



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
Minnesota Study of Telehealth Expansion and Payment Parity  
SWIFT Event #2000013872

Pamela Mink | Director of Health Services Research, Health Economics Program

1. Welcome + Context for this RFP
2. Corrections
3. Instructions to Responders
4. Summary of Scope
5. Proposal Content
6. Evaluation Procedure and Criteria
7. Additional information and reminders

# Minnesota Telehealth Act (2021)

## The 2021 Minnesota Legislature passed the Minnesota Telehealth Act

- Expands telehealth in Minnesota
- Extends payment parity to include telephone-only visits
- **Directs MDH to conduct a study of the impact of these policies under private sector health insurance**
  - A parallel DHS-led study will focus on the impact regarding Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP)

Minnesota Session Laws - 2021, 1st Special Session, Chapter 7, Article 6  
<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2021/1/Session+Law/Chapter/7/>

# How is MDH approaching the aims of the legislative study on telehealth expansion and payment parity?

## Environmental Scan

- Literature search/review, including focused review for audio-only telehealth
- Policies and studies in other states
- Minnesota telehealth landscape

## Qualitative Research Study

- Interviews with MN residents (patients), providers and payers
- Surveys & additional key informant discussions

## Quantitative Research Study

- **Health care claims data (MN APCD)**
- Other data (e.g., potential EHR data analysis, actuarial research, population & provider surveys, etc.)

## Technical Advisory Group

- Provide expert and scientific input into study design, materials, implementation and interpretation of results

## Telehealth Research Workshop

- Framework/methods/data to best address key research questions on telehealth and its impacts

## Other Stakeholder Engagement

- Ongoing outreach and additional follow-up with stakeholders

# CORRECTIONS

# Correction 1 (Addendum posted via SWIFT on March 9)

Page 4 of RFP document:

Questions should be emailed to the contact by Thursday, ~~March 9, 2023~~ **March 16, 2023**. Answers will be uploaded to SWIFT and posted on the [MDH telehealth study website \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/data/economics/telehealth/index.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/data/economics/telehealth/index.html) on Thursday, ~~March 16, 2023~~ **March 23, 2023**.

# Correction 2 (Hyperlink)

Page 2 of RFP

ORIGINAL:

- **SWIFT SUPPLIER PORTAL SECURITY CHANGES**

There are new security measures that the Minnesota Management and Budget implemented on October 16, 2022. It is a new multi-factor authentication (MFA) to enhance the security of the [State of Minnesota Supplier Portal](#). MFA is an authentication method that requires bidders and suppliers provide two verification factors to log into the SWIFT Supplier Portal. The goal of MFA is to create a layered defense that makes it more difficult for unauthorized system access to occur.

For information about these changes, please refer to the [SWIFT Supplier Portal Multi-Factor Authentication FAQ](#) document.

CORRECTION: The link to the FAQ is <https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/documents/swift/training/trainingguides/swift-sup-portal-mfa.pdf>

More information available at: <https://mn.gov/mmb/accounting/swift/general-information/swift-updates/10202022.jsp>

# Correction 3 (Hyperlink)

P. 16 of RFP

ORIGINAL:

**F. Diverse Spend Reporting.** The Sample Contract contains a clause for Diverse Spend Reporting. When this clause applies, Contractor will be required to register in a free portal to report diverse spend.

Please see [Diverse Spend Reporting Frequently Asked Questions](#) for additional information.

CORRECTION:

<https://mn.gov/admin/business/vendor-info/oep/spend/>

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESPONDERS

# Solicitation Materials

- **All solicitation materials are available via SWIFT**
- Posted materials to date include:
  - Solicitation document (RFP)
  - Cost detail form (for Attachment C)
  - Sample contract
    - Note that exceptions to State's Terms and Conditions must be listed and submitted as Attachment B
  - Addendum noting correction to due date for questions
    - Any additional addenda will be similarly posted/communicated via SWIFT
- Answers to questions submitted by March 16 will be posted on March 23

# Instructions

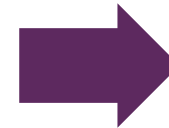
## Read the solicitation document (RFP)

- Solicitation and all relevant materials are on SWIFT
- Information also available on MDH website
- Deadline for submitting questions was March 16
- Q and A will be posted March 23



## Write your response

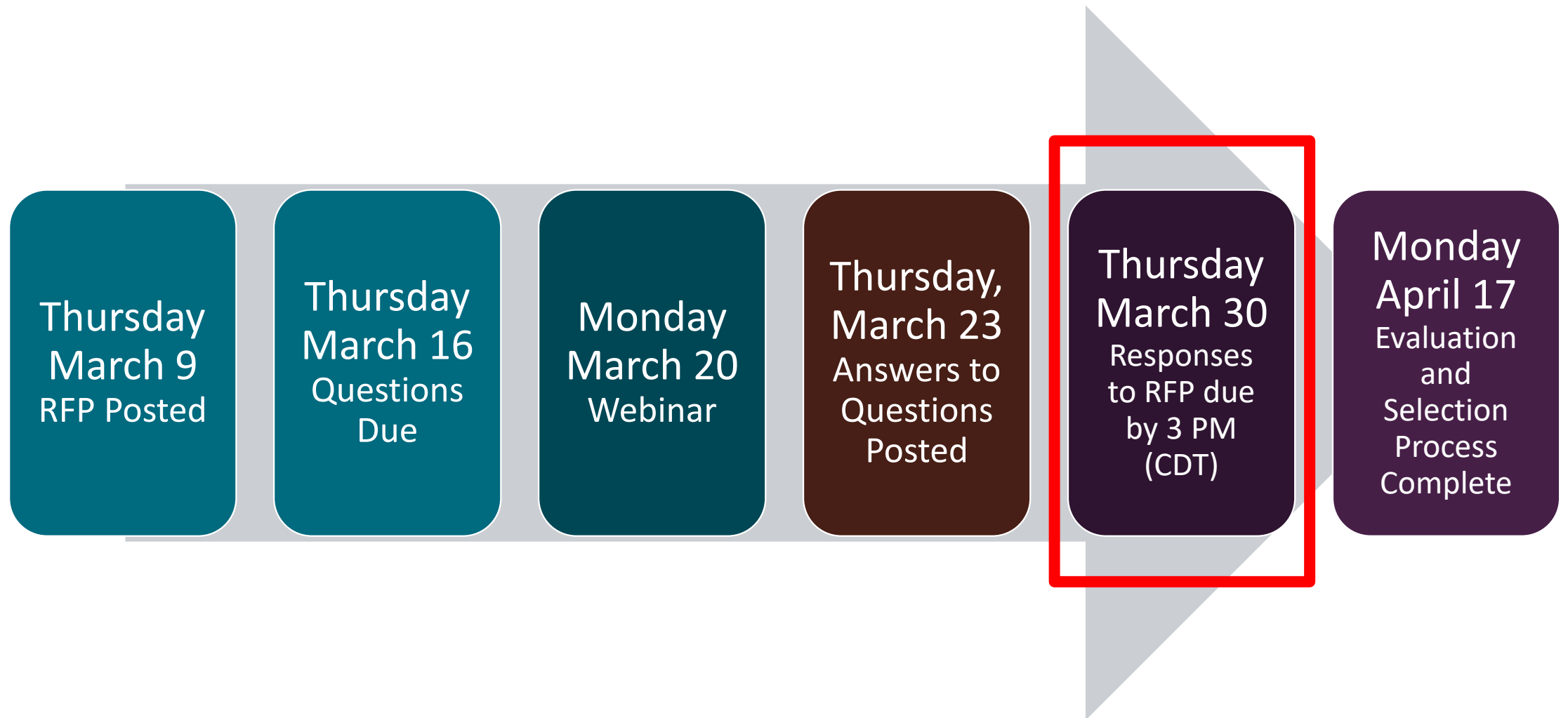
- The Proposal Content is outlined in Section 4 of the RFP (pp. 9-11)
- Include all requested content
- Review, sign, and include the Responder Declarations with your response



## Submit your response

- Proposals **MUST** be submitted through the SWIFT Supplier Portal
- Responses must be received no later than March 30, 2023 3:00 p.m. Central Time
- Late responses will not be considered

# Key Dates



The term of the awarded contract is anticipated to be from April 28, 2023, or within 45 days from Supplier selection, to May 31, 2024

***Note that most key milestones and deliverables are due by early Fall, 2023***

# OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY OF SCOPE

# Procurement Overview and Goals

- In the 2021 session, the Minnesota Legislature directed the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to “study the impact of telehealth expansion and payment parity under this article on the coverage and provision of health care services under private sector health insurance”
- MDH is seeking a research or data analytics vendor team to conduct quantitative analyses of available data in order to address the key telehealth questions as laid out in the Minnesota legislation
  - **Minnesota-specific data from the Minnesota All Payer Claims Database (MN APCD) must be used**
  - Additional relevant data sources available to the consulting team may also be used
- The questions from the legislation are listed in the solicitation (see pp. 6 and 9), and on the next two slides. Responders should describe how they will (or will not) address each area of inquiry, including what data sources will be used
- Qualitative research (e.g., interviews, focus groups, etc.) is out-of-scope for this solicitation

# Questions in the MN Legislation (1)

1. The impact of telehealth expansion and payment parity on **access** to health care services, **quality** of care, health **outcomes**, patient **satisfaction**, and **value-based payments** and **innovation** in health care delivery
2. The impact of telehealth expansion and payment parity on **reducing health care disparities** and providing **equitable access** to health care services for **underserved communities**
3. Whether **audio-only** communication as a permitted option for delivering services:
  - a. **supports equitable access** to health care services, including behavioral health services, for **the elderly, rural communities, and communities of color**
  - b. **eliminates barriers to care for vulnerable and underserved populations** without reducing the quality of care, worsening health outcomes, or decreasing satisfaction with care

# Questions in the MN Legislation (2)

4. The **services and populations**, if any, for which increased access to telehealth improves or negatively impacts health outcomes
5. The extent to which services provided through telehealth:
  - a. **substitute** for an in-person visit
  - b. are **services that were previously not billed or reimbursed**
  - c. are **in addition to** or are **duplicative of** services that the patient has received or will receive as part of an in-person visit
6. The impact of telehealth expansion and payment parity, especially **in rural areas**, on patient **access to, and the availability of, in-person care**, including specialty care

# Important Note about Scope

- We do not expect responders to be able to propose/conduct analyses that address every single question on the previous two slides!
- MDH would like to hear **which questions** you propose to answer
- For each question you propose to answer, please indicate:
  - what data sources will be used (including the MN APCD)
  - how the proposed analyses will address the questions

***Please be sure your response to this RFP is clear about the above information and details!***

# Additional Activities

Responders are encouraged to propose additional tasks or activities if they will improve the results of the project.

These items should be separated from the required items on the Cost Proposal.

# List of Required Tasks/Deliverables (1)

- See pp. 5-7 of RFP for description of required tasks and deliverables for the awarded contract
- Be sure your proposal and cost estimates include these tasks and take into account the due dates
- Information about the Minnesota All Payer Claims Database is available on the MDH website: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/data/apcd>

# List of Required Tasks/Deliverables (2)

1. Detailed schedule of milestones and deliverables (timeline)
2. Regular meetings with MDH over course of contract period
  - Additional meetings with, or presentations to, MDH partners
3. Complete required security training for access and use of the MN APCD
4. Conduct analyses of MN APCD and any other data sources
5. Interim written report of study progress and research findings (due by July 31, 2023)
  - See RFP (pp. 6-7) for further details regarding the components of this report
6. Final written report (due by September 29, 2023)
  - See RFP (p. 7) for further details regarding the components of this report
7. PowerPoint slide deck

# Due Dates for Deliverables

The contract term will begin on April 28, 2023, or within 45 days from Supplier selection, and continue until completion of all tasks and no later than May 31, 2024

The final report summarizing data analyses must be completed and submitted to the state by September 29, 2023

***The timeline for completing all the tasks listed in the RFP should bear these deadlines in mind, and allow for sufficient time for review, input, and approval by MDH***

# PROPOSAL CONTENT

## See pp. 9 – 11 of RFP

1. Project overview
2. Work plan
3. Methodology and analysis approach
4. Qualifications and experience
5. References
6. Cost detail
7. Sample transaction documents

## Be sure to include (see pp. 16-23):

- Attachment A: Responder declarations
- Attachment B: Exceptions to State's Standard Terms and Conditions
- Attachment C: Cost proposal
- Attachment D: Responder forms
  - Veterans preference form
  - Workforce certification form
  - Equal pay certification form
- Attachment E: Reference form

**Do not include Non-Public/Trade Secret data**  
(as defined by Minn. Stat. § 13.37)

# Project Overview

- 2 page limit
- Provide a clear and concise summary of your understanding of MDH's needs and intended results
- Include a description of the value that you (your team) bring to the project
- Simply restating language from this solicitation is not an adequate response

- 10 page limit
- Provide a description of the deliverables to be provided
- Work plan should identify the major tasks to be accomplished
- Proposed work plan should be able to be used as a basis for scheduling, project managing, and invoicing
- Do not include cost detail in the work plan (cost detail goes elsewhere [Attachment C])
- Provide a statement of the objectives, goals, and tasks that demonstrate the responder's view and understanding of the contract
- Address each task and deliverable one-by-one
- Propose additional tasks or activities if they will improve the results of the project (any additional tasks/activities must be separated from the required items on the Cost Proposal)

# Methodology and Analysis Approach

- 10 page limit
- Proposed research questions must be derived from the set of questions from the Minnesota Telehealth Act (Laws of Minnesota 2021, First Special Session, Chapter 7, Article 6)
  - These questions are also listed in the RFP on pages 6 and 9, and on Slides 16 and 17 of this PPT
- Responders should clearly indicate which questions (from list) they propose to address (and how they propose to address them), as well as how the proposed analyses will answer each question
- Provide detailed information about the data sources that will be used, proposed measures, units of analysis, stratifications, focus areas (e.g., types of visits, provider specialties, service lines, etc.), and timeline to address the research questions
  - **Note that the Minnesota All Payer Claims Database (MN APCD) must be one of the data sources**
- MDH does **not** expect responders to propose addressing every single question on the list
- MDH is **not** asking for analysis on the impact of telehealth policies on health insurance premiums in this solicitation

# Qualifications and Experience

- 3 page limit (plus resumes)
- Provide an outline of responder's relevant background and experience
- Include examples of similar work done by the responder
- Provide a list of personnel who will conduct the project (role on project, training, experience)
- Indicate very clearly and specifically how Mandatory Qualifications are met
- Note how responder meets the Desired Qualifications (if applicable)
- Include resumes for project personnel
  - Do not include personal contact information, such as personal telephone numbers, home addresses, or home email addresses

# Mandatory Qualifications

- At least five (5) years of experience in data analytics
- At least five (5) years of experience in health services research
- Experience from two (2) or more projects that used appropriate International Classification of Diseases (ICD) and Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes to distinguish telehealth encounters from in-person encounters in either claims data or clinical data
- Experience from two (2) or more projects conducting research for or in partnership with states for policy development

# Desired Qualifications

- At least three (3) years of experience in medical claims data analytics
  - Responders should describe this experience briefly and document it by attaching or linking to an example, such as a report or other summary of the research and its findings
- Experience conducting one (1) or more telehealth studies
  - Responders should describe this experience briefly and document it by attaching or linking to an example, such as a report or other summary of the research and its findings

*NOTE: Examples provided to document qualifications do not count toward the page limit*

- Reference forms can be found in Attachment E (p. 23 of RFP)
- Submit three (3) completed reference forms with response
- Include name and contact information for each reference
- Once responder's response is received, the Solicitation Administrator will send the same form to responder's reference(s) for each reference to fill out and return to MDH

- Information about what to include in Cost Detail can be found in Attachment C (p. 19 of RFP) and in the **Cost Detail Form (available in SWIFT)**
- Cost Proposal must be submitted as a separate document (Attachment C: Cost Detail) from the technical response
  - **Do not include any cost information in the Technical Proposal part of the response**
- Rate(s) identified in the Cost Proposal must include all costs, including but not limited to:
  - Line item for each major task and deliverable
  - Any other costs (e.g., travel expenses, mass mailings, fees, commissions, compensation, equipment, and other charges)
- The state does not make regular payments based solely upon the passage of time; it only pays for services performed or work delivered after it is accomplished.

# Cost Detail Form

See solicitation posting on SWIFT for a copy of the Cost Detail Form

## Cost Detail Form

The rate(s) identified in the Cost Proposal must include all costs, including but not limited to: travel expenses, mass mailings, fees, commissions, compensation, equipment and other charges.

Responders must also include line items for each major task and deliverable. Deliverables correspond to the Required Tasks and Deliverables on pg. 5 of the RFP.

Task #	Deliverable	Cost	Expected Completion Date
<b>Project Plan</b>			
1a	Provide to MDH a project plan with a detailed schedule of milestones and deliverables that includes ample time for MDH to provide input over the project period and review draft deliverables.		
<b>Meetings</b>			
1b(i)	A kick-off meeting to discuss and finalize the project plan and methodology.		
1b(ii)	Progress update meetings at least twice a month during contract period.		
1b(iii)	Meet with and present findings to the Telehealth Study Technical Advisory Group (TAG) (Maximum of two 90-minute meetings).		
1b(iv)	Participate in up to three 60-minute meetings with other MDH research partners involved in the MDH Telehealth study, including actuaries and clinical researchers, to discuss research questions, study methods, and findings.		
<b>TOTAL</b>			
<b>Trainings</b>			
1c	Complete required security training for access and use of the MN APCD		

# Sample Transaction Documents

- Sample transaction documents will not be scored as part of the evaluation process
- Prior to award, a potential successful Responder must submit samples of any transaction documents proposed for use under the resulting contract

# EVALUATION PROCEDURE AND CRITERIA

The state will conduct an evaluation of responses to this Solicitation. The evaluations will be conducted in three phases:

- Phase 1 - Review responses for responsiveness and pass/fail requirements
- Phase 2 - Evaluate responses
- Phase 3 - Select finalist(s)

# Phase 1 – Review for Responsiveness and Pass/Fail Requirements

- Purpose: Determine if each response complies with **mandatory requirements**
- The following Mandatory Requirements will be considered on a pass/fail basis:
  - The State (MDH) must receive proposals by the due date and time specified in this RFP
    - All proposals are due by Thursday, March 30 at 3 p.m. (Central Standard Time)
  - Respondents should **specifically indicate the experiences** that satisfy the mandatory qualifications listed in the RFP (p. 10)
    - At least five (5) years of experience in data analytics
    - At least five (5) years of experience in health services research
    - Experience from two (2) or more projects that used appropriate International Classification of Diseases (ICD) and Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes to distinguish telehealth encounters from in-person encounters in either claims data or clinical data
    - Experience from two (2) or more projects conducting research for or in partnership with states for policy development

# Phase 2 – Evaluate Responses

- Only responses found to have met Phase 1 criteria will be considered in Phase 2
- The factors and weighting on which responses will be evaluated are:

Project overview	50 points
Work plan for deliverables	50 points
Draft methodology and analysis approach	300 points
Qualifications and experience	250 points
References	50 points
<u>Cost detail</u>	<u>300 points</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000 points</b>
Preference points (if applicable)	60 points (in addition to the 1,000 available)

- Preference points are described in the RFP under “Solicitation Terms” (See Section 6 Item 13 [p. 15] and Attachment D)

# Preference Points

- Targeted group (TG), economically disadvantaged business (ED), veteran-owned (VO) business
  - Unless a greater preference is applicable and allowed by law, in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 16C.16, businesses that are eligible and certified by the State as targeted group (TG) businesses, economically disadvantaged (ED) businesses, and veteran-owned businesses will receive points equal to 6% percent of the total points available as preference
- For TG/ED/VO certification and eligibility information visit [the Office of Equity in Procurement website at https://mn.gov/admin/business/vendor-info/oep/](https://mn.gov/admin/business/vendor-info/oep/) or call the Division's Helpline at 651.296.2600

# Phase 3 – Select Finalists

- Only responses that have been evaluated under Phase 2 are eligible for Phase 3
- The State (MDH) will make its selection based on **best value**, as determined by this evaluation process
- It is anticipated that the evaluation and selection will be completed by April 17, 2023

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

# Additional Information and Reminders

- Read the entire RFP (and any addenda) carefully!
  - This presentation did not cover every section or detail in the RFP
- Reminder that all proposals must be submitted via the SWIFT Supplier Portal
  - Ensure you are set up for 2-factor authentication in SWIFT (see p. 2 of RFP)

# QUESTIONS

# Thank You!

**Pamela Mink**

Health Economics Program

*[pam.mink@state.mn.us](mailto:pam.mink@state.mn.us)*