Assessing the Feasibility of a National Certification Program for Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
***Applications Due Friday, May 17, at 5:00 PM EDT***

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), the voice of local public health in the United States, is collaborating with CDC’s Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP) to explore the development of a national sexually transmitted disease (STD) prevention certification program for Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS).

NACCHO invites experienced consultation agencies, institutions, organizations, and individuals to submit proposals to provide technical assistance and prepare a feasibility study and business plan to guide in the decision-making and development process of a national certification program for DIS.

The purpose of the feasibility study is to: 1) describe the current and future directions of the DIS profession and determine how certification would impact DIS, 2) determine the financial burden and proposed budget for creating and sustaining a certification program, 3) assess the organizational capacity necessary to create and maintain a certification program, 4) connect with key stakeholders in both the public health and certification industries to obtain guidance for best practices, and 5) develop a business plan with recommendations for how to proceed post-feasibility study.

BACKGROUND

Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) are public health professionals who locate and counsel individuals with sexually transmitted diseases as well as their partners and associates. They are a flexible workforce with a vital set of skills that can also be utilized during public health emergencies. However, due to the lack of a national certification program for DIS, there are no standardized methods to train staff, achieve consistency in service delivery, increase workforce stability, or validate the knowledge, skills, and abilities of DIS staff. Based on an identified need to strengthen and better recognize the DIS profession within the larger medical workforce, NACCHO is assessing the feasibility of a national certification program for DIS.
AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

NACCHO will award up to $30,000 to the agency, institution, organization, or individual consulting contractor selected to conduct the feasibility study.

The recipient of this funding will:

1) Conduct a certification feasibility study.
2) Provide technical support and advice on all certification related matters.
3) Facilitate and plan two in-person meetings with collaborative partners.
4) Develop a key informant interview questionnaire for DIS.
5) Perform a job task analysis.
6) Prepare a final report and business plan.

The project period will begin on Monday, June 3, 2013 and will be completed by September 30, 2013. A final report would be due by Monday, September 29, 2013. This will be subject to availability of funds. In addition, the funded entity would be required to attend at least four in person meetings. However, funding for travel does not need to be allocated in the proposed budget, as travel arrangements will be made by NACCHO staff.

ELIGIBILITY

Agencies, institutions, organizations and individual consulting contractors are eligible to apply.

SCOPE OF WORK

1) Attend a two-day in-person meeting with NACCHO and CDC project staff to review the scope of work, project objectives, and develop an action plan and project timeline.

2) Collaborate with NACCHO staff to conduct a feasibility study that will be utilized to guide the development of a national certification program for DIS. The feasibility study should: 1) describe the current and future directions of the DIS profession and determine how certification would impact DIS, 2) determine the financial burden and proposed budget for creating and sustaining the certification program, 3) assess the organizational capacity necessary to create and maintain the certification program, and 4) connect with key stakeholders in both the public health profession and credentialing industry to obtain guidance for best practices.

3) Provide guidance and oversight for the creation or selection of a potential certifying body to house the DIS certification.

4) Facilitate and plan two in-person meetings with NACCHO and CDC collaborative partners to outline and explain best practices of certification development, elicit input about prospective certification from key stakeholders, and disseminate findings or the feasibility study.
5) Prepare a final report after each in-person meeting with NACCHO and CDC partners to summarize meeting outcomes and record action items developed at the meeting.

6) Collaborate with NACCHO staff to develop a key informant interview template that will be used to conduct an environmental scan of DIS in the field and determine the potential need and impact of certification.

7) Participate in conference calls with NACCHO, CDC, and other collaborative partners to ensure all certification development processes are being conducted according to best practices within the credentialing or certification industry.

8) Carry out and conduct a DIS job task analysis to better define the scope, competencies, and desired standards for the DIS profession.

9) Set up meetings with potential testing vendors and assist NACCHO staff in cataloging testing vendors and computer software for tracking certificants.

10) Summarize lessons learned and provide a final report and business plan with preliminary recommendations to guide NACCHO and CDC decision-making after the completion and dissemination of feasibility study findings.

11) Participate in a second in-person meeting with NACCHO staff the end of the project to review final deliverables and recommendations.

**EXPECTATIONS**

Applicants should submit the information requested on the accompanying application form.

- Describe experience developing or providing consultation services for credentialing or certification.
- Represents an incorporated entity registered for business in the United States.
- Has a history of completing tasks on time and within budget.
- Provides a list of previous and related projects the contractor has managed.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Applicants must submit the attached application, including background information, work plan, and budget.

Applications should be sent electronically to kclark@naccho.org by 5:00 PM EDT on May 17, 2013. We will confirm receipt. Please also send a back-up hard copy to:

NACCHO  
Attn: Kristine Clark  
1100 17th Street, NW, Second Floor  
Washington, DC 20036
Please contact Kristine if you do not receive a confirmation of receipt within 24 hours of submission. We will not consider funding any applications received after the above deadline.

**SELECTION PROCESS**

Applications will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

- Completeness
- Evidence of agency/individual capacity to carry out the proposed activities
- Evidence of a history of working with stakeholders on credentialing or certification activities
- Appropriate work plan (e.g., time line, goals, objectives)
- Appropriate staffing plan
- Realistic and appropriate budget

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For questions about this RFP, contact:

Kristine Clark
(202) 471-1206
kclark@naccho.org