FAQs - Funding Opportunity for NWD System Business Case Development

Version 2 - June 2018

The following frequently asked questions (FAQs) have been developed as a follow-up to the informational webinar held on April 25th. This document will be updated with responses to any additional questions ACL receives. For more information about this funding opportunity and for a recording and transcript of the webinar, visit the NWD website.

1. **Question:** How can I download the full funding opportunity announcement (FOA) and instructions?

   Answer: To find the instructions and application details, click here to get to the announcement page. Next, click on the tab that says "Package" (on the far right). The next page will open; go to the far right, and click on "Preview" (under Actions). A small pop-up will appear, then click "Download Instructions" on the right-hand side.

2. **Question:** What is the expected number of grant awards for this funding opportunity?

   Answer: This funding opportunity will fund up to nine states.

3. **Question:** What is the minimum and maximum award amount for each budget period? What is the minimum and maximum award amount for the total grant period?

   Answer: The minimum award for each budget period (12 months) is $390,000 and maximum is $600,000. For the entire grant period (24 months) the minimum is $780,000 and the maximum is $1,200,000. For the budget narrative, a detailed budget is required for each budget year and a total budget must be included in the application.

4. **Question:** For implementation of the evidence-informed model(s), can a state focus on one or two counties as opposed to a large geographic region?

   Answer: Yes, the geographic area(s) for the evidence-informed model(s) can be one or more counties. An estimated number of people served through the identified evidence-informed model(s) in the specified geographic area(s) must be provided in the project narrative of the application.

5. **Question:** Can the applicant propose a different evidence-informed model, aside from the four listed in the FOA?

   Answer: Yes. However, all requirements of the grant must be met. The applicant must demonstrate that the intervention has:

   - **Direct connection to the State's No Wrong Door System** as defined by the NWD System Key Elements;
   - **The proposed intervention is evidence based and/or evidence informed;**
   - **The applicant has demonstrated that the proposed intervention can meet the FOA timeline;**
   - The intervention **includes person-centered counseling**, has an identified geographic area, and can produce core outcomes that may result in return on investment calculations.

6. **Question:** In reference to individual level data, would this include de-identified data?

   Answer: The individual level data collected and shared with ACL and its partners would need to have some type of identifier. This does not have to be a name or other PII/PHI information, rather there should be some indicator to identify whether or not an individual has contacted the entity before. Identifiers are also important for follow-up and being able to capture data on an individual over time.

7. **Question:** In the Budget Narrative and Justification, may applicants propose funding organizations to help ensure the program and client data are collected in a timely fashion?

   Answer: Yes, applicants may choose to use funds to sub-grant to community-based organizations in order to ensure streamlined data collection in a timely fashion. This could lead to ongoing sustainability, as it may eliminate duplication of efforts, ensure statewide data collection, and ease overall data collection/reporting requirements.

8. **Question:** Is the provided work plan sufficient for the entire project? Is there a requirement for a grantee-only work plan in addition to the one outlined in the FOA?

   Answer: The proposed work plan provided on pages 5 and 6 of the FOA is an estimated and tentative outlook of major activities throughout the grant period, it is not exclusive to the entire project. The purpose of this work plan is to give applicants a sense of who the responsible entities are for major grant activities.
   There is no requirement for a grantee-only work plan, however as a part of the project narrative, applicants must provide a description of the roles and responsibilities of project staff, consultants and partner organizations, and how they will contribute to achieving the project's objectives and outcomes.

9. **Question:** Under Use of Funds, there are directions about geographic area identification and an estimated number of people served. Does that bullet relate to the pre-screening/nursing home diversion program model or does it apply to all four of the evidence-informed models?

Answer: Identification of a geographic area and estimated number of people served applies to each of the evidence-informed models. The last bullet point on page 4 of the FOA would apply to any evidence-informed model(s) that an applicant chooses.

10. **Question:** May grant funds be used for administration of the project by the awarded entity?

    Answer: Yes, grant funds may be used for administrative activities.

11. **Question:** When will the recording of the informational call be available on the NWD website?

    Answer: The webinar presentation slides, recording and transcript have been posted to the NWD website.

12. **Question:** Are states with very early stages of NWD System development eligible to apply? If so, can grant funds be used to develop our system?

    Answer: Yes, all 56 states and territories are eligible to apply, regardless of the stages of NWD System development. Grant funds may be used to develop and enhance a state's NWD System functions, as defined in the NWD System Key Elements, however the goals and outcomes listed in the FOA, especially related to return on investment (ROI) calculation, business case development and data sharing, must be met. For further examples of how funds can be used, see pages 4 and 5 of the FOA.

13. **Question:** Can an applicant submit a proposal that uses more than one intervention?

    Answer: Yes, the only requirement is that the applicant proposes at least one evidence-informed intervention. The applicant may choose to implement more than one.

14. **Question:** Will the estimated number of people served be a factor in selecting proposals to fund?

    Answer: No, the numerical value of the estimated number of people served, either through person-centered counseling or through the evidence-informed model(s), will not affect the applicants score. However, applicants must ensure that anticipated outcomes of the evidence-informed model will result in the development of a strong, impactful business case.

15. **Question:** May a different evidence informed or evidence-based intervention be used in two geographic areas?

Answer: Yes, if an applicant chooses more than one evidence-informed intervention, than multiple geographic areas may be identified.

16. **Question:** Do you have any requirements on what states should collect to calculate ROI?

    Answer: The purpose of this FOA is to identify the necessary data elements for developing a methodology for calculating ROI. ACL and its partners will work with grantees the first three months of the grant period to identify preliminary data elements for ROI calculation. For more information, refer to the proposed timeline and work plan on pages 5 and 6 of the FOA.

17. **Question:** Should nursing facility diversions and Money Follows the Person (MFP) be kept separate or counted within the data set for cost savings?

    Answer: Data from the MFP program can be counted towards efforts for pre-screening/nursing home diversion programs.

18. **Question:** Will agencies who use more than one evidence-based approach be given a higher score? Would concentrating on one area and model be better than using two areas with two different models?

    Answer: No, the number of evidence-informed models proposed by applicants will not be a factor for scoring. The decision on number of areas or number of models is up to the applicant and can depend on data collection capabilities or relationships/commitments from health care institutes.

19. **Question:** May an applicant implement evidence-based programs instead of evidence-informed programs?

    Answer: Yes, the model chosen may be evidence-based or evidence-informed. By definition, an evidence-based model must have at least one randomized trial, therefore to be inclusive, we have generally used the term evidence-informed. As an example, the Veteran Directed Home and Community Based Services (VD-HCBS) program is evidence-based.

20. **Question:** If a state has done some initial work on ROI, can funds be used to help connect/coordinate data systems to be able to better track services across systems?

    Answer: Yes, funds may be used to enhance data collection capabilities to allow for data linkages and/or coordination across systems. Applicants shall describe any current work related to ROI or business case development in the project narrative.

21. **Question:** When looking at the VD-HCBS intervention, are there examples of ROI for the state?

    Answer: The VD-HCBS program has demonstrated savings to the Veteran's Health Administration and to Medicaid agencies. A 2015 study of the San Diego VD-HCBS program demonstrated that 24 Veterans enrolled in the program saved the VAMC $1.6 million over two years, as a result of 51% reduction in hospital admissions, 25% reduction in Emergency Room visits, and 20% of Veterans avoiding skilled nursing home admission. A more recent study conducted by the Veterans Health Administration in November 2017 found that Veterans enrolled in VD-HCBS had a 30% reduction in inpatient utilization one year after VD-HCBS enrollment compared to the year prior. In addition, research has shown self-directed personal care services that better meet the needs of the Veteran results in a net savings to Medicaid after factoring in cost savings from reductions in nursing home admissions and other long term care, resulting in a net savings to Medicaid.

22. **Question:** Is the goal of the grant to collect aggregate data or individual-level data?

    Answer: ACL will be looking for both aggregate and individual-level data. As grantees work with ACL and its external partners, aggregate data may be used to develop a methodology for calculating ROI.

23. **Question:** Will there be an ROI calculation at the national level ROI calculation or just at the state/local level?

    Answer: The goal is to generate ROI calculations at the state and local level in order to inform national level impact and value.

24. **Question:** What is the expectation for gathering high-level data on Medicaid or social determinants of health?

    Answer: Grantees are expected to have relationships in place with key partners and stakeholders in order to have access to and collaborate on data necessary to demonstrate ROI, such as Medicaid data or social determinants of health data.

25. **Question:** Will the entity ACL partners with be on board during the whole grant period for grantees to work with?

    Answer: Yes, ACL's partners and external contractors will work with grantees throughout the entire grant period.

26. **Question:** The application criteria requires for an estimated number of people served through the chosen evidence-informed model and an estimated number people to be receive person-centered counseling during the grant period. What is the difference between these estimates?

    Answer: ACL is looking for an estimated number of people what will be served through the evidence-informed program/model (i.e. number of people referred to NWD/ADRC from the identified hospital or nursing home, which would be from a specific geographic area, for example). We ask for a specified geographic area so that populations or health utilization data can potentially be compared for ROI calculation. In addition, the project narrative must include an estimate of the total number of individuals in the state that may receive PCC during the grant period.