

Coalition of ACHs

9/3/2024

**Request for Proposals:**  
**Statewide Evaluation of Washington's Community Care Hubs**  
**Deadline Extended to 5pm PST, Wednesday September 11, 2024.**  
***Change to max budget amount added 9/3/2024***

**Background**

The Coalition of ACHs, the association of Washington's Accountable Communities of Health, is seeking an experienced research firm to conduct a statewide evaluation of the ACHs' Community Care Hubs, funded through the state's Medicaid 1115 Waiver renewal.

While there has been increasing attention to the importance of addressing unmet social needs to improve health outcomes and lower the cost of care, our health care systems have not adequately built the support structure around local grassroots organizations working diligently to address the social needs of the region. Because of that lack of support, significant gaps remain, including:

- Current social care services are limited and fragmented, with the care coordinators in each community working in siloed systems
- The expertise of community organizations isn't fully utilized
- There are no systemic data on social care needs nor the impact of social care services
- There is lack of sustainable financing for social care
- Most community-based organizations have limited administrative and/or technical capacity to contract with health plans, providers, local and state governments systems

ACH Community Hubs will address these gaps by building and supporting regional networks of social care, expanding and strengthening the community-based health workforce for social care coordination and helping to connect all Medicaid enrollees to the services they need. ACH Community Hubs will also provide centralized data collection and reporting on social needs, available services and gaps and outcomes.

This community-based, coordinated approach will help break down existing silos in social care and advance health equity. Authentic and sustainable community engagement is needed to develop solutions that lead to inclusive and lasting progress toward health equity. ACH Community Hubs will invest in and support trusted, community-centered, culturally and linguistically effective organizations. ACH Community Hubs will also

strengthen the voice of these social care providers in the delivery system, which is an important shift toward recognizing the community voices essential to advancing equity goals.

ACH Community Hubs will be a community-wide resource and actively conduct outreach and seek to engage all Medicaid enrollees in their regions.

- ACH Community Hubs will connect people to the social care services and resources available in their regions, as well as connect eligible Medicaid enrollees to the specific list of Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) services approved in Washington's 1115 Waiver Renewal.
- They will:
  - Organize community partners into a regional network of social care providers
  - Make significant investments to expand and strengthen the community-based health workforce in each region for high-touch social care coordination
  - Work with partners to establish and maintain a regional closed-loop referral network for social care needs
  - Facilitate the implementation of a uniform social needs assessment and screen (or assure partners screen) Medicaid enrollees for social needs
  - Report on identified needs, utilization, outcomes, and performance metrics
  - Monitor for social care "network adequacy" and report on service gaps
  - Provide technical assistance, training, and capacity-building support to social care providers, including quality improvement and shared learning

### **Funding for Community Care Hubs**

ACH Community Hubs are funded by the Washington Health Care Authority through the 1115 Waiver Renewal. An estimated \$240 million from Washington's 1115 Waiver Renewal will flow through the ACHs to invest in regional Community Care Hubs. Funds include dollars for capacity building, as well as a per-member per-month payment for care coordination services based on all Medicaid enrollees in the region. The majority of these funds will be invested directly into community-based organizations and other regional partners.

ACHs are also managing the Washington Department of Health (DOH) CareConnect Hubs, the funds for which will be braided with Medicaid funding. Although different funding streams with different requirements will flow through ACH Community Care Hubs, community members will access these resources through one centralized hub in each region. This will allow for the most administratively efficient use of funds and avoid duplicate funding.

### **Expected Value of Community Care Hubs**

- **Strengthen Regional Social Service Delivery:** ACH Community Hubs will serve as a regional and coordinated model of care that is locally governed, community-based and equity centered.

- **Center Community Expertise:** ACH Community Hubs will support trusted messengers through local partnerships that will provide “no wrong door” support for engaging with social needs through a local, trusted workforce.
- **Build Community Capacity:** ACHs will also build the capacity of CBOs to better serve their communities.
- **Advance Equity:** ACH Community Hubs will build and strengthen a culturally and linguistically diverse community-based health workforce and address social care needs that cause or contribute to health disparities.
- **Increase Quality and Consistency in Social Care:** ACH Community Hubs will facilitate quality improvement and technical assistance for greater consistency and quality in social care service delivery. They will also support peer and shared learning across the social care network to develop and spread innovative models of care.
- **Provide a Central Source for Data:** Community Hubs will provide regional (and statewide) data on quality and access to community services. This will provide improved ability to quantify and study the return on investment for addressing social care needs, as well as have a better understanding of community need and gaps in service availability.
- **Serve as a Community-Wide Resource:** ACH Community Hubs will access available community resources (not just those funded through HRSNs). By utilizing braided, funding Community Hubs will create the possibility to serve whole families/whole communities, not just those who are on Medicaid. ACH Community Hubs can provide value to payers beyond Medicaid and public health, including city/county governments, philanthropy, and other state agencies and/or programs. They will also provide support during emergencies, enabling regions to better respond to community needs during public health crises, natural disasters, or climate events.
- **Prove the Value of Social Care Investments:** Over time, more organized and sophisticated approach to delivering and managing social care services will reduce waste and allow payers, such as the state and MCOs), to realize the benefit of social care investments through improved performance metrics and lower costs of care, such as reductions in social admissions or social bed days, delayed discharges, preventable readmissions within 30 days.

### **Scope of Work**

CACH seeks an experienced research and evaluation firm to conduct a statewide evaluation of the nine ACH Community Care Hubs funded through [Washington’s Medicaid 1115 Waiver Renewal](#). This evaluation is intended to augment the evaluation, funded by the Washington Health Care Authority, on all initiatives of the 1115 Medicaid Waiver Renewal.

Key questions for this evaluation to answer include:

1. How do CCHs identify and engage individuals or population groups that could benefit from CCH services?
2. How do CCHs build and support a diverse network of social care providers?

3. How do CCHs support the community-based workforce?
4. What impact do CCHs have on client needs and well-being?

The proposed timeline is October 2024 – December 2027, broken into two phases:

**Phase 1 (October 2024 – December 2025 )Evaluation Priorities:**

- Learn how Hubs are identifying priority populations
- Explore how community voice is incorporated into Hub priorities
- Understand Hubs’ goals and approaches for network development
- Assess partners’ and payers’ experiences to date, and their future expectations
- Describe current state of Hub networks, workforce, and service volume

**Phase 2 (January 2026 – December 2027)Evaluation Priorities:**

- Learn which methods are most successful for engaging Hub priority populations
- Explore CBW experiences and how Hubs are supporting workforce development and well-being
- Assess the benefits and challenges that Hub partners and funders perceive
- Explore client experiences and perceptions of Hub impact
- Analyze change over time in volume and characteristics of Hub networks, workforce, and clients

**Data Sources**

- Focus groups and/or interviews with:
  - CCH staff
  - Community representatives
  - Network partners and payers
  - CCH clients
- CCH strategic measure reporting and additional survey questions
- CCH CMS & administrative data
- CCH key documents (e.g. landscape assessments, regional reports, etc.)

**Proposal Requirements**

Bidders should provide a brief proposal (maximum of 10 pages not including appendix/supplemental materials) addressing the following components:

**Content Area Expertise** (not to exceed 2 pages)

Describe your expertise in evaluating Medicaid and/or social care programs and demonstrated experience with facilitating diverse groups, including inclusion of or links to similar projects/products.

**Key Personnel** (not to exceed 2 pages)

Identify the key personnel for this project, including brief bios and their intended role on this project. (Resume/CVs may be added as an appendix and are not included in page limit).

**Proposed Approach, Deliverables and Timeline** (not to exceed 5 pages)

Provide a detailed description of the proposed methodology and how it will successfully address the evaluation questions and priorities identified in this RFP. Provide an overview of key project deliverables and a project timeline.

**Proposed Budget** (not to exceed 2 pages)

**The maximum budget award for this evaluation is \$1 million.**

Provide a line-Item budget and narrative for both phases of the evaluation, that clearly outlines:

- Personnel (number of staff, percent effort to the program and salary wages or hourly fees).
- Funds to be provided to other sub-contractors working on the project, if applicable.

**Relevant Past Projects** (1 page)

- List three professional references (including phone and email contact information) and briefly describe the work performed for each.

**Timeline**

<b>8/23/24</b>	RFP Issued
<b>8/29/24 (5:00pm deadline)</b>	Deadline to submit questions/requests for clarifications Submit questions to: <a href="mailto:info@coalitionofachs.org">info@coalitionofachs.org</a>
<b>9/3/24</b>	Response to questions/requests for clarifications posted
<b>9/11/2024 (5:00pm deadline)</b>	Responses to RFP due Submit proposals to: <a href="mailto:info@coalitionofachs.org">info@coalitionofachs.org</a>
<b>9/16/2024</b>	Final selection and notification to Offeror
<b>9/17/2024-9/30/2024</b>	Complete contract with selected Offeror
<b>10/1/2024</b>	Work expected to begin

**Selection Criteria and Scoring:**

Each proposal will be reviewed and rated on the following elements:

- **Understanding of Program Purpose and Goals (15 points):** Applicant has a clear understanding of the project’s purpose, goals, and deliverables.
- **Relevant Experience and Personnel (35 points):** Applicant has clearly documented evidence of their (and that of the proposed program staff) subject matter expertise and experience in the proposed content areas. Reasonable effort (hours) are budgeted for team members with the needed skills and knowledge.

- **Proposed Approach & Timeline (40 points):** The proposal includes a clear, feasible, and appropriate plan to effectively meet the goals and deliverables of the evaluation. The proposal should include a reasonable timeline with all deliverables completed within the evaluation period.
- **Budget (10 points):** The proposal includes a detailed, line-item budget justifying proposed expenses, and the expenses are appropriate for the purposes of the deliverables. The CACH has not set a not-to-exceed amount, so proposers are encouraged to submit what they believe is the appropriate budget to support this work. Estimated costs are expected to be around \$1 million across both phases of work.

#### **Deadline and Committee Contact**

- Questions about this RFP may be submitted to the contacts listed below. Please submit questions [info@coalitionofachs.org](mailto:info@coalitionofachs.org). We will share a Q&A document with answers to all submitted questions.
- The deadline for proposal submission is **Wednesday, September 11, 2024 by 5:00 pm, Pacific Standard Time**. Proposals should be compiled in PDF format and emailed to the CACH at [info@coalitionofachs.org](mailto:info@coalitionofachs.org).