REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:
CA BRIDGE PROGRAM – SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIPS

A. Introduction

The Public Health Institute (PHI) is a global leader in public health. PHI is dedicated to promoting health, well-being, and quality of life for people around the world through innovative solutions and collaborative partnerships. Additional information may be found at https://www.phi.org.

The goal of PHI’s CA Bridge Program is to increase access to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders. The program seeks to increase access to Medication for Addiction Treatment (MAT) for substance use disorder (SUD) in hospital emergency departments (EDs) and inpatient units. Additional information can be found at https://www.bridgetotreatment.org/

One of the essential components of the CA Bridge Program is the Substance Use Navigator (SUN) who works in the ED to help initiate treatment and provide navigation of services to ensure that patients receive follow up SUD treatment after they leave the hospital. Research has found an increase in treatment engagement when ED initiated MAT is combined with coordinated follow-up.

As a peer support, the SUN (or similar position) helps coordinate care and facilitate referral to the appropriate level of care outside the hospital setting. The SUN conducts initial brief assessments, introduces patients to MAT programs and services, expedites appointments at MAT-capable outpatient clinics, serves as the primary coach for their clients, and maintains ongoing contact with their panel. They also assist with access to other services such as financial counseling, primary care, mental health services, social services, and residential treatment facilities. The SUN helps facilitate referral to the appropriate level of care outside the hospital setting at a time when patients are recognized to be at higher risk for opioid overdoses. With immediate MAT initiation and ongoing support, patients are more likely to remain in treatment and reduce further opioid use.

B. Purpose

SUNs currently employed through the CA Bridge Program are hired as hospital staff or through an ED staffing group and supported through statewide grant funds that are time limited. Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), PHI seeks to identify at least four awardees to pilot models for financing, hiring, or deploying SUNs that can be sustained without grant funding in the future. The overall goal of this solicitation is to a) determine which of these strategies could be adopted more broadly throughout the state and b) inform our advocacy for state policy changes that would make these strategies more viable.

Applicants may be eligible to receive $50,000 - $80,000 of funding to implement SUN sustainability pilots for up to 12 months; funding amounts will vary by site based on the scale, complexity and costs associated with the project. Funding may support staffing, training, EHR
modifications, policy and protocol development, data reporting, or other systems required to implement effective strategies for testing the viability of the pilots.

CA Bridge will assist selected pilot institutions to carry out the tasks and functions specified in their agreements by providing the following services through CA Bridge team members and expert consultants:

1. Provide assistance with model conceptualization and assistance overcoming implementation barriers
2. Broker relationships between parties
3. Provide access to state and federal policy clarification
4. Provide technical assistance with billing and/or data collection
5. Document the lessons learned from the pilot project

C. Sustainability Pilot Requirements

Applications must meet the following requirements:

1. The pilot project must involve at least one hospital that has established and has on staff, or commit to establishing and hiring, the position of SUN, behavioral health counselor, or similar position that fills the functions described in Section A.

2. The project must involve a partnership between at least two of the following entities (two including the lead applicant organization):
   a. Acute care hospital
   b. Emergency department staffing group
   c. Managed care plan
   d. County substance use or behavioral health department
   e. Community health center or community-based organization

3. The lead applicant may be any one of the above institutions.

4. Pilots shall test one or more strategies for sustainability described in the paper Options to Support Substance Use Navigators in Emergency Departments. Alternative strategies can also be proposed but must lead towards more stable funding or greater sustainability of the SUN position.

D. Application Requirements

1. Completed application not exceeding 4 pages (single spaced, 12-point font), exclusive of cover sheet.

2. Letter(s) of support from entity/entities that will be partnering with the applicant.

E. Application Guidelines
1. Agreement Type

PHI intends to issue up to four fixed price, milestone-based agreements to successful applicants identified from this RFA process.

2. Federal Funding

Agreements are subject to the approval of and the receipt by PHI of funding from the State of California’s Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS). DHCS’ funding of the CA Bridge Program is federal pass-through money from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHSS). Accordingly, agreements will include standard federal rules and regulations, notably 2 CFR 200, and applicable rules and regulations from the State of California. PHI will incorporate the applicable federal and state rules and regulations into the terms of conditions of the agreements.

3. Compliance Requirements

PHI is unable to issue an agreement to any entity that is listed with the General Services Administration as debarred or suspended. Additionally, successful applicants must be registered in the System for Award Management (www.sam.gov) prior to PHI issuing an agreement for negotiation.

4. PHI’s Discretion

PHI may, at its sole discretion and after the evaluation process, choose not to issue any agreement as a result of this process. PHI may also, at its sole discretion, choose to issue as many or as few agreements as deemed necessary to meet PHI’s business needs. PHI may, at its sole discretion, issue the agreements for any dollar amount deemed appropriate by PHI to meet the program and business needs. PHI may, at its sole discretion, structure site budget amounts and payment amounts to meet program objectives and funder requirements, including base and option period (incremental) funding.

5. Application Costs

There is no reimbursement for costs associated with preparing or submission of applications in response to this RFA or costs associated with possible award negotiation.

F. Submission of Applications & Deadline

Submit applications via email to: Serena Clayton
Program Director, California Bridge Program
Public Health Institute
Email: serena@bridgetotreatment.org
Application deadline is:

- September 30, 2020
- October 16, 2020
- 5:00 pm – Pacific Standard Time

Applications must be submitted via email only; hard copies of applications will not be accepted. Applications received after the above deadline may not be considered.

G. *Anticipated Timeline, Questions, and Evaluation*

1. **Anticipated Timeline**

PHI intends to follow the below timeline for review and award of this RFP:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Release of RFP</td>
<td>August 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application due date</td>
<td>September 30, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 16, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial selection notification and request for additional</td>
<td>October 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td>October 30, 2020</td>
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</tbody>
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At PHI’s discretion, the above timeline is subject to change to best meet programmatic needs and further requirements, as applicable.

2. **Questions**

CA Bridge will accept questions from potential applicants to assist in the preparation of fundable proposals. Please submit questions by email to serena@bridgetotreatment.org with the subject line: Sustainability Pilot Question. We will attempt to respond to questions within two business days and will post Q&A on our website at https://www.bridgetotreatment.org/sustainability.

3. **Evaluation**

PHI will select applicants who present the most complete and responsive applications.

An internal evaluation team will use the following criteria to evaluate the applications:

- Commitment to having comprehensive SUN services offered in the ED for the duration of the pilot
- Feasibility of implementation of the proposed pilot sustainability strategy. (Note: A partnership between two entities is required, and additional partners neither adds to nor detracts from the competitiveness of the proposal.)
- Likelihood that the proposed pilot strategy will improve long term sustainability for the SUN position
• Clarity and feasibility of the data collection and documentation plan required to capture pilot outcomes and answer the question: Was a sustainable business model achieved?
• Clarity of how funds will be used by each partner institution to implement the pilot strategy.

At PHI’s discretion, the above evaluation criteria are subject to change to best meet programmatic needs and funder requirements, as applicable.