

Request for Proposal – External Evaluator

Project: FASST—Food Access and Support Services Team

Funder: University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS)

Closing Date: March 14th, 2023

City, State: Baltimore, Maryland

Organizations(s): Meals on Wheels Central MD; Moveable Feast; Benefits Data Trust; Maryland Food Bank; Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP)

Sector: Equitable Food and Nutrition Support in Healthcare Services

Job Type: Consultancy

1. Background

Project Description

Food Access Support Services Team (FASST) is a collaborative multi-year project that aims to improve health outcomes, reduce cost, and improve health equity for safety net populations with complex or high-risk medical and social conditions by addressing social determinants of health, including food insecurity, poor nutrition, economic insecurity, and lack of support services.

Project Goals

Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland (MOWCM), Moveable Feast (M Feast), Maryland Food Bank and Benefits Data Trust (together, the “Coalition”) are collaborating on a project with the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS), known as FASST to improve health equity for patients of UMMS by providing nutrition and other support services that positively impact the social determinants of health through a technology platform developed by the Coalition, UMMS and the Chesapeake Regional Information System for Patients (CRISP). Using the information contained in the patient’s electronic health record (EHR), as well as that derived from patient screening for food insecurity, patients will be referred to FASST and matched for service with the most appropriate member of the Coalition. Once matched, the identified member of the coalition will deliver nutrition services and support services to the patient and when appropriate, their family, for at least 90 days.

Theory of Change

By addressing food insecurity for individuals living in underserved communities of color where access to healthy food has been identified as a key factor in poor health outcomes, the project strives to improve nutrition behavior and health equity, and thus reduce the total cost of care by reducing hospitalizations, and ER visits and improving medication compliance and patient satisfaction.

Services Provided (FASST Coalition Project Members)

Meals on Wheels Central Maryland: Two ready-to-eat nutritious meals delivered to the home daily, health and safety check, health and needs assessment, and additional support services. (Adults over 60)

Moveable Feast: Home-delivered, medically tailored meals and nutrition services with weekly deliveries, up to monthly visits with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist for assessment, counseling, and coaching.

Benefits Data Trust: Outreach via phone, mail, or text, and guidance to BDT’s contact center for further assistance in applying for benefits such as SNAP, Medicaid, heating, and electricity assistance.

Maryland Food Bank: Biweekly direct shipping of “Diabetes-Friendly” or “Healthy” Backup Boxes.

Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients (CRISP): CRISP will help to identify eligible patients and enable healthcare teams to easily refer patients to FASST members.

Target Population: 2000 individuals and families living in the UMMS catchment areas identified for high risk of food insecurity and high Area Deprivation Index (ADI).

Project Timeline

This is a three-year grant funded project. Years I & II will focus on project development, process evaluation, and outcome development with Year III focused on outcome measurement.

Meals on Wheels Central Maryland has hired a project manager to oversee program management and progress on deliverables.

2. External Project Evaluation

Purpose of Evaluation

FASST is seeking an external evaluator with a proven track record to evaluate a three-year grant funded complex, quality improvement project between a large multi-hospital health system and four highly reputable community- based organizations.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the project from development through delivery and completion to support successful implementation, identify barriers to implementation, make recommendations for process improvements, and measure success against an established set of outcome and impact measurements.

Specifically, the Project Evaluator will work with the Coalition to:

- Determine if the program is meeting its original objectives
- Inform the ongoing planning and development of the program, and provide ongoing evaluative guidance on project implementation
- Identify gaps, challenges, and obstacles in the project design and implementation
- Evaluate project strengths and weaknesses
- Consolidate lessons learned and provide recommendations
- Assess the efficiency, effectiveness, and timeliness of the intervention
- Determine level of participant satisfaction with service
- Measure project performance against an established set of outcome and impact measurements
- Determine feasibility and make recommendations for sustainability of service.

Scope of Work

1. Create an evaluation design that:
 - Defines specific outcomes measurements and time intervals for data evaluation
 - Identifies what data is needed for evaluation
 - Creates a method for collecting data in a client centered way
 - Develops appropriate tools needed for data collection, including client satisfaction surveys
 - Tracks key performance indicators, identifies variances, and makes recommendations for project implementation and process adjustments
 - Specifies collection method and evaluation of claims data at defined intervals.

- Participate in coalition led work groups, stakeholder interviews, and field visits to project sites.
- Conduct stakeholder interviews to include participants, coalition members, UMMS partner leadership and participating staff.
- Analyze all data collected to determine success of project implementation and performance against defined outcomes.

Deliverables

1. Verbal reports as needed for coalition led workgroups including a monthly leadership workgroup.
2. Completion of semiannual progress reports and annual evaluation reports on grant activities and outcomes as defined in the grant proposal and/or requested by UMMS.
3. Year I, II and III formal reports to the Coalition regarding findings including challenges, process changes, and successes.
4. Final comprehensive project report that addresses the following:

Significance and Value of the Project Design

- Were the needs and objectives properly and adequately identified? To what extent?
- Were the planned activities sufficient and appropriate to achieve the goal, objective, and results?
- Were technology systems set up to support automated and effective referral to FASST project members?
- Were the risks and assumptions properly defined and identified?
- Was the project implemented well?
- Were the priority populations sufficiently represented in the project?

Impact of the Operation

- Were the project's inputs delivered on time and according to proposed costs?
- Were the project's outputs, outcome, and impacts (quality and quantity) achieved?
- Was the project able to achieve the anticipated effects in line with its Theory of Change?
- How did priority populations benefit from the project activities?
- How did priority populations (patients) view the benefit(s) of the project? How satisfied were they?
- How could the project have better met the needs of the priority populations?

Sustainability

- Has the project achieved any positive or negative lasting effects on the priority populations and on the FASST member organizations? What and to what extent?
- Do patients, FASST member organizations, and other stakeholders see the impact of the project as sustainable?
- What is needed to achieve sustainability and scalability of project activities?

Qualifications

Successful Evaluator will have demonstrated expertise in project design and monitoring, as well as experience in participatory process and qualitative data review with familiarity with and ability to interpret clinical as well as all payor claims data. Knowledge of the social determinants of health—including food insecurity, poor nutrition, economic insecurity, and lack of support services as well as experience in projects involving underserved communities of color also required.

Other skills and abilities include:

- Ability to strategize for short- and long-term projects
- Experience with Food and Nutrition Support in Healthcare Services projects and/or evaluations
- Ability to evaluate multiple complex processes within a larger project
- Experience with evaluation of health outcomes and population health projects
- High level of self-organization and ability to effectively navigate remote (Zoom) meetings
- Experience in mixed methods methodology
- Familiarity with administrative claims data, specifically HSCRC case mix data
- Excellent communication and writing skills; culturally sensitive
- Ability and willingness to conduct the work in Maryland, including in the field

How to apply

Interested project evaluators submit their proposals to **KIARA HOWARD VIA E-MAIL AT HOWARD@MOWCM.ORG.**

Submission, no greater than 10 pages, must include:

- 1) A cover letter
- 2) A narrative, that addresses:
 - a. A brief description of the evaluator's expertise, qualifications, and relevant experience delivering the specified services outlined above in the "Scope of Work" section
 - b. How the scope of work, detailed above, will be completed, including a timeline, tasks, milestones, and goals with estimated hours attributed to each task.
 - c. A description of proposed evaluation strategy, activities, and methodology based on your understanding of the initiative and this RFP.
 - d. A description of your policies for promotion of equity.
- 3) A project budget that is broken out by task and includes all costs payable by MOWCM; billing and payment will coincide with meeting agreed-upon milestones and tasks.

Required attachments (not counted against 10 page limit):

- 4) Two professional references who can speak to the project evaluator's experience doing similar work including name, phone number, email address, scope of services provided, and length of service.
- 5) Attach an organizational chart for your project team indicating project manager, key staff, and their roles as well as sub-contractors and their roles.

Proposals should be emailed to Kiara Howard, Sr. Project Director, howard@mowcm.org by March 14, 2023 and must not exceed 10 pages with 12-point font, excluding attachments. MOWCM will evaluate

and award project deemed best service and competitive price. MOWCM reserves the right to reject proposals at their sole discretion.