RFP: Improving Access to and Use of Patient Visit Notes

OVERVIEW

On November 1st, the New York State Health Foundation (NYSHealth) released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for hospitals seeking to implement OpenNotes, which is a national effort to give patients access to the visit notes written by their doctors, nurses, or other clinicians. Since 2017, NYSHealth has supported 10 hospital systems and 6 federally qualified health centers and other non-hospital settings statewide to implement OpenNotes.

Through this RFP, NYSHealth will provide hospitals with funding, tools, and technical assistance to effectively implement and share visit notes. The 21st Century Cures Act Information Blocking Rule requires health care providers to share clinical notes with patients free of charge. Accordingly, NYSHealth expects that applicants are already making some level of financial investment to implement OpenNotes within their facilities and that funding available through this RFP will accelerate and expand the use of OpenNotes.

The full RFP is available here. Applications are due on December 6th.

FUNDING

NYSHealth will award grants of $30,000 to 25-30 hospitals to supplement the costs associated with implementing OpenNotes. Such costs include, but are not limited to:

- Staff support;
- Training;
- Education;
- Electronic health record (EHR) configuration; and/or
- Patient marketing and engagement.

Hospitals selected for funding will also participate in a 12-month OpenNotes technical assistance and learning network program, which will ensure providers are equipped with the appropriate tools to effectively share notes and that patients know how to access and use their visit notes.

Project durations will vary but may last up to two years.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Any hospital facility in New York State that is implementing and sharing OpenNotes in compliance with federal regulations is eligible for funding through this RFP. Both hospital facilities that are in the initial phases of implementing OpenNotes and those that are seeking to optimize their early implementation to make sure it works well for clinicians and patients are eligible and encouraged to apply.

Hospitals will be required to engage a project team of 3-4 members, which may include patient experience/engagement leaders, physician leaders, EHR implementation or IT leads, and staff/patient educators.

APPLICATION

NYSHealth will prioritize for funding proposals that:

- Serve marginalized populations (e.g., older adults, non-English speakers, uninsured individuals, patients of color);
- Show compliance with the 21st Century Cures Act mandate; and
- Demonstrate creative patient engagement approaches and/or include at least one patient representative as part of the program team.

Timeline

Proposals must be submitted by December 6th. All applicants will be notified regarding award decisions by early 2022.

On November 16th from 10am-12pm, NYSHealth will host a webinar with presentations, discussions, and an audience Q&A regarding the implementation of OpenNotes. Details and registration are available [here](#).

Programmatic questions may be submitted to OpenNotesRFP@NYSHealth.org. Technical questions may be submitted to Kennen Willis at Willis@NYSHealth.org.