



Department of Mental Health

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Agency of Human Services

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

RFI 2

Coordinated Specialty Care for First Episode Psychosis

ISSUE DATE	March 21, 2025
QUESTIONS DUE	April 10, 2025 – 4:30PM (EST)
RFI RESPONSES DUE BY	April 25, 2025 – 4:30PM (EST)

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT ALL NOTIFICATIONS, RELEASES, AND ADDENDUMS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS RFI WILL BE POSTED AT:

<http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/pca/bids/bids.php>

THE STATE WILL MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO CONTACT INTERESTED PARTIES WITH UPDATED INFORMATION. PLEASE CHECK THE ABOVE WEBPAGE FOR ANY AND ALL NOTIFICATIONS, RELEASES AND ADDENDUMS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS RFI.

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1 PURPOSE

This Request for Information (RFI) is issued by the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to gather information concerning the potential implementation of a **Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) for First Episode Psychosis program**. **This RFI will be to solicit feedback on program design, including cost estimates, preliminary to seek proposals to establish a CSC in Vermont.** Options should consider the foundational elements required by DMH based upon existing evidence-based CSC program elements as defined by the Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). These programmatic components may include variations of implementation structures acceptable to SAMHSA in other states/regions that are comparable to Vermont's rurality, existing system of care infrastructure, and demographics.

DMH intends to evaluate any submissions by respondents and explore how this information might meet the communities' needs and federal requirements in consideration of the costs and funding associated with available solutions. See here for further information: [SAMHSA CSC Cost and Financing Strategies](#)

Information received by the State will be reviewed for the purposes of the objectives for this RFI, which may include exploration of available goods or services or solutions, how such offerings may meet the needs of the State and Vermonters, and understanding the costs associated with such offerings. DMH shall not be held liable for any costs incurred by the vendors in the preparation of their submission.

The State will not award a contract directly resulting from this RFI. This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes. This request for information does not commit the State to contract for any materials or service whatsoever. Further, this RFI is not a request for proposals (RFP); the State is not at this time seeking proposals and will not accept unsolicited proposals. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude any company or person from participating in a future RFP, if one is issued. If an RFP is released, it will be posted on the BGS bid opportunities web site: <http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/pca/bids/bids.php>. It is the responsibility of the potential offerors to monitor this site for additional information.

1.2 ***UNSOLICITED VENDOR-CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION PROHIBITED***

Vendors are hereby expressly directed not to include any confidential information in their proposal submissions, except as specifically permitted below, and so marked. By submitting information in response to this RFI, vendors acknowledge and agree to abide by the terms and conditions outlined in this document, including the prohibition on submitting confidential information. This prohibition reduces the burden on the State while preventing vendor-confidential information from entering the public record.

1.2.1 **Disclosure Under Public Records Act**

All information received by the State in response to this RFI will become part of the contract file and subject to Vermont public records law. Responses by any vendor may become available to the public once a contract has been executed or otherwise following conclusion of this procurement process, in accordance with the State's Public Records Act, 1 V.S.A. § 315 et seq., or the State may choose to publicly post them.

1.2.2 **Unsolicited Confidential Materials**

This RFI does not solicit vendor confidential information and vendors are expressly prohibited from providing confidential information in response to this RFI. All materials furnished by vendors in response to this RFI, including those marked as confidential by vendors, are subject to disclosure if requested under the Public Records Act, or public posting.

1.2.3 **State Not Responsible for Disclosure of Unmarked Vendor-Confidential Information**

It is the sole responsibility of the vendor to ensure that, other than where specifically directed or permitted by this RFI and accordingly marked as described below, no information that should not be publicly disclosed is included in their submitted materials, including any 1) trade secrets or intellectual property, 2) proprietary financial or business information, 3) personal information, or 4) any other information that should not be disclosed to the public. For example, vendors should avoid including specific details of their proprietary technologies or methodologies that they consider confidential, and any references to previous client engagements should be presented in a manner that does not disclose the client's confidential information.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In May 2023, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) mandated DMH to use ten percent of its federally funded Mental Health Block Grant funds to be used specifically to implement the evidence-based program for first episode psychosis. Coordinated Specialty Care for first episode psychosis is the only identified evidence-based program recognized by SAMHSA.

[Coordinated Specialty Care for Early Episode Psychosis \(CSC-EEP\) | Department of Mental Health](#)

[CSC Fidelity Scale | Department of Mental Health](#)

3 RFI DESCRIPTION

The State is seeking information leading to the establishment of a CSC Program for First Episode Psychosis in Vermont. In the future, the State anticipates issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) that has been informed by the results of this RFI. If the State moves forward in the development of an RFP, the RFP process will be open to all respondents regardless of their decision to participate in this RFI.

The State is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) with the following key objectives:

- To serve the target population, which is individuals and families experiencing first episode psychosis ages 14-30 with an average length of stay of 3-5 years and a caseload size in alignment with evidence-based CSC practice.
- The establishment of a CSC model to inform the structure of one pilot team with the goal of regional coverage across the state. Teams would be comprised of psychiatry staff, Team Leader, Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Clinician(s), Case Manager(s), Peer Specialist(s), and Supported Employment and Education Specialists each with required, credentialed staff. This team would provide the following services:
 - Pharmacotherapy and Primary Care Coordination
 - Team Leadership – lead multi-disciplinary treatment team
 - Case management
 - Peer Support- specialized peer support services (cannot be a dual role with case management)
 - Psychotherapy and Family Education and Support
 - Supported Employment and Education (SE/SEd) – specialized SE/SEd services (cannot be a dual role with case management or peer support)
- The Contractor will subcontract with outside consultants on the CSC model and training as needed and/or with the service delivery entities.

The State is seeking information to identify an entity which demonstrates the capacity to establish a Coordinated Specialty Care program in Vermont which will be capable of meeting both the Department's and federal requirements.

- Explain how you will approach the following:
 - Identify a Vermont CSC headquarters
 - Recruit/hire administrative staff if needed
 - Provide comprehensive training for CSC teams
 - Implement outreach strategies to raise awareness about CSC program
 - Develop educational materials for schools, primary care providers, Designated Agencies/Specialized Service Agencies, and other service provider organizations
 - Engage community leaders and organizations to promote collaboration with CSC program

- Establish incoming and outgoing referral processes
- Identify training requirements to support the evidence-based practices
- Design the service model that will support a focus on mobile crisis and community-based service delivery
- Coordinate with 988 and Mobile Crisis Teams
- Development of admission and discharge criteria within the parameters identified by DMH
- Ensure service delivery entities are enrolled in and are able to bill Medicaid by not later than the start of service delivery
- Subcontract as needed with outside consultants to inform the model, training needs, etc.

The RFI has this key objective:

The State is seeking feedback on the information in this RFI and will consider any information, including partial responses, received in response to this RFI. If the State moves forward in the development of an RFP, the RFP process will be open to all respondents regardless of their decision to participate in this RFI.

The State envisions that the solution will support the following high-level goals:

- The establishment of a Coordinated Specialty Care Program for First Episode Psychosis
- To come into compliance with the use of the 10% set-aside Mental Health Block Grant funds as directed by SAMHSA.

4 CURRENT STATE

Vermont currently does not have a Coordinated Specialty Care program that meet the current federal requirements set forth by SAMHSA. Individuals and their families who currently meet the criteria for entry into a CSC program must either access the aforementioned services as individual services, potentially through multiple different providers or seek CSC program services out of state. Vermont (DMH) is out of compliance with its use of the mandatory minimum 10% set aside for Early Serious Mental Illness/First Episode Psychosis of the Community Mental Health Block Grant funds by not having a CSC program.

5 STATEMENT OF WORK

5.1 ANTICIPATED REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of this RFI is to determine if there are solutions capable of meeting the State's anticipated requirements and to determine alternatives for meeting those requirements that are consistent with the overall vision for the DMH and the State.

The State's discovery efforts to date have resulted in a desire to obtain access to solutions with the following attributes:

6 REQUESTED INFORMATION

Each submission prepared in response to this RFI must include the elements listed below, in the order indicated. The vendor, when presenting the response, must use the following outline:

- Cover Page
- Company/Supplier Information
- Cost Estimates
- Business and Technical Requirements

6.1 COVER PAGE

The first page of the vendor's RFI Response must be a cover page displaying at least the following:

- Response of RFI Title
- Company/Supplier Name
- Contact Person
- Telephone Number
- Email Address

All subsequent pages of the RFI Response must be numbered.

6.2 *VENDOR QUESTIONNAIRE*

Please provide your answers to the stated questions related to the project. Additional information may supplement your answers and must be attached to the RFI response.

6.3 *CONTACT INFORMATION*

SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT: Please direct all communications concerning this RFI to the State Contact listed on the front page of this RFI.

6.4 *EXPLANATION OF EVENTS*

6.4.1 *Question and Answer Period*

Any vendor requiring clarification of any section of this RFI or wishing to comment on any requirement of the RFI may submit specific questions in writing no later than the deadline for question indicated on the first page of this RFI. Questions may be e-mailed to the point of contact on the front page of this RFI. At the close of the question period a copy of all questions or comments and the State's responses will be posted on the State's web site <http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/pca/bids/bids.php>. Every effort will be made to post this information as soon as possible after the question period ends, contingent on the number and complexity of the questions.

6.4.2 *Changes to this RFI*

Any modifications to this RFI will be made in writing by the State through the issuance of an Addendum to this RFI and posted online at <http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/pca/bids/bids.php>. Verbal instructions or written instructions from any other source are not to be considered.

6.4.3 *Submission of Responses*

DUE DATE: Responses must be received by the State by the due date specified on the front page of this RFI. If a change is made to the due date, the State will inform all vendors by posting the change at the webpage indicated on the front page of this RFI.

6.4.3.1 *Recording of Responses:*

There will not be a public opening. The State will record the name, city and state for any and all responses received by the due date.

6.4.3.2 *Electronic Submission Instructions:*

Responses will be accepted via email submission to AHS.DMHSUBMISSIONS@VERMONT.GOV. Responses must consist of a single email with a single, digitally searchable PDF attachment containing all components of the response. Multiple emails and/or multiple attachments will not be accepted. There is an attachment size limit of 40 MB (40,960KB). It is the Vendor's responsibility to compress the PDF file containing its response if necessary, in order to meet this size limitation. It is also the Vendor's responsibility to ensure that their own email system can send and receive messages up to this size.

6.4.4 Review of Responses

The RFI Manager or other DMH representatives may, at their option, initiate discussion with respondents for the purpose of clarifying aspects of their responses.

6.4.5 Vendor Demonstration of Their Product

Vendors chosen from the review process may be called on to demonstrate their products and/or service offering. These select vendors will make arrangements with DMH to demonstrate their products and/or service offering. The DMH shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the vendor in preparation of its demonstration. All costs occurred are the vendor's sole responsibility. All demonstrations are for planning purposes only.

6.4.6 Vendor Product Test Trial

Certain Vendor products and/or service offering may be selected after review process to be trialed by DMH, if this is an option allowable by the vendor. The test trial can last up to 90 days. Up to 2 vendors products selected will be involved with the test trial. The DMH staff will provide feedback to the RFI Manager. The selection of vendor products for a test trial does not commit the DMH or the State of Vermont to award a contract. This test trial is for information gathering purposes only and no vendor will be selected, pre-qualified, or exempted based upon their RFI / test trial participation. All costs incurred are the vendor's sole responsibility. All product test trials are for planning purposes only.

7 VENDOR QUESTIONNAIRE

We are asking for a total cost estimate (low and high estimates) comprised of software, hardware, and necessary implementation services. We understand that the cost figures provided are for planning purposes only and will not be binding in any way.

8 ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

Please provide any other materials, suggestions, costs, and discussion you deem appropriate.