

Frequently Asked Questions

Minnesota Health Information Exchange (HIE) Grant Program

Updated August 1, 2018

1) *Is this grant opportunity strictly focused on setting up a HIO connection?*

Yes. Grant funds are intended to be used for a new connection to an HIO for ADT and/or CCD transactions or for ongoing subscription costs for ADT and/or CCD transactions through an HIO.

2) *Or can it be used on staff training/ EPIC integration of other health IT work (i.e., Encounter alert system with Audacious inquiry currently being used with IHP ACOs)?*

No, staff training or other EHR work is not an eligible activity.

3) *Could the HIE grant funds be used for pulling the PMP database for opioids?*

No, that is not an eligible activity for these grant funds.

Updated July 30, 2018

1) *Our consortium of up to 13 individual organizations intends to apply for funding through the Minnesota Health Information Exchange Grant Program. The estimated award maximum is listed at \$100,000. Could we apply for up to \$200,000 in order to cover expenses for all consortium members?*

The grant award maximum was set to ensure that multiple groups and a range of provider organization types would be eligible for funding. While there is no match requirement for this grant, an application for all consortium members that included matching funding to make up the difference between the \$100,000 grant award maximum and total project cost would be an option to consider.

2) *We're planning on submitting a multi-organization application for the HIE grant. We understand a single application including all partners is preferred. However, do both organizations need to complete a due diligence form? Or is one from only the lead organization acceptable?*

A due diligence form is only required to be completed by the lead organization that will be serving as the fiscal agent for the grant.

3) *If you have received a DHS grant for HIE before are you eligible for this grant?*

Yes.

- 4) ***If you are already connected/in process of connection to an HIO would additional internal interfaces be eligible for this grant?***

No, these grant funds are intended to be used for new connections to an HIO for ADT and/or CCD transactions or for ongoing subscriptions for ADT and/or CCD transaction costs.

- 5) ***Would ongoing subscription costs be eligible under this grant?***

Yes, prorated for after the November 1, 2018, grant agreement start date, for cost for ADT and CCD transactions only.

- 6) ***We are a local public health agency that is part of a larger Community Health Board. Should our grant application lead be listed as the local public health agency or should the lead applicant be the Community Health Board?***

That is a decision for your organization and the Community Health Board.

Updated July 19, 2018

- 1) ***If an organization is considering applying to become an HIO, would the costs to become or apply to become an HIO be considered eligible expenses for the Minnesota Health Information Exchange Grant Program?***

No, those expenses would not be considered eligible expenses.

- 2) ***If our organization is not an HIO and not connected to one, is it an eligible expense to pay for the connectivity and subscription costs to one of the HIO services?***

Yes, the eligible expenses for this grant included the connection costs and up to one year's subscription cost for a Minnesota state-certified HIO for event alerting and care summary exchange transactions.

- 3) ***There has been increased recognition that improving health and achieving health equity will require broader approaches that address the social determinants of health, such as, economic stability; education; food; support systems; physical and neighborhood environment, i.e., housing, transportation, safety; and other factors that influence health. Our healthcare system has identified a need to exchange information with Hennepin County related to Medical Assistance admissions and discharges for case coordination, access to Medical Assistance case manager notes, home visiting notes, releases from corrections, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) eligibility, housing/homeless status, and resource utilization to improve the coordination of health and support care services and quality of services. Would a project to implement one or more of these types of data transactions through a HIO qualify within your definition of event alerting/notification?***

Yes, that fits within the parameters for the grant eligible expenses for information captured within ADT and CCD transactions. Eligible expenses for this grant included the connection

costs and up to one year's subscription cost for a Minnesota state-certified HIO for event alerting and care summary exchange transactions.

4) *Can the grant be used to exchange information with corrections facilities including the county jail on verifying medical assistance enrollment status, discharge from corrections, etc.?*

Yes, that fits within the parameters for the grant eligible expenses for information captured within ADT and CCD transactions. Eligible expenses for this grant included the connection costs and up to one year's subscription cost for a Minnesota state-certified HIO for event alerting and care summary exchange transactions.

5) *If funded for the first grant period of November 1, 2018 to October 31, 2019, will grantees be eligible to apply again for subsequent grant periods should funding be available, or only allowed one grant?*

MDH is unsure at this time what the parameters on potential future grant programs may be.

6) *Do you have set data points that grantees will be required to respond to in the monthly progress reports, and if yes, may you share them?*

1. The monthly reports will consist of a narrative report and monthly transactions tally. Sample narrative questions may include, but are not limited to, the following:
2. What are key accomplishments or deliverables achieved?
3. Are there any internal or external challenges affecting the project? If yes, please describe in more detail.
4. How will your organization address the challenge(s)?
5. Is there anything MDH can do to help address any issues or assist your organization?

a. Indicate Minnesota State-Certified HIO:

- Allina Health
- Koble-MN
- Southern Prairie Community Care –CareTrac
- South Country Health Alliance-DiamondView

b. HIE Transactions:

- Event notification (e.g., ADTs)
 - a. Estimated number of transactions in this quarter:
 - b. Partners with which you exchanged this time period:
- Care summary document exchange (e.g., CCD, CCDA)
 - c. Estimated number of transactions in this quarter:
 - d. Partners with which you exchanged this time period:

- 7) *It states in the RFP that recipients of HIE grants should consider presenting at the Minnesota e-Health Summit. Are expenses for attending and presenting allowable expenses for the grant budget?***

We would highly encourage participation at the 2019 Minnesota e-Health Summit but expenses for presenting or attending are not eligible grant expenses.

- 8) *Is there a page limit for the application narrative and any other requirements, font size, double spacing, etc.?***

There is no page limit or font size or spacing requirements. However, please keep in mind there will be multiple reviewers that may review either on paper or electronically so be mindful of what formatting may be easiest for them to review.

- 9) *Is there a page size or number of pages limit for the implementation plan section of the application?***

It is preferred that the example format be used. However, there is no page size or page limit for this section.

- 10) *As part of completing the Due Diligence form we need to attach our most recently certified financial audit. The audit is provided by the auditors as a password protected document that can't be attached to other documents. When we submit our application may we be allowed to have two documents – the application plus the audit as a separate document?***

Yes, that would be acceptable.

Updated July 12, 2018

- 1) *What are the types of requests being considered?***

Requests from all of the listed eligible providers will be considered. As noted in the RFP, the eligible activities are event alerting (ADT) or care summary (CCD) exchange through a connection to one the four state-certified health information organizations.

- 2) *If we wanted to connect to an HIO would the funds go to the HIO or to our organization for resources to do the work?***

The grantee (eligible applicant) would sign a participation agreement with one of the Minnesota state-certified HIOs. The HIO would complete services needed to connect the grantee and invoice the grantee for those services. The grantee would pay the HIO and then submit an invoice (with supporting HIO invoice) to the state for reimbursement. These funds are intended to be used to pay a state-certified HIO for connection costs. Applicant organization staff salary, fringe and indirect costs are not eligible for reimbursement. (See page 7 for the Grant RFP or excerpt below)

Eligible Expenses

Funds may be used to pay for costs associated with implementing the exchange transactions among providers through a State-Certified Health Information Organization connection based on the HIO quote and for up to one year's subscription costs.

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Indirect costs, salaries, wages, fringe, consultant costs, supplies, and travel
- EHR hardware, software or interfaces not related to an HIO connection
- Broadband infrastructure or service costs
- Telehealth equipment or services

3) *Would an eligible activity be direct messaging?*

There is not a specific transport protocol requirement. Direct messaging is an option for the eligible event alerting and care summary exchange transactions. The best transport option should be discussed with the selected HIO.

4) *Would this be a standalone software, web portal or would this need to directly interface with a health care organizations current Patient Registration System?*

The funds are intended to be used to pay one of the state-certified HIOs for connection costs and up to one year's subscription cost. There may be interface costs as a part of that HIO connection to integrate with the applicant organization's EHR or be outside the EHR. An HIO's subscription cost may include access to a portal.

5) *Which HIOs are currently connected to the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Event Alerting Service (EAS)?*

Please contact the individual HIOs or DHS for the most current information. The contact information for the four Minnesota State-Certified HIE Service Providers – HIOs are listed here: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/e-health/hie/certified/index.html>

6) *What transport mechanism is being used and a set of technical specifications for ADTs and CCDAs required for each HIO?*

Please contact the individual HIOs for the most current information.

7) *How many ADT and CCDAs transactions does each HIO handle – daily, weekly, monthly and annually?*

Please contact the individual HIOs for the most current information.

8) *The HIO Connections webpage contains a list of organizations, with which HIO they are participating and "onboarding status. Could a contact for each organization where an HIO is contracted be included so that future or potential partners can reach out to them?*

The MDH website page [Health Information Organization Connections](http://www.health.state.mn.us/e-health/hie/certified/hioconnections.html) (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/e-health/hie/certified/hioconnections.html>) lists which organizations are currently connected to an HIO, which HIO, and the onboarding status is.

There is also a downloadable spreadsheet, that allows for search/sort by organization, city, county and HIO.

MDH does not have a contact for every organization as this information is supplied by the HIO. Please contact the individual HIOs or the organizations directly for this information.

9) *Could a definition of what ‘completed’ means in the onboarding column on the Health Information Organization Connections be included in the table?*

The onboarding status definitions have been updated on the page and are as follows:

- not started (have signed participatory agreements)
- in progress (testing), or
- completed (in production).

10) *Our network has primarily rural sites located across the state. The network is already participating with (connected to) a state-certified HIO and exchanging care summaries (CCDs) already. There are currently no organizations in our service areas who are connected with the same HIO/or any HIO for event alerts. Could we use grants funds to connect to the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP)?*

Please contact the individual HIOs or DHS for the most current information on organizations sending event alerts to them. Grant eligible activities include event alerts/notifications and care summary document exchange as listed in subdivision 4.3 of Minnesota Statute [62J.495 Electronic Health Record Technology](#). A connection to the Prescription Monitoring Program is not an eligible activity.

Letter of Intent Questions:

If our organization partnered with other organizations in our area on a previous HIE grant but has not been able to confirm a willingness to continue this work with us, how should we complete the letter of intent?

The letter of intent to apply does not obligate an organization, or a group of organizations, to submit a full application. However; if an organization does not submit a letter of intent that organization may not submit an application.