

Request for Proposals

Meeting the Mark: Achieving Excellence in Diabetes Care

Applications are accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis

I. NYSHealth Diabetes Campaign: Reversing the Epidemic

Nearly 1.8 million New Yorkers—almost 10% of the State's population—have diabetes, a chronic condition that exacts an enormous human and financial toll, affecting individuals' health but also health care institutions, health plans, and the State's budget. The prevalence of diabetes has doubled in the last 16 years. Costs related to diabetes in New York are estimated at \$12.9 billion annually, including excess medical costs of \$8.7 billion. The good news is that diabetes is a largely preventable and manageable condition; information is available and tools have been developed to help people manage their disease and reduce the complications that lead to unnecessary hospitalizations and preventable death. The tasks at hand are to spread the use of these tools to clinicians and community leaders, support their efforts to achieve excellence in diabetes care, and make a measurable difference in the lives of people with diabetes.

In 2008, the New York State Health Foundation (NYSHealth) established a five-year, \$35 million, statewide Campaign to tackle the diabetes epidemic. The vision for the NYSHealth Diabetes Campaign is to transform care and reduce the human and financial toll associated with diabetes. The Campaign's strategy is to support the statewide adoption of best practices for diabetes prevention and management in clinical and community-based settings so that New Yorkers with diabetes have an opportunity to live healthy and productive lives.

The NYSHealth Diabetes Campaign seeks to build a critical mass of health providers that achieve excellence in diabetes care as demonstrated by attaining recognition under the National Committee for Quality Assurance's (NCQA's) Diabetes Recognition Program¹ or Bridges to Excellence's (BTE's) Diabetes Care Recognition Program.² By targeting 25% of the approximately 11,000 primary care physicians in New York State, the Foundation expects to have a significant impact on increasing the number of people getting quality care for their diabetes by 2013. We anticipate that by reaching 3,000 physicians, we will set a new standard of care that will lead to a tangible increase in the number of people with controlled

¹ <http://www.ncqa.org/tabid/139/Default.aspx>

² <http://www.bridgestoexcellence.org/Content/ContentDisplay.aspx?ContentID=45>

diabetes, a decrease in hospitalization rates for people with diabetes, and a decrease in the number of emergency room visits related to diabetes. To learn more about the NYSHealth Diabetes Campaign, visit www.nysdiabetescampaign.org.

II. Meeting the Mark: Achieving Excellence in Diabetes Care

This request for proposals (RFP) invites organizations³ across New York to apply for funds to improve the quality of care for people with diabetes and to support primary care physicians in achieving recognition by the NCQA or BTE diabetes programs. To date, the Foundation has worked with stakeholders including the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS), the Community Health Center Association of New York State (CHCANYS), the New York Chapter of the American College of Physicians (NYACP), and the American Academy of Family Physicians (NYAFP) to advance this work. As a result, more than 700 physicians have achieved national recognition, providing excellent care for more than 150,000 patients with diabetes in New York State. To learn more about some of the providers who have achieved recognition, please visit www.nysdiabetescampaign.org/providers.

Through this *Meeting the Mark* RFP, the Foundation aims to build on these successes and meet the goal of 3,000 primary care providers achieving national recognition for delivering excellence in diabetes care. Providers, health organizations, insurers, and other key stakeholders are invited to apply for funding to assist physicians in achieving the NCQA or BTE diabetes recognition and becoming part of a leading group of providers that meet the mark of excellence in diabetes care.

With growing momentum for Patient-Centered Medical Homes and an influx of funding to spread the use of health information technology, there are more opportunities than ever for providers in New York to achieve the best possible outcomes for their patients with diabetes. The Foundation will support initiatives that can build on these related opportunities to meet the criteria for recognition by the NCQA Diabetes Recognition Program and BTE Diabetes Care Recognition Program.

The Foundation selected the NCQA and BTE diabetes recognition programs because they focus on patient outcomes, not simply on process improvements. These programs give physicians clear goals and measures for achieving excellent care for their patients (see Table 1). People with diabetes who have controlled blood sugar (HbA1C), blood pressure, and cholesterol levels, along with timely screenings for kidney disease and eye exams, have a reduced

TABLE 1: NCQA and BTE Core Measures at a Glance

Outcome Measures
Hemoglobin A1c (<7.0%)
Blood Pressure Control (< 130/80)
Cholesterol Control (<100)
Process Measures
Retinal Exam
Nephropathy Exam
Foot Exam
Smoking Status and Cessation

³ Eligible organizations include health care delivery organizations; quality improvement organizations; private physician practices; health plans; and third-party payers (e.g., insurers, employers). See Section IV, "Eligible Applicants," for more information.

risk of complications, such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, and blindness. Achieving good outcomes across these health indicators can also reduce the financial cost of treating these diabetes-related complications.

The NYSHealth Diabetes Campaign encourages physicians to use the NCQA and BTE diabetes core measures as an indicator for providing excellent diabetes care because the measures are clear, widely accepted, and achievable. In addition, insurers and other third-party payers increasingly are offering financial incentives to providers that meet the outcome measures of the recognition programs.

III. Grant Funding

Through the work of the NYSHealth Diabetes Campaign and its current partners, the Foundation has witnessed hospital outpatient clinics, community health centers, and private physician offices throughout New York State redesign their clinical delivery systems to meet the mark of excellence in diabetes care. From multi-site health centers and outpatient departments to individual and group practices, physicians committed to excellence have met the criteria for national recognition programs.⁴ More than 700 physicians have now achieved recognition by NCQA or BTE.

The Foundation's goal is to get at least 3,000 primary care physicians in New York State to provide excellent care for their patients with diabetes, as demonstrated by achieving recognition through the NCQA Diabetes Recognition Program or BTE Diabetes Care Recognition Program. Organizations with the skills, experience, and capacity to work with primary care physicians to achieve recognition are eligible to apply for a grant. The Foundation encourages applications from various practice settings, including physician-led initiatives in private practices.

The following outlines the Foundation's support for this initiative:

GRANT AWARDS

For this RFP, a grant award will be calculated based on the number of primary care physicians who achieve NCQA or BTE diabetes recognition.

AWARD CALCULATION

The Foundation will provide \$2,500 per physician who achieves NCQA or BTE diabetes recognition. For example, if an organization works with 50 primary care physicians to achieve NCQA or BTE recognition, the Foundation will provide a grant of \$125,000 (\$2,500 per provider X 50 providers).

GRANT DISBURSEMENT PROCESS

An initial payment of 20% of the grant total will be made when grants are approved. The final payment of 80% is solely contingent upon verification of the physicians achieving NCQA or BTE recognition.

⁴ For a list of New York State providers who have achieved NCQA or BTE recognition, and to read some of their stories, visit www.nysdiabetescampaign.org/providers.

IV. Eligible Applicants

NYSHealth will consider proposals from a wide range of organizations, including but not limited to the following:

- Solo or group primary care practice sites
- Community health centers (CHCANYS members: see FAQs)
- Hospitals/hospital outpatient departments (HANYS members: see FAQs)
- Insurers or health plans (see FAQs)
- EMR implementation projects (e.g., regional extension centers)
- Regional quality improvement collaboratives
- Quality improvement organizations
- Consulting firms
- Community-based organizations
- Academic Institutions
- Patient-centered medical homes (or organizations in the process of meeting criteria for Level 3 Medical Home recognition by NCQA)

The Foundation does not make grants to individuals. If you are a solo practice, please contact the Foundation prior to submission.

V. Application Process

Interested applicants are required to complete an online inquiry form, which can be found in the "Funding Opportunities" section of the NYSHealth website at www.NYSHealth.org. NYSHealth staff will review the inquiries on an ongoing basis and respond to potential applicants within three weeks. Site visits may be scheduled with applicants during this phase.

Eligible applicants will then be invited to complete a full online application to provide a detailed description of their strategy, approach, and capacity to meet the project's goals. Applications will be accepted and grants awarded on a rolling basis.

VI. Review Criteria

Applicants invited to submit a full application will be assessed by a panel comprising reviewers from across the State who possess a wealth of expertise in diabetes care and quality improvement initiatives.

Applicants must have a well developed strategy and feasible timeline to get a cohort of physicians to attain recognition by NCQA's Diabetes Recognition Program or BTE Diabetes Care Recognition Program. Eligible applicants should have demonstrated experience working on quality improvement initiatives.

NYSHealth's review panel will consider the following factors:

1. The experience, potential, and readiness of the applicant organization to complete the project successfully.
2. Clear articulation of the strategy to help physicians achieve NCQA or BTE diabetes recognition.
3. Ability of the applicant to use this grant to leverage other existing resources within the organization.
4. Likelihood that a project will accomplish its goals within the proposed timeline.

NYSHealth encourages projects that:

- are located in geographic areas with high prevalence and incidence of diabetes and diabetes-related hospitalizations;
- will improve the quality of care for low-income and underserved populations; and
- can potentially scale up to reach more providers in the coming years.

Finally, the Foundation seeks to have equitable geographic distribution across upstate regions and New York City boroughs.

VII. RFP Support

The Foundation will host a series of informational webinars and conference calls for potential applicants. If you are interested in learning more, and for all other inquiries, please send an e-mail to MeettheMark@nyshealth.org.