

Addendum to RFA# 67-179

Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program

Date: December 28, 2023

Addendum Number: 1

Addendum Changes:

- 1) This addendum is to provide answers to all questions per the RFA Potential Applicant letter.
  - a. I have a patient that is in need of a blood pressure cuff and so I'm just calling to see if this program would be something to help them to be able to get that and monitor their blood pressure.
    - i. The program does provide blood pressure cuffs to participants. However, you must refer them to an organization that is funded to implement the program for your patient to participate in.
  - b. Can Long Term Facilities in Pennsylvania Apply? Does this RFA apply to them?
    - i. At this time long term facilities are not eligible to apply. This is subject to change in the future.
  - c. If yes to the above, what would be expected of them as part of the program? Would the below be an accurate description of expectations?  
If a long term care facility receives the award, at least two of their staff ( e.g two nurses or nursing assistants) will be provided a BP training by the PA Department on the Healthy Heart Ambassador blood pressure self-monitoring program curriculum. Then the trained staff can train/coach long term care residents who have previously diagnosed with hypertension either with or without medication to measure/monitor their own blood pressure. At least 25 residents should participate. The staff member will collect and record data from these sessions and report this data to the Department on a quarterly basis.
    - i. At this time long term facilities are not eligible to apply. This is subject to change in the future.
  - d. Can you tell me more about the blood pressure monitoring curriculum? Is this something you could share with me?

- i. We cannot share the curriculum at this time. Once Grantees are selected, designated program facilitators will take the training course where the curriculum will be shared.
- e. Are you considering businesses for this outreach program?
  - i. At this time, the funding is only being offered to community-based nonprofit organizations. This is subject to change in future iterations.
- f. I am a little confused on how my organization will go about implementing the correct program. Also, how would we go about getting the funding and what the funding will cover?
  - i. Applicants include a proposed budget with their application to cover the cost of implementing the program. Once Grantees are selected, the PA DOH will establish a Grant Agreement with the selected applicant. Once the Grant Agreement has been fully executed, the Grantee will invoice for charges that they've included in their budget.
- g. Can you tell me more about the blood pressure monitoring curriculum? Is this something you could share with me?
  - i. We cannot share the curriculum at this time. Once Grantees are selected, designated program facilitators will take the training course where the curriculum will be shared.
- h. As I reviewed the application it is requesting a Federal I.D and SAP Vendor number. My Agency has not been provided these credentials through the DHS or OLTL. However, below I provided both my NPI number and MPI number. Would that be sufficient to move forward with my RFA process?
  - i. All legal entities are required to have a Federal ID number. If your agency does not have one, contact the IRS.
- i. Do I need to have a contract with an MCO and DUNS number to qualify for this program?
  - i. Neither a contract with an MCO nor a DUNS number is required for this RFA.
- j. Are these services billable through promise or paid through the state? It is unclear if the grant will fund this program or if additional monetary compensation will be provided. The budget detail states the overall budget shall not exceed 40,100.00.

- i. The resulting Grant is funded by the PA DOH and will fund the implementation of this program.
- k. As a DME supplier will we be providing clients with blood pressure devices and billing insurance or will that be provided by the program?
  - i. DME suppliers are not eligible to apply at this time.
- l. We are an Adult Day Center, and I was wondering if we would qualify for this if they themselves take their blood pressures, with their personal BP machines, while they are in attendance here.
  - i. The program is meant for participants to take their blood pressure readings at home by themselves. It is meant for participants to take ownership and manage and control their hypertension themselves. They would not be eligible to take their readings at the day care center.
- m. The RFA states that the eligible population can include individuals that have been diagnosed with hypertension and are currently managing their diagnosis with medication, with this in mind, is the goal to target individuals who are not consistently taking their medication?
  - i. To clarify, participants must be diagnosed with hypertension and may be on medication but do not have to be on medication. The goal is to target individuals with uncontrolled hypertension and assist them in managing and controlling it.
- n. Do the stated outcomes related to reduction of systolic blood pressure and diastolic blood pressure apply to individuals who were diagnosed with hypertension who are on medication and are currently maintaining a blood pressure in the normal/acceptable range?
  - i. The stated outcomes are for all participants in the program. Participants are not required to be on medication for their hypertension to participate. The goal is to target individuals with uncontrolled hypertension and assist them in managing and controlling it.
- o. Any chance you could give me an idea of how much time is required of an individual in this program. I need to figure out the time commitment of my staff and if we have the capacity to fill it.
  - i. We are interpreting this question as the time requirement for staff in this program, not the participant. Staff time requires an eight-hour

training course, approximately two 10-minute office hour appointments with each client, and weekly check in emails/phone calls/text messages to participants, a one hour nutrition education seminar every month. The program is four months long. Other staff time might be spent on recruitment of participants, forming relationships for referrals or entering data/working on reports or both.

- p. Can BCM's do this in addition to their current job duties?
  - i. Yes, if they have the capacity, they would be able to serve as the program facilitators. The program facilitator is not required to have any clinical knowledge/experience.
  
- q. Can purchasing BP cuffs be part of the budget?
  - i. Yes, blood pressure cuffs can be included as part of the budget, as long as they are on the approved devices list referenced in the RFA.
  
- r. If offering a reward to participants for compliance, such as a gift card, allowed and able to be part of the budget?
  - i. Incentives are allowable to participants who have completed the program, not for signing up/promotional items. These items are to be related to healthy behaviors and be cost effective. Gift cards and monetary payments are not permitted. All incentives shall be preapproved by the Program Manager at PA DOH prior to purchasing.
  
- s. Who are letters of support required from?
  - i. Letters of support are to be submitted from any partners that applicants anticipate they will be working with through the implementation of this program.
  
- t. Is the RN at our agency able to be the consultant?
  - i. We are interpreting "the consultant" to be the program facilitator who works with the participants. Yes, an RN can be the program facilitator.
  
- u. Are any other consultants or subcontractors required?
  - i. There is no minimum requirement for staffing. It depends on the current responsibilities and capacity of your staff. See response to question o. above for staff responsibilities.

- v. How long is the training, both initial and yearly? Will these be in person or virtual? Is this allowable to be included in the budget? (Time spent at training, travel if required, etc)
  - i. The initial training is approximately eight hours, two days four hours each. The yearly training will be approximately three hours. These will be completed virtually. The staff time spent completing the training could be included in the budget (personnel and fringe). Since these will be completed virtually, no other expenses would be necessary to include in the budget. The trainings being completed virtually is subject to change, in which case the other associated expenses associated with in person training could be included in the budget.
  
- w. If a client already has a diagnosis of hypertension and are currently working on it and have it within a normal range, are they eligible to participate?
  - i. No, they are not eligible. The program is for individuals with a diagnosis of uncontrolled hypertension.
  
- x. What happens with funding if not all participants reach the goals of reduction and attendance?
  - i. Your funding will not be affected based solely on the goals of reduction and attendance.
  
- y. If I am a nonmedical office would I be eligible for a skilled level care as a office participant to the study?
  - i. Yes, the program is designed for nonmedical organizations.
  
- z. For the application are we just submitting a budget application for each fiscal year for \$40,100 each service year when applying?
  - i. Yes, that is correct.
  
- aa. How many hours of work would they estimate per person?
  - i. I'm interpreting "person" to mean participant. This all depends on the participant. Each program facilitator should meet at least two times a month with each participant during office hours. These office hour visits are estimated to take approximately 10 minutes but this could differ depending on the participant and their needs. There is also other work like the logs, sending biweekly check in messages to the participant, and the education sessions that would factor into the hours of work depending on if the program facilitator is completing

these or someone else from the organization. See response o. above.

- bb. Can there be more than one class happening throughout the grant period?
  - i. Yes, since the program is only four months long, there can be more than one class per Grant period.
- cc. When will the questions/answers be posted?
  - i. Questions are due December 19, 2023 and the answers will be posted shortly after that.
- dd. (B.4.a.) Is there a curriculum available? If not, can a table of contents be provided?
  - i. There is a curriculum but it cannot be shared. See answer to g. above.
- ee. (B.4.e.) Do we have to purchase from the website provided or just ensure they are same models listed on the website?
  - i. No, you do not have to purchase blood pressure cuffs from the website, but they must be the same approved models.
- ff. (B.4.f) Is there a curriculum to follow for the individual coaching sessions?
  - i. There is a format to how the coaching sessions will be conducted. This will be reviewed during the program facilitator training.
- gg. (B.4.f) Can these sessions be held virtually if needed?
  - i. Yes, they can be held virtually.
- hh. (B.4.i) Do all four group education sessions have to be for all 25 individuals at once? Or can the four sessions take place in one city and another four sessions take place in a separate city for another group of participants?
  - i. All participants should take the four group education sessions. How that happens is up to the applicant. Applicants can have multiple sessions so that all participants have the opportunity to attend.
- ii. The training, for the ambassadors- is that an in-person training held somewhere or is it available on line, And how long does it take to complete.
  - i. The training is currently being offered virtually. This is scheduled for two four-hour days. This is subject to change.

- jj. It says 25 people enrolled, is that at the start of the program or would that be a total for throughout the entire program.
  - i. That is the total number of participants for the Grant year.
  
- kk. Are the individual/ group topics already set or is that something we need to develop ourselves.
  - i. The education seminars are established and have materials that will be provided to you.
  
- ll. What does the training to become a Healthy Heart Ambassador entail? How long is it, how is it delivered (virtual, in-person, hybrid), and are there any required qualifications? Are there any required materials/costs associated with the training that need to be included in the budget? (Part One, B.4.a, pg. 6)
  - i. The training is currently be offered virtually. It is two four-hour days. There are no required qualifications. There are no costs associated with the training that need to be included in the budget. However, please note that this is subject to change.
  
- mm. Can you provide/describe the Healthy Heart Ambassador curriculum for participants? (Part One, B.4.c, B.4.f, B.4.i, pg. 6)
  - i. The curriculum for the program cannot be shared. See response g and dd above.
  
- nn. Does the program include marketing materials/templates for participant recruitment? (Part One, B.4.c, pg. 6)
  - i. Yes, a marketing flyer has been created for participant recruitment.
  
- oo. Does the program include or encourage incentives for participation? Are participant incentives allowable in the budget? (Part One, C.3, pg. 11)
  - i. The program does not include incentives but this is something that you could include in your budget. Incentives could be provided to participants once they complete the entire program. Items would have to be preapproved by PA DOH. Gift cards are not permitted. See response r above.
  
- pp. Should blood pressure monitors for all participants be included in the budget? (Part One, B.4.e, pg. 6)
  - i. Yes, it would be best to anticipate providing blood pressure monitors to all participants. You could potentially reallocate those funds if

some of the participants have their own and you don't buy all of the cuffs at once.

qq. Though the YMCA is excluded from applying, are there opportunities for partnership? Will the YMCA play a role (e.g., providing technical assistance)? (Part One, A, pg. 3)

i. Partnership with YMCA is not excluded. If you feel as though that makes sense to do then it is allowable. The YMCA will not play a role, like providing technical assistance.

rr. Is there a specific portal or database that will be used to fulfill reporting requirements? (Part One, B.4.j, B.4.k, B.5, pg. 7)

i. PA DOH has created a database that will be used to fulfill the reporting requirements.

\*Except as clarified and amended by this Addendum, the terms, conditions, specifications, and instructions of the RFA and any previous addenda, remain as originally written.