

RFA: Screening and Management of Unhealthy Alcohol Use in Primary Care - Dissemination and Implementation of PCOR Evidence

OVERVIEW

On September 13th, the Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) released a Request for Applications (RFA) to fund projects that use evidence-based approaches to disseminate and implement patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) findings to improve identification and management of unhealthy alcohol use among adults in primary care practices.

Projects funded through this RFA will aim to improve screening and brief intervention (SBI) and medication-assisted therapy (MAT) in primary care practices, with a focus on small and medium-sized practices (with 10 or fewer lead clinicians) and practices that have low rates of screening, access to community supports, and non-integrated behavioral health services. Organizations may also choose to incorporate screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) into the project for patients whose needs cannot be adequately met in a primary care setting. AHRQ plans to award up to \$13.5 million total over three years to support up to six projects.

The full RFA is available [here](#). Applications are due on January 4, 2019.

FUNDING

The total costs for each awarded project may not exceed \$1 million annually, or \$2.25 million for the entire project period. Funding awarded through this RFA may only be used for expenses that are directly related to and necessary for the successful implementation of the project. Although cost sharing is not a requirement, AHRQ encourages applicants to devote additional resources to the project to ensure sustainability.

Contracts will last for up to three years beginning approximately in August 2019.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include the following:

- Not-for-profit agencies with or without 501(c)(3) IRS status;
- Higher education institutions;
- State, county, and local governments; and
- Faith-based or community-based organizations.

Applicants may submit more than one application; however, each application must be scientifically distinct and may not have substantial overlap with another application from the same organization.

Additionally, AHRQ encourages applicants to propose community partnerships with other local providers. Proposals will need to include a demonstration of the scientific merit of the project, but the Program Director/Principal Investigator may be any individual with the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to carry out the proposed research.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Programs must target adults in primary care settings. In developing projects, applicants should:

- Convene a team, likely drawing from multiple organizations, with the expertise and experience to achieve the goals of this initiative;
- Define a discrete geographic region and develop a plan for recruiting and working with a minimum of 125 primary care practices that serve adult patients in that region;
- Develop a process and criteria for identifying PCOR findings and determining what findings will be disseminated to primary care practices;
- Define a comprehensive, evidence-based dissemination and implementation strategy to increase the use of SBI and MAT in primary care practices, which may include referral to specialty treatment as an important step in the continuum of care;
- Propose a robust, internal evaluation that addresses one or more evaluation questions of interest;
- Plan to participate in a separate, more comprehensive program evaluation to be conducted by an external contractor selected by AHRQ; and
- Propose a dissemination plan in conjunction with AHRQ and/or its contractors.

APPLICATION

Applications will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Significance
- Investigator
- Innovation
- Approach
- Environment

Applications will receive a score on each category and an overall impact score. However, applications do not need to be strong in all of the above categories to be deemed scientifically impactful. Reviewers will also consider the following additional items to determine each applicant's overall impact score:

- Protections for Human Subjects
- Degree of Responsiveness
- Budget and Period of Support
- Inclusion of Priority Populations

Reviewers will also consider the application's relevance within AHRQ research priorities, as well as overall programmatic and geographic balance of the proposed project to program priorities when determining awards.

Timeline

Applications are due on January 4, 2019. Applicants are encouraged but not required to submit a Letter of Intent to alcoholresearch@ahrq.hhs.gov by December 4th. AHRQ will host a technical assistance call to summarize the purpose of the RFA and respond to questions on October 24th at 1:30pm. Interested parties may register by sending an email to the address above by October 22nd with "Unhealthy Alcohol Use FOA TA Call" in the subject line.

Questions regarding this RFA should be submitted by October 17th to the email address above.