

State of Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Health



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Improving Swing Bed Quality and Market Utilization

Date Posted: January 7, 2022

- Responses must be received no later than 4:00 PM, Central Time, February 4, 2022.
- Late responses will not be considered

Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

The State of Minnesota is committed to diversity and inclusion in its public procurement process. The goal is to ensure that those providing goods and services to the State are representative of our Minnesota communities and include businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. Creating broader opportunities for historically under-represented groups provides for additional options and greater competition in the marketplace, creates stronger relationships and engagement within our communities, and fosters economic development and equality.

To further this commitment, the Department of Administration operates a program for Minnesota-based small businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. For additional information on this program, or to determine eligibility, please call 651-296-2600 or go to [the Office of Equity in Procurement home page, at www.mn.gov/admin/oep](#).

SPECIAL NOTICE: This is a request for proposal. It does not obligate the State of Minnesota to award a contract or complete the proposed program, and the State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered in its best interest.

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Solicitation Attachments

- Attachment A: Responder Declarations
- Attachment B: Exceptions to State's Terms and Conditions
- Attachment C: Cost Detail
- Attachment D: Responder Forms

Sample Contract

- Exhibit A: Contract Terms
- Exhibit B: Insurance Requirements
- Exhibit C: Specifications, Duties, and Scope of Work
- Exhibit D: Pricing

SECTION 1 – INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDERS

Steps for Completing Your Response	Follow the steps below to complete your response to this Solicitation: Step 1: Read the solicitation documents and ask questions, if any Step 2: Write your response Step 3: Submit your response
Incomplete Submittals	A response must be submitted along with any required additional documents. Incomplete responses that materially deviate from the required format and content may be rejected.

STEP 1 – READ THE SOLICITATION DOCUMENT & ASK QUESTIONS, IF ANY

How to Ask Questions	The contact person for questions is: Emma Distel, State Program Administrator Minnesota Department of Health/ORHPC health.flex@state.mn.us Questions should be emailed to the contact by January 21, 2022. Other personnel are not authorized to answer questions regarding this Solicitation.
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STEP 2 – WRITE YOUR RESPONSE

The Proposal Content section is in Section 4. Prepare a written response and supply all requested content. Responses should address the requested information and documents detailed in Section 4. **DO NOT INCLUDE** Non-Public/Trade Secret data (as defined by Minn. Stat. § 13.37).

Review, sign, and include the Responder Declarations with your response.

STEP 3 –SUBMIT YOUR RESPONSE

Submit your response to:

Where to Send Your Response	Minnesota Department of Health Emma Distel, State Program Administrator health.flex@state.mn.us
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Please include the title of the RFP in the subject line of the email submission.

Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 PM, Central Time, February 4, 2022. **Late responses will not be considered.**

Provide one copy of the proposal. Proposals are to be emailed. Provide one copy of the cost detail as a separate attachment clearly labeled “Cost Detail” along with the responder’s name.

By submitting a response, responder is making a binding legal offer for the period of time set forth below in Section 6, Conditions of Offer.

SECTION 2 – SUMMARY OF SCOPE

1. Procurement Overview and Goals.

The purpose of this solicitation is to identify a vendor to provide education, technical assistance and targeted market analysis to critical access hospitals with licensed swing bed programs with the goal to improve quality of patient care and optimize swing bed market utilization for improved financial performance. The education and related technical assistance will be made available to any interested staff in all participating hospitals with swing bed programs. Swing bed quality improvement should be targeted at clinical staff working with patients receiving care in a swing bed setting. Financial analysis and the related technical assistance and recommendations will be available to staff in financial or administrative roles in participating hospitals.

The Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility program was established by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 to support hospitals in their process to become designated as critical access. Minnesota maintains 77 licensed Critical Access Hospitals (CAHS) and a State Flex Program, which is housed within the Office of Rural Health and Primary Care. Swing beds are a special bed license for small, rural hospitals that allows these facilities to use a certain number of hospital beds for either acute or skilled nursing care. Both rural prospective payment system (PPS) and critical access hospitals (CAHS) can apply to be licensed for swing beds if they participate in the Medicare program. Many of the 77 facilities have a swing bed program in place.

The State Flex Program supports a variety of relevant topics and initiatives to sustain the rural health care system, including but not limited to quality improvement and patient safety, financial and operational improvement, population health and emergency medical services. The intent of this project is to provide a comprehensive state-based approach to supporting education, quality and financial improvement specific to swing bed and transitional care programs in critical access hospitals. This will ultimately improve health care delivery in rural Minnesota.

2. Sample Tasks and Deliverables.

1. Document the penetration of swing bed programs and transitional care in Minnesota.
2. Provide analysis and benchmarking opportunities to show how individual swing bed programs compare to state or national benchmarks.
3. Provide expert technical assistance to participating hospitals, identify knowledge gaps and make evidence-based recommendations about appropriate education or resources necessary to fill gaps and demonstrate improvement.
4. Provide educational opportunities designed to improve the core competencies of clinical staff providing care to patients in swing beds and staff responsible for hospital operations. Education should be accessible by any staff on an as needed basis and in a format that allows for self-paced learning. Education should be available to all interested staff within participating facilities and not limited to a staff in any specific role. Topics available for education should be identified using hospital swing bed data and recommended in tandem with the technical assistance plan. Respondents should propose their own solutions and tasks to be performed as part of hospital staff education, topics may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Clinical scenarios and appropriate treatment of patients commonly seen in swing bed settings,
 - b. Communication and coordination across systems, ensuring appropriate transfer of patients between acute and transitional care settings,
 - c. Increasing compliance with policies, procedures and the Conditions of Participation for swing bed programs,
 - d. Reduction of 30-day readmission rates and increasing patients that return to their previous residence after swing bed discharge,
 - e. Improving patient satisfaction with swing bed care,
 - f. Improving quality of care in a swing bed/transitional care program,
 - g. Improving staff resiliency and organizational culture within the transitional care setting,

5. Strategic marketing and ways to increase swing bed utilization and understanding of individual hospital market share.
6. Provide swing bed market analysis for participating facilities designed to demonstrate the potential maximum market value of their hospital swing bed program. Following the analysis, provide expert technical assistance and evidence-based strategies for improvement based on the findings of the market analysis.

The responder will ensure that all training and communications materials will be accessible according to State of Minnesota accessibility standards, including but not limited to videos, audio materials, and electronic documents. Should anyone have difficulty using any materials due to inaccessibility, the responder will update to make accessible at no additional cost to the state. In addition, if live training or demonstrations are included as part of the proposal, the responder will provide any accommodations that may be requested, such as CART (live captioning), sign language interpreters, or large print materials.

The selected contractor will work closely with the State Flex Program to develop program outputs and outcomes to track improvement for hospitals and the state. They will provide regular updates to the State about the progress of the project and make informed recommendations about appropriate next steps to identify continued program development.

SECTION 3 – PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Anticipated Contract Term.

The term of this contract is anticipated to be from March 1, 2022 to August 31, 2022 with the option to extend up to an additional 2 years in increments determined by the State.

2. Question and Answer Instructions.

All questions should be submitted no later than the date and time listed in Section 1, Instructions to Responders. The State is not obligated to answer questions submitted after the question due date and time.

Only personnel listed above are authorized to discuss this solicitation with responders. Contact regarding this solicitation with any personnel not listed above could result in disqualification. This provision is not intended to prevent responders from seeking guidance from state procurement assistance programs regarding general procurement questions.

If a Responder discovers any significant ambiguity, error, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other deficiency in the solicitation, please immediately notify the contact person detailed above in writing of such error and request modification or clarification of the document.

3. Additional Tasks or Activities.

Responders are encouraged to propose additional tasks, activities, or goods above and beyond the scope of what is requested in this solicitation if they will substantially improve the results of this procurement. Any costs associated with these additional tasks, activities, or goods should be clearly marked and separated from costs associated with the tasks, activities, or goods specifically requested under this solicitation. Because cost is a factor in the evaluation of responses to this solicitation, failure to separate costs for additional tasks, activities, or goods may result in those costs being included in a responder's cost proposal and result in a lower cost score for that proposal.

SECTION 4 – PROPOSAL CONTENT

Please submit the following information:

1. Work Plan. Responder should provide a description of the deliverables to be provided by the Responder along with a detailed work plan that identifies the major tasks to be accomplished and can be used as a scheduling and managing tool, as well as the basis for invoicing. This document should NOT list cost detail. If cost detail is included in this document, the State may disqualify the proposal as non-responsive. Responder should provide a statement of the objectives, goals, and tasks to show or demonstrate the Responder's view and understanding of the nature of the contract.
 - 1.1 An explanation of the proposed method to recruit hospital participants.
 - 1.2 A description of the type of technical assistance (1:1, cohort based, large group webinar format) to be provided to participating facilities.
 - 1.3 An explanation of the proposed method and data that will be used to identify needs and recommend appropriate educational topics to participating hospitals.
 - 1.4 An explanation of the mechanism(s) of delivering education (online educational system, webinar series, etc.).
 - 1.5 An explanation of how a market analysis will be conducted, including how this information will be shared with hospitals.
 - 1.6 An explanation of how recommendations will be made based on the findings in the market analysis for financial improvement targeting swing services.
2. Qualifications and Experience. Responder should provide an outline of background and experience with examples of similar work done by the Responder and a list of personnel who will conduct the project, detailing their training and work experience. Resumes or other information about project personnel should not, if possible, contain personal telephone numbers, home addresses, or home email addresses. If it is necessary to include personal contact information, please clearly indicate in the response that personal contact information is being provided.
 - 2.1 A detailed explanation of experience with swing bed quality improvement and market analysis. The proposal should contain sufficient detail to indicate the respondent's experience in:
 - 2.1.1 Working with rural or critical access hospitals in Minnesota;
 - 2.1.2 Providing evidence-based education and technical assistance; and
 - 2.1.3 Content knowledge of swing beds programs and transitional care.
3. Accessibility of Services or Products. The responder will ensure that all training and communications materials will be accessible, including but not limited to videos, audio materials, and electronic documents. Should anyone have difficulty using any materials due to inaccessibility, the responder will update to make accessible at no additional cost to the state. In addition, if live training or demonstrations are included as part of the proposal, the responder will provide any accommodations that may be requested, such as CART (live captioning), sign language interpreters, or large print materials.

Responders are encouraged to reference the, the Section 508 and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) sections in a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT®) for all software, hardware, and websites (as applicable) as proposed in response to the solicitation to ensure materials meet State Accessibility standards. The

VPAT form can be found on the [ITIC VPAT site](#). (Under “Resources,” select the “508” option, as it contains both 508 and WCAG forms.) For systems with multiple interfaces (such as an admin and user interface), a VPAT is completed for each interface. For more references, responders are encouraged to review the “[Vendor VPAT Guidance](#)” in the “Products” tab on the [Accessible IT Procurement page \(https://mn.gov/mnit/about-mnit/accessibility/it-procurement.jsp\)](https://mn.gov/mnit/about-mnit/accessibility/it-procurement.jsp), which contains information and instructions on completing the VPATs. Respondents should also review the related guidance documents on the same site for solicitation reviewers to understand expectations.

4. **Cost Detail.** Complete and submit Attachment C, “Cost Detail,” attached to this solicitation. Submit one copy of Attachment C along with one copy of the cost proposal as a separate attachment clearly marked as cost proposal. This must be separate from your Technical Proposal. Clearly label the attached file “Cost Proposal” along with the firm’s name. Do not include any cost information in the Technical Proposal part of the response. The Proposal must be open for acceptance until a contract is executed, the Solicitation is cancelled, or 180 days after the due date and time of the Solicitation, whichever comes first.
5. **Sample Transaction Documents.** Prior to award, a potential successful Responder may be asked to submit samples of any transaction documents proposed for use under the resulting contract. The State may review the transaction documents to ensure they contain sufficient detail and to review additional terms and conditions contained therein, if any. The State reserves the right to request additional detail in the transaction documents or to reject additional terms and conditions within transaction documents. Once approved by the State, Contractor may not materially change transaction documents unless a change has been approved in writing by the Commissioner of Administration, as delegated to the Office of State Procurement. Any terms and conditions included in transaction documents but not approved by the State are voidable by the State. Any terms and conditions that are in conflict with Minnesota law or in conflict with the terms of the State Contract are void. Failure to void a non-approved term or condition included in a transaction document does not waive the State’s right to void any non-approved term or condition.
6. **License Agreements, Maintenance Agreements, or Other Terms and Conditions.** The State may require Responder to provide any license agreements, maintenance agreements or any other terms and conditions relevant to the work under a resulting contract. Review and approval by the State may be required prior to contract execution. In the event Responder fails to comply with a request under this provision, Responder agrees that it will not seek to enforce terms and conditions of any such agreement against the State. Further, failure to provide any of the pertinent documents upon request may result in the State not agreeing to sign any additional documents, rejecting your response, or cancelling the award.

Submit all requested documentation, including, but not limited to, the following documents:

1. Attachment A: Responder Declarations
2. Attachment B: Exceptions to State's Standard Terms and Conditions
3. Attachment C: Cost Proposal
4. Attachment D: Responder Forms

DO NOT INCLUDE Non-Public/Trade Secret data (as defined by Minn. Stat. § 13.37).

SECTION 5 – 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)

1. Phase 1 – Responsiveness and Pass/Fail Requirements

The purpose of this phase is to determine if each response complies with mandatory requirements. The State will first review each proposal for responsiveness to determine if the Responder satisfies all mandatory requirements. The State will evaluate these requirements on a pass/fail basis.

Mandatory Requirements. The following will be considered on a pass/fail basis:

- Responses must be received by the due date and time specified in this RFP.
- Responses must include a statement verifying that the vendor acknowledges and agrees all documents, materials and related content must be updated to meet State Accessibility Standards.

2. Phase 2 - Evaluate Responses

Only those responses found to have met Phase 1 criteria will be considered in Phase 2.

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|----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Work Plan for Deliverables | 300 points |
| 2. Qualifications and Experience | 300 points |
| 3. Cost Detail | 400 points |
| | 1000 points |

3. Phase 3 - Select Finalist(s)

Only those responses that have been evaluated under Phase 2 shall be eligible for Phase 3.

The State will make its selection based on best value, as determined by this evaluation process. The State reserves the right to pursue negotiations on any exception taken to the State's standard terms and conditions. In the event that negotiated terms cannot be reached, the State reserves the right to terminate negotiations and begin negotiating with the next highest scoring responder or take other actions as the State deems appropriate. If the State anticipates multiple awards, the State reserves the right to negotiate with more than one Responder.

It is anticipated that the evaluation and selection will be completed by February 18, 2022.

SECTION 6 – SOLICITATION TERMS

1. **Competition in Responding**

The State desires open and fair competition. Questions from responders regarding any of the requirements of the Solicitation must be submitted in writing to the Solicitation Administrator listed in the Solicitation before the due date and time. If changes are made the State will issue an addendum.

Any evidence of collusion among responders in any form designed to defeat competitive responses will be reported to the Minnesota Attorney General for investigation and appropriate action.

2. **Addenda to the Solicitation**

Changes to the Solicitation will be made by addendum with notification and posted in the same manner as the original Solicitation. Any addenda issued will become part of the Solicitation.

3. **Data Security - Foreign Outsourcing of Work is Prohibited**

All storage and processing of information shall be performed within the borders of the United States. This provision also applies to work performed by subcontractors at all levels.

4. **Joint Ventures**

The State allows joint ventures among groups of responders when responding to the solicitation. However, one responder must submit a response on behalf of all the others in the group. The responder that submits the response will be considered legally responsible for the response (and the contract, if awarded).

5. **Withdrawing Response**

A responder may withdraw its response prior to the due date and time of the Solicitation. For solicitations in the SWIFT Supplier Portal, a responder may withdraw its response from the SWIFT Supplier Portal. For solicitations done any other way, a responder may withdraw its response by notifying the Solicitation Administrator in writing of the desire to withdraw.

After the due date and time of this Solicitation, a responder may withdraw a response only upon showing that an obvious error exists in the response. The showing and request for withdrawal must be made in writing to Solicitation Administrator within a reasonable time and prior to the State's detrimental reliance on the response.

6. **Rights Reserved**

The State reserves the right to:

- Reject any and all responses received;
- Waive or modify any informalities, irregularities, or inconsistencies in the responses received;
- Negotiate with the highest scoring Responder[s];
- Terminate negotiations and select the next response providing the best value for the State;
- Consider documented past performance resulting from a State contract may be considered in the evaluation process;
- Short list the highest scoring Responders;
- Require Responders to conduct presentations, demonstrations, or submit samples;
- Interview key personnel or references;
- Request a best and final offer from one or more Responders;
- The State reserves the right to request additional information; and
- The State reserves the right to use estimated usage or scenarios for the purpose of conducting pricing evaluations. The State reserves the right to modify scenarios, and to request or add additional scenarios for the evaluation.

7. Samples and Demonstrations

Upon request, Responders are to provide samples to the State at no charge. Except for those destroyed or mutilated in testing, the State will return samples if requested and at the Responder's expense. All costs to conduct and associated with a demonstration will be the sole responsibility of the Responder.

8. Responses are Nonpublic during Evaluation Process

All materials submitted in response to this Solicitation will become property of the State. During the evaluation process, all information concerning the responses submitted will remain private or nonpublic and will not be disclosed to anyone whose official duties do not require such knowledge. Responses are private or nonpublic data until the completion of the evaluation process as defined by Minn. Stat. § 13.591. The completion of the evaluation process is defined as the State having completed negotiating a contract with the selected responder. The State will notify all responders in writing of the evaluation results.

9. Trade Secret Information

9.1 Responders must not submit as part of their response trade secret material, as defined by Minn. Stat. § 13.37.

9.2 In the event trade secret data are submitted, Responder must defend any action seeking release of data it believes to be trade secret, and indemnify and hold harmless the State, its agents and employees, from any judgments awarded against the State in favor of the party requesting the data, and any and all costs connected with that defense.

9.3 The State does not consider cost or prices to be trade secret material, as defined by Minn. Stat. § 13.37.

9.4 A responder may present and discuss trade secret information during an interview or demonstration with the State, if applicable.

10. Conditions of Offer

Unless otherwise approved in writing by the State, Responder's cost proposal and all terms offered in its response that pertain to the completion of professional and technical services and general services will remain firm for 180 days, until they are accepted or rejected by the State, or they are changed by further negotiations with the State prior to contract execution.

11. Award

Any award that may result from this solicitation will be based upon the total accumulated points as established in the solicitation. The State reserves the right to award this solicitation to a single Responder, or to multiple Responders, whichever is in the best interest of the State, providing each Responder is in compliance with all terms and conditions of the solicitation. The State reserves the right to accept all or part of an offer, to reject all offers, to cancel the solicitation, or to re-issue the solicitation, whichever is in the best interest of the State.

12. Requirements Prior to Contract Execution

Prior to contract execution, a responder receiving a contract award must comply with any submittal requests. A submittal request may include, but is not limited to, a Certificate of Insurance.