



Foxborough Determination of Need Funds – Request for Letters of Intent

Executive Summary

Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) requests letters of intent (LOI) to support two community health initiatives in the town of Foxborough, MA. The two community-identified focus areas include expanding transportation access and mental health linkage systems. The awards are available through Massachusetts Department of Public Health's (DPH) Determination of Need (DoN) program.

Background

On December 11, 2019, BWH received approval from DPH for a DoN application to expand MRI and CT imaging services at the Brigham and Women's Mass General Health Care Center in Foxborough (DoN # PHS 19072212-RE). As part the approval, BWH will spend \$368,434.96 to fund key health issues to benefit the Foxborough community. In late 2019 through early 2020, an Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee comprised of local Foxborough leaders was established to identify priority health needs that should be addressed with this investment. As part of this process, three community meetings were held in February 2020 to gather community input as part of this identification process. Through these efforts, the following two key areas for investment were identified and subsequently approved by DPH: 1) Expanding transportation access and 2) Mental health linkage systems. Furthermore, as part of this process, the Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee allocated the following amounts to each focus area to be disbursed over three years, with estimated annual disbursements of approximately one-third of the total amount each year:

- 1) Expanding transportation access: \$221,060.98 (\$73,686.99 per year)
- 2) Mental health linkage systems: \$147,373.98 (\$49,124.66 per year)

Purpose

The purpose of this LOI request is to identify organizations or local government agencies with innovative approaches to address: 1) expanding transportation access for Foxborough residents and/or 2) mental health linkage systems for Foxborough residents. Organizations with a competitive LOI will be invited to submit a full proposal through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The organizations invited to submit a full proposal will be selected by an Allocation Committee comprised of Foxborough leaders and regional experts with knowledge of transportation issues and mental health service systems.

Expanding Transportation Access

Public transportation in Foxborough is limited to a paratransit program providing limited service to residents 60 years and older and residents under 60 with qualifying disabilities and several

volunteer run programs offering limited services in and around the town.¹ These programs are limited in availability, eligibility of residents, destinations served, and funding.

By expanding access to transportation, these funds are intended to improve physical and mental health outcomes and support independent living for Foxborough residents. Specifically, these funds are intended to address local economic inequality's impact on residents' access to appointments and resources, engagement with their community, and feeling of social isolation. Project(s) will be prioritized for funding if they reach identified at-risk populations for this health priority in Foxborough including older adults with low to moderate incomes, adults with mobility challenges, as well as individuals who don't currently qualify for subsidized transportation but experience significant challenges (e.g. domestic violence survivors referred through local programs).

Mental Health Linkage Systems

The Foxborough Community Conversations identified barriers to accessing mental health services as a top priority, noting issues with referral sources, direct outreach to at-risk individuals, and community awareness for recognizing warning signs. These concerns were noted across the age continuum. Barriers to accessing mental health services often result in delayed or missed treatments, which are “associated with premature mortality, productivity loss, high rates of disability, and increased risk for chronic disease.”² Conversely, greater access to behavioral health services has been associated with better behavioral and physical health outcomes, lower acute service utilization, and lower health costs.³ Improvements to access are more impactful when services are combined with collaborative and integrated care models.⁴

By strengthening local mental health linkage systems, these funds are intended to improve mental health outcomes for Foxborough residents by increasing access to resources and referrals. Specifically, these funds are intended to address resource inequities that prevent local residents from receiving services and address barriers to mental health care such as stigma and lack of awareness of conditions and treatment options. Project(s) will be prioritized for funding if they reach one or more at risk population(s) for this health priority in Foxborough including students, survivors of domestic violence, isolated individuals and older adults, and residents generally who need assistance accessing mental health support services.

¹ https://foxboroughma.gov/departments/council_on_aging___human_services

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5775117/>

³ Increasing Access to Behavioral Health Care Advances Value for Patients, Providers and Communities. (2019, May). Retrieved from <https://www.aha.org/system/files/media/file/2019/05/aha-trendwatch-behavioral-health-2019.pdf>

⁴ Slomski A. (2017). Primary Care Treatment of Substance Use Disorder Reaches More Patients. JAMA.

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2664454>; See also Archer J, et al. (2012) Collaborative Care for Depression and Anxiety Problems. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews. https://www.cochrane.org/CD006525/DEPRESSN_collaborative-care-for-people-with-depression-and-anxiety

Amount and Length of Funding

The Foxborough DoN Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee has allocated \$221,060.98 to expanding transportation access and \$147,373.98 to mental health linkage systems. Each amount is to be spent over three years, with approximately one-third of the total funds distributed annually. Funding is expected to be awarded between June 10 - July 31, 2021 and will end of July 31, 2024. Depending upon the proposed approaches, the Allocation Committee may ultimately choose to fund more than one organization in each of the focus areas.

Anticipated Timeline

Description	Date
Request for LOI Released	March 17, 2021
LOIs Due	April 7, 2021
Organizations Notified of Selection for RFP	April 21, 2021
Virtual Bidders Information Session	Week of May 3 – 7, 2021
RFP Due	May 19, 2021
Notification of Awards	June 9, 2021
Contract Execution and Fund Disbursement	June 10, 2021 – July 31, 2021
Expected Start Date	August 1, 2021
End Date	July 31, 2024

Eligibility

- Priority for funding will be given to entities with non-profit or governmental status, but for-profit entities may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Applicants do not need to be geographically based in Foxborough and services delivered do not need to be delivered physically in Foxborough, but services must benefit Foxborough residents.
- Applicants may choose to address both focus areas (transportation and mental health linkage systems), but must submit a separate LOI for each focus area.
- Proposals may involve a partnership among different entities, but there must be one primary applicant that will serve as the fiscal agent for project.

Guidelines on Use

These funds can cover staff salaries, consultant fees, operating expenses, and indirect costs (not exceeding 25% of the direct expenses) connected with the focus area. (Indirect costs include those not specifically tied to your proposed project but are essential to your overall operations.)

The following are ineligible activities for funding:

- Medical treatments that fall within the customary scope of BWH activities
- Clinical/community linkage programs designed solely to address the BWH's existing or future Patient Panel
- Costs of transportation to/from BWH institutions and services, except when necessary to accomplish the objectives of a specific focus area
- If a particular service or intervention is eligible to be covered by any insurer including MassHealth (including flexible service spending) or Medicare, funds cannot be used to cover that service or intervention

Priority will be given to applicants whose funds address health inequities at the systemic level. More specifically, as DPH explains, these funds "...are directed toward strategies to change the conditions which promote or hinder opportunities for health."⁵

Application Process and Instructions

To apply, please submit an LOI inclusive of the following two parts. Part 1 should be no longer than 1 page in length (12 point font, single spaced) and Part 2 should be no longer than 2 pages in length (12 point font, single spaced). If your organization is interested in applying for funding in both focus areas, separate LOIs must be submitted – one per focus area of interest. The LOI(s) must be signed by the Executive Director, CEO, or equivalent of the organization/entity.

Part 1: Background Information

Part 1 should serve as your cover page, included on page 1 of your LOI, answering the prompts below:

Organization Information

Organization's name:

Organization's contact person:

Organization's address:

Contact person's email:

Contact person's phone number:

If using a fiscal agent, please specify the fiscal agent's name and contact person:

Organization or fiscal agent's Federal Tax Identification number:

⁵ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/community-health-initiative-planning/download>

Project Information

Project name (if any):

Project focus area: Please select the focus area for this LOI:

- A. Expanding transportation access
- B. Mental health linkage systems

Part 2: Proposal

Part 2 should include responses to the prompts below in a document no longer than 2 pages in length (12 point font, single spaced):

- Identify your focus area of interest and why it was selected
- Describe your organization's expertise in the area of your chosen focus area
- Describe your planned approach if awarded the funds
- Describe how your planned approach incorporates an equity framework*
- Describe your organization's experience working in Foxborough. If none, explain how your organization plans to expand services to Foxborough
- Estimate the amount of funds your organization will request, annually and total

An **equity framework is one that asks the following questions:*

- *Who benefits from your planned approach?*
- *Who is harmed by your planned approach?*
- *Who influences your planned approach?*
- *Who makes decisions shaping your planned approach?*
- *What are the unintended consequences of your planned approach?*

Application Submission Information

LOIs are due by 5 pm April 7, 2021. To submit an LOI, send it to bwhhegrants@partners.org. Please feel free to contact bwhhegrants@partners.org with any questions. Answers to all questions will be posted on the [BWH Foxborough DoN webpage](https://www.brighamandwomens.org/about-bwh/community-health-equity/foxborough-don) (<https://www.brighamandwomens.org/about-bwh/community-health-equity/foxborough-don>) for all to see.

Applicants will be notified by April 21, 2021 if they are selected for the RFP process.