

Washington Health Information Collaborative

2007 Questions and Answers

Note: As new questions are submitted, the questions and answers are added to the beginning of this document. Scroll down to see all questions asked and answered.

Posted July 19, 2007

Question: You mentioned that the \$20,000 award is for small practices as well as rural practices. What qualifies for these?

Answer: Last year the Collaborative limited applicants to groups of no more than 30 providers (defined as a Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Naturopathy, Doctor of Osteopathy, Physician Assistant, or Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner). This limitation has been removed for 2007, although there continues to be a preference to award funding to practices of 30 or fewer clinicians.

Question: Is there a possibility that the Health Care Authority won't provide funding for this program during 2007?

Answer: This is possible, as funding availability from Health Care Authority is conditional upon disbursement of funds by the Office of Financial Management and the Department of Information Services as provided in the Operating Budget for the 2007-2009 Biennium.

Question: Are clinics or hospitals outside of Washington State eligible to apply for funding?

Answer: Organizations outside of Washington State are eligible to apply for funding if they are part of the First Choice Health network or its Oregon subsidiary, Healthcare Direct.

Question: Does the award have a timeline in terms of when it must be used. For example, if the EMR purchase takes place two years from now, is this allowed?

Answer: Funding will be awarded for current projects. Funding will not be made available for future projects, or for work performed prior to the award. Work under the award must be performed within 18 months of the award agreement execution date.

Question: Will funding be made available to ARNP practices?

Answer: ARNPs are defined as clinicians in the award announcement and may apply for funding.

Question: Question two of the background section of the application asks "size of active panel." How does this apply to hospitals?

Washington Health Information Collaborative

Answer: The question regarding the size of an active panel is geared to provider practices. For hospitals, it may be more appropriate to describe the number of patients seen within the last year.

Question: Question six of the planning section of the application requests "a document of signatures indicating current consensus on moving forward with your health IT project." Is there a specific document or specific wording in mind? From whom should we be getting signatures?

Answer: There is neither a specific document nor specific wording in mind. Such a document is intended to be a statement of commitment to the project as spelled out in the application to insure that all critical parties are apprised of this project and agree to it before the application is considered. In the case of a small practice, this document should include the signatures of all practitioners and office staff, in the case of a larger practice or Critical Access Hospital, the document should include signatures from your leadership team (i.e. CEO, CIO, CFO, clinical leadership team, project manager, etc.).

Question: Are Rural Health Clinics eligible for the grant?

Answer: Rural Health Clinics are eligible for grant funding supplied by First Choice Health if the clinic is a member of the First Choice Health network. Rural health clinics would be eligible for HCA funding, which may become available (conditional upon disbursement of funds by the Office of Financial Management and the Department of Information Services as provided in the Operating Budget for the 2007-2009 Biennium).

Posted July 9, 2007

Question: We are looking at expanding our current health IT system and converting our paper records to electronic records and storing them on a server. Please let us know if this project fits the parameters for Collaborative funding.

Answer: Based on your description the project likely does fit the parameters for funding.

Question: Are hospitals and local clinics eligible to apply separately? Are hospital-owned clinics eligible to apply?

Answer: A hospital (provided it is a Critical Access Hospital) and outside primary care clinics are eligible to apply separately. Clinics owned and operated by a hospital are not eligible to apply separately from that hospital.

Question: What is a Critical Access Hospital?

Answer: Critical Access Hospitals are designated by the State and certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Additional information, as well as a list of Critical

Washington Health Information Collaborative

Access Hospitals in Washington state is available from the Department of Health at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/hsga/ocrh/CAH/cah399.html>.

Question: We are in the process of converting to an electronic health record. We need support to be able to abstract data from the paper charts into the electronic health record. Would this be considered an eligible project for your grant funding?

Answer: If this activity is part of a conversion to an electronic medical record, it could be eligible for funding.

Question: Can the award funds be used for purchasing consulting services?

Answer: Yes, if the use of consultant services clearly fits within a larger framework of practice expenditures for adopting or expanding health information technology. If this is how you intend to use the award (in whole or in part), please be aware that no-cost consulting services are available to practices participating in the DOQ-IT program (go to the Qualis Health website at: www.qualishealth.org/doqit for more information about DOQ-IT).

Question: In addition to awards for Electronic Medical Records (EMR) technology, will funding be available for clinics to implement the CHILD Profile Immunization Registry? Implementation of the registry requires that providers have a custom interface built for their EMRs, and this cost is often prohibitive for many providers and clinics.

Answer: An interface between an EMR and the Washington State CHILD Immunization Registry would add efficiency for pediatric and family practices. Funding for such projects would be considered if this interface is a component of a larger interoperability plan for the practice or facility.

If you have a question that is not answered above, please email it to awardsqna@hca.wa.gov