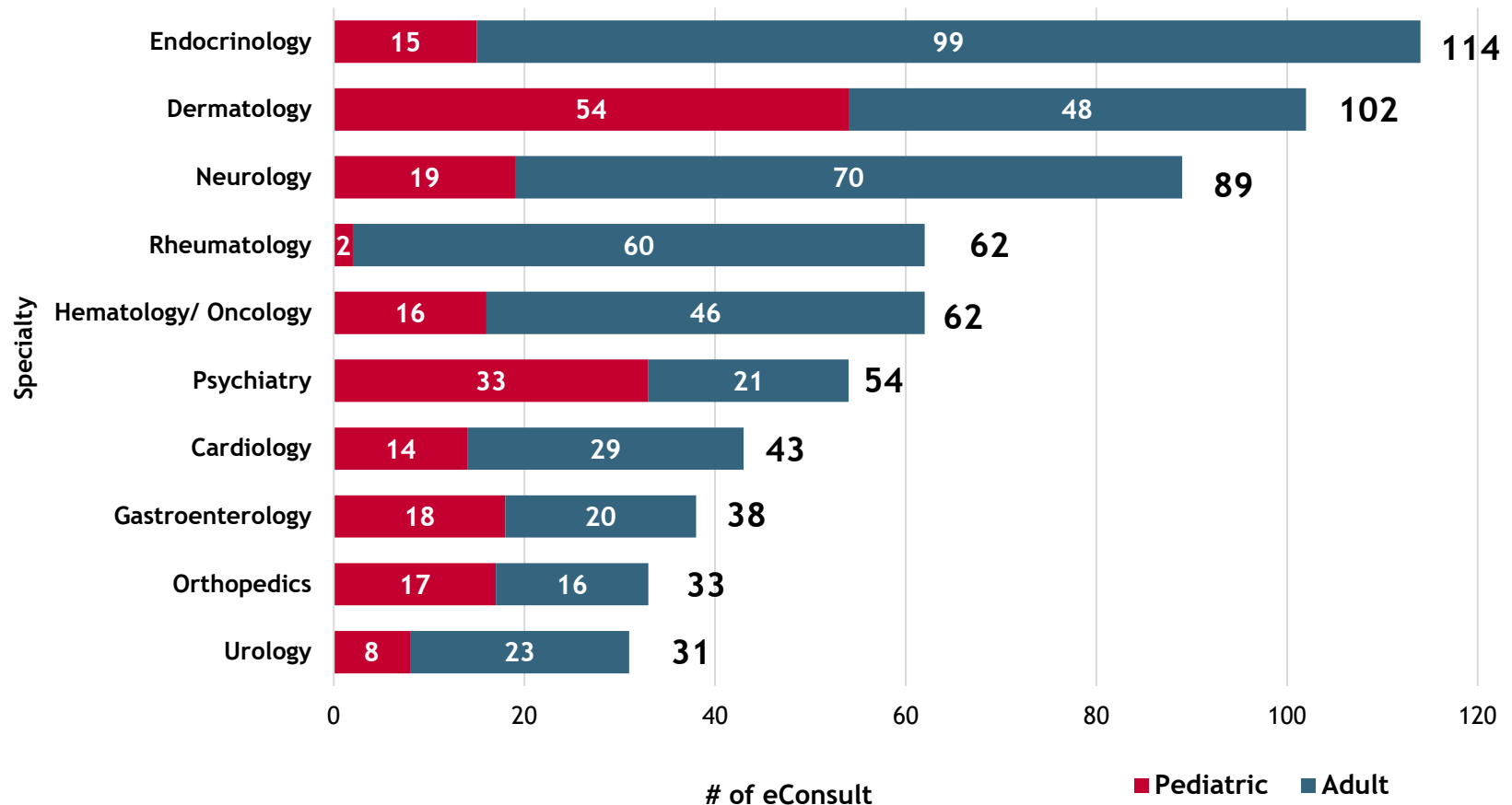


Top 10 Submissions by Specialty 2/1/24- 2/28/25

Top 3 Specialties

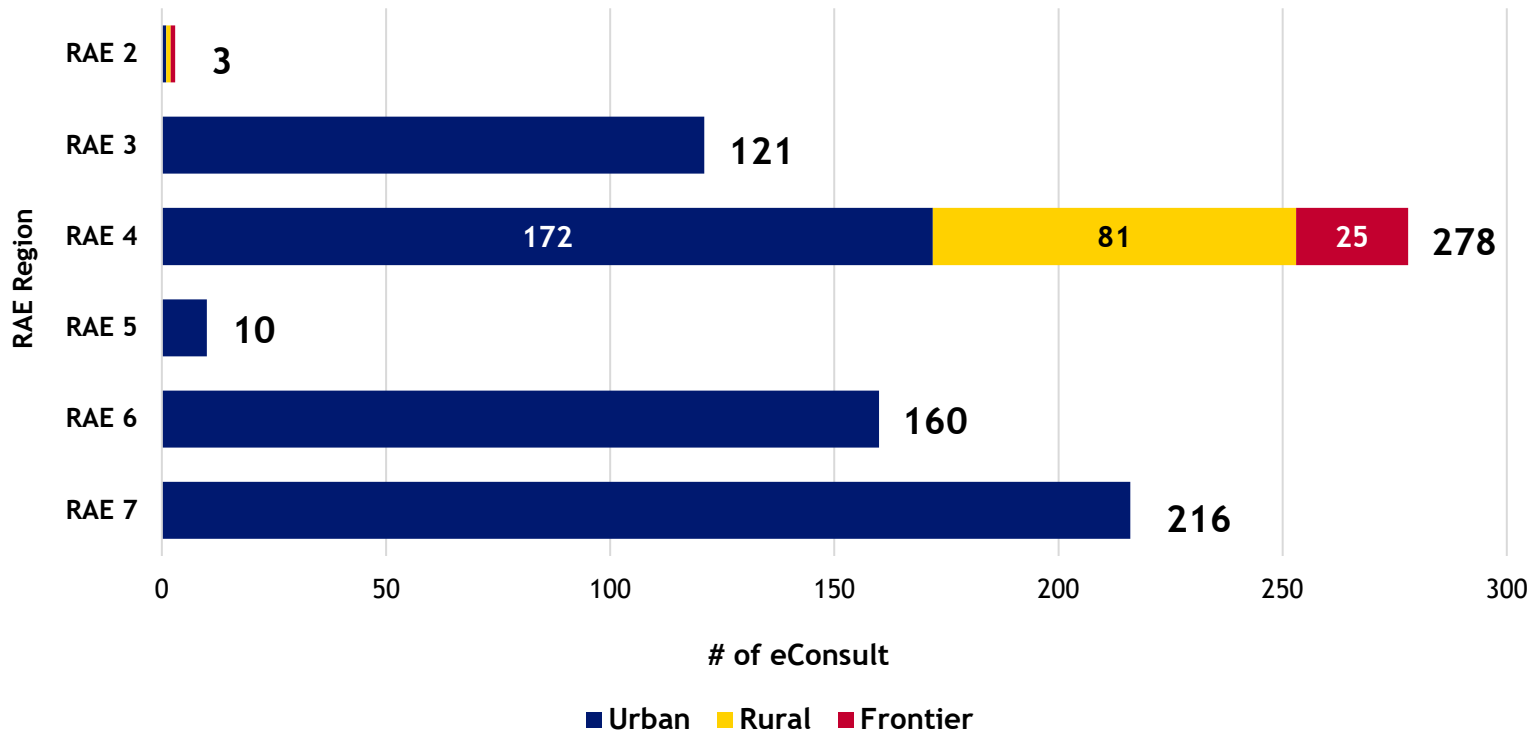
Adult: Endocrinology, Neurology, Rheumatology

Pediatrics: Dermatology, Psychiatry, Neurology



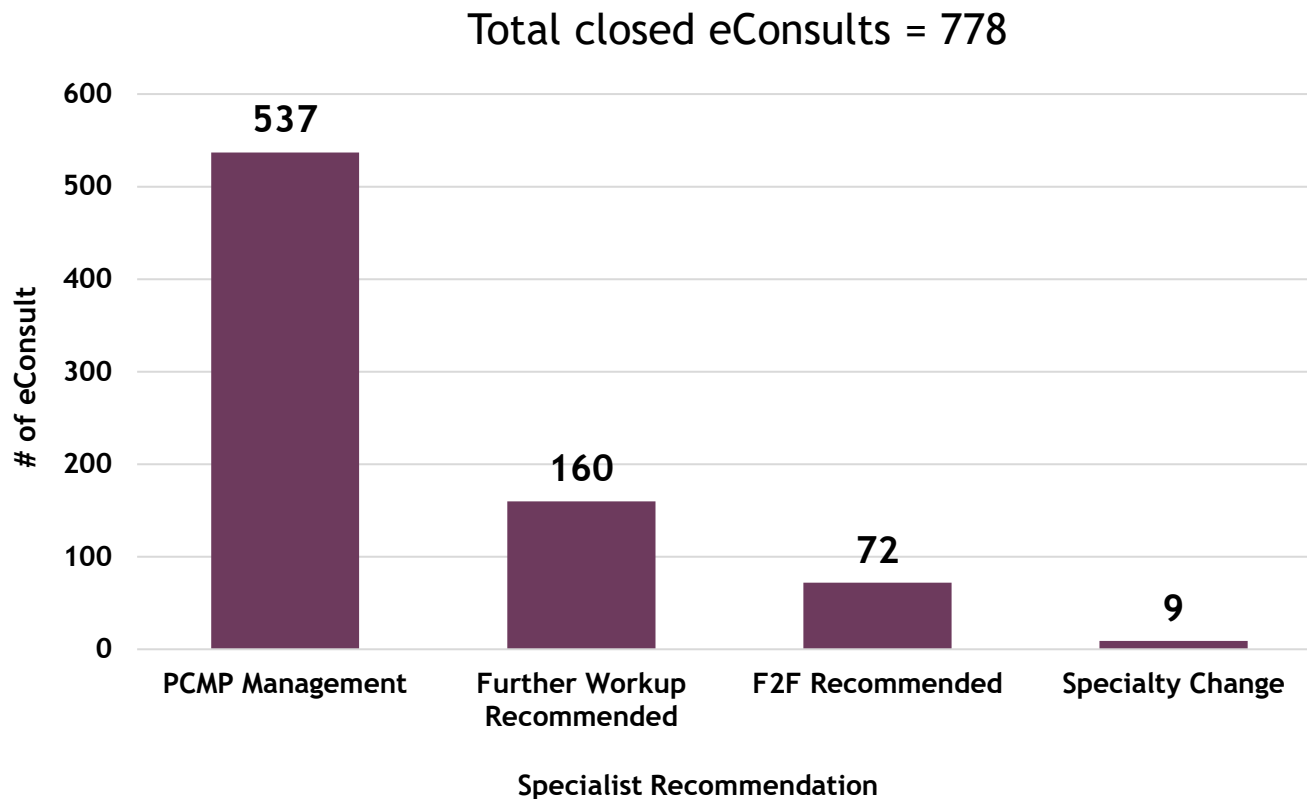
Submissions by RAE and RAE County Designation 2/1/24 - 2/28/25 (788 eConsults)

The majority of eConsults across all RAE Regions are being submitted by Urban counties (dark blue bar), followed by Rural (yellow) and Frontier (red) counties.



eConsult Outcomes 2/1/24 - 2/28/25

- **90%** of eConsults have provided actionable guidance to the PCMP, ensuring timely care and reducing unnecessary specialist visits for the Member.
- Average response time is **less** than 1 business day



Provider Experience

"The Colorado Medicaid eConsult platform has been an enormous benefit to our practice! In my experience, many Medicaid patients have to wait several months to see a specialist, but with eConsult, we are able to get started with workup and intervention for the patient during their wait period, which improves the quality of patient care."

- Hai Bui, MD from Lakewood Medical Center

"The use of this invaluable resource undoubtedly increases the rate of access to specialty care saving healthcare time and dollars while simultaneously increasing the quality of care delivered. We love Colorado Medicaid's new eConsult platform because it helps us help our patients."

- Leslie Dawdy, FNP from Peak Family Practice

"When using eConsult, it has helped me in being able to improve patient care by not having my patients have to wait to get seen by a specialist. As an FNP, I would highly recommend the eConsult platform, it is easy to use and very beneficial for the patients."

-Patricia Donegan, FNP-C from Castillo Primary Care

Specialty to Specialty Feature - July 1, 2025

- **Role Expansion:** Current Treating Practitioner user role will be expanded to a more generalized submitter role
 - **New Fields:** Add new fields to differentiate between the types of Submitters
- **Eligibility:** Specialists who are MDs/DOs, NPs/PAs will have the ability to submit eConsults as a submitter (treating practitioner user role)
- **Limitations:** Behavioral Health (BH) providers (LCSWs, LPCs, LMFTs, LACs, and Psychologists) are not able to submit eConsults as treating practitioners or serve as specialists on the platform.
 - The eConsult platform allows Treating Practitioners to seek clinical guidance from addiction medicine and psychiatry specialists on non-urgent medical care and medication management related to behavioral health issues.
- **Impact:** Expand the engagement of healthcare professionals to improve access to care, support member well-being, and facilitate the co-management of members with complex, multi-specialty needs

Examples of Specialty-to-Specialty eConsults

Gastroenterology to Endocrinology:

1. **Scenario:** A gastroenterologist is managing a patient with elevated liver enzymes and diabetes and seeks guidance from an endocrinologist regarding the impact of diabetes medications on liver function.
2. **Benefit:** Ensures appropriate management of both the liver condition and diabetes, minimizing potential drug interactions or complications.

Cardiology to Nephrology:

1. **Scenario:** A cardiologist is treating a patient with heart failure and requests an eConsult from a nephrologist to assess kidney function before starting an ACE inhibitor.
2. **Benefit:** Safeguards the patient's kidney health while optimizing heart failure management.

Dermatology to Rheumatology:

1. **Scenario:** A dermatologist is treating a patient with a skin condition (e.g., psoriasis) and asks a rheumatologist for advice on managing potential underlying autoimmune or inflammatory aspects of the disease.
2. **Benefit:** Ensures comprehensive care for both the skin and the systemic disease.

Steps to Participate

Providers who are interested in participating should complete the following steps below:

- Step 1: Practice emails SNC at Coloradosupport@safetynetconnect.com or completes a practice enrollment form on the eConsult information site (<https://www.econsultco.info/>) to begin enrollment process.
- Step 2: SNC sends practice enrollment and user creation forms for completion.
- Step 3: Once completed forms are returned, SNC will confirm the enrollment.
- Step 4: SNC will send training options and registration links to the practice.



Questions?