

A call for partners

2018 North Sound ACH Call for Partners: Medicaid Transformation Project Initiatives

The North Sound ACH is seeking clinical and non-clinical partners to improve health in the North Sound region, who are currently working in the North Sound region, in North Sound ACH Project Areas, and serving the North Sound ACH Populations of Focus.

This an open call – please share this packet with organizations in your community and networks who you feel meet the framework laid out in this Call for Partners.

The Application Packet

Please make sure to read all sections of this packet before submitting your application to the North Sound ACH, including:

- Entire narrative description of the Call for Partners
- Application, Part 1
- All Attachments
 - A. Initiatives and Populations of Focus
 - B. Getting Set Up with the Financial Executor Portal
 - C. Memorandum of Participation

Introduction

The North Sound Accountable Community of Health (North Sound ACH) is a nonprofit organization working with partners from multiple sectors in Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom counties, and tribes, to transform systems that impact health. Launched in 2014, and one of the first ACHs recognized in Washington, North Sound ACH is governed by a Board of Directors who set the strategic direction for the organization.

The North Sound ACH is a partner in the statewide Healthier Washington initiative, which includes an agreement between Washington State and the federal government providing opportunities to support new and innovative approaches to transform health and community services that will: 1) build healthier communities through a collaborative regional approach; 2) integrate the physical and behavioral health payment and delivery system to foster focus on the whole person; and 3) prepare providers for contracts that pay for quality and outcomes rather than quantity. You can learn more about Healthier Washington at this link (<https://bit.ly/2xBa5M0>).

North Sound ACH is one of nine region-based ACHs in Washington. During 2017, each ACH was required to select project focus areas within which initiatives would be planned and implemented. To plan and carry out these projects, the ACH will establish partner agreements with regional and statewide partners, build upon their history and mission, and augment and leverage the great work already underway.

Current Opportunity for Partnership with North Sound ACH

Currently, we are looking for partners to join us in planning and implementing our Transformation Initiatives for our Populations of Focus (see Attachment A).

What does partnership mean?

When an organization partners with the North Sound ACH, it commits to aligning its work with our vision of improved health, a transformed health system, and improved health equity for our region. Partners also join us in showing our impact by completing planning, reporting, and implementation deliverables tied to our goals for our region. Partners that require supplemental funds to align their work with the North Sound ACH can receive funds for doing so.

If partners need funds, how do they earn them?

It is important that applicants understand that the Medicaid Transformation Project (and this Call for Partners) is **not a grant program**. Partners will earn revenue by completing deliverables tied to planning, reporting, and implementation. Please also note that the intent of the funds available through this 2018 Call for Partners is to provide partners with short-term funding to *supplement existing resources* for implementing health systems transformation activities that align with North Sound ACH's transformation initiatives. **The intent is not to build new programs. These funds are not renewable and are not to be considered sustaining funds.**

Additional Future opportunities

While we have targeted needs at specific times - such as this 2018 Call for Partners - the North Sound region can add new partners at any time, as the need arises. We expect to offer the following opportunities in the future:

- Contracts with organizations that will address IT infrastructure, workforce assessment and development, training on evidence-based models, and core infrastructure needs of clinical and nonclinical partners.
- Community-based care coordinators and Community Health Workers, which will have an additional Call for Partners later this month;
- Behavioral Health and Physical Health providers who are working toward Integrated Managed Care, and/or Bi-directional Integration should respond to this Call for Partners; you may also be contacted directly by either the North Sound ACH or the North Sound Behavioral Health Organization (BHO) to engage in the projects/initiatives during upcoming months.
- Regional collaboration, including leveraging community health assessments, workforce capacity, educational and other technical assessment services.
- 2019 partners to implement strategies laid out in the fall regional Implementation Plan.

Please go to our website (www.NorthSoundACH.org) and join the North Sound ACH newsletter mailing list so you are informed when these and other opportunities are announced.

Who Should Respond to this 2018 Call for Partners?

This Call for Partners is intended for organizations who share our vision of improved health, a transformed health system, and improved health equity for our region.

We know that in order to improve health, we need to also account for services that are not health care-specific, like care coordination, food, housing and transportation. So, in addition to clinical providers, we are looking for Community-Based Organizations who work with our Populations of Focus, intersect with the health care delivery system, and are willing to partner because they can see where their work impacts health. We are especially looking for partner organizations who serve communities of color, have diverse geographic and demographic reach, and represent residents who experience health disparities. This depth of knowledge and community will help us reach our objectives to improve health equity and take steps to eliminate disparities.

We know that there are many organizations that touch the lives of people on Medicaid. In this May 2018 Call for Partners, we are seeking public, private and tribal organizational partners who are currently engaged in work in our initiative areas *and* working with our initial populations of focus (see Attachment A). Potential partners include:

- Physical health providers, including primary care, emergency department, specialists in diabetes, heart disease and asthma and oral health services.
- Community-Based Organizations, especially those providing care coordination services, housing assistance, transportation, food and nutrition.
- Behavioral Health Practices, including those who provide mental health and substance use disorder services
- Counties who are providing direct services in alignment with Attachment A.
- Tribes or tribal organizations working in care integration, coordination or transformation activities as outlined in Attachment A.
- Long-Term Care Partners, working in care integration, coordination or transformation activities as outlined in Attachment A.
- First responders, especially EMS providers.

What are the requirements for partners?

All applicants must meet all of the following five requirements and will need to affirm those same commitments in the Memorandum of Participation.

- **Be committed to improving the health of the people who live in the North Sound region, starting with people on Medicaid.**
- **Provide services currently in the North Sound region, in at least one of the initiative areas.**
- **Deliver care and/or services to at least one of the populations of focus.**
- **Can demonstrate commitment to improving equity and reducing disparities.**
- **Can dedicate/assign staff from to work on individual and regional implementation planning.**

Our region has great assets, a strong history of collaboration among the five counties and eight tribes, and a deep commitment to improving the health of the people who live here. *These and other commitments required from applicants are included in the "Memorandum of Participation" page of the Application Packet.*

Two-Part Application Process

The North Sound ACH 2018 Application Process will be conducted in two parts. All potential partners to the North Sound ACH transformation initiatives must complete all steps in Part 1 and Part 2 of this process.

Important notes about the 2018 Partner Process:

- Completion of Part 1 does not guarantee payment for any subsequent steps, including Part 2.
- Part 1 must be returned by June 21, 2018.
- Only organizations who fully complete and submit Part 1 will be sent Part 2 of the Partner Process.
- Part 2 must be completed and submitted by September 1, 2018.

Part 1:

- 1) (May 2018 release) Completion of the Part 1 Partner Application, which includes questions about, at a minimum:
 - a. Initiatives that the organization commits to working on;
 - b. North Sound ACH Populations of Focus that the organization is working with;
 - c. Key personnel designated to the initiatives;
 - d. Workforce development needs related to initiatives;
 - e. Attestations that organization is not using multiple sources of Medicaid funds to support work for the ACH; and
 - f. Attestations that organization is committed to working with Medicaid enrollees.
- 2) Successful registration in the Financial Executor portal, which includes a 'click' Master Service Agreement. (see Attachment B – Getting Set Up With the Financial Executor Portal)
- 3) Signed Memorandum of Participation with the North Sound ACH, which includes agreement to share reporting data in the North Sound ACH reporting portal (See Attachment C – North Sound ACH 2018 Partner Application: Memorandum of Participation).

Part 1 Payment: For completion of all Part 1 deliverables there will be a stipend payment of up to \$40,000 to the partner organization, which will be paid through the Financial Executor portal.

Part 2: *Please note that only Applicants who successfully complete Part 1 of the Partner Process will be invited to complete Part 2 when it is released on or before July 6, 2018.*

- 1) Creation of an account in the North Sound ACH reporting portal (TBD).
- 2) Completion of the Part 2 Partner Self-Assessment, including and uploading responses into the reporting portal. Part 2 will include an assessment related to Health Information Exchange (HIE) and Health Information Technology (HIT) and will ask much more detailed questions about how your organization works with people on Medicaid, the data you collect, what initiatives you are currently supporting, your organization's capacity to participate in the initiatives, and workforce and infrastructure challenges you face.
- 3) Designation of key staff to work with North Sound ACH and other partnering providers to finalize the region's implementation plan and specific performance measures.
- 4) Concurrently with 3) above, designation of key staff to develop an organization-specific implementation plan in the reporting portal.
- 5) Signing of a Partner Contract with North Sound ACH that commits the partner to undertaking capacity building and readiness activities laid out in the regional and individual implementation plans.

Part 2 Payment: The payment in mid-fall 2018 will vary among partners who complete the Part 2 deliverables.

Payment factors will be further detailed in the Part 2 packet, including:

- Size, complexity of organization, with possible metrics to include:
 - Medicaid beneficiaries served ("lives")
 - Medicaid engagements (services rendered)
 - Workforce that will be engaged in implementation initiatives
- Number of initiatives that organization commits resources to
- Target populations that the organization commits to
- Services that reach rural/remote populations
- Organization's reach/commitment to underserved populations and/or those experiencing disparities

Important note on availability of funds:

The North Sound ACH has no guarantee of receiving earnings from the Medicaid Transformation Project. These are the funds to be shared under this Call for Partners with partnering organizations, therefore completion of the 2018 milestones does not guarantee any earnings to organizations beyond 2018.

Additionally, the North Sound ACH retains the authority to support none, some, or all of the initiatives described in this Call for Partners. There is no guarantee that all initiatives with all populations of focus will receive revenue from the North Sound ACH.

You can view the Project Plan that the North Sound ACH submitted in describing its approach to the Medicaid Transformation Project at this link (<https://bit.ly/2G5gGzl>). The detailed implementation plan is due on October 1, 2018, which we will develop jointly with partners who participate through this Call for Partners.

Timeline

To be considered during this first Call for Partners, applications and attachments must be received by 5:00 pm Thursday, June 21, 2018.

All applications - whether hard copy or electronic - should be directed to attention of Hillary Thomsen at the North Sound ACH.

By email: Hillary@NorthSoundACH.org

By mail:
North Sound ACH
PO Box 4256
Bellingham, WA 98227

In person:
North Sound ACH
1204 Railroad Avenue, Suite 200
Bellingham, WA

For additional questions, contact Hillary at 360-543-8858 or Hillary@NorthSoundACH.org.