

**IMPROVING HEALTHCARE TO VETERANS
Request for Applications (RFA)**

- I. Comprehensive statewide effort to serve veterans' primary care, behavioral health and other needs**

And

- II. Innovative or evidence-based smaller denomination grants that provide health wellness and management services or activities to veterans and their families**

Important Dates:

Publication of Request for Applications (RFA): October 28, 2015

Letter of Intent Due Date: November 4, 2015

Application Open Date: November 6, 2015

Application Close Date: November 25, 2015

Notification Date: December 18, 2015

Anticipated Start Date: January 1, 2016

Anticipated Project End Date: June 30, 2016

PO Box 360, Trenton, NJ 08625-0360

INTRODUCTION

Following separation from the military, veterans may experience a host of service-connected and non-service-connected health issues.

Our veterans deserve the primary care and behavioral health services they need to support their resilience. The alternative is stark. Veterans comprise one in five homeless Americans. One in three homeless men are vets, and 58.9 percent of homeless vets are minorities (vs. 20.7% of all vets). Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan have an unemployment rate approximately 40% greater than the general population. There are effective, proven treatments that can save lives and costs. We must help ensure that our veterans get the services they need.¹

Thus, the two part challenge becomes: 1) increasing the number of veterans in need who receive care and 2) ensuring that care is promptly available and delivered using appropriate evidence-based screening and treatment.

In order to help close the gap on the unmet needs of our veteran population in the state of New Jersey, a request for applications (RFA) will be released, totaling \$5.5 million in funding. \$5 million of the RFA will be to support a comprehensive statewide effort to serve veterans' primary care, behavioral health and other needs. Recognizing that the \$5 million represents one-time funding, a goal is to leverage and further develop existing frameworks in New Jersey that can serve the primary care, behavioral health and other needs of veterans. The remaining \$500,000 will be to support innovative or evidence-based smaller denomination grants that provide health wellness and management services or activities to veterans and their families.

ELIGIBILITY, FUNDING AVAILABILITY, AND OBLIGATIONS

RFA PART I: ELIGIBILITY & FUNDING

Five million dollars will be made available to serve veterans' primary care, behavioral health (including PTSD) and other needs. The number of awards made will depend on the number and quality of applications received. The desire is to award to at least two entities—one based in Central/Northern New Jersey, and one based in Southern New Jersey.

- Eligible applicants will already be providing health services (primary care and/or behavioral health services) targeted to veterans.
- Eligible applicants will be:

¹ The National Council, Meeting the Behavioral Health Needs of Veterans, Nov. 2012

- A) New Jersey nonprofit hospitals with expertise in behavioral health services - each hospital applicant must work in partnership with a New Jersey State university, as demonstrated through a Letter of Support; or
- B) New Jersey State university providers of behavioral health services - each university applicant must work in partnership with a licensed New Jersey health facility that provides primary care, as demonstrated by a Letter of Support

RFA PART I: OBLIGATIONS

- Program Elements:
 - Needs Assessment and Project Planning: The awardees will conduct a needs assessment of the primary care, behavioral health and other needs of veterans in their respective regions. Based on the Needs Assessment, awardees will develop plans to guide their provision of services to veterans.
 - Veterans' Services: Based on the findings of the Needs Assessment, and utilizing their outreach networks of local veterans groups and related organizations, the awardees will schedule appointments (same-day whenever possible) with veterans to serve those veterans' primary care and/or behavioral health needs. If those veterans have other needs (e.g. specialty health needs, housing, employment, legal services), the awardees will connect those veterans to appropriate services. The awardees will work, as appropriate, with local social service agencies, State agencies (e.g. Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD), Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA)), and federal agencies to serve the veterans' needs.
 - Support Coach/Peer Mentoring: To help support the provision of services to veterans, the awardees will identify veterans successfully progressing in addressing their chronic disease or behavioral health challenges to serve as support coaches and peer mentors. These coaches and mentors will receive training to provide peer-to-peer counseling to fellow veterans, assisting their fellow veterans in keeping appointments, connecting to other services designated by the awardees, and providing the type of coaching that only a peer can sometimes provide.
- Deliverables and Payment Structure
 - Awardees will be required to submit a monthly report during the period January 1- June 30, 2016 to the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH). The monthly report will detail the achievement of deliverables. Based on the achievement of deliverables the payment schedule is monthly cost reimbursement.

- Proposed deliverables for the initiative will include:
 - Applicants must develop a Needs Assessment of the unmet physical and behavioral health needs of veterans in their service area. The Needs Assessment must identify the applicant supports, as well as the community assets and resources available, to help address the veterans' unmet health needs. The Needs Assessment must include an estimate of the number of veterans in need of physical and behavioral health services in their service area.
 - All applicants must develop an Implementation Plan, including a timeline, for implementing their strategy to address the unmet health needs identified in the needs assessment. The Implementation Plan must include the projected number of veterans that will receive services.
 - Applicants must develop an Infrastructure Development Plan, identifying the types of health services that it needs to develop to address the unmet health needs of veterans. The plan must include the steps the Applicant will undertake to develop the services through this grant.
 - Applicants must develop and design a Health Plan Template that includes the assessment and alignment of clinical and behavioral health interventions with patients' preferences, shared goal setting, patient education, promotion of healthy behaviors, and self-management.
 - Between 125 and 250 veterans will receive primary care and/or behavioral health services in Southern New Jersey by an awardee. Between 125 and 250 veterans will receive primary care and/or behavioral health services in Central/Northern New Jersey by an awardee.
 - Between 25 and 50 veterans will receive same-day appointments in Northern/Central New Jersey by an awardee. Between 25 and 50 veterans will receive same-day appointments in Southern New Jersey by an awardee.
 - Between 25 and 50 veterans will receive other services, e.g. housing/employment/legal services, in Northern/Central New Jersey by an awardee. Between 25 and 50 veterans will receive other services, e.g. housing/employment/legal services, in Southern New Jersey by an awardee.
 - At least 10 veterans will be trained in Southern New Jersey by an awardee to serve as chronic disease self-management program trainers, support coaches or peer mentors. At least 10 veterans will be trained in Central/Northern New Jersey by an

awardee to serve as chronic disease self-management program trainers, support coaches or peer mentors.

- An end-of-program evaluation will be required. Each awardee will allocate a certain portion of their award to fund the evaluation and outline how the end-of-program evaluation will be conducted.

RFA PART II:

The RFA will also seek several awardees for innovative or evidence-based smaller denomination grants. Each award will be for up to \$50,000, for a total of \$500,000. These smaller denomination grants will be awarded to non-profit organizations, including faith-based organizations, which propose to provide health wellness and management services or activities to veterans and their families. A quarterly report will be required for the time periods January 1- March 31, 2016 and April 1 - June 30, 2016.

PROOF OF ELIGIBILITY

Applicants are required to submit financial documents, in accordance to the NJDOH Cost Controlling Initiatives and Terms and Conditions. **Failure to provide required documentation by the date of application submission will result in the application being deemed non-responsive.** Please attach the requested documents in Word or PDF to your application through the NJDOH System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE):

1. Valid Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 501(c) (3) tax exempt status.
2. Statement of Total Gross Revenue and/or Annual Report (if applicable). If grant is less than \$100,000 and agency doesn't receive any other funds from the state or federal government an audit report is not required. Agency should submit the Statement of Total Gross Revenue in order to determine if an audit report is required.
3. Tax Clearance Certificate is to be submitted—Application for Tax Clearance can be obtained at <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/busasst.shtml> (fee of \$75.00 or \$200.00).
4. NJ Charities Registration- If your organization is registered with the NJ Charities Registration then each year a "Letter of Compliance" from the Division of Consumer Affairs must be obtained. All registered charities must renew their registration yearly. More information, contact and forms can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/charity/charfrm.htm>

APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION

The anticipated schedule for this RFA is as provided in the table below.

Chart 1: Anticipated Improving Healthcare to Veterans RFA Schedule

Date	Activity
November 4, 2015 before 3 PM	Letter of Intent Due Date
November 6, 2015 by 8:00 AM	Application Open Date
November 25, 2015 before 3 PM	Application Close Date
December 18, 2015	Notice of Intent to Award
January 1, 2016	Anticipated Start Date
June 30, 2016	Anticipated Project End Date

PRIMARY CONTACT

The name, address, and contact information for the Primary Contact for this RFA are as follows:

Stephanie Marchese Forrest
NJ Department of Health
Policy and Strategic Planning
PO Box 360
Trenton, NJ 08625-0360
stephanie.forrest@doh.state.nj.us

LETTER OF INTENT

A 1-2 page letter of intent on organization letterhead is mandatory for any organization interested in potentially submitting an application. Although a letter of intent is not binding and does not enter into the review of a subsequent application, the information that it contains allows NJDOH staff to estimate the potential review workload and plan the review.

The letter of intent must include the following information:

- 1) Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)
- 2) Organization address
- 3) Name and contact number of person entering application information in SAGE
- 4) Descriptive title of proposed project
- 5) Participating institutions and organizations
- 6) Overview of project (1-2 pages) - significance, aims and methods

Interested applicants must submit a letter of intent on organization letterhead by 3pm EST on November 4, 2015 via email to: stephanie.forrest@doh.state.nj.us

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND DELIVERY

To be considered, Applicant proposals must be responsive to all of the requirements of this RFA. Incomplete grant applications will not be considered and will be disqualified. All proposals must be submitted via the SAGE system no later than 3pm EST on November 25, 2015. Paper submissions will not be considered. SAGE can be accessed at the following link: (<https://enterprisegrantapps.state.nj.us/NJSAGE/Login.aspx?APPTHEME=NJSAGE>) beginning on November 6, 2015 by 8am.

Please Note: The New Jersey Department of Health may, in its sole discretion, reissue the RFA and add another application period if insufficient qualified applications are received. Applications not submitted by the due date and time will be deemed non-responsive and, therefore, subject to rejection.

RFA Part I:

Applications should be succinct, self-explanatory, and organized in the order outlined below:

- A. Executive Summary: a brief description of the proposed project (including the high-level process that will be used to achieve the deliverables identified in this RFA) should be included under the Needs and Objectives of project page in the SAGE system.
- B. Proposal: a description of the approach and plans for accomplishing the work and deliverables that shows the Applicant's understanding of the requirements of this RFA and its ability to successfully complete the project within the six month timeframe should be included under the Needs and Objectives of project page in the SAGE system.
- C. Organizational Capacity: a description of the Applicant's organizational capacity to achieve the goals, objectives, and deliverables as detailed in this RFA. The Applicant should describe core project management to execute the award, including the roles and responsibilities of project staff. The Applicant should identify its Project Manager's ability to lead and manage the project to successful execution of the deliverables in this RFA; monitor the project's on-going progress; prepare and submit plans, reports, and performance measures; and facilitate communication with partners. This information should be included under the Needs and Objectives of project page in the SAGE system.

- D. Readiness to Implement: a description of the Applicant’ readiness to design, develop, implement, and measure the veterans’ health initiative. This information should be included under the Method(s) and Evaluation of project page in the SAGE system.
- E. Evaluation: Description of how applicant will conduct an end-of-program evaluation. This information should be included under the Method(s) and Evaluation of project page in the SAGE system.
- G. Budget: \$5 million will be made available to serve veterans’ primary care, behavioral health (including PTSD) and other needs. The number of awards made will depend on the number and quality of applications received. The desire is to award to at least two entities—one based in Central/Northern New Jersey, and one based in Southern New Jersey. Only actual costs incurred for the activities, deliverables, and services outlined in this RFA will be reimbursed. The Applicant must complete Chart 2 (below) of this RFA. This information should be included under Schedule A, Schedule B, Schedule C and the Cost Summary pages in the SAGE system. Please attach the following chart in SAGE under the miscellaneous attachment page.

Chart 2: IMPROVING HEALTHCARE TO VETERANS BUDGET

DELIVERABLE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE(S)	APPROXIMATE DELIVERABLE COST
Deliverable 1: Needs Assessment: Applicants must develop a needs assessment of the unmet physical and behavioral health needs of veterans in their service area.		
Deliverable 2: Implementation Plan: Applicants must develop a plan, including a timeline, for implementing their strategy to address the unmet health needs identified in the needs assessment.		
Deliverable 3: Infrastructure Development Plan: Applicants must develop a		

plan, identifying the types of health services that it needs to develop to address the unmet health needs of veterans.		
Deliverable 4: Health Plan Template: Applicants must develop and design a Health Plan Template that includes the assessment and alignment of clinical and behavioral health interventions with patients' preferences, shared goal setting, patient education, promotion of healthy behaviors, and self-management.		
Deliverable 5: Between 125 and 250 veterans will receive primary care and/or behavioral health services		
Deliverable 6: Between 25 and 50 veterans will receive same-day appointments		
Deliverable 7: Between 25 and 50 veterans will receive other services, e.g. housing/employment/legal services		
Deliverable 8: At least 10 veterans will be trained to serve as chronic disease self-management program trainers, support coaches or peer mentors		
Deliverable 9: End of program evaluation		

RFA Part II:

Applications should be succinct, self-explanatory, and organized in the order outlined below:

- A. **Executive Summary:** a brief description of the proposed project (including the high-level process that will be used to develop the deliverables that the applicant will identify in this RFA) should be included under the Needs and Objectives of project page in the SAGE system.
- B. **Proposal:** a description of the approach and plans for accomplishing the work and deliverables and its ability to successfully complete the project within the six month timeframe should be included under the Needs and Objectives of project page in the SAGE system.
- C. **Organizational Capacity:** a description of the Applicant's organizational capacity to achieve the goals, objectives, and deliverables to be proposed in Chart 3 (see below). The Applicant should describe core project management to execute the award, including the roles and responsibilities of project staff. The Applicant should identify its Project Manager's ability to lead and manage the project to successful execution of the deliverables; monitor the project's on-going progress; and prepare and submit plans/reports. This information should be included under the Needs and Objectives of project page in the SAGE system.
- D. **Readiness to Implement:** a description of the Applicant' readiness to design, develop, implement, and measure the impact of the grant should be included under the Method(s) and Evaluation of project page in the SAGE system.
- E. **Evaluation:** a description of how the Applicant will conduct an end of program evaluation. This information should be included under the Method(s) and Evaluation of project page in the SAGE system.
- F. **Budget:** RFA Part II will seek several awardees. Each award will be for up to \$50,000. The Applicant must complete Chart 3 (below) of this RFA. This information should be included under Schedule A, Schedule B, Schedule C and the Cost Summary pages in the SAGE system. Please attach the following chart in SAGE under the miscellaneous attachment page.

Chart 3: IMPROVING HEALTHCARE TO VETERANS BUDGET

DELIVERABLE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE(S)	APPROXIMATE DELIVERABLE COST

NEW ORGANIZATIONS ON SAGE

If you are a first time NJDOH applicant whose organization has never registered in the NJDOH SAGE, you **must** contact the SAGE System Administrator, Cynthia Satchell-Gore, cynthia.satchell-gore@doh.state.nj.us (609) 633-8009, complete a New Agency form, and submit it to the NJDOH. The Department will review the documents to ensure applicants have satisfied all the requirements. When approved, the organization’s status will be activated in SAGE. The SAGE System Administrator will grant permission via email or phone call to the organization’s Authorized Official informing them they are authorized to access the application in SAGE. You will not have access to an application in SAGE until all documents are received and all procedures are satisfied.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SESSION

A Technical Assistance (TA) Session will be held on November 5, 2015 from 1:00pm to 5:00pm in Trenton. After the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) receives the Applicant’s Letter of Intent, NJDOH will forward information to the Applicant regarding the exact Trenton location for the TA session. It is strongly advised that Applicants attend this TA session. Staff from NJDOH will be on hand to answer questions and to provide guidance on the use of the SAGE system.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

In scoring applications, eligible applications will be evaluated against the following criteria during review:

- A) Applicant's Proposal and its compliance with RFA requirements. (50 points)
- B) Applicant's organizational capacity and readiness to perform the work required by the RFA, as presented in its proposal. (30 points)
- C) Applicant's cost proposal (20 points)