

VALLEY HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION dba MAT-SU HEALTH FOUNDATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Behavioral Health in Schools Sustainability Technical Assistance

1. Date of Issue:	10.14.21
2. Deadline to submit questions on the RFP	11.2.21
3. Deadline to Submit Proposals	11.5.21 @ 4:00 pm ADT
4. Award to Successful Firm	11.19.21
5. Project Completion	3.31.22

Qualified, interested parties must submit a completed proposal, along with signed cover letter, electronically by 4:00 PM, Alaska Time, 11.10.21, to:

Mat-Su Health Foundation
Attn: Amy Gorn, Program Officer
agorn@healthymat-su.org

I. About Mat-Su Health Foundation

Mat-Su Health Foundation (MSHF) is the official business name of Valley Hospital Association, Inc., which shares ownership in Mat-Su Regional Medical Center (MSRMC). In this capacity, the MSHF board members and representatives actively participate in the governance of Mat-Su’s community hospital and protect the community’s interest in this important healthcare asset through board oversight. The MSHF invests its share of Mat-Su Regional’s profits into charitable works that improve the health and wellness of Alaskans living in Mat-Su.

Vision: A community where all persons have the opportunity for a healthy life
Mission: To Improve the Health and Wellness of Alaskans Living in the Mat-Su
Values: Prevention, Access, Wellness, Fairness, Leadership, Collaboration

Definitions

- Health – Complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity
- Wellness – A healthy balance of the mind, body and spirit that results in an overall feeling of well-being
- Wellbeing – A good or satisfying condition of existence; a state characterized by health, happiness and prosperity (Quality of Life)

II. Background, Scope of Work and Deliverables

Background

The Mat-Su Health Foundation (MSHF) is seeking technical assistance (TA) to provide an analysis of billing options, such as Medicaid and other sustainable funding avenues, for the “Behavioral Health in Schools” (BHIS) program in Mat-Su. For years the MSHF has been the sole funder for onsite, accessible behavioral health services

in a dozen Mat-Su schools delivered by community-based practitioners. This evolving and collaborative initiative also has an external evaluation for learning the scope, type, and impact of school-based therapeutic services.

It is desired to expand the BHIS program in all Mat-Su schools should workforce allow, and schools are willing. It is not possible to expand the program through only the investment of the MSHF; sustainability and growth is incumbent on utilizing billable funding streams. An analysis of the sustainability of BH services in Mat-Su schools will inform funding decisions, transitions, and opportunities.

The [Mat-Su Behavioral Health Environmental Scan Report 2](#) found a lack of immediate access to behavioral health care for children with ‘mild-to-moderate’ mental health needs. The state funding system had been focused on funding care through Medicaid for children with Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED). This created a situation where when a child presents with less severe needs, there is often a waiting list, and depending on the setting, Medicaid may not pay for care.

School-based services address a gap in mental health care and is an early intervention for students prior to potential escalation of more severe behaviors. Initial outcomes are promising such as increasing access (reducing barriers) and reducing stigma. It is important to note that there are community service providers contracting directly with schools to support student IEP and treatment plans, through a diagnosis. The BHIS program in Mat-Su does not act in the same manner or purpose as Student Support Services. It is a referral-led program for students experiencing potential adjustment disorders and symptoms that could escalate to higher levels of care if not addressed. The therapeutic services include individual, family, group, and maintenance interventions developed to an individual’s needs. As well, clinicians may spend time providing therapeutic supports, teacher and family consultations and meetings, classroom observations, school “meet and greets,” student check-ins, and other activities that positively integrate the clinician into the school environment.

It is the intent of this TA to crosswalk the types of services, encounters, and administrative time spent in Mat-Su schools by behavioral health providers with the Medicaid billing codes in Alaska, and other potential funding mechanisms. For example, the State of Alaska’s 1115 Medicaid Waiver Services may reimburse for these early intervention services in a school setting. There is now the ability for Licensed Professional Counselor (LPCs) to bill Medicaid, but it may not be possible for LPCs to bill from a federally qualified health center (FQHC).

This TA will analyze which current program activities and services are billable and how, and what are the billable gaps the MSHF could continue to fund for maintaining the program’s efficacy.

Scope of Work

- Conduct discovery interviews with the program’s behavioral health providers (3) and two schools (2) at different education levels to learn about services delivered, time spent with each school’s Core Implementation Team, and other program activities such as paperwork and parent/guardian contacts.
- Conduct learning meetings with representatives from the Department of Health and Social Services’ Division of Behavioral Health; Department of Early Education and Development; the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority; and select other similar school service programs such as Alaska Behavioral Health in the Anchorage and Fairbanks school districts. (MSHF will work with contractor on a contact list.)
- Research and/or conduct a literature review for similar school-based service and billing examples from other states.
- Utilize the program’s external evaluation briefs for data and scope of services.
- Conduct examination of Alaska’s Medicaid billing system and crosswalk with components of Mat-Su’s BHIS program.

Deliverables

1. Host bi-weekly check-in meetings with MSHF staff
2. Analysis of research into a report including:
 - a. Billable and non-billable scenarios to implement transitions by each provider type:
 - i. non-profit community behavioral health provider
 - ii. FQHC
 - iii. non-Medicaid billing private practice
 - iv. public school district
 - b. Detail opportunities, restrictions, required special approvals, and barriers for each provider type
 - c. Identify action steps and a timeline to enact a funding transition with each provider type
3. Identify areas of possible policy advocacy for increasing the opportunity to fully fund services in Alaska schools.

III. Budget

Proposals will be evaluated with the budget information and a contract will be negotiated once the vendor is selected. Interested contractors are requested to submit a cost proposal based on their knowledge of the time and resources needed to complete the project as described. There is the potential for a renewed contract in 2022 based on identified, additional work, and job satisfaction.

IV. Work Schedule

The contract term and work schedule set out herein represent Mat-Su Health Foundation's best estimate of the schedule that will be followed. If a component of this schedule, such as the opening date, is delayed, the rest of the schedule will likely be shifted by the same number of days.

The approximate contract schedule is as follows:

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| 1) Issue RFP | 10.14.21 |
| 2) Deadline to submit questions on the RFP | 11.2.21 |
| 3) Due date of proposals | 11.5.21, 4 PM ADT |
| 4) Contract awarded by MSHF | 11.19.21 |
| 5) Final report due to MSHF | 3.31.22 |

V. Proposal Format & Content

MSHF seeks simplified, cost-effective proposals. However, in order for MSHF to evaluate proposals fairly and completely, offerors must follow the format set out in this RFP and provide all information requested.

Introduction and Methodology

Proposals must include the complete name and address of offeror's firm and the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person MSHF should contact regarding the proposal. Proposals must confirm that the offeror will comply with all provisions in this RFP. Proposals must be signed by a company officer empowered to bind the company. An offeror's failure to include these items in the proposals may cause the proposal to be determined non-responsive and the proposal may be rejected.

Experience and Qualifications

Offeror must provide the following:

- A narrative description of offeror's organization.
- Résumés of key personnel.
- Reference names and phone numbers for similar projects the contractor has completed.

Cost Proposal/Budget

Cost proposal must include an itemized list of all direct and indirect costs associated with the performance of the contract, including, but not limited to, total number of hours at various hourly rates, direct expenses and supplies. Costs should be broken out by estimated number of work hours needed, hourly rates, and direct expenses and supplies.

VI. Evaluation Criteria

This evaluation will not be based on discrimination due to the race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, disability, or political affiliation of the offeror.

All proposals will be reviewed to determine if they are responsive. Specific evaluation criteria include the following:

- Suitability of the proposal: The proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Competency and Experience: The contractor has successfully conducted relevant work for satisfied clients, and has excellent technical understanding.
- Value/Pricing Structure: The price is commensurate with the value offered by the contractor and is within the stated budget.

VII. Additional Instructions

Location of Work

The work is to be performed, completed and managed at the contractor's site and at locations where the stakeholders convene. MSHF will not provide workspace for the contractor. The contractor must provide its own workspace.

Right of Rejection

Offerors must comply with all of the terms of the RFP, and all applicable local, state, and federal laws, codes, and regulations. MSHF may reject any proposal that does not comply with all of the material and substantial terms, conditions, and performance requirements of the RFP.

Offerors may not qualify the proposal nor restrict the rights of MSHF. If an offeror does, MSHF may find the proposal to be a non-responsive counteroffer and reject the proposal. Minor informalities that do not affect responsiveness and/or change the meaning/scope of the RFP may be waived by MSHF.

MSHF reserves the right to refrain from making an award if it determines that to be in its best interest.

MSHF Not Responsible for Preparation Costs

MSHF will not pay any cost associated with preparation, submittal or presentation of any proposal.

Disclosure of Proposal Contents

All proposals and other material submitted become the property of MSHF and may be returned only at MSHF's option. All proposal information will be held in confidence during the evaluation process and prior to the time a Notice of Intent to Award is issued. Trade secrets and other proprietary data contained in proposals may be held confidential if the offeror requests, in writing and that MSHF agrees, in writing, to do so. Material considered confidential by the offeror must be clearly identified, and the offeror must include a brief statement that sets out the reasons for confidentiality.

Offeror's Certification

By signature on the proposal, offerors certify that they comply with:

- (a) the laws of the State of Alaska:
- (b) the applicable portion of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964:
- (c) the Equal Opportunity Act and the regulations issued thereunder by the federal government:
- (d) the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations issued thereunder by the federal government:
- (e) all terms and conditions set out in this RFP and:
- (f) a condition that the proposal submitted was independently arrived at, without collusion, under penalty of perjury: and
- (g) that the offers will remain open and valid for at least 30 days.

By signature on the proposal, offerors also certify that programs, services, and activities provided to the general public under the resulting contract conform with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the regulations issued thereunder by the federal government.

If any offeror fails to comply with (a) through (g) of this paragraph, MSHF reserves the right to disregard the proposal, terminate the contract, or consider the contractor in default.

Conflict of Interest

Each proposal shall include a statement indicating whether or not the firm or any individuals working on the contract has a possible conflict of interest and, if so, the nature of that conflict. MSHF reserves the right to cancel the award if any interest disclosed from any source could either give the appearance of a conflict or cause speculation as to the objectivity of the program to be developed by the offeror. MSHF's determination regarding any questions of conflict of interest shall be final.

Discussions with Offerors

MSHF will answer questions pertaining to this RFP in writing via email submitted prior to 11.5.21. The answers to these questions will be posted to the MSHF website for review by all potential bidders. Additionally, the MSHF may conduct discussions with offerors in order to determine if a proposal is reasonably susceptible for award. Such discussions between the offeror and MSHF staff are permitted to clarify uncertainties or eliminate confusion concerning the contents of a proposal and which do not result in a material or substantive change to the proposal.

MSHF may also conduct discussions with offerors for the purpose of ensuring full understanding of the requirements of the RFP and proposal. Discussions will be limited to specific sections of the RFP or proposal identified by MSHF. Discussions will only be held with offerors who have submitted a proposal deemed reasonably susceptible for award by MSHF. If modifications are made as a result of these discussions, they will be put in writing. Following discussions, MSHF may set a time for best and final proposal submissions from those offerors with whom discussions were held. Proposals may be reevaluated after receipt of best and final proposal submissions. If an offeror does not submit a best and final proposal or a notice of withdrawal, the offeror's immediate previous proposal is considered the offeror's best and final proposal.

Offerors with a disability needing accommodation should contact MSHF so that reasonable accommodation can be made. Any oral modification of a proposal will be presented in writing by the offeror.

Alaska Business License and Other Required Licenses

At the time the proposals are opened, all offerors must hold a valid Alaska business license and any necessary applicable professional licenses required by Alaska Statute. Offerors must submit evidence of a valid Alaska

business license with the proposal. An offeror's failure to submit this evidence with the proposal will cause their proposal to be determined non-responsive.

Proposed Payment Procedures

MSHF will make payments based on a negotiated payment schedule.