

**STATE OF FLORIDA
AGENCY FOR HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
AHCA RFI 006 - 14/15**

**FLORIDA HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE (FLORIDA HIE)
SERVICES AND OPERATIONS**

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Purpose

This is a Request for Information (RFI) as defined in Section 287.012(22), Florida Statutes, for planning purposes. This RFI is issued by the State of Florida, Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency), to solicit information regarding available providers for the services described herein. The purpose of the RFI is to determine Vendor interest and perspectives about the opportunities in operating the Florida HIE 2017 – 2023.

An RFI is not a method of procurement. Responses to an RFI are not offers and shall not be accepted by the Agency to form a binding Contract. This RFI and responses to it shall not result in the execution of a Contract with the Agency. By submitting a response to this RFI, a Vendor is not prohibited from responding to any related subsequent solicitation. This RFI may be used for purposes of determining whether or not to competitively procure a commodity or contractual service, determining what solicitation process to use, or researching general, special, and/or technical specifications for a solicitation. The Agency reserves the right to utilize the information gathered through the RFI process to develop a scope of services, which may be incorporated into a Contract using a statutorily approved method of procurement.

2. Background

The Agency has statutory responsibility for creating and administering the Florida statewide health information exchange network that will provide a state-level infrastructure and shared service capabilities as prioritized by Florida health care stakeholders. Florida goals include improving coordination of care through point of care access to patient information, enabling efficiencies of provider-to-provider communication, and enhancing public health services. In addition, the Agency desires to support providers in achieving meaningful use of electronic health records in order to align with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) direction.

Florida has a large number of health care organizations at varying degrees of adoption of health information technology. It is desirable that physician practices are participants as a source of data and consumers of data but the Agency recognizes the varying technical functionalities available to physicians. To meet these needs, the Agency has developed a statewide health information exchange network which is called the Florida Health Information Exchange (Florida HIE). The services offered by the Florida HIE enable health care providers to engage at various levels of technical sophistication and resource commitment.

Currently and for the foreseeable future, the Florida HIE operates under a no cost state Contract with the current Vendor. The Florida HIE is responsible for the collection of user fees from participants to sustain operations. Therefore, the value of services and willingness of stakeholders to sustain the Florida HIE as it continues to grow and respond to changing stakeholder priorities is paramount.

3. Description of Services

The Florida HIE offers health information exchange services either directly or through participating organizations. These are:

- a. The **Patient Look-Up service (PLU)** enables the search and retrieval of a patient's health information made available by other participating health care organizations and data sources. There is no central database of patient records. Providers, with patient permission, search for records using patient demographic information. The consent model for PLU is "consent to query" with the patient giving explicit consent to the provider querying. Substance abuse treatment encounters may be filtered. Hybrid PLU services may be offered by organizations participating in PLU. The Hybrid PLU service enables providers authorized to write prescriptions in Florida to query for health data using PLU with patient consent. This is an option for health care providers not currently sharing data in a health information exchange connected to the Florida HIE. The consent model for Hybrid PLU is the same as PLU.
- b. **Direct Messaging** is a service that encrypts electronic messages and allows for the secure transmission of emails including attachments. This service enables exchange of messages by users of any Direct Trust accredited Vendor. The service is offered as an adjunct to PLU and Event Notification Service. The consent model used is determined by providers using the service consistent with applicable law.
- c. **The Event Notification Services (ENS)** provides notification of hospital discharges or other encounters by a health plan's member to health plans enrolled in the service. Hospitals provide a data feed which is matched to the health plan member with the notification issued to the health plan using Direct Messaging or via sFTP. ENS offers options for frequency of delivery. The consent model is patient (member) authorization obtained by health plans as required by applicable law. Restricted self-pay and substance abuse treatment encounters must be filtered by the hospitals.

Subscription agreements signed by participating organizations and the Vendor describe the general terms and conditions of participation including permitted purposes for each service. Usage metrics for the services are available at: www.FHIN.net.

B. INFORMATION REQUESTED

1. Respondents are requested to provide information specified in Section C, RFI Instructions, Item 3., of this RFI for the following program requirements:
 - a. Operation and maintenance of the Florida HIE PLU service including the collection of user fees to fund maintenance of the service;
 - b. Operation and maintenance of the Florida HIE ENS service including the collection of user fees to fund maintenance of the service; and
 - c. Operation and maintenance of the Florida HIE Direct Messaging service through a no cost Contract with a Vendor that collects user fees.
2. Respondents are requested to provide information specified in Section C, RFI Response Instructions, Item 4., of this RFI for the following:
 - a. Expansion of one or more Florida HIE current service offerings as proposed by the Respondent such as:
 - i. Patient PLU hybrid access;
 - ii. Hospital readmission ENS;
 - iii. Other; and
 - b. Introduction of one or more new Florida HIE service offerings on a no cost basis if proposed by the Respondent. (Note: This item is optional.)
3. Respondents are requested to provide information specified in Section C, RFI Response Instructions, Item 5., of this RFI for the following:
 - a. Provision of some or all of the below governance activities currently provided by the Agency:
 - i. Outreach, outreach materials development and website;
 - ii. Policy development and subscription agreement change process;
 - iii. Management of participant stakeholder relationships, workgroups, and meeting logistics; and
 - b. Transition to a not-for-profit governing organization that would perform under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Agency and contract with the Vendor to operate the Florida HIE. (Note: This item is optional.)

C. RFI RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS

Respondents to this RFI are asked to be thorough, but concise. The RFI response should include the following:

1. The Respondent's name; place of business address(s); contact information, including representative name and alternative, if available; telephone number(s); and e-mail address(s);

2. A description of the Respondent's business and its experience including accreditations or certifications as it relates to the services outlined in this RFI. This description should include a narrative explaining past experiences in which the Respondent has engaged with other health care agencies, health care providers or government agencies to deliver HIE services; and
3. A statement of interest in or knowledge of the services outlined in Section B, Information Requested, Item 1., of this RFI, including a high level outline of any specific product, concept, technology or approach that would pertain to the information sought through this RFI.

Additional elements to be included in the response are answers to the following questions:

- a. How can greater efficiencies be accomplished in operations?
 - b. Should the consent model be changed?
 - i. Would patients give explicit consent to a specific provider?
 - ii. Would filtering of sensitive data be required or permitted?
 - c. How can the value for participants be increased from current service?
 - i. What changes could be made to increase information available for exchange? What would be the operational cost impact if any?
 - ii. What changes could be made to increase flexibility in how the information is made available for exchange? What would be the cost impact if any?
 - d. What if any permitted purposes should be added?
4. A statement of interest in or knowledge of the services outlined in Section B, Information Requested, Item 2., of this RFI, including a high level outline of any specific product, concept, technology or approach that would pertain to the information sought through this RFI.

Additional elements to be included in the response are answers to the following questions:

- a. Who are the proposed subscribers and what is the evidence of demand?
 - b. What would be the proposed price of the service offering?
 - c. When is the proposed Florida HIE breakeven (if applicable)?
 - d. What are the permitted purposes, permitted users, and consent model?
5. A statement of interest in or knowledge of the services outlined in Section B, Information Requested, Item 3., of this RFI, including a high level outline of any specific product, concept, technology or approach that would pertain to the information sought through this RFI.

Additional elements to be included in the response are answers to the following questions:

- a. What is the proposed service level of governance support?
- b. What would be the impact on Florida HIE pricing if any?
- c. What would be the time frame for implementation?

D. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

Any portion of the submitted response which is asserted to be exempt from disclosure under Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, shall be clearly marked “exempt”, “confidential”, or “trade secret” (as applicable) and shall also contain the statutory basis for such claim on every page containing such exempt information. Pages containing trade secrets shall be marked “trade secret as defined in Section 812.081, Florida Statutes”. Failure to segregate and identify such portions shall constitute a waiver of any claimed exemption and the Agency will provide such records in response to public records requests without notifying the Respondent. Designating material simply as “proprietary” will not necessarily protect it from disclosure under Chapter 119, Florida Statutes. An entire response should not be considered trade secret.

E. RESPONSE SUBMISSION

Respondents to this RFI shall submit one (1) electronic copy of its response. The response shall not exceed one hundred (100), single-sided, pages in length. The electronic format shall be submitted on CD-ROM. The software used to produce the electronic files must be Microsoft Word 97 and/or Excel 97 or newer. The electronic files must be logically named.

The Respondent shall **also** submit one (1) electronic redacted copy of the response suitable for release to the public. Any confidential or trade secret information covered under Section 812.081, Florida Statutes, should be either redacted or completely removed. The redacted response shall be marked as the “redacted” copy and contain a transmittal letter authorizing release of the redacted version of the response in the event the Agency receives a public records request.

Responses to this RFI shall be provided no later than **5:00 PM, Eastern Standard Time, July 15, 2015**. Responses shall be submitted to:

Agency for Health Care Administration
Procurement Office
Attn: Victoria Bell
2727 Mahan Drive, MS 15
Tallahassee, FL 32308
procurement@ahca.myflorida.com

After the Agency has received all responses to this RFI, the Agency, in its sole discretion, shall determine if a meeting with Respondents is necessary to clarify the information

received. In the event that the Agency decides to hold a meeting, the Respondent(s) will be notified via email.

F. VENDOR COSTS

Vendors are responsible for all costs associated with preparing a response to this RFI. The State of Florida, Agency for Health Care Administration, will not be responsible for any Vendor costs associated with preparing a response to this RFI.

G. QUESTIONS

Questions concerning this RFI should be submitted in writing via email to procurement@ahca.myflorida.com.

All response to questions received will be made, in writing, directly to the sender.

H. AGENCY FOR HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION WEBSITE

Additional information about the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration can be found on the Agency's website at: <http://ahca.myflorida.com/>

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