



Adirondack Health Institute

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***Request for Proposals:***  
**ADK Wellness Connections Coordination Centers**

**Posting Date: July 26, 2018**

**Submission Date:** Completed applications must be submitted by **5pm, Thursday, August 30, 2018.**

**I. Background**

Adirondack Health Institute (AHI) is an independent, non-profit organization supporting hospitals, physician practices, behavioral health providers, community-based organizations, patients and others in our region to transform health care and improve population health. AHI is the lead entity for the AHI Performing Provider System (PPS), an integrated, multi-sector network of over 100 organizations and agencies serving individuals across a largely rural area of upstate New York. The AHI PPS network serves community members in Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Saratoga, St. Lawrence, Warren, and Washington counties. The AHI PPS was formed as a partnership to plan for and manage health care restructuring in the northern New York/Adirondack region and administer the NYS Department of Health (DOH) Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program. The nine county service area spans nearly 11,000 square miles and the network serves approximately 144,000 Medicaid beneficiaries.

DSRIP's purpose is to fundamentally restructure the health care delivery system by reinvesting in the Medicaid program. The primary goal is to stabilize the safety-net system and reduce avoidable hospital use by 25% over five years. DSRIP is aligned with the Triple Aim of improving access to care, improving quality of care, and reducing costs.

To advance DSRIP goals and further progress towards improving population health in the greater Adirondack region, AHI and its partners are implementing a technological solution to coordinate care for individuals and families in need. ADK Wellness Connections is a coordinated, multi-sector referral network, built on a shared IT platform. It will enable network participants to collectively address the social determinants of health, with the community member at the center of care. ADK Wellness Connections network partners will be connected through Unite Us, a HIPAA-compliant technology platform. Network partners will be able to expand their organizational impact, easily connect community members to a wealth of services in less time than before, and track the journey of individuals served across the community.

**II. Purpose**

Stakeholder feedback garnered through community strategy sessions held in each of AHI PPS' five Population Health Network (PHN) regions supported deployment of a hybrid referral model for the ADK Wellness Connections network. A hybrid model allows for direct provider to provider referrals while also offering Coordination Centers that act as hubs for facilitating, managing, and tracking referrals. Coordination Centers enable network providers to send referrals to a central entity that assumes accountability for ensuring referrals are matched with appropriate providers and that the referring provider is informed of the referral's outcome.

AHI is seeking organizations to fulfill the functional and operational responsibilities of Coordination Centers for the ADK Wellness Connections network in each of the following three geographic areas:

- Glens Falls PHN and Fulton PHN regions (Fulton, Hamilton, Warren, Washington, and northern Saratoga counties)
- Plattsburgh PHN and Saranac PHN regions (Clinton, Franklin, and Essex counties)
- St. Lawrence PHN region (St. Lawrence County)



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It is anticipated that up to three organizations will be selected in total, one for each of the three identified catchment areas. Applicants may propose operationalizing Coordination Centers in more than one of the three defined geographic areas, provided the applicant organization has a physical location/site within the boundaries of each of the geographic areas it is proposing to cover, as they are described in this RFP. It is important that Coordination Centers are supervised and staffed by individuals with a strong understanding and knowledge of local resources and serve providers.

To ensure continuity of the regional benefits provided by the ADK Wellness Connections network, AHI is seeking applicants with the desire, capacity, and intent to sustain Coordination Center operations after funding awarded as a result of this RFP has expired. Organizations with existing organizational capacity to support Coordination Center activities, allowing for Coordination Centers to be operationalized quickly upon award announcements, are encouraged to apply. It is expected that all Coordination Centers will be operational no later than October 15, 2018, which is the anticipated launch date of the ADK Wellness Connections network. Applicants should consider their readiness to begin Coordination Center activities in accordance with that deadline.

### III. Activities

Coordination Centers will be expected to execute the following activities within their designated coverage area:

#### *Administrative Duties/Staff Development:*

- Ensure Coordination Center staff participate in trainings provided by Unite Us and AHI representatives to become well-versed in technological, operational, and functional requirements and expectations.
- Train Coordination Center staff on the use of a prescribed Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) screening tool, provided by AHI. This SDoH screening tool will be an embedded assessment in the Unite Us platform and Coordination Center staff will play a role in training ADK Wellness Connections providers on its use.
- Report to designated AHI representatives regularly regarding progress, challenges, and any identified network gaps or needs. Frequency of any required communications and reporting to AHI will be determined prior to contracting with selected organizations.
- Work collaboratively with AHI representatives, Unite Us staff members, ADK Wellness Connections providers, and other stakeholders as needed to address any identified concerns or process improvement needs.
- Maintain required records and database information for clients in Unite Us software platform.

#### *Network Development:*

- Build and maintain ongoing relationships with ADK Wellness Connections network providers and promote ADK Wellness Connections utilization within the designated service area.
- Conduct initial site visits or outreach calls with all organizations participating in ADK Wellness Connections within the Coordination Center's service area to ensure familiarity with available programs and resources.
- Provide training and technical assistance to ADK Wellness Connections providers on use of the platform and network as needed (Training and technical assistance will also be provided by Unite Us staff. Coordination Centers will not be responsible for training every new user). Elevate training and technical assistance needs that exceed Coordination Center staff capacity to Unite Us and/or AHI representatives.
- Support growth of the ADK Wellness Connections network and ensure key organizations are added to the network to close identified service gaps.
- Capture a balanced perspective of both client and provider experiences and identify gaps in services available through the network.



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- Use feedback from community members and providers to inform improvements to network operations.
- Maintain a current, in-depth understanding of ADK Wellness Connections network capabilities and capacity to ensure high-quality referrals.

*Referral Management and Customer Service:*

- Receive, prioritize, and triage incoming service requests, both from ADK Wellness Connections providers as well as community member self-referrals initiated through a portal on AHI's website. This may include following up with community members who self-refer, or referring providers, for additional information to make the appropriate referral, as needed.
- Coordinate client care with providers inside the network, monitor pending referrals across the Coordination Center's designated region and follow up with providers as needed, and request updates on client cases from network providers to ensure services are provided to clients when appropriate.
- Be accessible via web platform and telephonically to obtain or provide client status updates and enable referrals.
- Ensure all referrals are directed to the most appropriate provider based on eligibility and any preferences expressed by the referred individual and/or the referring organization. This may include sending referrals out of network when necessary.
- Ensure referrals are distributed equitably across ADK Wellness Connections network providers.
- Adhere to network standards.

#### **IV. Availability of Funds**

Award amounts will vary dependent upon the scope of proposals received. Given reported referral volume from other coordinated referral networks supported by Unite Us technology, it is anticipated that one FTE, or its equivalent, would be needed to effectively execute Coordination Center responsibilities in each of the three proposed geographic regions. Applicants are strongly encouraged to leverage existing organizational resources to support Coordination Center activities, and to propose a budget for funds needed to augment staff and programs already in place. Therefore, it is estimated the average budget request will fall between \$20,000-\$40,000. Applicants may submit proposals outside of these guidelines if they can demonstrate how their proposed structure will support efficient execution of Coordination Center duties.

#### **V. Eligibility and Review Criteria**

*Eligible applicants must:*

- Be an active AHI PPS partner, as evidenced by a fully executed AHI PPS Master Participant Agreement and an AHI PPS Pay for Performance Agreement.
- Submit at least one letter of support from a community partner to illustrate their standing and history of collaborative relationships in the community/communities they serve.

*Preference will given to applicants which demonstrate the following organizational attributes:*

- Have strong and trusting relationships with both service providers and community members in the region(s) in which they are proposing to operate a Coordination Center.
- Have recognized experience, expertise, and success in resource navigation, care coordination, and referral and linkage processes.



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- Commitment to collaboration across service provision sectors and provider types to achieve whole-person care and promote population health improvement.
- An organizational vision and mission in alignment with the goals and purpose of the ADK Wellness Connections network.
- Existing capacity to carry out some Coordination Center responsibilities soon after award announcements, with assurance that they could be fully operational no later than October 15, 2018.
- Clear ability and intent to assume responsibility for sustaining Coordination Center operations beyond the duration of the contract resulting from a successful RFP application.

#### **VI. Exclusions**

Funding resulting from a successful application may not be used for the purchase of land or vehicles, support of lobbying or political activities, to establish or continue RHIO participation and/or connection, and for services that are eligible for reimbursement.

#### **VII. Contract Period**

The contract will start no later than 10/1/18 and will be two years in duration. Please note that it is not anticipated that there will be any funding provided by AHI for these purposes after the contract terminates. Organizations interested in becoming Coordination Centers should consider their capacity and desire to sustain the program beyond the two-year contract period.

#### **VIII. Review, Award and Payment**

Applications received will be reviewed by a committee comprised of AHI representatives and ADK Wellness Connections stakeholders. Funds will be awarded based on the quality of applications and assessment of their alignment with eligibility and review criteria. Payments will be initiated after chosen applicants have completed the contract execution process with AHI.

#### **IV. Application Process**

Please submit the attached **application template and budget template, along with a minimum of one letter of support from a community partner organization**, via email no later than **5pm, Thursday, August 29, 2018**, to Jessica Chanese at [jchanese@ahihealth.org](mailto:jchanese@ahihealth.org).