

# Request for Information



State of Alaska  
Department of Health  
Division of Senior and Disabilities Services

**Date Issued: 8/16/2024**

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES TELEHEALTH FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

### **Introduction:**

The Alaska Department of Health (DOH) Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) is seeking to enhance healthcare accessibility for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) that receive Home and Community Based (HCBS) waiver services. With a commitment to improving the quality of care and expanding healthcare outreach, SDS is initiating an assessment of interest from potential entities with specialized training in intellectual and developmental disabilities to provide telemedicine physician services. This initiative aims to bridge geographical barriers, optimize healthcare delivery, and address the unique healthcare needs of these individuals. By exploring the integration of telemedicine into healthcare provision, SDS hopes to foster inclusivity, promote health equity, and enhance the overall well-being of those with IDD and vulnerable populations across the state of Alaska.

### **Background Information:**

The scarcity of healthcare providers trained to effectively address the complex needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities perpetuates a significant gap in healthcare accessibility. Individuals with IDD often require specialized care and support that mainstream healthcare providers may not be adequately equipped to provide. Consequently, when individuals with IDD seek medical attention, especially in emergency room settings, they frequently encounter challenges in receiving appropriate care due to a lack of understanding or familiarity with their unique needs. This can result in suboptimal treatment outcomes and increased healthcare inequalities for this population. Furthermore, this issue is particularly pronounced in rural areas of Alaska where healthcare resources are already scarce. In these regions, individuals with IDD face additional hurdles in accessing healthcare services due to geographical isolation, limited transportation options, and a shortage of healthcare facilities. As a result, many individuals in rural communities experience delays in receiving necessary medical care, exacerbating health inequalities, and diminishing overall health outcomes with potentially increased costs.

In Alaska currently, there are roughly 2,700 individuals with IDD receiving services from either the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) waiver or the Individual Supports waiver (ISW) that potentially experience the barriers listed above. Addressing these systematic challenges requires innovative approaches that prioritize the integration of telemedicine and other remote healthcare solutions to improve access to quality healthcare for individuals experiencing an Intellectual or developmental disability.

### **Response Information:**

**Interested vendors who have experience providing telemedicine physician services to Individuals with IDD are encouraged to submit responses to the following:**

1. Provide the vendor's complete company name, address, telephone number and email address for the vendor's contact person for its RFI response.
2. Describe the vendor's approach and innovative strategies for delivering telemedicine services to individuals with IDD, and provide a general overview of the vendor's profile, including a detailed description of its capabilities and experience in providing telemedicine services tailored to meet the needs of individuals with IDD. Identify the states and jurisdictions in which the services were provided within the last 5 years, specifying the name of the agency or department utilizing the vendor's services. Please include a detailed description of the telemedicine services you provide, such as:
  - Virtual consultations
  - Emergency services
  - Remote monitoring
  - Behavioral Health services
  - Coordination of Care with local hospitals/clinics
3. Information on the telehealth technology you use, including its features, security measures, and how it enhances patient care.
4. Provide the staffing plan, estimated costs, and implementation timeline.
5. Additionally, how does the vendor intend to address the specific telemedicine challenges in rural Alaska, including limited access to the internet, possible long-distance to nearest hospital, etc.

Interested vendors must submit their response in writing via email by **1:00 p.m. Alaska Time, on August 23, 2024**, to the following person:

**Haley Wilkinson**

Procurement Specialist

Department of Health

Division of Finance and Management Services

Phone: (907)795-3312

Email: [haley.wilkinson@alaska.gov](mailto:haley.wilkinson@alaska.gov)

Please also copy [doh.procurement.proposals@alaska.gov](mailto: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 files.

It is the interested party's responsibility to follow up with the person listed above to ensure your response was received prior to the time and date specified. Please ensure the response includes your company's name and contact information (email) for the individual(s) who should be notified if DOH releases a solicitation.

**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.