



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE SERVICES

1500 Jefferson Street SE, Olympia, WA 98501

February 15, 2022

Susan E. Birch, Director
State of Washington Health Care Authority
628 8th Avenue, SE
P.O. Box 45502
Olympia, WA 98504-5502

Subject: Authorization to Create a Convenience Contract to Obtain Health Care Consultation Services

Dear Director Birch:

This is in response to the February 11, 2022 letter in which the State of Washington Health Care Authority (HCA) requests authorization to create a convenience contract designed to obtain multiple vendors to provide Health Care Consultation Services (Services), throughout Washington. Your letter supports this request, which is granted.

HCA administers programs that provide health care coverage for nearly 1 in 3 Washington residents as well. HCA is the state's largest health care purchaser and oversees the Medicaid program (Apple Health), Public Employees Benefits (PEB), and School Employees Benefits (SEB). HCA also provides community behavioral health services, support for these services, recovery services, and related prevention efforts for the entire state. Through these programs, HCA serves nearly 2.7 million lives.

HCA's policy and purchasing approaches are focused on transforming the health care delivery system in Washington state. These value-based purchasing strategies are designed to transform care through better health, better care, and lower cost; provide whole-person care through integrating physical and behavioral health services; and utilize data-informed evidence to make purchasing decisions that improve health outcomes.

HCA is experiencing a significant amount of organizational, system, and process changes as the agency responds to legislative directives, federal mandates, and market shifts. As health care continues to evolve, more programmatic and organizational changes will be required to align with federal, state, and industry expectations. HCA desires health care specific subject matter expertise to develop and drive health care initiatives as it evolves in its role as the largest health care purchaser and leader in the State of Washington.

HCA has issued a solicitation, #2021HCA34, to obtain bids from firms interested in providing as-needed consultants to provide Services in the following areas:

1. Strategic Planning: including areas of health care and health insurance trends; health care policy; health care delivery systems; health benefit management; accountable care organizations; value-based purchasing; process improvements; and related project management services.
2. Partnerships and Coalitions: includes establishing and maintaining community partnerships; coalition building with public agencies, health care providers and health insurance providers; developing strategic solutions to address specific business needs; identifying common ground communications; creating sustainable financing models; administrative procedures; and dispute resolution processes.
3. Development, Evaluation and Assessment of Health Programs: includes assessment of benefits packages; program enrollment, eligibility, coverage, and strategic plans; surveys of providers or clients; developing strategy models to determine recommended program changes; and related project management services.
4. Health Care Information Technology: systems/process analysis and assessment; health care and IT trends and best practices; implementation and integration of applications and systems on premises and in the cloud; communications; quality assurance reporting, and clinical quality measurement; conduct feasibility studies, and business cases to justify an investment in change; related project management services.
5. Delivery System Reform: develop new models for the payment and delivery of healthcare services and the inclusion of social supports into clinical models; provide technical support in program design, program financing, and processes for comprehensive project planning development and implementation; ability to rapidly deploy experts and consultants to assist in regional health system capacity building and transformation; evaluate project and provider performance.

HCA acknowledges the solicitation is for as-needed convenience contracts. The anticipated term of the contracts is from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2026. These contracts will be for HCA use only. HCA is therefore requesting approval for entering into these contracts.

A convenience contract “is a contract for goods and services, or both, that is solicited and established in accordance with the procurement laws and rules for use by a specific agency . . . as needed from time to time. [It] is not available for general use and may only be used as specified by [DES].” See RCW 39.26.070. Here, the requested convenience contracts are for a specific use, by HCA alone, and the proposed use is for a limited duration.

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HCA has qualified procurement staff capable of successfully procuring and administering this procurement and the resulting convenience contracts. Its standard contract terms and conditions preserve the State's rights in the unlikely circumstance of a contract breach by a vendor.

HCA has articulated a valid basis for this request to authorize the requested convenience contracts, which are hereby authorized.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Drew Zavatsky, Procurement Risk Assessment Administrator, by email, Drew.Zavatsky@des.wa.gov or telephone, (360) 407-7915.

Sincerely,



Tara C. Smith
Director

cc: Annette Schuffenhauer, Chief Legal Officer, Health Care Authority
Rachelle Amerine, Contract Administrator, Health Care Authority
Danielle Mortenson, RFP Coordinator, Health Care Authority
Rebecca Linville, Deputy Assistant Director, Department of Enterprise Services
Drew Zavatsky, Procurement Risk Assessment Administrator, Department of Enterprise Services