

Request for Information



State of Alaska
Department of Health
Division of Public Health

Date Issued: April 15, 2024

KENAI OUTREACH

Introduction:

The Department of Health, Division of Public Health, AK B+C is requesting the professional services of community outreach experts to support the program's efforts to provide patient navigation and outreach services that include informing eligible Alaskans about AK B+C, educating individuals of the importance of screening for breast and cervical cancer, enrolling them into AK B+C if eligible, and connecting them to providers who work with AK B+C to pay for these services. A part of patient navigation will be to link people to resources that resolve barriers that prevent successful completion of appropriate screenings. Examples of barrier relief currently being provided include assistance with making appointments, transportation, and interpretation services.

Background Information:

Alaska Breast and Cervical Screening Assistance Program (AK B+C) has been operating in the state of Alaska since 1995, addressing barriers to cancer screening for underserved populations through community outreach and patient navigation contracts.

Alaska Breast and Cervical Screening Assistance Program (AK B+C) covers the out-of-pocket costs of breast and cervical cancer screening for Alaskans ages 21-64 with income at or below 250% FPL. AK B+C contracts with health care providers all over Alaska who agree to participate in the program and be reimbursed for breast and cervical cancer screening services for enrolled program participants. The goal of the program is to increase the number of eligible program participants who complete breast and cervical screening. The Alaska Breast and Cervical Screening Assistance Program is part of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/index.htm>).

The Kenai Peninsula has been identified as a priority region for increased outreach efforts. The Small Area Health Insurance Estimate (<https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/sahie/#/>) shows that the Kenai region has 2,371 low income, uninsured women who could benefit from this program. In addition, there are 3,878 insured women who may also benefit from this program.

Minimums:

What experience is required for this vendor to qualify for this type of work?

- A minimum of two (2) years of experience within the last five (5) years providing community outreach services to underserved Alaskans.

- A minimum of two (2) years of experience within the last five (5) years of utilization of HIPAA compliance protocols.

Budget

One (1) year contract term with nine (9) one-year optional renewals at a maximum of \$50,000 per year. Optional renewal are at the sole discretion of the state.

Scope of Work:

To address the needs of eligible residents in the Kenai Peninsula, AK B+C is seeking a contractor to perform community outreach and patient navigation. AK B+C will provide the outreach materials and assist with high level community data for developing goals and priorities. The target population for outreach and patient navigation efforts are Alaskans ages 21 to 64 who are at or below 250% of the federal poverty level. **The goal of this work is to increase breast and cervical cancer screening in the Kenai Peninsula area through enrolling eligible people into the program and successfully navigating them to complete breast and/or cervical screening.** In addition to assisting those without health insurance, people enrolled in the program can have health insurance and still qualify. AK B+C can help with copays and deductibles for those who qualify who are insured or uninsured.

There are recommended strategies that AK B+C will share from the national Community Preventive Services Task Force (<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/>) such as small media to educate and motivate people to get screened, group and one-on-one education, efforts to reduce structural barriers (i.e.: transportation and language interpretation) that impede screening, and patient navigation. The goals that will be measured are increased AK B+C enrollment and completed screenings in this region.

Support and monitoring will be through monthly check-ins with the AK B+C Outreach Manager and quarterly reports submitted by the contractor. In addition, there are monthly virtual gatherings with the other outreach/patient navigation contractors throughout the state to share ideas and challenges.

The contractor shall provide patient navigation and outreach to:

- Inform people of the AK B+C Screening Assistance Program.
- Educate Alaskans about breast and cervical cancer screening
- Link individuals to AK B+C program providers for cancer screening services
- Navigate enrolled participants to complete breast and/or cervical cancer screening
 - Navigation typically entails at least 2 contacts with the person needing screening (ie: enrollment, follow-up communication to see if they received screening, etc.). It may also include barrier relief (ie: assistance with scheduling an appointment, connection with transportation assistance, etc.).

The contractor will use evidence-based interventions such as:

- Small media such as videos and printed materials. Examples include letters, brochures, and newsletters to educate and motivate people to get screened
- Group and one-on-one education
- Efforts to reduce structural barriers, such as language interpretation services and/or transportation

Deliverables:

1. Contractor will participate in an initial meeting with the Alaska Breast and Cervical Outreach Manager in the first two weeks of the contract to clarify any questions/details about the workplan, protocols for identifying the target population, protocols for patient and provider contacts, and the timeline.

Within two weeks of the initial meeting the contractor will provide a final project work plan including a detailed budget and projected enrollment targets.

2. Contractor will provide Client Navigation services, successfully moving clients through completion of screening. It is expected that in the first year, the awarded vendor will be starting up, gaining connections, and initiating navigation services. By the second year, the awarded vendor should be achieving the client numbers proposed.

Navigation typically entails at least 2 contacts with the person needing screening (ie: enrollment, follow-up communication to see if they received screening). It may also include barrier relief (ie: assistance with scheduling an appointment, connection with transportation assistance). Navigation service include but are not limited to:

- a. Identification and recruitment of people eligible for the Alaska Breast and Cervical Screening Assistance Program
 - b. Assessment of individual patient barriers to cancer screening, diagnostic services, and initiation of cancer treatment
 - c. Individualized education and support
 - d. Assistance with the Alaska Breast and Cervical Screening Assistance Program (AK B+C) enrollment process, including providing a list of all AK B+C providers in the area
 - e. Assistance with scheduling screening appointments with the patient's choice of AK B+C provider
 - f. Resolution of patient barriers (i.e., transportation, translation, or childcare)
 - g. Assistance, as needed, with scheduling follow-up appointments
 - h. Work with AK B+C staff to resolve billing and insurance issues
 - i. Patient tracking and follow-up to support patient progress in completing screening, diagnostic testing, or initiating cancer treatment
 - j. Collection of data to evaluate the primary outcomes of patient navigation – cancer screening and/or diagnostic testing, final diagnosis, or treatment initiation
3. Contractor will conduct outreach activities including but not limited to:
 - a. Educate Alaskans, particularly those in the priority populations, about breast and cervical cancer risk and screening recommendations utilizing the following evidence-based strategies:
 - i. Client reminders such as letters, postcards, emails, text messages, voicemail
 - ii. Group education conducted by health professionals or trained lay educators to provide accurate cancer screening information
 - iii. One-on-one education conducted by health professionals or trained lay educators about indications for, benefits of, and ways to overcome barriers to cancer screening with the goal of informing, encouraging, and motivating people to seek recommended screening
 - iv. Development and distribution of culturally- tailored small media materials to inform and motivate individuals to be screened
 - b. Increase awareness of AK B+C services and affiliated activities such as mobile mammography will conduct evidence-based strategies among AK B+C priority populations and enroll eligible people in the program.
 4. For the duration of the contract, the contractor will be available to meet with the AK B+C Outreach Manager monthly – either in-person or over the phone.
 5. Contractor will monitor the project and notify the AK B+C Outreach Manager of any concerns, as well as prepare and submit monthly invoices in accordance with the terms of the contract.
 6. Contractor will share progress toward achieving work plan goals and projected enrollment targets in quarterly reports to the Outreach Manager.

7. A representative of the contracting agency will actively participate in monthly Outreach Coalition meetings – in person or virtual – organized by the AK B+C Outreach Manager, the Alaska Cancer Partnership Detection workgroup, and other relevant collaboratives.
8. All services conducted during this contract must adhere to HIPAA mandatory guidelines. Should a HIPAA violation occur, the contractor must notify the AK B+C Outreach Manager as described in the contract.

Response Information:

Interested applicants/ firms who believe they can provide the services described above should indicate their interest by submitting an electronic response (.pdf format is preferred) with the following information:

- a. Company name
- b. Contact Information, including email address, for the individual(s) who should be notified if DOH releases a solicitation.
- d. A summary that clearly describes how the applicant/firm meets or exceeds the preferred minimum experience.
- e. A statement confirming that the company anticipates the project deliverables are reasonably within the estimated budget or, if not, why?
- f. A summary of any concerns regarding the project as described. What potential obstacles should be anticipated?

Response Submission:

Interested vendors must submit their response in writing via email by **2:00 p.m. (Alaska Time) Thursday, April 25, 2024**, to the following person:

Haley Wilkinson

Procurement Specialist
Department of Health
Division of Finance and Management Services

Email: haley.wilkinson@alaska.gov

Please also copy doh.procurement.proposals@alaska.gov on the submission)

Responses in Microsoft format are preferred, with attachments submitted in pdf, Microsoft Word, Adobe, Microsoft Excel or PowerPoint file.

It is the interested vendor's responsibility to follow up with the person identified above to ensure its response was received prior to the time and date specified. Please ensure the response includes the vendor's company name and correct contract information (email) for the individual(s) who should be notified if DOH releases a solicitation or seeks an alternative procurement method related to the services described in this RFI.

Important Notice:

This RFI does not extend any rights to prospective vendors or obligate the state to conduct a solicitation or

purchase any goods or services. Nor will the State be financially responsible for any costs associated with the preparation of any response for the requested information. This RFI is issued for the sole purpose of obtaining information as described in this notice. However, the information obtained from this request may be used to prepare a purchase, contract, or solicitation in the future.