

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF THE HEALTHCARE ADVOCATE
STATE INNOVATION MODEL PROGRAM MANAGEMENT OFFICE**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
Value Based Insurance Design Services**

FIRST Addendum

RELEASE DATE – 072315

The State Innovation Model (SIM) Program Management Office's official responses to questions submitted as of 3:00pm, July 23, 2015 are provided below. Please note the deadline for questions is 3:00pm, July 24, 2015.

1. Question: Task B: How frequently does the state anticipate the employer-led consortium will meet?

Response: It's anticipated the consortium will meet two to three times annually.

2. Question: Task C: Does the State envision the Respondent to facilitate meetings for and track progress and milestones of an employer-led learning collaborative, facilitate annual meetings and track progress or milestones, and to develop a plan for other activities that the State will implement? Or, is the State's intent that the Respondent will conduct all activities listed, including webinars, technical support, workshops, an online collaborative site and phone support.

Response: Yes

3. Question: Task C: If the Respondent is responsible for all activities listed. For the required webinars to feature subject matter experts, and health plan and physician panels, will the vendor be responsible for payment of honoraria or other expenses required by subject matter experts and representatives to participate on the health plan and physician panels?

Response: No.

4. Question: Task C: Please clarify the State's intent for provision for technical support. For example, technical support could be as minor as answering questions about the VBID models or as extensive as providing data analysis, training staff, etc.

Response: We envision relatively modest support such as answering questions and perhaps limited staff training or consultation regarding business processes modifications via webinar. We do not envision data analytic activities.

5. Question: Task C: Please clarify the level of phone support required. Must the Respondent have dedicated staff who are readily available on a daily basis throughout the full contract period to respond to entities with questions about the VBID model?

Response: The Contractor is not expected to have designated staff available respond to all entities on a daily basis, but designated staff should be available to the PMO and OSC on a frequent basis for the full contract period.

6. Question: For Tasks B and C, will the Contractor be responsible for arranging locations for consortium meetings and the three annual stakeholder meetings for the employer-led learning collaborative? Will the Contractor be responsible for payment of any associated costs (e.g., conference facilities, honoraria, food, etc.)?

Response: Yes, the Contractor, in coordination with the OSC and PMO, will be responsible for arranging meetings and learning collaboratives. No, the contractor will not be responsible for paying meeting or conference related expenses.

7. Question: Task C indicates “The learning collaborative may leverage similar learning collaboratives in the Northeast region to cross-pollinate employer experiences and best practices.” Are there other collaboratives underway related to the State’s SIM grant? If so, are other contractors conducting those for which the vendor will be responsible for collaborating?

Response: The PMO and OSC are still in the process of researching other collaboratives and have had preliminary discussions with the CT Business Group on Health (CTBGH) and the North East Business Group on Health (NEBGH).

8. Question: Task E: In regards to developing a baseline of business intelligence within Connecticut, is the State’s intent that the Respondent, for example, identify every business within Connecticut that has implemented a VBID model or a representative sample. Additionally, is the State, for example, looking for the vendor to evaluate level of employee readiness based on analysis directly conducted with that employer or based on publicly available information and our prior experience?

Response: The State’s intent is that the respondent develop a baseline of business intelligence, however, there are many different approaches to gathering this information. One recommended approach would be to work with the largest five health insurance companies in Connecticut to assess VBID plan designs in the state, as well as employer readiness for adoption of plan designs. The State would look to the respondent to make recommendations on the most efficient approach to accomplish this goal.

9. Question: Task E indicates “Baseline data collection will be designed, performed, analyzed, synthesized and reported by the SIM program evaluator.” Please clarify this statement related to baseline collection of intelligence. Will the Respondent be required to collaborate with the SIM program evaluator in determining what information to collect initially, or will the SIM program evaluator obtain data separately?

Response: The Respondent will be required to collaborate with the SIM program evaluator in determining what information to collect initially.

10. Question: Task F: Please clarify the role of consortium members in creating the prototype VBID.

The RFP suggests that the Respondent will be responsible for recommending plan designs and strategies for at least three groups (self-insured employers, fully insured employers and private and public health insurance exchanges). Will such recommendations be provided to the consortium for final decisions, or will the consortium provide input for the Respondent to consider when developing recommendations?

Response: The consortium will provide input for the respondent to consider when developing recommendations.

11. Question: Task F states that the Respondent shall develop a template for a minimum recommended VBID benefit plan for self-insured employers. It also states the employer-led consortium, supported by the Respondent, will create a universal template for self-insured employers. Will the Respondent be responsible for developing a final template (e.g., developing draft, obtaining feedback, incorporating edits, finalizing draft), or only for providing recommendations to the consortium to consider in developing the template?

Response: The respondent will be responsible for suggesting recommended approaches and developing a final template and the employer consortium will act as an advisory body.

12. Question: Task F states that the Respondent must provide recommendations for technical assistance to accelerate employer uptake. Please confirm that the Respondent is not responsible for provision of the technical assistance.

Response: Technical assistance is not expected to be provided by the respondent, but the respondent should demonstrate its technical capabilities should the grant period be extended with additional funding and there be a need for technical support.

13. Question: Task F states that we must develop a template for a minimum recommended VBID benefit plan for use by fully insured employers. However, the following statement is also made: The recommended VBID must also be administratively viable for employers and their contracted health plans. Due to regulatory requirements and limitations, fully-insured employers will be encouraged to adopt off-the-shelf VBID benefit plan offerings available through their contracted health plans. Please confirm the need for a template for a minimum recommended VBID benefit plan for use by fully insured employers.

Response: Confirmed.

14. Question: Will the Contractor have responsibility for collaborating with or developing materials that would be reported to other SIM workgroups? If so, please describe the anticipated level of involvement

Response: No.

15. Question: In satisfaction of the requirement on RFP page 23 regarding providing three references:

Can references include individuals employed by the State of Connecticut?

Response: Yes.

16. Question: Can references include clients of the subcontractor or does the State require that all references be for the prime contractor?

Response: See page 23 of the RFP which states "THE RESPONDENT SHALL include at least three references for the lead organization and additional references for subcontractors that it proposes for substantial involvement in the provision of services."

17. Question: Is the initial maximum award of \$210,250 inclusive of travel costs?

Response: The Respondent may exclude travel costs from the anticipated maximum award of \$210,250, but include estimated travel costs as part of its cost proposal. We will review our ability to cover these costs over and above the anticipated maximum award and consider this issue in the contract negotiations.

18. Question: In light of the underlying federal grant from CMS, please confirm that the Department has evaluated the role of the respondents to this RFP to be "Contractors" under the OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR 200 ("Uniform Guidance") by applying the criteria outlined in 2 CFR 200.330? If not, how is the State categorizing the respondent under the Uniform Guidance?

Response: The state is categorizing the Respondent as a "Vendor" in accordance with OMB Circular A-133.

19. Question: Further, given the requirement that the cost submittal be one lump sum, please confirm that respondent-Contractors will not be required to provide any additional cost detail or be subject to the cost principles under the Uniform Guidance, including but not limited to indirect cost limitations and salary level limits.

Response: Page 25 of the RFP requires the submission of two cost proposals, one of which shall be all-inclusive hourly rates, excluding travel. The resulting contract may be based on this cost proposal. We have received preliminary guidance from CMS that the salaries of professionals who are working for a consulting services organization and providing consulting services, typically based on hourly rates, are exempt from salary level limits. It is important that the respondent meet the definition of a consulting services organization, which should be evident from the organization's articles of incorporation.

20. Question: Total Fixed Cost method: Please clarify if by requesting a "Fixed Cost" bid the State is intending Respondents to submit a "Fixed Price" bid.

Response: Yes, the State is intending the Respondent to submit a "Fixed Price" bid.

21. Question: RFP Page 21, letter C.a) indicates that the bidder's "Response must coincide with the RFP Table of Contents." Please clarify the State's intent in this regard. Does the State intend for bidders to follow RFP Section V. Response Contents (and provide a table of contents that coincides with this list of required contents)?

Response: Yes

22. Question: Paragraph 1 on RFP page 21 indicates that the proposal should be submitted electronically, while paragraph 2 on the same page indicates that the "original submission must carry original signature." Please clarify if the State requires the submittal of a hard copy proposal with ink (wet) signatures.

Response: An electronic signature is acceptable.

23. Question: If an electronic submittal is required as opposed to a hard copy, is it permissible for bidders to email the electronic copy to the contracting officer or are bidders required to physically submit an electronic copy on CD?

Response: Respondents may email the electronic copy to the contracting officer and are not required to physically submit an e-copy.

24. Question: If bidders are required to submit documents (or CDs) directly to the State – please provide a physical shipping address as opposed to a P.O. box number as commercial carriers will not deliver to P.O. boxes.

Response: Please see response to question #23.

25. Question: Please provide a definition for "consulting services organization" as used on page 26 paragraph 3.

Response: Please see response to question #19.

26. Question: Will the State publish responses to all questions submitted?

Response: Yes

27. Question: Which firms currently are contracted to support SIM activities for the State? Are they eligible to bid on this important effort?

Response: The SIM PMO currently has contracts with Connecticut Peer Review Organization, Inc dba Qualidigm and The Chartis Group. One of the two contractors is not eligible to bid.

28. Question: Please confirm that the State has evaluated the role of the vendor (and any vendor subcontractors) under the resulting contract and determined them to be "Contractors" as defined under the OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, 2 CFR 200 ("Uniform Guidance") and the Illinois Governor's Office of Management and Budget has made this determination by applying the criteria outlined in 2 CFR 200.330.

Response: The state is categorizing the Respondent as a "Vendor" in accordance with OMB Circular A-133.

29. Question: Further, please confirm that other than what has been specifically required under this RFP, respondent-Contractor will not be required to provide any additional cost detail or be subject to the cost principles and restrictions under the Uniform Guidance, including but not limited to indirect cost limitations and salary level limits.

Response: This will depend on the structure of the contract and whether the contractor is a consulting services organization.

30. Question: Is it permissible for a respondent to submit a response that responds to some, but not all, of the service components set forth in section II. Required Service Components and Scope of Work(pages 8-12 of the RFP) or is it a requirement that all the listed service components and scope of work be conducted by the respondent and its specifically identified subcontractors as referenced in section V.B.2(page 23 of the RFP)?

Response: The Respondent may submit a response that does not respond to all service components; however, this may impact the evaluation of the Respondent's proposal.

31. Question: Regarding section IV.B, Delivery Condition, is the exclusive method of submission to the PMO in an electronic format or is there a further requirement that the response be submitted in any additional manner, such as in a hard copy or copies?

Response: Please see response to question #23. Hard copies are not permitted.

32. Question: The RFP indicates that the deadline for submission is 3:00 PM on July 31. However, on the State Contracting Portal cover page (http://www.biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/BidDetail.aspx?CID=36590), it lists the due date as July 30. Can you confirm that the due date is 3 pm on July 31?

Response: The original published date on the State Contracting Portal is an error. The State Contracting Portal cover page has been corrected. The deadline for submission is 3:00 PM on July 31.

33. Question: For Task C, Establishing and Conducting Learning Collaborative, will the PMO or OSC be providing a venue for the annual meetings and/or a budget (for food and venue rental if applicable)?

Response: See response to question #6.