



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: HEALTHCARE PAYER ROUNDTABLE (2024)

Application Deadline: March 29, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. ET

Exploring Opportunities to Enhance Patient Care and Efficiency through Improved Laboratory Test Quality and Data Application

The selection process is competitive. The funding ceiling is \$50,000 with services provided from April 1, 2024 – July 15, 2024. Interested organizations must submit their application to nmccoy_ic@chronicdisease.org by Friday, March 29, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. ET.

A. OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

Background:

Inadequately harmonized clinical laboratory measurements prevent effective, appropriate healthcare delivery, and impact the clinical laboratory's ability to contribute to the healthcare team effectively and successfully.

Reliable standardized assays exist for many chronic disease biomarkers. Failure to utilize them may lead to either overdiagnosis or underdiagnosis of medical conditions, potentially leading to either undertreatment or overtreatment, ultimately increasing the risk of unnecessary, costly, and preventable complications from diseases.²

Utilizing standardized and harmonized assays can ensure that measurements are both accurate and consistent across different laboratories and over time. This not only streamlines healthcare procedures by minimizing the necessity for redundant testing but also conserves resources and improves patient care.

Project Overview:

This request for proposal (RFP) seeks one vendor to support the implementation of a 60-minute virtual thought leader roundtable designed to facilitate discussion between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Clinical Standardization Program (CSP) and healthcare payers on exploring opportunities to improve laboratory test quality and data application.

The goals of this project are to:

- increase understanding of payers' use of laboratory data and approach to laboratory test quality and
- identify strategies the participants can use to increase the use of high-quality tests.

Vendor must be able to complete the following:

- Recruit up to 10 healthcare payer representatives able to contribute to the discussion and development of strategic recommendations for the healthcare payer industry,
- Provide one moderator for the roundtable discussion,
- Prepare one report on the roundtable discussion providing a summary of notes from the roundtable discussion, recommended strategies, and actionable next steps for the CDC Clinical Standardization Program.

About the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors:

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) improves the health of the public by strengthening state-based leadership and expertise for chronic disease prevention and control in states and at the national level. Founded in 1988, NACDD aims to lead and influence the ways that chronic disease prevention and health promotion shapes the health landscape. NACDD is based in Decatur, Georgia. For more information, visit www.chronicdisease.org.

About the CDC Clinical Standardization Programs¹:

The CDC Clinical Standardization Programs (CSP) assess the analytical performance of new and established laboratory tests in patient care, public health, and clinical research globally. This work is done through continuous certification programs and special, focused laboratory studies. CSP help laboratories and test manufacturers by offering certification programs for chronic disease biomarkers, performing focused interlaboratory comparison studies for biomarkers of high clinical interest, conducting performance assessments studies of testing devices in laboratories, and providing single-donor materials with reference information for clinical laboratory self-assessment. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/labstandards/csp>.

B. ELIGIBILITY

One applicant will be selected. Applicants should currently be involved in working with or regularly interacting with public and/or private healthcare payers in some capacity (i.e., partner, client, service recipient).

C. TIMEFRAME

The project timeline is April 1, 2024, through July 15, 2024.

Estimated Timeframe	Activity
March 19, 2024	Request for proposal publicly released
March 29, 2024	Proposal deadline
April 8, 2024	Submissions reviewed and evaluated
April 10, 2024	Selected vendor notified and contract developed
April 2024	Kickoff meeting (1-Day)
April 1, 2024 – July 15, 2024	Project implemented
May 1 – June 30, 2024 (timeframe)	Virtual roundtable
July 1-14 2024	Project closeout and vendor submits report
July 15, 2024	Last day to submit final invoice to NACDD

D. Project Components

The selected vendor will receive guidance, technical assistance, and previously prepared materials.

- The selected vendor will recruit roundtable participants and moderate a virtual roundtable discussion attended by CDC and public and private healthcare payers. The selected vendor must be able to recruit up to 10 roundtable participants.

This Request for Proposal has five deliverables:

1. Recruit up to 10 target participants.
2. Moderate one 60-minute virtual roundtable discussion.
3. Prepare one report of roundtable outcomes and findings.
4. Provide invoice(s) and progress/status report
5. Maintain ongoing communication with the project lead.

- **Funding:** Receive up to \$50,000 to complete project deliverables.

E. AWARDEE EXPECTATIONS

Awardees will commit to recruiting at least up to 10 healthcare payers with direct knowledge of payers’ use of laboratory data and possess knowledge of previous or current approaches to laboratory test quality used by healthcare payer organizations.

Participants must include panelists and thought leaders from public and private healthcare payer organizations.

The vendor is expected to help the project team recruit up to 10 representatives possessing titles, roles, or responsibilities such as:

- **Medical Director or Chief Medical Officer (CMO):** The medical director or CMO oversees all medical aspects of the insurer agency's operations, including laboratory testing.
- **Clinical Laboratory Director:** Applicable if an insurer has its own clinical laboratory, there will be a laboratory director responsible for overseeing all aspects of laboratory operations, including quality control and quality assurance measures.
- **Network Management Department:** Applicable where laboratory tests are outsourced to external laboratories or providers, the network management department plays a crucial role in selecting and contracting with high-quality laboratories.
- **Quality Assurance Department:** Primarily responsible for developing and implementing quality control procedures to ensure the accuracy and reliability of laboratory tests. They establish standards, protocols, and guidelines for laboratory testing processes and monitor adherence to these standards.
- **Insurer Utilization Management Department:** Review and approve requests for laboratory tests to ensure they are medically necessary and appropriate. This unit may also monitor patterns of test utilization to identify potential overutilization or inappropriate testing practices.
- **Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs)⁴:** PBMs work to secure lower drug costs for insurers and insurance companies. PBMs serve as middlemen between insurance companies, pharmacies, and drug manufacturers.
Laboratory Benefit Manager (LBMs): LBMs secure lower laboratory test cost for insurance companies, laboratories and test manufacturers. LBMs will select labs for a payer's network, then manage that network. They also manage claims and lab-test utilization, often reviewing medical necessity.

F. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

Applicants are required to complete an application and budget.

1. **Application:** Describe your organization's capacity and plans in detail to recruit participants, moderate the roundtable discussion, and prepare a report summarizing the discussion with recommendations for next steps.
2. **Budget Proposal:** The project budget proposal should reflect a project period of April 1, 2024, to July 15, 2024, and should not exceed \$50,000.

Itemize anticipated expenses related to staffing, equipment, supplies, travel, meeting logistics, contractors, and indirect/overhead costs.

Applicant proposals must include the following:

1. **Applicant Contact Information (2 points)**
 - a. Agency/Organization Name
 - b. Mailing Address/Physical Location
 - c. Primary Project of Contact (POC) Name
 - d. POC Title
 - e. POC Email Address
 - f. POC Phone Number
2. **Finance Contact** (necessary for NACDD contract request) **(2 points)**
 - a. Primary Fiscal Contact Name:
 - b. Title
 - c. Email Address
 - d. Phone Number
3. **Provide name, roles, and the responsibilities of staff that will be included in the project and their experience in services associated with this project. (2 points)**
4. **Provide name and contact information (e.g. email and phone number) for the person who will be responsible for signing the final contract agreement, (2 points)**
5. **Describe your organization's capacity to implement a virtual thought leader roundtable discussion, including details of your proposed approaches for recruiting targeted participants and preparing the required report.**
 - a. Demonstrated experience working with public/private payers.
 - b. Capabilities and capacity (i.e., portfolio of work on similar services or projects).
 - c. Examples of successful partnerships and past clients.
 - d. References
 - e. Years in business
6. **Experience in/ability to recruit target audience.**
 - a. Provide information on previous experience in recruiting the identified target population (see RFP Section E) for roundtables, focus groups, or other conversations.
 - b. State previous experience in coordinating, moderating, and/or implementing a thought leader roundtable discussion.
 - c. Describe experience in preparing a report summarizing notes and recommendations from a thought leader or roundtable discussion.

7. **Describe any existing or potential partnerships confirming evidence of direct connections to target roundtable participants. Applicants can provide supporting documents including existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements, list of subscribers, or evidence of partnerships with healthcare payers.**
8. **Describe proposed method for recruiting up to 10 participants for the virtual healthcare roundtable.**
9. **Describe proposed method for supporting implementation of the virtual roundtable. This includes services to help NACDD moderate one 60-minute virtual roundtable discussion.**
10. **Describe method for developing at least one report synthesizing the roundtable discussion. This report should highlight roundtable outcomes, as well as a summary of considerations and strategies for increasing use of high-quality standardized and harmonized hormone assays in clinical laboratories as mentioned by the healthcare roundtable participants.**

RFP Page Limits and Scoring Scale

RFP responses will be reviewed by a panel of subject matter experts with the following qualifications:

- Prior or current experience in working with healthcare payers,
- Skilled in coordinating and leading roundtable discussions, and/or
- Skilled in managing healthcare quality improvement initiatives.

Evaluation committee will assign a score for each evaluation criterion listed below and up to the maximum points (total 100 points).

Proposer must adhere to the following page limits.

SEGMENT	SECTION	PAGE LIMIT
Application	Applicant Contact Information	½ page
	Finance Contact	½ page
	Staff Responsibilities	½ page
	Person Responsible for Signing Contract	½ page
	Capacity to Implement Roundtable	1 Pages
	Experience/ability to recruit target audience	1 Pages
	Existing/potential connection to target group	1 Pages
	Method for recruiting up to 10 participants	3 Pages
	Method for supporting implementation of roundtable	2 Pages

Budget	Funding request	Use the provided Excel spreadsheet or submit a document providing the required budget breakdown.
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Response cannot exceed 10 single-spaced, one-sided pages. Budget response is not included in the 10 page limit.

SEGMENT	SECTION	MAXIMUM POINTS
Application	Applicant Contact Information	1 point
	Finance Contact	1 point
	Staff Responsibilities	1 point
	Person Responsible for Signing Contract	1 point
	Capacity to Implement Roundtable	10 points
	Experience/ability to recruit target audience	20 points
	Existing/potential connection to target group	10 points
	Method for recruiting up to 10 participants	25 points
	Method for supporting implementation of roundtable	25 points
Budget	Funding request	6 points
	TOTAL	100 points

Each section will receive a numeric score and rating criterion of either excellent, good, adequate, weak, or poor.

Rating	Definitions
Poor	No answer or inappropriate answer. Applicant did not address all aspects of the criterion and/or the information presented indicates a strong likelihood of not meeting the Developing State and Local Capacity for the Collection of Hereditary Cancer Data program goals.
Weak	Insufficient answer. Applicant did not address all aspects of the criterion and/or the information presented indicates the likelihood of not meeting the Developing State and Local Capacity for the Collection of Hereditary Cancer Data program goals.
Adequate	Adequate answer. Applicant addresses all aspects of the criterion and the information presented contains many minor weaknesses.
Good	Above average answer. Applicant addresses all aspects of the criterion and/or demonstrates the likelihood of meeting the Developing State and Local Capacity for the Collection of Hereditary Cancer Data program requirements with few minor weaknesses.
Excellent	Outstanding answer. Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion and/or demonstrates the likelihood of meeting the Developing State and Local Capacity for the Collection of Hereditary Cancer Data program requirements with no weaknesses.

Healthcare Payer Thought Leader Roundtable

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&A)

The following FAQ is provided below to help answer common questions about the application process.

Q. What is the approval process?

A. Proposals will be reviewed and scored by NACDD representatives. Vendor proposals will also complete a secondary review to ensure the selected applicant can legally receive funds from a federally funded contractual agreement.

Selected applicants will receive an approval notice from NACDD and receive questions to help NACDD establish a contractual agreement between NACDD and the selected vendor.

Q. What is NACDD's timeline for moving forward with this opportunity?

A. The following presents a tentative timeline for the Virtual Health Payer Roundtable RFP (listed as number of workdays): (To be Updated with Release of RFP announcement)

- April 10, 2024: NACDD notifies the selected vendor and establishes contract agreement.
- April 11, 2024, or April 12, 2024 (subject to change): Kickoff Meeting
- April 2024: NACDD and Vendor modify roundtable materials.
- April/May 2024: Vendor sends meeting invites and correspondence to target audience (healthcare payers).
- April/May 2024: NACDD secures participant information from confirmed guests.
- Full service period: April 1, 2024, to July 15, 2024

Q. To whom should the cover letter and proposal be addressed?

A. The cover letter and proposal should be addressed to John W. Robitscher, MPH, NACDD Chief Executive Officer, 101 W. Ponce De Leon Avenue, Suite 400, Decatur, Georgia, 30030. All proposals must be submitted by email to nmccoy_ic@chronicdisease.org.

Q. What is the timeline for review and approval?

A. Responses will be reviewed and approved within ten days after the RFP deadline.

Q. What exactly is the contract award intended to cover?

A. Awarded funds will compensate vendor for completion of project deliverables. NACDD will provide a percentage (up to 20%) of the awarded amount upfront to initiate delivery of services. The remaining funds will be disbursed using a negotiated payment schedule.

Applicants must submit a project budget using the provided Budget Form (Excel Spreadsheet) and identify what funds will be used for.

Q. If the goal is to launch the virtual thought leader roundtable in Spring 2024, why is the anticipated period of performance ending on June 15, 2024?

A. We aim to grant the chosen vendor a minimum of two (2) weeks following the virtual roundtable to deliver a comprehensive report encompassing a synthesized overview of the discussion, pivotal findings/considerations, and any recommendations for CDC and NACDD's next actions.

Q: Will the selected vendor receive any assistance?

A: Yes, NACDD and CDC will collaborate with the selected vendor throughout every stage of this project. CDC and NACDD have developed numerous materials, including the virtual roundtable discussion agenda and questions, and will be provided to the final vendor. The final vendor will be asked to review prepared materials and advise on any edits or modifications needed to recruit desired participant audience.

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors is responsible for processing payment and all follow-up correspondence with confirmed thought leader participants.

Q: Is there a page limit for the response?

A: Applicants are asked to limit the response to 10 pages. Provide hyperlinks to supporting documents in the appendix. Applicants must also complete and submit the provided NACDD Budget Sheet.

Q: Is there a chance the project timeline will be modified at any time?

A: Modifications to the project timeline and deliverables may be considered by the CDC Division of Laboratory Sciences. The selected vendor will be responsible for completing all project deliverables and providing invoice packages by the stated deadlines. Project activities and reporting must be completed and submitted to NACDD by no later than July 15, 2024.

Q: Can an applicant partner with an additional company or service provider to complete contract deliverables?

A: Applicants can propose a partnership with an additional company but must include details about the partnership in your application. The partner must also meet some or all of the eligibility criteria outlined in this request for proposal. The applicant is responsible for compensating the additional partner for their time and services. NACDD must receive the same required proposal information from the subcontractor and verify that the partner organization is in good standing and can legally be included in a federally fund contract. If the partner organization is not in good standing with federal rules and regulations, the applicant risks receiving lower consideration or being deemed unable to apply for this contract.

Q: Do you know which public and private payers will be contacted?

A: The selected vendor is responsible for primary recruitment activities. CDC and NACDD have maintained a list of potential contacts who will also be contacted by the agency with closest ties to that potential contact.

Q. Can you describe what is meant by “public and private healthcare payers?”

A. A healthcare payer (also called healthcare payor) is an organization responsible for handling the processing patient eligibility, services, claims, enrollment, and payment of health care claims⁴ and associated wraparound healthcare support services. Examples of public payers include Medicare, Medicaid, and other public assistance plans. Private payers include any company authorized to manage health insurance coverage provided through an employer, union, or the Health Insurance Marketplace.

Q. How much will thought leader roundtable participants receive? Who is responsible for distributing the stipend?

A. Roundtable participants will receive a one-time stipend of \$250 for their time and contribution. The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors is responsible for providing this payment. The selected vendor is not eligible to receive the stipend.

Q. Are there any specific responsibilities regarding the recruitment of virtual roundtable participants?

A. Yes, the selected vendor must state your plan for recruiting the target roundtable participants mentioned in Section E. Vendor is also responsible for providing NACDD a contact list presenting the names and contact information of anyone invited to participate in the virtual roundtable. Privacy concerns will be upheld on a case-by-case basis.

Q. How much time is needed to set up the vendor contract?

A. NACDD will work to establish the new vendor's contract as quickly as possible. A new vendor contract typically requires 2-4 weeks to set up.

Q. How will the selected vendor be notified?

A. The selected vendor will be contacted by Natasha McCoy, NACDD Senior Public Health Consultant. All applicants will be notified when the final vendor enters into a contractual agreement with NACDD.

Q. Is it possible to request a meeting if I have a question?

A. Yes, please contact Natasha M. McCoy, NACDD Senior Public Health Consultant at nmccoy_ic@chronicdisease.org to request a direct meeting. McCoy will work with you to coordinate a meeting with the project team to discuss your proposed solution once a selection has been made.

Q. Who is the Point of Contact (POC) for this project?

A. The Point of Contact is Natasha McCoy, MPH, NACDD Senior Public Health Consultant. McCoy can be reached at nmccoy_ic@chronicdisease.org.

Q. Will the applicant be able to contact CDC at any time during the request for proposal?

A. All questions must be directed to the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors.

Q. Can applications be submitted by mail?

A. No, proposals must be submitted by email to nmccoy_ic@chronicdisease.org. **MUST** use email subject line "RFP: 2024 Virtual Roundtable."

FUNDER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

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REFERENCES

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