



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Sojourns Pathway Program:
Hospital-Based Palliative Care Innovation Grants

PROPOSALS DUE: Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis beginning July 20, 2009 until available funding has been expended

ABOUT THE REGENCE FOUNDATION

The Regence Foundation is the corporate foundation of The Regence Group, the largest health insurer in the Northwest/Intermountain region and a not-for-profit independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. A 501(c)(3) grantmaking organization, the Foundation partners with organizations driving significant change in health care delivery and accessibility in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah. For more information, visit www.regencefoundation.org.

SOJOURNS SIGNATURE PROGRAM

Today's health care system focuses significant effort and resources on treating patients approaching end-of-life. Despite the investment by medical and social services professionals, family members, caregivers, spiritual counselors, and insurers and payers, the result is often far short of the intended mark. Patients with life-threatening and terminal illness need relief from pain and symptoms, and to have their goals and wishes for care honored. The experience of patients and families at this vulnerable time is a stark example of how the health care system fails to meet our communities' need for quality palliative and end-of-life care.

Sojourns is The Regence Foundation's signature philanthropic program, created to address this misalignment between patients' needs and what the health care system provides. Through *Sojourns*, the Foundation seeks to recognize leadership and innovation in end-of-life and palliative care, and expand access to high-quality palliative care in hospital and community settings across the care continuum.

A core component of *Sojourns* is the Pathway program, which offers comprehensive support including funding and best-practices training and mentoring to hospitals and partnering community-based organizations interested in developing, implementing and enhancing palliative care services.



The intent of the Pathway program is 1) to develop new, sustainable hospital-based palliative care services; and 2) to support hospitals with existing palliative care services to address gaps in the local care continuum through expanded and innovative programs and community partnerships.

BACKGROUND: THE PALLIATIVE CARE CONTINUUM

Palliative care is based on a holistic approach to the physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs of patients with advanced illness and their families. The focus of palliative care is relief from pain and suffering. Depending on the progress of disease and the patient's wishes, it may be combined with curative care or supplant aggressive treatment that does not effectively extend the length or quality of a person's life.

At The Regence Foundation, we believe that patients deserve effective and appropriate care at every stage of life. Hospital-based palliative care programs offer a means to relieve suffering, facilitate patient autonomy, support caregivers and family members and address the emotional burden experienced by health care professionals who care for seriously ill patients. Ideally, palliative care is available to patients throughout the course of disease and across multiple care settings.

Many hospitals in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah have developed palliative care programs to better meet the needs of hospitalized patients with advanced illness and those approaching end-of-life. However, when patients are discharged hospitals face difficulties in coordinating care across settings, including during times of change in the patient's condition and transitions between different intensity levels of care.

Ensuring a seamless continuum of care for these patients remains a significant challenge—one that may best be addressed by robust partnerships between the hospital and other organizations that serve the elderly and/or people with complex medical needs.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO HOSPITAL-BASED PALLIATIVE CARE

Through the *Sojourns* Pathway program, The Regence Foundation will award three types of grants to eligible hospitals serving communities in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah:

1. Planning grants for hospitals with no formal palliative care program
2. Implementation grants for hospitals that develop a vision and plan for a palliative care program
3. Innovation grants for hospitals that provide palliative care services and seek to respond to unmet, local palliative care needs through new or expanded community partnerships

Each type of grant will be awarded through a separate Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

INNOVATION GRANTS

The Regence Foundation is offering innovation grants ranging from \$30,000 to \$100,000 (Project period: one to two years) to nonprofit and public hospitals to respond to unmet, local palliative care needs through new or expanded community partnerships. Grantees are required to provide in-kind contributions of 50% of the overall budget project.

The proposed innovation must be primarily focused on integrating palliative care services, practices and/or philosophies within local health care delivery systems through new or enhanced partnerships with other health or health care and community-based organizations. Potential hospital partners include hospice, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, and

community-based health and social service agencies whose clients are elderly and/or people with advanced illness and end-of-life needs. Innovation grants are not intended to support the ongoing operations of existing inpatient hospital palliative care programs.

The Foundation is particularly interested in supporting hospitals that can demonstrate a successful history of collaborating with other organizations to improve the availability and quality of health care locally.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply for an innovation grant, applicants must:

- Be a tax-exempt nonprofit or public hospital, or an established hospital collaborative
- Serve communities in Washington, Oregon, Idaho or Utah
- Currently offer palliative care services

Note: 509(a) organizations must provide documentation verifying the subsection under which they are classified [509(a)(1), 509(a)(2) or 509(a)(3) – Type I or Type II]. 509(a)(3) Type III organizations are not eligible to apply for a Sojourns Pathway grant.

USE OF FUNDS

Innovation grants must be used to support planning and implementation costs for new activities related to hospital-community palliative care partnerships, such as needs assessments; legal and regulatory research; planning meetings; community events and education; data collection and evaluation; and innovative palliative care training and staffing models.

Ineligible expenses:

- Operational support for existing inpatient hospital palliative care programs
- PCs and laptop computers

HOW TO APPLY

To submit an application, visit the Foundation's online application center at regencefoundation.org. It is not necessary to first submit a letter of inquiry. Applications submitted in hard copy will not be reviewed.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Online applications must include the following components (incomplete submissions will not be reviewed):

1) Application Narrative

A. Background

- Identify the community and geographic area served by the hospital, number of hospital beds, and occupancy rate
- Describe the palliative care services the hospital currently provides, including staffing configuration, estimated full time equivalent (FTEs), and patient volume
- List any organizations with which the hospital partners to deliver palliative care
- Specify the requested funding amount (\$30,000 - \$100,000)

B. Partnership Rationale and Model

- Describe the top one or two challenges your hospital has faced in the last several years in sustaining or expanding palliative care services

- Elucidate the unmet need or gap in the palliative care continuum that your partnership model will address, supported by relevant demographic data, statistics and information
- Describe how your proposed new or expanded partnership model responds to the unmet need
- Clearly outline the goal and objectives of the proposed new or expanded partnership model, and the role that the hospital and each community partner will play in meeting those objectives
- List any activities conducted to date to plan, implement or evaluate new or expanded hospital-community partnerships related to the provision of palliative care
- Map the timeline for key project activities

C. Evaluation

- Describe expected outcomes and how they relate to the program goal and objectives.
- Address how results will be evaluated against expected outcomes. What specific indicators will be used to assess each outcome? What is the data or information source for each measure?

D. Sustainability

- Discuss strategies for sustaining the partnership model after the grant period ends; include likely source(s) of revenue and funding
- Describe plans to cultivate administrative leadership and any additional internal or external stakeholders to sustain the partnership

2) Attachments

1. Letters of support from:
 - The hospital's Chief Executive Officer, and
 - The leadership at each partner organization (e.g. Executive Director, Board Chair, or agency head). Please upload the letter(s) as attachments to your online application. Alternately, fax the letter(s) to (503) 276-1996, Attn: Michelle McClellan, M/S E12C
2. Project budget with narrative line-item justification and a description of the in-kind support that will be provided by the hospital, and its financial value*
3. Board of directors or commissioners list
4. A copy of the hospital's tax exempt status letter

*Required In-Kind Contribution: Grantees are required to provide a 50% in-kind contribution to support the project. Examples of eligible contributions include clinical staff hours, administrative support, technology support, data collection and recording, and project-related travel costs.

SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

- Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis beginning July 20, 2009, until available funding has been expended
- After submitting a proposal, applicants will receive a confirmation e-mail and may be contacted by Foundation staff for more information
- Applications will be reviewed and recommendations presented to the Foundation board of directors
- Applicants will be notified of funding decisions following each quarterly board of directors meeting

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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