Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Defining a Community Health Resource and Related Questions

Q. Who can be a Community Health Resource?

An applicant can demonstrate that it qualifies as a Community Health Resource in any of three ways:
- <u>As a designated CHR</u> as listed in the regulations under §10.45.05.04. The designated CHRs are defined in the regulations under §10.45.01.
- <u>As a Primary Health Care Services CHR</u> as defined under §10.45.05.02.
- <u>As an Access Services CHR</u> as defined under §10.45.05.03.

Q. Can community hospitals be the applicant?

A community hospital is not specifically identified by the regulations as a Community Health Resource under §10.45.05.04. A community hospital can, however, demonstrate that it is a Community Health Resource, most likely under §10.45.05.02 of the regulations. The regulations detail criteria that an organization will have to demonstrate to qualify as a CHR, the three central criteria are:
- Provide services predominantly to individuals residing in Maryland;
- Provide primary care services; and
- Provide services according to a sliding scale fee schedule that meets the Commission's guidelines.

A community hospital that documents that it meets these criteria is eligible to apply for a grant.

Q. What documentation must be included to demonstrate that an organization qualifies as a community health resource?

The applicant should submit documentation sufficient to demonstrate that it qualifies as a CHR under the regulations. If the information submitted is insufficient for the Commission to make a determination, the Commission may request additional information.

Q. Can a local health department submit a proposal?

Local Health Departments are specifically identified in §10.45.05.04 of the regulations as being a Community Health Resource, so they are eligible to apply for a grant.

Q. Are school systems eligible applicants?

School Based Health Clinics are designated Community Health Resources under §10.45.05.04 of the regulations. School systems are not designated CHRs and would need to qualify under §10.45.05.02 or §10.45.05.03.

The MCHRC Application Process

Q. If we haven't sent in our Letter of Intent – is it too late?

Letters of intent were requested by September 20. By that time over 60 letters of intent were submitted. Grant applications can be submitted without a letter of intent.

Will feedback be provided on the Letters of Intent as to whether the applicant qualifies as a CHR?

No.

Q. Will the deadline for proposals be changed?

No. The deadline for proposals is Friday, October 20, at 5:00 p.m. EDT.

Q. When will the form for Contractual Obligations, Assurances and Certifications be available?

This will be posted on the Commission's website by Monday, October 9, 2006.

Q. When will the grant application cover sheet be available?

This will be posted on the Commission's website by Monday, October 9, 2006.

Q. Can an organization submit multiple proposals?

Yes. An applicant can submit multiple proposals. Each proposal will be considered individually and assessed according to the Commission's selection criteria and funding priorities.

Q. Can a proposal address more than one of the Commission's priority areas or should separate proposals be submitted?

If an applicant is proposing two distinct projects, it would likely be better served by submitting separate applications. If, however, the applicant is submitting a proposal that addresses two of the Commission's interests in an integrated fashion, it should submit one application. The Commission, as part of its review

and selection process, may chose to fund only a portion of a proposal. The final scope of the project and funding level will be negotiated between the Commission and the prospective grantee.

Q. Would a proposed project intended to serve immigrants of unknown or undocumented immigration status, but who currently reside in Maryland, - meet the criteria of "serving Marylanders in Maryland"?

Yes.

Q. Can grants be used to establish a school-based wellness center, under the priority that projects will improve access to care and/or promote service integration for low-income families and under- and uninsured populations?

Applicants should carefully read the Call for Proposals to determine the Commission's priorities for funding projects.

Q. Is there a format requirement for the electronic submission of the proposal and related documents? Do they have to be sent as PDFs (Adobe Acrobat files)?

No.

Q. If the application calls for organizations to partner, who should submit the application?

It would be advisable that the organization that most clearly meets the requirements to be a CHR submit the application.

Q. Can an out-of-state organization submit an application?

To qualify as a CHR an organization must meet the requirements in the regulations, including providing services "primarily to Maryland residents from service sites located within the state of Maryland" (§10.45.05.02A(2)(c)).

Q. What is the allowance for indirect costs?

Indirect costs may not exceed 10 percent of direct project costs.

The Sliding Scale Fee Schedule

Q. What are the sliding scale fee schedule requirements for CHRs?

Designated CHRs, listed under §10.45.05.04 of the regulations, are not required to submit or provide a sliding scale fee schedule. CHRs that qualify as a Primary Care Services CHR (§10.45.05.02) or an Access Services CHR (§10.45.05.03) must demonstrate that they have in place a sliding scale fee schedule that complies with the Commission's guidelines– (§10.45.05.05).

Applicants should also note the selection criteria in the regulations under §10.45.07.01:

> The extent to which the applicant demonstrates use of a sliding scale fee schedule effectively to increase access to care for low-income uninsured and under-insured individuals in Maryland.

This applies to all applications for MCHRC funding, regardless of how the applicant demonstrates its qualifications as a CHR.

Other Questions

Q. Regarding the condition that grantees must participate in an evaluation of the grants program: Will MCHRC hire an outside evaluator? Are grantees required to allocate any funds to an outside evaluator?

The Commission has, at this time, no plans to hire an outside evaluator. The prospective grantee and the Commission will, as part of finalizing the grant award, agree to data elements that will need to be calculated and submitted to monitor progress and assess performance.

Q. The Work Plan calls for a discussion of the specific products that will be submitted to the Commission as evidence of completion of project milestones. Please give examples of the tangible products you are requesting.

Milestones and deliverables should be proposed by the applicant based on its understanding of the project and the steps necessary to complete the project. The final schedule of milestones and deliverables will be negotiated between the Commission and the prospective grantee.

Q. Is there a budget form that MCHRC requires that must be signed off by the Finance Officer and CEO of our organization?

Applicants are required to submit a transmittal letter, a cover sheet and contractual obligations, assurances and certifications forms. These are to be signed by an individual responsible for conducting the affairs of the organization and authorized to execute contracts on behalf of the organization.

The Call for Proposals describes the budget information required to submit an application. There is no required format. A common budget template used by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has been posted on the Commission's website as an example.

Q. If submitting a three-year grant, can Year 1 be used for planning and Years 2 and 3 for implementation of the project? What is the percentage of the grant over three years? Is it up to the grantee?

How the applicant proposes to distribute funds over the course of the project is at the applicant's discretion.

Q. If funding becomes available in 2/1/07, should this be our project start date? If yes, one year projects would end on 1/31/08 and the 3 year project would end on 1/31/10. Is that correct?

The Commission would like to start projects as quickly as possible. The start date of all projects will be negotiated between the Commission and the prospective grantee.

Q. Does the Commission have an anticipated number of grants that it intends to award either by region, or among the three grant categories?

The Commission is interested in funding a range of proposals and will consider geographic balance in awarding grants. The Commission, however, has no numerical expectations for awarding grants at this time.

Q. What is the deadline for submitting questions?

There is no deadline for submitting questions via e-mail. Answers to any questions received will be posted to the website as soon as practicable.

Q. Is substance abuse a severe mental illness?

This question appears to relate to the background paragraph in the Call for Proposals in the section entitled "Integrating Community-Based Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services with Somatic Services" (pages 3-4) The

paragraph provides background, not requirements for proposals. Applicants intending to submit a grant in this area should carefully read this section.

Q. What services are excluded from funding by the Commission?

The Call for Proposals details what items are, and are not, fundable by Commission grants.

Q. Does focusing on a particular population group strengthen or weaken an application?

Applicants should carefully read the Call for Proposals to determine the Commission's priorities for funding projects.

Q. Can capital improvements be included in the grant?

The Call for Proposals states that grant funds may be used for "a limited amount of essential equipment and minor infrastructure improvements".

Q. Does the cost of service per person have to be identified?

No.

Q. Do Local Health Departments have to submit the entire Department's budget?

No. Pertinent subunit budgets should be submitted.

Q. If the organization has an extensive audit document what information should be submitted?

The cover letter and summary should be submitted. The Commission may request additional information if needed for its review.

Q. Can a grant for oral health services be submitted?

Yes.

Q. Does the grant application have to follow a "logic model" format?

No.

Q. Can support letters developed for previous grant applications to other organizations serve as support letters for this grant?

No.

Q. Can support letters from several organizations be combined?

No. The Commission wants to see specifically what each supporting organization will contribute to the proposed project.