



Request for Proposals

HIT In Practice: Toolkit Grants

1. Program Overview / Background

Since its inception, The Physicians Foundation has supported and promoted the use of Health Information Technology (HIT) as an important tool in the delivery of healthcare and improvement of health outcomes. The Foundation believes that there is the potential for many benefits when technology is applied to improving the quality of care and the physician and patient experience. The goal of this initiative is to support physicians' adoption of certified electronic health record systems through the development of tools and resources. The Foundation recognizes that the challenges facing physicians and their practices in today's healthcare environment are well documented and adopting an electronic health record (EHR) system is not without its own barriers. Specifically, conducting research on software options/hardware needs, implementing the technology and importing data and records, training staff and addressing staff resistance and developing new workflow processes for day-to-day practice work takes a significant amount of time. In addition, these steps require substantial internal capacity and often outside expertise, as well as large financial investment.

As physicians move towards adopting electronic health records for their practices and engaging in meaningful use of health information technology according to the requirements of the HITECH Act, the Foundation recognizes the need for development and dissemination of tools and resources that will assist physicians and their practices in choosing, implementing and using certified electronic health record technology. (For additional information about the HITECH Act and the definition of meaningful use, visit the Health IT section of the HHS website: <http://healthit.hhs.gov>.)

Through this initiative the Foundation will make grants to support projects focused on the development, testing and dissemination of practical, efficient tools and resources to aid in physicians' adoption and meaningful use of certified EHRs. Projects can be focused specifically on practice readiness or selection and implementation of technology, or projects can be more broadly designed to address a variety of needs. Tools and educational resources should be geared towards small practices (25 physicians or fewer). Products developed as part of these grants must be replicable in terms of reasonable financial cost and efficient use of human resources. In addition, projects should complement and/or support the work of the newly established Regional Extension Centers.

2. Eligibility Criteria

Applicant organizations must be:

- a. Tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or tax exempt educational institutions
- b. Not a private foundation as defined in IRC section 509 (a)
- c. Located in the United States

3. Selection Criteria

Selection will be based on the following:

- a. Alignment with the goal discussed in this RFP
- b. Demonstrated knowledge of and experience in the health information technology field
- c. Demonstrated knowledge of barriers and challenges to practices adopting electronic health record systems and engaging in meaningful use as defined in the HITECH Act
- d. Demonstrated expertise developing hands-on tools and resources for use in practice-based settings
- e. Demonstrated knowledge and experience working with physician practices or partnering with medical associations or other physician organizations
- f. Presentation of a detailed plan and timeline for accomplishing the project objectives, with realistic expectations, clearly defined outcomes and assigned resources
- g. A well-justified budget derived from clear and compelling understanding of resources needed to carry out the project successfully
- h. Demonstration of replicability at a reasonable cost in terms of dollars and efficient use of human resources
- i. A plan for disseminating project findings widely to audiences such as physicians, researchers and policymakers

4. Grant Size

The Foundation anticipates making grants that range from \$50,000 to \$150,000. Project budgets, per the instructions, will require detail and a narrative. Applicants may request more or less, although the foundation anticipates that the size and scope of most projects will fall somewhere in this range. No more than 15% of grant funds may be allocated to general administrative purposes or indirect project expenses. Grants are available for projects of up to two years in length. A limited number of grants will be made.

5. Evaluation and Monitoring

Projects should have a plan for evaluation that defines desired short- and long-term outcomes and steps to collect data for measurement of progress towards those outcomes. In addition, projects should incorporate processes for feedback and assessment of ongoing work that will allow for mid-course corrections if necessary. Grantees are expected to meet requirements for the submission of narrative and financial reports, as well as periodic information needed for overall project performance monitoring and management. Project directors may be asked to participate in periodic telephone or in-person meetings and give progress reports on their work.

6. Use of Grant Funds

Grant funds may be used for the following expenses: project staff salaries and benefits, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, supplies, project-related travel and other direct project expenses. According to the Foundation's policy, grant funds may not be used for any of the following:

- Unrestricted general operating expense
- Ongoing programs, or existing staff, unless their time is being redirected to a new project
- Payment for services of a fiscal agent

- Endowment funds
- Religious purposes
- Fundraising activities or events (e.g. annual fund drives, phone solicitations, benefit tickets)
- Capital expenditures by the grantee (e.g. repairs, equipment, etc.)
- Lobbying or political activities
- Activities related to litigation, arbitration or other dispute resolution
- Medical education at the undergraduate or residency training levels
- Research that is not practice-based
- Medical research or animal research
- Research and/or development of drugs or medical devices
- Any activity inconsistent with the Foundation's status as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization

7. How to Apply

To apply for a grant, download the application form and proposal instructions from the Foundation's website. Proposals must be complete and submitted with all required attachments in order to be considered for funding in this grant cycle. Please follow the proposal instructions closely and contact the Foundation's office if you have questions.

8. Program Contacts

Questions about this RFP or the Foundation in general should be addressed to Tracy Little, Program Officer, tlittle@gmafoundations.com or by calling the Foundation's office at 617-399-0417.

9. Timetable

RFP Release Date: May 12, 2010
 Proposals Due: June 9, 2010
 Funding Decisions: August 20, 2010
 Project Start Date: September 1, 2010

10. About The Physicians Foundation

The Physicians Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that seeks to advance the work of practicing physicians and to improve the quality of healthcare for all Americans. The Foundation is unique in its commitment to working with physicians nationwide to create a more efficient and equitable healthcare system. It pursues its mission through a variety of activities including grantmaking, research and policy studies. Since 2005, The Foundation has awarded numerous multi-year grants. Additional information about The Physicians Foundation is available online at www.physiciansfoundation.org