

**PHIX RFP 6100009286**

**Questions and Answers Round 1**

1. Will the State seek a quality assurance/evaluation contractor through a separate procurement?  
That has not been determined at this time. If the Commonwealth determines such a need, it would be procured separately.
2. We understand sealed proposals must be returned to your Office by May 3rd. We would like to respectfully request an extension in order to provide a very high quality response.  
The RFP due date has been extended by three (3) weeks. Proposals are due by 1:30 PM EDT on Monday, May 24, 2010.
3. Page 19, Section II-6 Training. – Indicate recommended training of PHIX project personnel.... Could the Commonwealth please elaborate on the project personnel to be trained in terms of roles, number of personnel per role, and current experience?  
For purposes of submitting a proposal, assume the following project staff will need to receive training. Actual numbers may vary.  
Implementation Specialists: 3-5 individuals who will become Train-the-Trainers  
System Administrators: 1-3 individuals  
Technical Specialists: 2-3 individuals
4. Would the Commonwealth consider a three (3) week extension to the proposal due date to enable responders to fully address the complexities of the requirements in building its solution and proposal?  
Please see the response to question number 2 above.
5. We would like to request an extension of three weeks in the time allowed for the RFP response, till May 24th 2010. We feel that the currently allotted time will not be sufficient for us to produce the best possible proposal and might thus deprive PA of the best and most cost effective solution.  
Please see the response to question number 2 above.
6. In order that potential bidders can ensure the highest possible participation for their Disadvantaged Business participation, would the Commonwealth extend the due date of the proposal by three weeks?  
Please see the response to question number 2 above.

7. When does the Commonwealth expect to begin Year One Implementation?  
Please refer to the RFP Section I-25: Year One implementation should begin once the contract has been fully executed by the selected Offeror and all approvals required by Commonwealth contracting procedures have been obtained.
8. Section I-12: This section cites the number of paper copies required. Should one of the copies cited for each type of submittal be considered the original and so noted on the cover? For example, the Commonwealth asks for nine (9) paper copies of the Technical Submittal. Should an Offeror designate one of the nine as the Original?  
Yes, please return one copy marked as the original and eight (8) additional copies.
9. Section I-15: This section states that responses must be written in a font of 12 point.... May Offerors use a smaller font for graphics, organizational charts, Gantt charts and tables as long as these are easy to see? Using a 12 pt font for these areas can make it difficult to fit graphics, etc on one page.  
Using a smaller font for the types of items referenced is acceptable. The body of the text should be in 12 point font size.
10. Section I-26: Please confirm that Offerors do not have to respond to these items in the proposal per the language "By submitting its proposal, each offer understands, represents, and acknowledges that:....  
By submitting its proposal, the Offeror *is* responding to these items; i.e., the Offeror is certifying to its understanding of, and is representing and acknowledging the substance of, the items that are contained in that section. No further written response is required.
11. Section I-30: This section states that the final contract will allow other states or similar external procurement activities ("cooperative purchasers") to participate in the Contract...." Is the Commonwealth currently in discussions with other states to leverage the PHIX contract and if so, what is the population of those states?  
The Commonwealth is not currently in discussions with other states to leverage the PHIX contract.
12. Section II-3: This section states that Offerors should complete the Appendix J Requirements Matrix, Appendix K Product Table Matrix, and Appendix M Service Level Matrix and return with the Technical Submittal. Appendix M does not appear to include

any sections that must be filled in. Please advise if Offerors are to enter information into Appendix M and if so where?

Offerors may offer alternative Service Level Items, or may offer changes to those currently included. Changes should be highlighted or use a different font color for ease of review. If no changes or additions are being proposed, please state that in your response and you will not need to include the Appendix. Please note that proposals must be submitted according to Service Level Agreements and Methodology attached to the RFP, and may not be contingent upon negotiation of those original Service Level Agreements or the Methodology. Please reference Section II-8 of the RFP.

13. Section II-11: RFP indicates that “the Commonwealth reserves the right, during negotiations with the selected Offeror, to allow for changes to the deliverables or the inclusion of milestone payments for larger deliverables.” Please confirm that, at a minimum, payments may be received upon completion of each implementation deliverable, project foundation and annual planning deliverable, and architecture definition deliverable.

Correct; payments will be made, at a minimum, upon acceptance of the deliverables outlined in the RFP as may be amended through contract negotiations.

14. Section IV-3.1: “... may also include optional components that aid providers in achieving meaningful use or that enhance operations of PHIX.” What are these optional components? How would Offerors respond in the technical proposal and cost proposal?

The optional feature for the Commonwealth to exercise at this time relates to Section IV-3.3.K (EMR-Lite). Offerors are to follow the technical proposal and cost proposal instructions. Further consideration for enhancing operational efficiencies may result from annual review and customization efforts.

15. Section IV-3.2: Has the Commonwealth determined how many integrated health systems, payers and community providers in the “early adopter” implementation phase and if so, how many of each?

Please refer to Section IV-3.2: As part of your technical response, please address what you believe is a sound approach to scalability and implementation. The baseline assumptions included in this section are to be used for purposes of your submittal.

16. Section IV-3.2: What systems within the Pennsylvania Department of Health will be integrated into PHIX in the early adopter phase versus the systems to be included at full statewide rollout?

The Commonwealth expects Offerors to propose a plan based on their solution to the RFP requirements. Please refer to the Appendix N Strategic Plan for further information.

17. Section IV-3.2: Will the Commonwealth or the HIE vendor be responsible for the “defined rollout strategies” once the early adopters’ efforts are completed? If Pennsylvania is responsible, can the Commonwealth provide the defined rollout strategies now to the vendor community?

The Commonwealth will be responsible for the defined rollout strategies. Consultation between the Commonwealth and the selected Offeror will result in the final implementation strategy.

18. Section IV-3.3.A: Item # 8 is not included in Appendix J – Requirements Matrix – Should Offerors add # 8 to the matrix?

The Appendix J is meant to be a reference guide to your response, and is not intended to be inclusive of all requirements. Requirements of the RFP must be addressed in your proposal, even if they are not in the Appendix J. There is no need to add the item to the matrix.

19. Section IV-3.3.B: Item # 5 is not included in Appendix J – Requirements Matrix – Should Offerors add # 5 to the matrix?

Please see response to question number 18.

20. Section IV-3.3: In reference to the Provider Directory section, please elaborate on requirement #3, “...capability to link patients to caregivers such as primary care doctors...”

Please clarify what you are requesting elaboration on.

21. Section IV-3.3.G: Item # 6 is not included in Appendix J – Requirements Matrix – Should Offerors add # 6 to the matrix?

Please see response to question number 18.

22. Section IV-3.3: Please confirm that a PHR product offering is not required nor is there any place in the RFP to submit a PHR offering.

The Commonwealth is not requiring a PHR product offering.

23. Section IV-3.3 H: Item # 6 is not included in Appendix J – Requirements Matrix – Should Offerors add # 6 to the matrix?

Please see response to question number 18.

24. May we offer more than one EMR-lite product?  
Yes, in your technical submittal please thoroughly describe each product, including functionality. Include the cost of each in the Appendix C Cost Matrix.
25. In reference to the customer support center, what are the expected operating hours and days of the week of the customer support center?  
For purposes of submitting a proposal, assume 7 am to 7 pm Monday through Friday for years one and two, and 24 x 7 for years three and on.
26. Appendix A: Please confirm that all maintenance / operations payments will be made in equal monthly installments based on the total fixed fees each year.  
Please clarify this question as Appendix A does not address this issue.
27. Appendix C: Please confirm that all general operations charges not applicable to the Implementation Function, the Project Foundation and Annual Planning Function, or the Architecture Definition Functions should be allocated into either "Software (includes licensing, support and maintenance" or "Hosting (includes hardware support and maintenance."  
This is correct.
28. Appendix C: Instructions on summary tab indicate that option year totals must be included on this tab, but the table is formatted only through the base term. Should rows be added to summary tab to include option years?  
The option year totals were unintentionally omitted from the summary tab. A revised Appendix C including this has been posted to the DGS website.
29. Appendix C: Should the Rate card tab represent hourly rates for change orders outside of the current contract scope or are they meant to represent an all inclusive hourly rate for FTEs performing work under the current scope?  
The hourly rates are meant to represent an all inclusive hourly rate for FTEs performing work under the contract. These rates may, however, be used to negotiate change orders if needed.
30. Appendix C: Please confirm that it is acceptable to add rows to the Cost Matrix for additional FTEs / resources for each deliverable.  
This is correct. Lines may be added only to the deliverables for purposes of adding FTEs, or may be added to the rate card for such purpose. However, the total costs must be

based on the Appendix C as presented and may not include material changes to the number or types of deliverables or services. If adding lines, please verify that all formulas calculate correctly afterward.

31. Appendix C: Provider Portal only appears in Tab Year One. Does this mean that it is not required beyond Year One?

[Please refer to question number 28.](#)

32. Appendix C: Please confirm that the Commonwealth intentionally did not include the Items and Assumptions for the following: Eligibility and Claims Connectivity and Management, Measurement Tools and Reporting Capabilities, and PHR Gateway in the Cost Matrix.

[The Eligibility and Claims Connectivity and Management is to be included in the costs for Clinical Messaging. The Measurement Tools and Reporting Capabilities cost is to be included in the annual hosting and/or support/maintenance fee. The PHR Gateway was inadvertently omitted from the Cost Submittal and has been added in the revised version.](#)

33. Appendix C: Instructions on EMR Lite tab request a price per month per provider. Please confirm that these per month per provider costs should not be represented on the “Cost Summary” worksheet.

[This is correct.](#)

34. Appendix J: Was the section for a provider portal inadvertently missed? Appendix C Cost Matrix Year One Tab includes a section for Provider Portal.

[Please see response to question number 18.](#)

35. Appendix J: In reference to IV.3.3-C # 6, what are the PHIX policies for patient consent, protected health information categories such as HIV, mental health, and data usage agreements?

[Please refer to Appendix N Strategic Plan for further information.](#)

36. Appendix K: Please confirm that the entry for Personal health records is listed twice and row 20 can be disregarded.

[This is correct. Row 20 can be disregarded.](#)

37. Appendix M: When referencing days, does the Commonwealth mean business days or calendar days?

This refers to calendar days.

38. Appendix M: With regard to SLA Ref #1, can the Commonwealth clarify the SLA definition? Specifically, do you mean that system availability at 99% or less will result in a service level credit? Is planned downtime due to system upgrades or routine maintenance exempted from the measurement? Note that all planned downtime shall be communicated, agreed to, and approved by the Commonwealth in advance of the downtime.

Yes, system availability at 99% or less will result in a service level credit. Planned downtime that has been approved by the Commonwealth in advance shall be excluded. However, Offerors are expected to have the ability to failover to a hot site for full 24 x 7 operations.

39. Appendix M: Can the Commonwealth qualify the response time? Specifically, can we assume that the four (4) second rule applies when a DSL or broadband connections is used, not to include any additional response time or performance delay which may be associated with a user's internet connectivity and/or computer hardware, software, or local network environment, or external data sources from other data vendor partners.

Please clarify specifically which SLA this question refers to.

40. Appendix M: What is the "established baseline response time" referenced in SLA Ref # 3?

Baselines will be established during the initial operating period after the backbone has been implemented. The time necessary for establishing a baseline for SLA purposes will be negotiated with the selected Offeror, and may be proposed as a change/addition to the Appendix M Service Level Matrix.

41. Appendix M: Please clarify SLA Ref # 4a. Do you mean at the service level credit applies when a service down and no workaround available and not restored within two (2) hours?

Yes, this is correct. Offerors are expected to have the capacity to failover to a hot site. In addition, the Commonwealth is amending the credit to include additional 1% credits for each two hour time period beyond the original two hour outage.

42. Appendix M: Please clarify SLA Ref # 17. Do you mean that the service level credits apply when the remediation plan is not submitted within five (5) days?

Yes, this is correct.

43. Appendix M: Please clarify SLA Ref # 18. Do you mean that the service level credits apply when the audit issues is not resolved within 90 days?

Yes, this is correct. In addition, the Commonwealth is amending the credit to include additional 3% credits for issues not resolved in increments of 7 calendar days beyond the original 90. For example, issues not resolved within 97 days would carry an additional 3% credit, within 104 days another 3% credit, etc.

44. Appendix M: Please clarify SLA Ref # 19. Do you mean that the service level credits apply when the data breach notification requirements are not performed within one (1) hour of when the Contractor knew, or should have known, of such breach?

Yes, this is correct.

45. Appendix M: Would the Commonwealth provide the risk percentage points for each item in Appendix M? Using one of the items in Appendix M, can the Commonwealth demonstrate the level of credit? Are the risk weights for each line item in Appendix M negotiable?

The “at risk amount” is set out in the SLA Matrix for each individual Service Level. Most of the time the “at risk amount” is the total monthly cost, but sometimes it relates to the total annual cost or cost of a specific deliverable. These are expected to be negotiated with the selected Offeror, though proposals are to be submitted based on the information provided in the RFP, and may not be conditioned upon negotiation.

46. Section IV-2: Who is responsible for the recruitment and outreach of the provider community (including all providers and all facilities) to connect to PHIX? Who will be responsible for obtaining and maintaining the Business Associate and data sharing agreements with connecting entities?

The Commonwealth governing entity will be responsible for recruitment and outreach of the provider community.

The Commonwealth will compose the Business Associate and data sharing agreements. Responsibility for obtaining and maintaining the Business Associate and data sharing agreements has not yet been determined.

47. Can the prime contractor receive credit for Small Disadvantaged Businesses, Socially Disadvantaged Business, or Enterprise Zone Businesses that are contracted with a subcontractor to the prime?

Please provide additional clarification on this question.



48. As a Minority Women Business located in New Jersey can we still bid as a sub-contractor even though we do not have offices in Pennsylvania or must you have a office located in PA?

If the company is a certified DGS vendor then yes, they can still act as a subcontractor even though they don't have offices in PA.

49. What is the PHIX's definition of an EMR-Lite (i.e. e-prescribing, web portal, etc.)?

Please refer to the Appendix G – Glossary.

50. Please clarify which agencies/organizations are precluded contact with respect to this RFP?

With respect to Section I-22 of the RFP, the Issuing Officer is the sole point of contact for this RFP. There are no exceptions.

51. Commonwealth of PA Central IT organization has a set of Enterprise IT Software Standards already in place for mandatory use in all agency projects. Will the RFP bidders be required to use the software standards already in place and in use in Commonwealth of PA?

As this is an outsourced/vendor-hosted solution, most of the Commonwealth specific internal product standards do not apply. However, Addendum 3 contains some information on this question, and an Appendix O ITB Policies has been posted to the DGS website. In this Appendix, the Commonwealth has identified ITB policies and product standards which should be followed according to the supporting comments in the Summary/Content section. As part of the transition planning activities, any issues regarding the ITBs would be expected to be addressed as part of the Transition Plan Documentation.

52. Section II-4 Prior Experience: Are all subcontractors required to provide a minimum of 3 references?

Yes, please provide a minimum of 3 references for each subcontractor proposed.

53. Is the ratio of WBE as prime or sub inclusive of software license costs or exclusive and pertains to services?

Please clarify this question.

54. Since there is maintenance associated with the software, it appears that the intent of the Commonwealth is for a perpetual software license in place of a subscription license.

Providers should propose complete and accurate set of software and licensing to meet the requirements of the RFP. Proposers should state/identify how the software is licensed and/or structured including the maintenance, terms and conditions.