

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST

**Community Psychiatry Residency
Training Initiative**

October 29, 2021

Valerie L. Mielke, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services

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I. Purpose and Intent

The Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) is issuing a Request for Letters of Interest (RLI) to all fully accredited psychiatry residency programs in New Jersey that are currently providing four years of training in adult psychiatry (the Program).

The purpose of the Program is to:

1. Address the shortage of psychiatrists in New Jersey by increasing training opportunities by a total of 10 new adult psychiatry residency positions in the State.
2. Ensure that new state-funded psychiatry residency training positions provide residents with extensive experience in the public behavioral health system working with individuals in the community who have serious mental illness or a serious mental illness with a co-occurring behavioral health condition such as substance use disorder, intellectual disability or developmental disability.
3. Encourage recruitment of qualified candidates for residency training who are likely to practice psychiatry in New Jersey after graduation.

Psychiatry Residency Programs will:

- Obtain any needed approvals from partnering hospitals and affiliated programs that will support and maintain the new positions that place emphasis on community psychiatry.
- Obtain any needed certifications and approvals from residency accrediting bodies for the additional positions.
- Begin recruiting for the new residency positions and have the positions listed in the 2022 National Residency Matching Program (NRMP).
- Institute a Community Psychiatry Training track for new residents during Post-Graduate Year (PGY) 2-4 that meets the requirements of this RLI.

DMHAS will:

- Provide the sum of \$400,000 to support a residency four-year position in each psychiatric residency program that is selected for funding.
- Monitor residency program efforts to recruit and maintain qualified candidates, and to provide extensive training experiences for residents in non-hospital, community based settings in the public sector.
- Work with psychiatry residency programs to support efforts to implement a Community Psychiatry track and assist with retaining program graduates to work in community-based settings in New Jersey.

The RLI timeline is anticipated as follows:

- October 29, 2021: Release of RLI
- November 11, 2021: Deadline for receipt of Letters of Interest (LOIs)- no later than 4:00 pm EST
- November 22, 2021: Announcement of selected residency programs
- November 29, 2021: Program Start Date

II. Background

DHS and DMHAS are committed to addressing the State's psychiatrist shortage by increasing opportunities for qualified physicians to receive training and to work in community-based behavioral health programs in the state after graduation. The psychiatrist shortage in the State is part of a national problem. According to reports by several government and nonprofit organizations, the current workforce of U.S. psychiatrists does not meet the demand for psychiatric care, and these generally predict that unmet needs will grow in the future. While many factors led to the shortages, it is clear that availability of graduate medical education in psychiatry has not kept up with service demands.

Because of a lack of new funding for graduate medical training, the number of residency positions for psychiatrists has been relatively static while there is no deficit of qualified candidates. New Jersey psychiatry residency programs report having significantly more qualified candidates than the number of residency positions available and that they are able to train more individuals if those positions are funded. To support increasing capacity of funded positions, the New Jersey State Fiscal Year 2022 Budget includes \$4 million for 10 additional four-year positions in psychiatry residencies in the State.

In New Jersey and elsewhere, the greatest shortage for psychiatrists and the most unmet treatment needs exist in non-hospital, community-based, public sector behavioral health programs. Because it is imperative that residents appreciate the professional and community value of working in the public mental health system, the residency programs shall develop a dedicated community psychiatry track for residents in the funded positions.

Community psychiatry tracks offer enhanced training to residents interested in working in the public sector. Many individuals graduating medical school are looking for opportunities to work with vulnerable populations, and they may, in fact, be attracted to programs offering rotations in community psychiatry programs. Although all psychiatric residences offer some community experience, few programs currently offer a community psychiatry track despite the need for psychiatrists in these settings (Reardon et.al., Community Mental Health Journal, 2014).

The Community Psychiatry track must be developed in the first year of funding and made available for residents in funded positions in their PGY years 2-4. The track will include a didactic program, reading list, and relevant rotations in non-hospital, community-based behavioral health programs for individuals with serious and persistent mental illness, severe substance use disorders, intellectual/developmental disabilities with behavioral issues, and other underserved and vulnerable populations. The sites available for rotations can include outpatient mental health clinics, programs of assertive community treatment, substance use treatment programs, residential housing and treatment programs, and shelters. These rotations shall be open to all of the residents in the programs, not only to those in the state-funded positions.

III. Funding Availability

Funding for up to 10 residency programs will be in the amount of \$400,000 to cover the costs of four years of training (PGY1-PGY4) for each new position.

IV. Application and Proposal Requirements

All New Jersey-based psychiatry residency programs are eligible to respond to this RLI.

LOIs must indicate that the residency program will fully meet accreditation requirements to add the new position and that it will provide a community training track and support the resident through four years of his/her training.

LOIs must be written in 12-point Times New Roman font and be no longer than three (3) pages, not including attachments. The letter must be double-spaced with one-inch margins and numbered. Your letter must describe in the following order:

- Why your residency program wants to add a new psychiatry resident position and has the capacity to make this successful. Include a description of your experience recruiting qualified applicants in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) in prior years.
- How your residency program will make efforts to recruit qualified residency candidates who will be likely to remain in New Jersey and practice in the public sector behavioral health system after graduation.
- How your program will complete all required activities to add the new residency position beginning in 2022 and to recruit a qualified candidate for the position within the timeline required timeline.

- How your program will develop a community psychiatry track and ensure that residents being supported by the funding receive significant clinical experience serving individuals with serious mental illness and a variety of patient populations in rotations in non-hospital, community-based behavioral health programs in the public sector.

V. Submission Instructions

DMHAS assumes no responsibility and bears no liability for costs incurred in the preparation and submittal of the LOI.

In addition to the LOI, all submissions must include the following:

A completed Attachment A – Proposal Cover Sheet, as provided in this RLI.

DMHAS will select residency programs based on the responses to the information outlined in Section IV of this RLI.

All LOIs must be submitted no later than 4:00 pm EST on November 11, 2021, by emailing to: Carol Pitonyak, Executive Assistant, Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services carol.pitonyak@dhs.nj.gov.

DMHAS will notify selected respondents by November 22, 2021 after which time, DMHAS will contact the person indicated as the Agency Contact on the Proposal Cover Sheet to begin work on the Program.

Attachment – Proposal Cover Sheet

Date Received

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services**

Name of RLI: **Psychiatry Residency Initiative**

Incorporated Name of Bidder: _____

Type: Public _____ Profit _____ Non-Profit _____

Address of Participating Agency: _____

Program Administrator Name and Title _____

Phone No.: _____ Email Address: _____

Agency Contact Person Name and Title: _____

Phone No.: _____ Email Address: _____

Authorization: Program Administrator (printed name): _____

Signature: _____