

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS** RFA # 09-1678  
TITLE: Long-Term Care Enhancement Grant  
FUNDING AGENCY: DHHS/Division of Health Service Regulation  
ISSUE DATE: April 1, 2009

FUNDING AGENCY: 2711 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2711

IMPORTANT NOTE: Indicate agency or organization name and RFA number on the front of each application envelope or package, along with the date for receipt of applications specified below.

Applications, subject to the conditions made a part of hereof, will be received until 5:00 p.m., June 1, 2009, for furnishing services described herein.

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

Direct all inquiries concerning this RFA to: Becky Wertz, 2711 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC, 27699, telephone # 919-855-4580, e-mail address: [becky.wertz@ncmail.net](mailto:becky.wertz@ncmail.net), fax # 919-733-8274

NOTE: Questions concerning the specifications in this Request for Applications will be received until April 20, 2009. A summary of all questions and answers will be mailed to all agencies and organizations sent a copy of this Request for Applications by May 1, 2009.

## INTRODUCTION

The goal of the NC Coalition for Long-Term Care Enhancement's grant program is to improve the quality of life for residents in the state's dually certified (Medicare/Medicaid) and Medicaid-only certified long-term care nursing facilities through promoting positive environmental and cultural changes within these homes.

The program's primary objective is to partner with dually certified (Medicare/Medicaid) and Medicaid-only certified nursing facilities through the development of and implementation of funded projects showcasing a variety of cultural change enhancement philosophies.

To be eligible for a grant through the NC Coalition for Long-Term Care Enhancement, a facility must be Medicaid-certified by the Nursing Home Licensure and Certification Section, Division of Health Service Regulation, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, and have had a deficiency anytime in their history. Facilities in receipt of prior enhancement grants given by the Division of Health Service Regulation are eligible for these grants provided they request support for new projects or initiatives.

A contract between the grant facilities and the Division of Health Service Regulation, Department of Health and Human Services, 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 state funds by the use of non-state entities, as outlined in G.S. 143C-6-22 and 23.** For more information on these requirements, consult the website at <http://www.ncauditor.net/pub2/>. 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 Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Service Regulation, from federal enforcement actions under the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation ACT (OBRA) to help protect the health or property of residents in facilities with a deficiency any time in their history.

## SCOPE OF SERVICES

### **ASSEMBLING THE PROPOSAL DESCRIBING THE SCOPE OF SERVICES**

**All proposals must adhere to the following format:**

**Cover letter:** On facility letterhead stationery, list the RFA #, the date, the facility name, location, owner's (Licensee's) name and address along with the name of the Senior Officer, administrator's name, facility address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, facility's Federal Tax ID # and fiscal year end date. Identify clearly the person authorized to manage all elements of compliance for the duration of the grant period. Include contact information specific to this individual.

**Enhancement Goal(s) Statement {15 points}:** Clearly and specifically state what the enhancement goals are for your facility. Focus on how these goals will improve the quality of life and/or the quality of care for the residents in the facility. The grant application should identify which program(s), philosophy(ies), or method(s) that have been selected and a brief description of those concepts. Describe in detail how the planned enhancements correlate with the chosen philosophy 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). You may take up to two double-spaced, typewritten pages.

**Educating for Change {15 points}:** Educating for Change is defined as achieving a "buy-in" for the enhancement goals. Describe in detail how all members of the facility, including the staff, residents, and residents' families, will be educated on the enhancement philosophies chosen and the enhancements to be implemented in the facility. Identify strategies that shall be used to educate staff, residents and family members. Limit this statement to two double spaced typewritten pages.

**Implementation {30 points}:** Outline a well-conceived and detailed timeline that demonstrates how the enhancement goals will be achieved within the grant period. Include benchmarks expected to be reached during this process. Submit a per year itemized budget that shows specifically what the grant funds will be used for. The timeline and budget has no page limitation though it should be submitted in double-spaced typewritten format. Equipment and non-consumable supplies purchased with grant funds may not be depreciated by grantees. **The information contained in this section will form the basis for the contract with DHSR.**

**Contract Performance Based Criteria (25 points):** Each contract with the Division of Health Service Regulation 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 facility'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 facility'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 (fifth quarterly report), 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 facility 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 facility 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.). As part of the quarterly report to DHSR, performance monitoring shall include data, trends analysis of the data and narrative explanation of the analysis including reasoning for improvement or declines, and plans for adjustments to the system. Using data collected, analyzed, and reported quarterly (with the exception of the satisfaction survey), grantees must demonstrate what changes have occurred and the association between the changes, explanation for deviation (positive or negative), and any alteration to the program for further improvement.

In addition, contracts with the Division require performance monitoring to be conducted on all subcontractors. If enhancement grant funds are used to procure the services of a subcontractor, the grantee must monitor the subcontractor's performance. The results obtained from this performance monitoring must be submitted with the quarterly grant report in which reimbursement for the subcontractor's services are requested.

**Self-sufficiency (15 points):** 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. Identify the specific manner by which measurable improvements will continue to be assessed and incorporated into efforts to improve the quality of care provided to residents. Specify where funds are expected to be secured to maintain the changes implemented through this grant. Limit this to one double spaced typewritten page.

**Endorsements:** Each proposal submitted must show evidence of support from the following:

- The facility's owner or licensee
- The administrator
- The medical director
- The managing corporation (if applicable)
- The director of nursing
- Two direct care staff members, one of whom should be a nurse

In addition, any evidence of other endorsements, which you believe would be pertinent, may be submitted.

### **DHSR MONITORING OF GRANT FOR CONTRACT COMPLIANCE**

\*Please read the following information carefully as contract monitoring and compliance has changed from previous grant periods.

The grant facilities must adhere to the timeline and budget as exactly stated in their approved grant proposal. Should the grantee find it necessary to deviate from the proposal's timeline or budget, prior to expending the

funds, a written request, along with an explanation of the deviation, must be submitted to the Division of Health Service Regulation. Without formal approval of the deviation request from the Division of Health Service Regulation, the grantee shall be expected to adhere to the terms of the original grant contract and grant proposal.

- **DHSR Reporting Requirements:** Grantees shall complete and submit to DHSR a written **quarterly** narrative report detailing their progress and a **quarterly** expense report for the duration of the grant period or until the grant funds have been expended. 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. 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.

A final grant report shall be submitted to the Division of Health Service Regulation 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.

To maintain the integrity of the grant program, DHSR personnel serving on behalf of the Coalition, and/or Coalition members, will make a planned, on-site visit annually during the two-year grant period to each grant receiving facility to monitor grant compliance. Follow-up visits may be conducted during and/or following the grant termination date. In addition, all grant expenses and quarterly reports will be reviewed for accuracy, compliance with DHSR contract monitoring guidelines, and compliance with the grant proposal.

- **NC Office of the State Auditor Reporting Requirements:** Within 6 months after the end of their fiscal year, grantees are required to access the online Grants Information Center 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 <http://www.ncauditor.net/pub2/>. 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.

#### **GRANT LENGTH**

The funding period for the enhancement grants will be a maximum of two years, beginning with the date of the individual contracts and ending with the expenditure of grant funds. **Prior to the end of the contract period, should a grantee fail to comply with all explicit contractual obligations of the award, remedies up to and including termination of an award, withholding of further funds, and repayment of monies issued will be imposed.**

#### **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 \$400,000. Grants will be awarded in amounts not to exceed \$24,000 to be dispersed during a two-year budgeting period. 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; major capital improvements; partial support for large-scale construction projects; and

expenditures needed for regulatory compliance. Grantees in the past have used the money for specific structural improvements, acquiring and maintaining resident animals, educational programs, staff training, equipment, plants and horticultural activities, and intergenerational activities. Timely dispersal of grant money will be dependent upon the grantee's compliance with the reimbursement and reporting requirements set by a contract with the Division of Health Service Regulation, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and its addenda.

### **FUNDS DISBURSEMENT**

To receive compensation via grant money, grantees must submit a reimbursement request to the Division, at least quarterly but no more than monthly, for expenses incurred. Copies of original receipts with items and totals circled from expenditures must accompany the reimbursement request. An approved Division of Health Service Regulation expense report form, signed by the person responsible for completing the form, must accompany copies of the original receipts in order for grant funds to be dispersed. Expenditures can begin immediately upon receipt of a completely signed contract.

### **THE SELECTION PROCESS**

The selection committee, comprised of members of the NC Coalition for Long-Term Care Enhancement, will review each application submitted. CMS requires that civil money penalties be used to protect the health or property of residents in long term care. The primary goal of the selection committee is to direct these monies to nursing facilities with a history of a deficient practice. A history of deficient practice means the facility has or has had at least one deficiency during a certification survey or complaint investigation survey.

Upon review of each application the selection committee will assign a numerical rating based on the following:

- a) Enhancement Goal(s) {15 points}
- b) Education {15 points}
- c) Implementation {30 points}
- d) Self-sufficiency {15 points}
- e) Performance Based Monitoring {25 points}

The committee will submit recommendations based on the rating system to the NC Coalition for Long-Term Care Enhancement. The Coalition will submit the final recommendation proposals for final approval to the Chief of the Nursing Home Licensure and Certification Section, Division of Health Service Regulation, Department of Health and Human Services. The selected facilities will be contacted.

### **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 by (mth/day/yr).
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 thereof 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 up 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 certification regarding Lobbying and Debarment, and if applicable a Drug Free Workplace Requirements and/or Environmental Tobacco Smoke assurance. Private not for profit agency contracts would also include a conflict of interest policy statement.