

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS RFA # 2462

TITLE: North Carolina Culture Change Coalition Enhancement Grant
FUNDING AGENCY: DHHS/Division of Health Service Regulation
ISSUE DATE: April 2, 2015

FUNDING AGENCY: 2711 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2711, or overnight mail to 1205 Umstead Drive, Raleigh, NC 27603

IMPORTANT NOTE: Indicate the RFA number on the first page of your application. The font needs to be Times New Roman, 12 point, and shall include the entity name and page number on all pages. Submission is limited to 16 pages, not counting the cover letter.

Applications, subject to the conditions made a part of hereof, will be received through April 2, 2016 for furnishing services described herein. Submit your application electronically, in a word document, to Becky.Wertz@dhhs.nc.gov.

SEND ALL APPLICATIONS DIRECTLY TO THE FUNDING AGENCY ADDRESS SHOWN ABOVE.

Direct all inquiries concerning this RFA to: Becky Wertz, telephone # 919-855-4580, e-mail address: Becky.Wertz@dhhs.nc.gov,

NOTE: Questions concerning the specifications in this Request for Applications will be received through December 31, 2015. A summary of all questions and answers will be e-mailed to all agencies and organizations sent a copy of this Request for Applications quarterly from July 2, 2015 through December 31, 2015.

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the NC Culture Change Coalition enhancement grant program is to improve the quality of life for residents in certified nursing homes through promoting positive environmental and cultural changes within these homes. The objective of the program is the development and implementation of funded projects showcasing a variety of cultural change enhancement philosophies. Eligible nursing homes must be dually certified (Medicare and Medicaid), Medicare only certified, or Medicaid only certified.

A contract between the nursing home and the Division of Health Service Regulation (DHSR), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), will be in effect for the duration of the entire grant period. In addition, grantees must adhere to the North Carolina Office of the State Auditor's requirements for the use of funds by non-state entities, as outlined in G.S. 143C-6-22 and 23. For more information on these requirements, consult the website at <https://www.ncgrants.gov>. It is the expectation that the grantee will adhere to all conditions of the contract they have entered into with DHSR. Failure on the part of a grantee to comply with the explicit contractual obligations of the award shall result in remedies up to the withholding of grant funds and may include termination of an award and repayment of monies issued.

BACKGROUND

The grants are made possible by the utilization of penalty monies collected by the North Carolina DHHS, DHSR, from federal enforcement actions under the 1987 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA). The grant program is implemented through a partnership of the NC Culture Change Coalition, DHSR and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Assembling the proposal and describing the scope of services - this information will form the basis for the contract with DHSR.

All proposals must adhere to the following format:

Cover letter: Include a cover letter that introduces your organization, explains the purpose of the project, and contains a summary of your proposal. The cover letter should include the amount of funding that you are requesting, the population it will serve, and the need it will help solve. Make a concerted effort to bring your project to life in the cover letter and actively engage the reader.

Include the RFA #, the DUNS # if applicable (A D&B® D-U-N-S® Number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 100 million businesses worldwide), the nursing home status (profit, non-profit, state operated), the date, nursing home address, mailing address (if different from street address), telephone number, fax number, the administrator's name, administrator e-mail address, Federal Tax ID # and fiscal year end date. Identify the person authorized to manage all elements of compliance for the duration of the grant period. Include contact information specific to this individual.

Project abstract: Provide an abstract summary of the project that is no longer than one page. Include the requester's background and qualifications, the need for the project, a brief description of the project and its goals and objectives. Of the utmost importance is information regarding how the project will be evaluated to measure its success. Identify the person who will be accountable for the project evaluation. Include contact information specific to this individual.

Statement of need: The statement of need should describe the problem that the project will attempt to address. Also describe any problems that may be encountered in the implementation of this project. Articulate the contingency plan to address these issues (i.e. consider policies that may need to be written or updated; consider training for staff, residents and families; consider regulatory compliance).

Program description: Describe the project or program and provide information on how it will be implemented. Include information on what will be accomplished and the desired outcomes. A timeline shall accompany all proposals which outline benchmarks, deliverables and dates. Deliverables shall include quarterly reports to the state survey agency and CMS. The timeline shall include your goals for enhancement, education and implementation.

The grant application should identify which program(s), philosophy(ies), or method(s) of culture change that have been selected and a brief description of those concepts. Attach a list (i.e. books, websites, articles, training programs, conferences, etc.) that references the resources used in making the decision for using the specific enhancement model(s).

Results measurement: Each contract with DHSR and every CMS civil money penalty (CMP) grant is required to be performance based. To accomplish this, all grant recipients are required to select or develop a method for continuously monitoring the effects enhancements have on the nursing home's staff and residents. From this monitoring process, grantees will report on three (3) measures of performance. One (1) effect must be a measure of satisfaction, and the other two (2) must demonstrate effects of the enhancement on the nursing home's quality of care and/or quality of life.

Baselines for performance measures should be established within the grant's first reporting quarter. Grantees are expected to measure satisfaction through survey methods to be conducted, at a minimum, at the start of the grant period (first quarterly report), at midpoint in the grant period, and at the end of the grant period (final quarterly report). The two remaining performance measures must be reported quarterly.

Grantees shall measure satisfaction of the residents and/or families and staff affected by the enhancement project through devised methods. Others within the nursing home may be surveyed at the discretion of the grantee.

The Division recognizes that for performance measures to reflect the overall success of a project, the measures must be meaningful, responsibility-linked, organizationally acceptable, recipient focused, balanced, timely, credible, comparable and simple to explain. Grantees shall consider assessing the impact and value of the enhancement project the nursing home is implementing, demonstrating accountability for the project and the overall goal of the project when identifying the performance measures to track. Performance measures must show the extent of a change and measure what happened versus what was planned to happen.

All performance measures must be coupled with evaluation data and narrative analysis to increase understanding of why results occur and to identify what value the enhancement adds. Each grantee shall describe the specific method(s) with which the achievements of identified outcomes will be measured or verified. Supporting documentation demonstrating formulation is requested (i.e. tracking forms, questionnaires, etc.).

Quarterly reports will be submitted to the state survey agency and the state survey agency will forward to CMS.

Benefits to nursing home residents: Provide a detailed description of the manner in which the project will directly benefit and enhance the well-being of nursing home residents. Clearly and specifically state what the enhancement goals are for your nursing home. Focus on how these goals will improve the quality of life and/or the quality of care for the residents in the nursing home. Describe in detail how the planned enhancements correlate with the chosen philosophy concepts.

Stakeholder involvement: Describe in detail how all members of the nursing home, including the staff, residents, and residents' families, will be educated on the enhancement philosophies chosen and the enhancements to be implemented in the nursing home. Identify strategies that shall be used to educate staff, residents and family members, thus achieving a buy-in for the enhancement goals. Include a brief description of how the residents, family councils and direct care staff will be involved in the development and implementation of the project. Describe how the governing body of the nursing home shall lend support to the project. Specify any volunteer groups or outside agencies that shall lend support to the project.

Funding: Include an excel spreadsheet with the budget expenses for the project, along with a narrative explanation of the costs. Describe how you arrived at the costs. You may include vendor information. The budget must coincide with the project goals. Mention any co-funding that you are planning to use from other sources. The narrative shall include the specific amount of CMP funds to be used for the project, the time period for such use, and an estimate of any non-CMP funds that the nursing home expects to be contributed to the project.

Sustainability: Referencing the enhancement goals and plans for implementing changes, describe how the nursing home will continue to support the enhancement efforts once the grant funds have been depleted. This includes both funding for any continuing costs, as well as measuring the effectiveness of the project for improving the residents' quality of life.

Involved organizations: List any sub-contractors that are expected to carry out and be responsible for components of the project. Copies of subcontracts shall be available upon request to CMS and the state survey agency. Please submit DHSR construction approval or documentation that the review is in process, if applicable. Examples of applicability include but are not limited to: outdoor projects, bathing room changes, dining room enhancements, and reconstruction. If applicable, provide copies of any building permits or other required approvals.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

The selection committee, comprised of members of the NC Culture Change Coalition, will review each application submitted. Applications will be reviewed every month.

Upon review of each application the selection committee will rate each required area as: incomplete, needs improvement, acceptable or exceptional. Each nursing home applicant with any area identified below acceptable will be contacted by a NC Culture Change Coalition member to offer assistance and guidance in improving the area. Once each area of each application is at least acceptable, the applicant will be instructed to merge their grant proposal into the CMS CMP application. Then the Nursing Home Licensure & Certification Section will forward the application to CMS for review. Once an application is approved by CMS, the Nursing Home Licensure & Certification Section will begin the contract process.

GRANT LENGTH

The funding period for the enhancement grants will be one or two years, depending on the length of time requested to complete a proposed project, beginning with the date of the individual contracts and ending with the expenditure of grant funds.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Funding is provided by the Division of Health Service Regulation, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services through the federal enforcement action under Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA). The total amount of grant funding available is \$1,000,000. Grants will be awarded in amounts not to exceed \$24,000. The number of grants awarded will be based on the number of qualified applicants. Funds may be used for a variety of enhancements, with the exception of: staff salaries; capital improvements; partial support for large-scale construction projects; and expenditures needed for regulatory compliance.

FUNDS DISBURSEMENT

To receive compensation via grant money, grantees must submit a reimbursement request to the Nursing Home Licensure & Certification Section, no more than monthly, for expenses incurred. Some grantees may only have a one time reimbursement request. Copies of original receipts or invoices must accompany the reimbursement request. An approved DHSR expense report form, signed by the person responsible for completing the form, must accompany copies of the receipts or invoices in order for grant funds to be dispersed. Expenditures can begin immediately upon receipt of a completely signed contract. Timely dispersal of grant money will be dependent upon the grantee's compliance with the reimbursement and reporting requirements set by a contract with DHSR, North Carolina DHHS and its addenda.

DHSR MONITORING OF GRANT FOR CONTRACT COMPLIANCE

The grantee must adhere to the budget as exactly stated in their approved grant proposal. Should the grantee find it necessary to deviate from the proposal's budget, prior to expending the funds, a written request, along with an explanation of the deviation, must be submitted to DHSR. Without formal approval of the deviation request from DHSR, the grantee shall be expected to adhere to the terms of the original grant contract and grant proposal.

- **DHSR and CMS Reporting Requirements:** Grantees shall complete and submit to DHSR a written quarterly narrative report detailing their progress for the duration of the grant contract period. This report shall also include performance monitoring data and analysis. The performance monitoring analysis, based on data review, must demonstrate what changes have occurred and the association between the changes, explanation for any deviation (positive or negative) for outcomes other than those projected, and any alteration to the program for further improvement. Quarterly reports shall include any CMS conditions or requests that were listed in the CMS approval letter. All quarterly reports will be reviewed for compliance with DHSR contract monitoring guidelines, and compliance with the grant proposal. DHSR will provide a copy of all quarterly reports to CMS.
- Grantees must also complete and submit to DHSR a quarterly expense report until all funds have been expended. The expense report must be completed on a DHSR-approved form and must reflect costs incurred during the prior fiscal quarter reflected in that quarter's reimbursement bills. All grant expenses will be reviewed for accuracy, compliance with DHSR contract monitoring guidelines, and compliance with the grant proposal.

- A final grant report shall be submitted to DHSR within 30 days of the termination of the grant period. This report shall identify the results incurred through the changes supported by the grant money and these results should use the performance monitoring data and analysis found in the quarterly grant reports. DHSR will provide a copy to CMS.
- To maintain the integrity of the grant program, DHSR personnel serving on behalf of the Coalition, will make a planned, on-site visit annually during the grant period to each grant receiving nursing home to monitor grant compliance. Additional visits may be conducted as needed to assess compliance.
- **NC Office of the State Auditor Reporting Requirements:** Within 6 months after the end of their fiscal year, grantees are required to access NC Grants online and submit two reports in order to comply with statute G.S. 143C-6.23. Specifically, these reports are: State Grant Certification and Sworn Statement (NGO Form 0001), and State Grants Compliance Reporting Receipt of < \$25,000 (NGO Form 0002). This information is available through <https://www.ncgrants.gov>. Failure to submit this information on time could result in a grantee's name being placed on the state auditor's public list of non-compliant grantees.

The Procurement Process

The following is a general description of the process by which an agency or organization will be selected to complete the goal or objective.

1. Written questions concerning the RFA specifications will be received until the date specified on the cover sheet of this RFA. A summary of all questions and answers will be mailed to all agencies and organizations sent a copy of the RFA.
2. **Applications in one original and (at least two) copies** will be received from each agency or organization. The original must be signed and dated by an official authorized to bind the agency or organization.
3. All applications must be received by the funding agency not later than the date and time specified on the cover sheet of the RFA. Faxed applications will not be accepted.
4. At that date and time the applications from each responding agency and organization will be logged in. Budgets will be included as part of the application.
5. At their option, the evaluators may request additional information from any or all applicants for the purpose of clarification or to amplify the materials presented in any part of the application. However, agencies and organizations are cautioned that the evaluators are not required to request clarification: therefore, all applications should be complete and reflect the most favorable terms available from the agency or organization.
6. Applications will be evaluated according to completeness, content, experience with similar projects, ability of the agency's or organization's staff, cost, etc. The award of a grant to one agency and organization does not mean that the other applications lacked merit, but that, all facts considered, the selected application was deemed to provide the best service to the State.
7. Agencies and organizations are cautioned that this is a request for applications, and the funding agency reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all applications when such rejections are deemed to be in the best interest of the funding agency.

General Information on Submitting Applications

1. **Award or Rejection**
All qualified applications will be evaluated and award made to that agency or organization whose combination of budget and service capabilities is deemed to be in the best interest of the funding agency. The funding agency reserves the unqualified right to reject any or all offers if determined to be in its best interest. Successful applicants will be notified after final CMS approval.
2. **Decline to Offer**
Any agency or organization that receives a copy of the RFA but declines to make an offer is requested to send a written "Decline to Offer" to the funding agency. Failure to respond as requested may subject the

- agency or organization to removal from consideration of future RFAs.
3. **Cost of Application Preparation**
Any cost incurred by an agency or organization in preparing or submitting an application is the agency's or organization's sole responsibility; the funding agency will not reimburse any agency or organization for any pre-award costs incurred.
 4. **Elaborate Applications**
Elaborate applications in the form of brochures or other presentations beyond that necessary to present a complete and effective application are not desired.
 5. **Oral Explanations**
The funding agency will not be bound by oral explanations or instructions given at any time during the competitive process or after awarding the grant.
 6. **Reference to Other Data**
Only information that is received in response to this RFA will be evaluated; reference to information previously submitted will not suffice.
 7. **Titles**
Titles and headings in this RFA and any subsequent RFA are for convenience only and shall have no binding force or effect.
 8. **Form of Application**
Each application must be submitted on the form provided by the funding agency, and will be incorporated into the funding agency's Performance Agreement (contract).
 9. **Exceptions**
All applications are subject to the terms and conditions outlined herein. All responses will be controlled by such terms and conditions. The attachment of other terms and condition by any agency and organization may be grounds for rejection of that agency or organization's application. Funded agencies and organizations specifically agree to the conditions set forth in the Performance Agreement (contract).
 10. **Advertising**
In submitting its application, agencies and organizations agree not to use the results therefrom or as part of any news release or commercial advertising without prior written approval of the funding agency.
 11. **Right to Submitted Material**
All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to the RFA, and all other reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the agency or organization will become the property of the funding agency when received.
 12. **Competitive Offer**
Pursuant to the provision of G.S. 143-54, and under penalty of perjury, the signer of any application submitted in response to this RFA thereby certifies that this application has not been arrived at collusively or otherwise in violation of either Federal or North Carolina antitrust laws.
 13. **Agency and organization's Representative**
Each agency or organization shall submit with its application the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the agency or organization and answer questions or provide clarification concerning the application.
 14. **Subcontracting**
Agencies and organizations may propose to subcontract portions of work provided that their applications clearly indicate the scope of the work to be subcontracted, and to whom. All information required about the prime grantee is also required for each proposed subcontractor.
 15. **Proprietary Information**
Trade secrets or similar proprietary data which the agency or organization does not wish disclosed to other than personnel involved in the evaluation will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by NCAC TO1: 05B.1501 and G.S. 132-1.3 if identified as follows: Each page shall be identified in boldface at the top and bottom as "CONFIDENTIAL." Any section of the application that is to remain confidential shall also be so marked in boldface on the title page of that section.
 16. **Participation Encouraged**
Pursuant to Article 3 and 3C, Chapter 143 of the North Carolina General Statutes and Executive Order No. 77, the funding agency invites and encourages participation in this RFA by businesses owned by minorities, women and the disabled including utilization as subcontractor(s) to perform functions under this Request for Applications.
 17. **Contract**

The Division will issue a contract to the recipient of the grant that will include their application. Expenditures can begin immediately upon receipt of a completely signed contract.

Please be advised that successful applicants may be required to have an audit in accordance with G. S. 143-6.2 as applicable to the agency or organization's status. Also, the contract may include assurances the successful applicant would be required to execute when signing the contract. Agencies or organizations receiving Federal funds would be required to execute a Consolidated Federal Certification form (as applicable). Private not-for-profit agency contracts would also include a conflict of interest policy statement.