Health Care Innovation Program
Revolving Loan Program Funding Report
Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)
Published: September 1, 2026

Background

Subsection. 385.4015 (8), Florida Statues, requires the Department of Health (Department) to publish on its website information related to Health Care Innovation (HCI) Loan Program recipients, written agreements, performance conditions and their status and the total amount of funds dispersed to date. The law also requires the Department, beginning on September 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, to post on its website a report for the previous fiscal year which must include all of the following information:

- A summary of the adoption and implementation of recommendations of the council during the previous fiscal year.
- An evaluation of actions and related activities to meet the purposes set forth in this section.
- Consolidated data based upon the uniform data reporting by funding recipients and an evaluation of how the provision of the loans has met the purposes set forth in this section.
- The number of applications for loans, the types of proposals received, and an analysis on the relationship between the proposals and the purposes of this section.
- The amount of funds allocated and awarded for each loan application period, as well as any funds not awarded in that period.
- The amount of funds paid out during the fiscal year and any funds repaid or unused.
- The number of persons assisted and outcomes of any technical assistance requested for loans and any federal, state, or private funding opportunities.

HCI Loan Program Overview

Established pursuant to section 381.4015, F.S., and administered by the Florida Department of Health with recommendations from the Health Care Innovation Council, the HCI Loan Program provides low-interest financing to eligible entities seeking to implement innovative health care solutions.

The HCI Loan Program offers loans that cover up to 50 percent of total project costs, and up to 80 percent for rural hospitals, as defined in ss. 395.602(2), F.S., and for non-profit entities that accept Medicaid patients in rural or medically underserved areas.

Eligibility is limited to health care facilities licensed, registered, or certified by the Agency for Health Care Administration in accordance with section 408.802, F.S., excluding those identified in subsections (1), (3), (13), (23), and (25). Educational or clinical training providers may also qualify when partnering with an eligible health care facility.

During FY 2025–26, interested entities applied for loans of up to $5 million per project, with interest rates of 1 percent or less and repayment terms of up to 10 years.

Council Recommendations

During Fiscal Year 2025-26, Department staff worked to implement three significant recommendations from the Health Care Innovation Council:

- Implementation of the adopted application scoring rubric.
- Successful launch of first application cycle.
- Completed review of loan applications.

Application Scoring. In FY 2025-26, the HCI Loan Program adopted and implemented the Loan Evaluation Scoring Framework recommended by the Health Care Innovation Council in June 2025. The scoring framework uses a 100-point scoring scale based on the following criteria:

- Strategic Impact (30 points)
- Return on Investment (25 points)
- Strength of Implementation (20 points)
- Patient Outcomes and Population Benefits (15 points)
- Geographic Priority (5 points)
- Nonprofit-Medicaid Patients (5 points)

Successful Launch and Completion Application Cycle. The successful launch of the inaugural application cycle produced the following results:

- 16 loan applications received (15 via online portal; one by email)
- Seven loans approved totaling $13,388,500
- Projects spanning rural inpatient capacity, surgical robotics, AI-enabled diagnostics, behavioral health models, pediatric and disability care, and home health expansion
- Program advanced from design into operational readiness, including rulemaking initiation and underwriting preparation

Due to delays in releasing loan funds for the HCI Loan Program, the evaluation portion of this report along with consolidated data related to recipient data reports will be provided in a future update.

Loan Application Details

The HCI Loan Program, designed to fund innovative health care solutions, opened its first application cycle from October 3 through November 17, 2025.

Applications and Proposal Types

In the inaugural application cycle, 16 loan applications were received. Fifteen applications were submitted via the online application portal, and one was submitted by email. The applications represented a diverse set of health care innovation projects focused on expanding access, modernizing service delivery, integrating technology, and strengthening the workforce in rural and underserved communities.
Of the 16 applications received, only 12 met the eligibility requirements in the current statute. The Department reviewed the 12 eligible applications based on the criteria established by the Health Care Innovation Loan Council; specifically, whether the proposed use of the funds was innovative, and strategic impact, return on investment, strength of implementation, patient outcomes and population benefit, and geographic priority (projects targeting rural or underserved areas), in addition to ability to meet the matching funds requirement.

The funded projects aligned with the Florida Legislature's intent to harness entrepreneurial innovation and strengthen Florida's health care system by advancing replicable, technology-enabled, workforce-focused, and cost-reducing models of care. Collectively, the projects include expansions of rural inpatient capacity, integrated behavioral and assisted-living models, pediatric and disability care hubs, AI-driven diagnostic tools, mobile health units, home-based skilled nursing programs, telehealth-enabled service centers, and surgical robotics – each reflecting the legislative direction to highlight and scale innovative technologies, workforce pathways, and service delivery models that improve quality and lower costs in sustainable, reproducible ways.

Loan Awards

All applications underwent eligibility review, evaluation under the Loan Evaluation Scoring Framework, and comprehensive financial risk assessment. Of the 16 applications received, seven were approved for financing totaling $13,388,500.

The approved proposals, detailed in Table 1, encompass a wide range of innovative approaches to expand access, modernize care delivery, and strengthen services for underserved communities.

Table 1. FY 2025-26 Approved Loan Applications

#	Entity Name	Facility Type	Purpose/Summary	Loan Amount
1	**Blackstone Medical Services LLC**	**Health Care Clinic**	**Mobile App for Expanded Access to Home Sleep Testing:** This project will deploy an AI-driven app integrating telehealth, automated workflows, and low-cost sensors to streamline diagnosis, improve completion rates, and reduce healthcare costs for sleep apnea across Florida.	**$600,000**
2	**Calhoun Liberty Hospital**	**Rural Health Clinic**	**Restoring Full Inpatient Capacity and Health Innovation Project:** This project includes a $7.75M smart-care expansion that restores inpatient capacity lost after Hurricane Michael by adding 16 technology-enabled beds and modern infrastructure to improve rural access, reduce transfers, support telehealth, and strengthen long-term sustainability for patients across four Florida counties.	**$5,000,000**
3	**Hendry Regional Medical Center (HRMC)**	**Hospital**	**HRMC 340b Project:** This project aims to purchase an old CVS pharmacy to pass on 340b drug savings to patients and employees and be able to provide other telehealth services.	**$4,000,000**
4	**Jackson Hospital**	**Hospital**	**Surgical Robotics Program Expansion – da Vinci 5 Acquisition:** This includes the acquisition of a da Vinci 5 robotic system to bring minimally invasive surgery to a rural hospital for the first time, improving patient outcomes, reducing complications, and expanding local access to advanced surgical care without added costs.	**$2,538,500**
5	**Old Cutler Retirement Home**	**Assisted Living Facility**	**Behavioral Assisted Living Expansion and Innovation Initiative:** This project focuses on expanding behavioral assisted living capacity by integrating housing, psychiatric care, tele-mental health, mobile outreach, and specialized workforce training into a single preventive care model designed to stabilize high-need individuals, reduce hospital and justice-system cycling, and create a scalable, technology-enabled solution for Florida's underserved psychiatric population.	**$200,000**

#	Entity Name	Facility Type	Purpose/Summary	Loan Amount
6	**Open Arms & Heart Services**	**Homemaker and Companion Service**	**Integrated Pediatric and Disability Care Hub:** The scope of this project will combine PPEC, skilled home health, and medical transportation services into a single technology-enabled model to improve care continuity, reduce hospitalizations, and expand access for medically fragile children and individuals with disabilities in underserved communities.	**$900,000**
7	**Special Friends Inc.**	**Home Health Agency**	**Skilled Nursing and Private Duty Nursing Expansion Project:** This project will broaden home health services across 15 counties by adding skilled and private duty nursing, implementing EMR-enabled care coordination, and launching workforce training partnerships to improve access, reduce hospitalizations, and strengthen staffing in underserved areas.	**$150,000**

The various projects approved for HCI loans take various approaches to harnessing entrepreneurial innovation and the creativity of health care stakeholders to modernize care delivery, strengthening quality, reducing costs, and expanding health care access.

The mobile app for home sleep testing demonstrates how technology-enabled, automated, and scalable tools can streamline diagnosis and lower costs. The inpatient capacity restoration project and the purchase of a former CVS building show how infrastructure modernization – paired with telehealth, smart-care design, and 340B savings – can expand rural access, reduce system strain, and improve long-term sustainability. The surgical robotics proposal introduces an advanced, replicable technology model that improves patient outcomes and expands rural surgical access.

The behavioral assisted living initiative integrates psychiatric care, tele-mental health, mobile outreach, and specialized workforce training into a scalable model that reduces hospitalizations and justice-system cycling. The integrated pediatric and disability care hub and the skilled nursing/private duty nursing expansion both combine technology, workforce pathways, and coordinated service delivery to improve outcomes, reduce hospitalizations, and expand access for medically fragile children, individuals with disabilities, and underserved families across multiple counties.

Summary of Funds

Table 2 below provides a summary of the allocations and funding activities taken during fiscal year 2025-26 and the inaugural loan application cycle.

Table 2. Summary of Cycle 1 Loan Allocations and Funding Activities

Funds Available for FY 2025-26 HCI Loans	$50,000,000
Funds for Approved HCI Loans*	$13,388,500
Funds Not Awarded**	$35,728,392
Funds Repaid During the Fiscal Year	$0

*HCI Loan Program closings occurred in August 2026.

**Includes $13,388,500 in awarded loans.

Technical Assistance

HCI Loan Program staff responded to 73 emails from organizations and individuals requesting funding assistance during fiscal year 2025-26. Table 3 summarizes the types of requests received by the Department.

Table 3. Summary of Technical Assistance Provided in FY 2025-26

Request Type	No. of Emails
Loan Program Details and How to Apply	22
Loan Portal Technical Assistance	4
Loan Borrowers Documentation Assistance	42
Assistance with Other Funding Opportunities	5
Total	**73**

Additionally, the Department identifies and publishes on its website a list of federal, state, and private funding opportunities, including eligibility requirements, for the implementation of innovative technologies and service delivery models in health care.

Conclusion

The Health Care Innovation Council met four times during FY 2025-26, focusing on the application review process, eligibility criteria, scoring rubric, and application reviews. The Council issued funding recommendations along with additional recommendations to strengthen both operational procedures and strategic direction. Together, these actions positioned the program to move into loan underwriting and established a durable administrative and policy foundation.

During FY 2025-26, the Department completed the development and execution of the HCI Loan Program. Enhancements were made to both the Health Care Innovation website and the online application portal to improve usability and better support prospective applicants. A suite of marketing materials – including a tri-fold brochure, a one-page flyer, and program signage – was developed to increase program visibility. Targeted emails were sent to partner organizations to assist in promoting the program to potential applicants. Activities to conduct additional HCI Loan Program application cycles and secure a broader pool of loan applicants are dependent on funding by the Florida Legislature.