Request for Bid:

Data Validation for the Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Challenge

Applications due: August 7, 2013, by 11:59 pm ET

I. Purpose:
The purpose of this request for bid is to implement a Data Validation Project for the Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Challenge.

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC), Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention seeks applications from contractors that have expertise in health-related data validation and in conducting background checks on healthcare providers. The budget for this work should not exceed $120,000.

NACDD will fund one (1) contractor to implement this one-time, time-limited data validation project. Contractors who are interested in this project and can meet the urgent timeframes outlined below are invited to submit bids to NACDD by August 7, 2013, by 11:59 p.m.

Funding will be via a contract process to begin on or around August 15, 2013 and end by September 15, 2013 (all dates are approximate until funding is awarded).

The purpose of this task is to acquire expertise and services in validating the hypertension control rates submitted by potential champions through the
Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Challenge and conducting a background check as described in Section VII below.

II. Background on Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Challenge:
Million Hearts® is a national initiative to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017, and is led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and supporting Department of Health and Human Services agencies. Achieving this goal means that 10 million more Americans must have their blood pressure under control. Million Hearts® is working to reach this goal through clinical approaches, such as using health information technology to its fullest potential and integrating team-based approaches to care, as well as community approaches, such as strengthening tobacco control, reducing smoking, and improving nutrition through decreased sodium and artificial trans-fat consumption. Doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and community health workers play a key role in helping Americans control their blood pressure.

In an effort to reduce the population with uncontrolled high blood pressure, CDC is planning a Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Challenge. Through this challenge the CDC expects to identify clinicians, practices and health systems that are able to demonstrate exceptional levels of hypertension control within their patient population. The challenge will:

1) Identify large and small clinical practices and health systems with hypertension control rates greater than 70%.
2) Identify federal or governmental health care systems that document hypertension control rates greater than 70%.
3) Document standard and innovative system-level processes or approaches used by high performers to achieve exemplary hypertension control rates.

The challenge will be open to any private health care clinician, medical practice or health system providing primary care and specialty care for hypertensive patients. Nominees will submit two aggregate hypertension control rate data points approximately 12 months apart, practice or system demographics that describe the practice patient population as a whole, and system-specific data such as the use of health information technology,
incentives, team-based care, efforts to improve appropriate medication use and persistence, and community linkages.

Recognition will be made in two broad categories based on the number of patients served. Federal entities will be judged independently from private practices and clinicians. Federal entities will receive recognition but no monetary reward, therefore data submitted by federal entities will also need to be validated by the selected contractor.

A score will be generated for each nominee based on established criteria. The finalists (highest scorers) will be reviewed by an expert panel of judges and a list of proposed Champions will be compiled.

Up to fourteen Champions will be recognized from the private sector in 2013, and at most seven from the federal sector. Private sector Champions will be recognized by CDC and receive a cash award. CDC reserves the right to disqualify a proposed Champion if questionable data or background information is obtained, and propose a replacement Champion.

CDC anticipates announcing Champions in September 2013. The Challenge is contingent upon approval of an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Information Collection Request, which is currently pending approval. CDC anticipates launch of the Challenge August 1, a 21-30-day nomination period, 1 week for scoring and proposing champions, and 3-4 weeks for data validation. If OMB approval is not received to allow a August 1 launch date, the Challenge will move forward, but with a Champion announcement date late in the calendar year.

Each Champion will participate in the development of a success story to be posted on the Million Hearts® website. CDC anticipates this will be the first of three annual Challenges, pending evaluation of the response to the Challenge and public health impact.

III. Eligible Applicants:
Contractors that have the following qualification are eligible to apply:
• Expertise in conducting data validation and have workforces that can accomplish this project in the robust timeline indicated below.
• Expert knowledge and experience with clinical measurement and indicators as they apply to data validation processes.
• Experience working with large organizations in the development and implementation of validation protocols.
• Ability to provide background checks on clinicians, practices and health systems applying for this Challenge.

IV. Available Funding:
NACDD has a maximum of $120,000 available in funding for this project pending final approval from the CDC. This is the entire amount available to meet the project deliverables set forth below. Payment will be provided via a disbursement schedule set forth upon the following deliverables being met:

• Payment #1: Provided upon receipt of signed contract
• Payment #2: Provided upon receipt of documentation of successful completion of all deliverables

Receipt for final payment must be submitted within 30 days of project completion; however, final deliverables must be documented as completed with approval from the collaborators by September 15, 2013. (These dates are contingent upon the actual launch date of the Challenge, currently pending OMB approval.) If data collection is not approved by OMB prior to the anticipated project period, the project period will be extended based on the final approval date.

V. Project Period:
The anticipated project period for this data validation project is August 15 - September 15, 2013. Dates are subject to change pending final approval from the CDC on project timelines (See Section IV above).

VI. Use of Funds:
Funds must be used in accordance with the project deliverables listed below. Funds may not be used for travel, lobbying, alcohol, tobacco products, or other non-governmental-approved items.
The selected contractor may use funds as needed to provide all data validation and background check services and documentation and may include staffing or consultation support, telecommunications, data validation or background check fees, and other fees as approved by NACDD based on the budget template provided by the selected vendor.

VII. Project Deliverables, Task List, Outputs, and Outcomes:
The selected contractor shall collaborate with NACDD and CDC staff to consult and provide expert advice on activities to carry out the validation and background check. The contractor shall both advise development and carry out implementation of all aspects of the processes described below. The CDC will provide to the selected contractor via email a list of nominees and their contact information for the data validation and background check process. The contractor will work with the nominees on collecting and validating the data submitted.

Data validation of the reported hypertension control rate will be conducted for the proposed Champions. Data validation may be implemented using a tiered approach based on the “reasonableness” of hypertension control data. Data verification may include one or more of the following activities: a remote review to verify electronic data, a random hard copy or electronic de-identified record review, and/or verification through other reporting. Other proposed options will be considered based on the expertise of offerors.

In addition, a background check on proposed Champions will be conducted that includes, at a minimum, license verification and search of the Office of the Inspector General List of Excluded Individuals and Entities. Champions must be free from convictions or pending investigations of criminal and health care fraud offenses such as felony health care fraud, patient abuse or neglect; felony convictions for other health care-related fraud, theft, or other financial misconduct; and felony convictions relating to unlawful manufacture, distribution, prescription, or dispensing of controlled substances as verified through the Office of the Inspector General List of Excluded Individuals and Entities. Other proposed options will be considered based on the expertise of offeror.
Task List:

Task 1: Meet with NACDD and CDC via phone (anticipated to be weekly or biweekly). No onsite meetings are anticipated.

Task 2: Conduct background check equivalent to or more in-depth than described in section VII. CDC anticipates that all proposed Champions that participate in data validation will also undergo a background check, but will consider one review contingent upon successful completion of the other.

Task 3: Validate data for proposed Champions. In 2013, CDC anticipates 14 private sector Champions and up to seven Federal sector Champions. A sufficient number of validations will be required to yield the anticipated number of Champions. This task includes, but is not limited to:

- Developing a protocol for validating hypertension control data that includes an anticipated number of nominees to review that would yield a final number of 14 Champions within the private sector with valid data and seven from the federal sector with valid data.
  - Submit to NACDD and CDC a data validation protocol for prior approval.
  - A protocol including a tiered approach, based on “reasonableness” of data, or multiple approaches depending on the source of provider data (e.g., electronic health record, registry, paper records) is expected.
  - Timeline.
  - Definition of non-responsive participant.
- Conduct validation.

Task 4: Submit a brief summary report that identifies proposed Champions who receive an acceptable rating on the data validation and background check. For any proposed Champions that are disqualified, the report will briefly summarize the reason(s). This report will be kept in confidence and will only be shared with the NACDD and the CDC.

Outputs:

a. A timeline for completing the project.
b. A background check protocol.
c. A protocol for validating clinical hypertension control rate reported.
d. A report that identifies potential Champions excluded from consideration and a brief reason why. The report should also include any potential candidates that were non-responsive.

Outcomes:
a. A list of up to 21 proposed Champions that have been screened and whose data submission has been validated such that CDC can confidently recognize the provider or health system as a “Hypertension Control Champion.”
b. A list of lessons learned regarding the process that will inform subsequent Challenges.

VIII. Bid Requirements
1. Bids exceeding six single-spaced pages will not be reviewed (budget not included in page limit).
2. Late bids (electronically stamped by the sender after August 7, 2013, 11:59 pm ET) will not be accepted by NACDD.
3. Font size no smaller than 10-point Times New Roman, single-spaced.
4. Include page numbers and section headings in application.
5. Hard copy and fax applications will not be accepted. Applications and budget attachments must be emailed to NACDD at careers.nacdd@chronicdisease.org with the subject line: Data Validation Bid Application (contractor name)

IX. Application Content/Requirements:
1. Cover Letter on Letter head that includes (one page):
   a. Official Name of the contractor
   b. Name and contact information including email address for the contractor’s lead contact
   c. Pertinent information for fiscal agent including name, email, address, and phone number.
   d. Pertinent information for contract signatory including name, email, address, and phone number (if the same as above, all fields still need to be listed)
2. Narrative description describing:
a. Pertinent prior experience providing data validation and background check services including a sample listing of prior clients (no more than one page).
b. Capacity of lead contact and workforce capabilities needed to meet the timeline (no more than one page)
c. Technology capacity and needs or experience with different technologies to gather qualitative information (no more than one page).
d. Process description for providing these services and meeting the deliverables (no more than one page) that provides sufficient detail to evaluate the rigor of the validation process.

3. Proposed activities:
   a. Provide a timeline demonstrating the weekly progress to meet the deliverables and tasks listed above and the noted timeframes (no more than one page)
   b. Provide a budget detailing expenses using the attached budget template (no page limit). This template must be used; however, only the requested funding allocation sections need to be completed.

4. A budget in the format provided.

X. Submission Process:
Submit bids as one PDF (including budget) to careers.nacdd@chronicdisease.org

XI. Selection Process/Timeline:
NACDD will make a determination and notify selected contractor by August 9, 2013, with intent to have a signed contract by August 15, 2013.

XII. For more info contact:
Jennie Hefelfinger at careers.nacdd@chronicdisease.org  Please use the title subject line: Question on Data Validation Bid (contractor name)