

Request for Proposals

Proof of Concept Project for Use of Electronic Notification to Improve Surveillance and Quality of Newborn Screening Pre-analytic Processes



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Request for Proposals: Proof of Concept Project for Use of Electronic Notification to Improve Surveillance and Quality of Newborn Screening Pre-analytic Processes

Application Due Date: June 15, 2016

Introduction

The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL), with funding support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of Laboratory Programs, Standards, and Services (DLPSS), is pleased to offer funds for up to four (4) APHL member laboratory newborn screening (NBS) programs (laboratory and/or follow-up programs) to establish an electronic birth notification mechanism and to evaluate the value of conducting surveillance on NBS pre-analytic processes to improve the timeliness and quality of specimen collection, submission, and transport for NBS. Interested applicants may consider implanting in their state or building on the 2014/2015 pilot projects conducted by Indiana and Montana (to see the summary of their projects go to: <http://www.aphl.org/aphlprograms/newborn-screening-and-genetics/Documents/APHL-Proof-of-Concept-NANI-report-for-Indiana-State-Department-of-Health.pdf> and <http://www.aphl.org/aphlprograms/newborn-screening-and-genetics/Documents/APHL-Proof-of-Concept-MTPHL-Summary-Report.PDF>). This project relates to the Innovations in Quality Public Health Practice program, previously identified study questions of “What is the impact of the public health laboratory (PHL) system on the public’s health?” “What quality systems ensure public health laboratory quality?” and “What does the ideal public health system look like?” The scope of work listed below is not inclusive, and all related topics will be considered. Funding of up to **\$24,500** for each laboratory is available to conduct this project. Funding will be awarded via a contract with APHL.

Scope of work

The awardee laboratories or follow-up programs will develop or establish an electronic mechanism that notifies them of newborn births and allows them to receive or access relevant information about the newborns, such as name, the date and time of birth, birth weight, gestational age, mother’s name, race/ethnicity, family history relevant to newborn screening, health and nutritional status, the birth facility, responsible clinician/pediatrician, etc. Each awardee will test the feasibility of initiating case documentation and specimen tracking based on the infant’s information prior to receipt of the blood spot card. Each awardee will then provide any additional guidance to the healthcare providers at the birth facility about specimen collection, submission, and transport to the NBS laboratory.

The funded NBS testing laboratories or follow-up programs may utilize existing laboratory information systems, electronic health or medical record systems or collaborate with a hospital or health system that has the technology in place to conduct this project. The awardee will also document and assess the extent to which this notification and surveillance system improves newborn screening processes including:

- Reduction in delays of specimen submission and transport;
- Improved ability to communicate with specimen submitters about specimen collection, submission and handling issues;
- Reduction in specimen arrival on weekends (or coordination with an alternate testing site) if the laboratory is closed;
- Improved accuracy of information about the newborn to support results interpretation;
- Decreased test turnaround time; and
- Improved result reporting and follow-up practices (optional linkage to follow-up database is permitted).

Measures of success include:

- Establishing an electronic surveillance network that integrates birth notification, NBS specimen collection, and timely submission to the NBS laboratory;
- Demonstration of the feasibility to use the notification and surveillance system to improve NBS processes;
- Insights that could be broadened and applied to NBS in the state and to other state NBS programs;
- Lessons learned and identification of barriers, concerns, and logistical issues that should be resolved before broader implementation; and
- Information necessary for developing next steps and further projects.

Funding Support

APHL will provide up to **\$24,500** for up to four awards to help defray costs associated with the project based upon an approved budget submitted with the application. The project duration is from the award date (estimated at July 1, 2016) through **June 15, 2017** when final reports are due. Funds provided through this RFP may not be used to support a current staff member in whole or part; but contractors or consultants may be hired to complete the project. All consultant activities must be described in the budget justification.

Project Requirements

Each selected applicant will be required to complete the following activities during the project period:

- a. Complete all milestones as outlined in the proposal. Any changes to milestones or project must be approved by APHL.
- b. Submit progress on meeting milestones through APHL's electronic reporting site, SharePoint. The milestone progress reporting schedule is: Milestone Report 1 - due by October 1, 2016, Report 2 - due by March 31, 2017, and the Final Written Report - due on June 15, 2017. Reports must include the following:
 1. Whether the milestones were completed and how (do not recap project description); and

2. Description of obstacles that resulted in any delays of meeting the milestones, solutions taken to get back on track, and updated milestone(s) for next reporting period, if applicable.
- c. The Final Project Report due June 15, 2017 must contain the following:
 1. A list of partnering agencies and/or birthing facility (or facilities) with a description of their role and impact on the project;
 2. A detailed description of all project activities;
 3. Lessons learned by both the NBS laboratory or Follow-up program and partners;
 4. Identification of barriers, concerns, and logistical issues that must be resolved prior to broader implementation;
 5. Information necessary for developing next steps and additional projects;
 6. An answer to whether your program will sustain the project in the future, and if so, how?
 7. An answer as to whether there were gaps in the overall project that had not been anticipated? If so, what were they and how were they addressed?
- d. Consider submitting a proposal for a presentation (oral or poster) on the project's progress at the 2017 APHL Annual Meeting, June 11-14, 2017, Providence, RI, at other pre-approved conferences, or as a written manuscript for potential publication. Project funds of up to \$1,500 of the total budget may be budgeted toward travel costs.
- e. All changes to the project, milestones or budget must be submitted for approval before they are implemented; any changes not pre-approved could result in forfeiture of funding.

Application Requirements

Please adhere to the following outline in preparing your application. The application should not exceed ten double-spaced pages. The page limit does not include supporting documentation (such as letters of support). To maximize the strength of the proposal, verify that the proposal contains all elements listed in the scoring criteria on Appendix A.

1. **Project Description** – *(Not to exceed 1 page)*
Describe the project and your expected outcomes.
2. **Project Specific Methodology** – *(Not to exceed 4 pages)*
Describe in detail how the laboratory staff or consultant would be used to carry out the project. Outline project steps, identify materials and methods required for project completion and expected outcome, and provide a detailed timeline of activities. Be sure all partners are listed and explain their roles in detail. Applicants are welcome to provide letters of support from partners (these letters should be attached to the application in an appendix).
3. **Evaluation** – *(Not to exceed 2 pages)*
Describe how the effectiveness and impact of the project will be measured and evaluated. In addition, in order for APHL to track and measure the progress of the project, include three to five measureable milestones to be met on each reporting date of October 1, 2016, March 31, 2017 and the final written report due on June 15, 2017.

4. Budget and Justification – *(Not to exceed 3 pages)*

Up to **\$24,500** in direct support will be available for each awardee. The use of such funding must be detailed in the application with justification of why the funds are necessary. Applicants must list all in-kind services to be provided (including staff time and other resources provided by the public health laboratory or partnering organization).

Application and Program Deadlines

Application Deadlines

Complete applications must be submitted through email to bertina.su@aphl.org **by 5:00 PM (EST) on June 15, 2016**. APHL and CDC will review applications, make decisions and send notifications by no later than June 30, 2016. Please be sure to check the RFP/Scoring Criteria on Attachment A to be sure that you won't have points deducted as a result of not providing complete information in one or more of the scoring areas.

Please note: APHL is not responsible for lost or misdirected submissions. A confirmation email of receipt of submission will be sent to submitters. If you do not receive this confirmation within three days of submission, please contact Tina Su at 240-485-2729 to ensure your application was delivered correctly.

Project Deadline

APHL expects that the successful applicant will complete each milestone and status report by the due date specified in the contract from APHL and will submit a final report **by no later than June 15, 2017**. APHL will not grant extensions.

Evaluation Team

APHL staff, led by the Senior Specialist, Quality Systems, will conduct an initial review of all proposals for completeness. Any incomplete application on the proposal due date specified in Application and Program Deadlines section above may not be considered and may not receive a formal evaluation.

Complete proposals will be reviewed by a team of five individuals, each of whom is a subject matter expert in either NBS or quality systems. Two of these individuals will be selected from CDC DLPSS and the remaining three will be members of APHL staff. Once potential reviewers have been identified, APHL's Senior Director Public Health Systems will have final approval over the review team's composition.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the information provided in response to the Application Requirements above and will receive a numeric score of up to 100 maximum points based on the evaluation\scoring criteria in Appendix A.

Evaluation Process

The entire review will be conducted via a combination of email communications between the members of the evaluation team or among the evaluation team members via teleconference sessions. APHL's Senior Specialist,

Quality Systems will coordinate the review process and APHL's Director, Quality Systems will lead the evaluation sessions.

The reviewers may request follow-up interviews with all or some of the applicants and, following these interviews, may request supplemental information on the applicant's proposal. These interviews and any supplemental information would clarify an applicant's knowledge and/or experience in one or more of the evaluation criteria or to explain other information contained in an applicant's proposal.

Post-Evaluation Procedures

The selected applicants will be notified by APHL staff within ten business days of the completion of the evaluation and the name of the recipients will be posted to APHL's procurement website, www.aphl.org/rfp on the same day. Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of these results by email or by U.S. mail within 30 days of the date that the winning applicant is posted.

All applicants are entitled to utilize APHL's RFP Appeals Process to formulate a protest regarding alleged irregularities or improprieties during the procurement process. Specific details of this policy are located on the procurement website.

Conditions of Award Acceptance

The eligible applicant must be able to contract directly with APHL. The selected applicant must agree to comply with duties, services and expectations outlined in the Project Requirements section of this RFP.

All questions should be posted to this RFP's page on APHL's procurement website (www.aphl.org/rfp). In order to post questions, an applicant will be required to establish a free, no-cost account on aphl.org. Once posted, APHL's Senior Specialist, Quality Systems, or another member of APHL's Quality Systems Department will respond to the questions on the procurement website. APHL will endeavor to respond to questions within two business days of their initial posing.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Appendix A: RFP Evaluation/Scoring Criteria

Application Evaluation

APHL will evaluate applications individually against the specific criteria listed below.

Project description and submission - (25 points)

Does the applicant's project description demonstrate an understanding of how their project relates to meeting the scope of the project as outlined in the RFP? Are all components of the RFP addressed? Did the applicant stay in the page limit?

Project specific methodology – (30 points)

Is the methodology given for the project appropriate? If collaborating with others, are roles clearly defined?

Program Evaluation/Timeline - (20 points)

Is there a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the training activity? Are the described evaluation metrics appropriate for the project? Are the described milestones measurable and appreciate to gauge progress of the project? Is the timeline for completion of the project reasonable?

In-kind support – (10 points)

Does the described project have an adequate and reasonable allocation of program staff to carry out recipient activities, including the number, qualifications, duties and responsibilities, and time allocation of the proposed staff?

Budget and Justification - (15 points)

Is the budget realistic and reasonable? Is there clear justification given for all budget line items? Is in-kind support included?

Please note your application maybe disqualified if you do not follow all instructions.

- Suggestions for a Successful Application
 - Do not submit a single spaced application
 - Stay within the page limitations
 - Develop a realistic budget
 - Define who the partners or collaborators are
 - Be specific when describing in-kind support

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