



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Sojourns Pathway Program:
Hospital-Based Palliative Care Planning Grants

PROPOSALS DUE: October 19, 2009

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 nonprofit 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 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 ON PALLIATIVE CARE

Palliative care is based on a whole-person 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. Palliative care is typically coordinated by multidisciplinary teams of medical and nursing specialists, social workers, and spiritual counselors. In hospital settings, palliative care teams may function within consultation services, inpatient units, outpatient clinics and through community partnerships.

The number of palliative care programs has grown in recent years, but the scope and quality of these programs tend to vary widely. Despite its numerous benefits, palliative care is still not available in all hospitals in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah.

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 with existing palliative care programs to respond to unmet, local palliative care needs locally through new or expanded community partnerships

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

PLANNING GRANTS

The Regence Foundation is offering planning grants of up to \$25,000 (Project period: up to six months) to nonprofit hospitals interested in exploring the viability of developing a palliative care program to serve patients with serious, life-threatening illness or end-of-life needs.

The three objectives of the planning grants are to: (1) introduce palliative care as a viable hospital patient care program, (2) explore the benefits and costs of implementing a hospital palliative care program, and (3) assist hospitals in developing a palliative care program plan.

Grantees receive training and technical assistance in palliative care program development from The University of California, San Francisco Palliative Care Service / Palliative Care Leadership Center (PCLC). The UCSF PCLC is one of nine centers in the United States that offer training and mentoring to help start and expand hospital palliative care programs.

Grantees that develop a vision and plan for a hospital-based palliative care service will be encouraged to apply for an implementation grant from The Regence Foundation.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply for a planning grant, applicants must:

- Be a nonprofit or public hospital with 100 or more beds
- Serve communities in Washington, Oregon, Idaho or Utah
- Currently offer no formal palliative care program

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.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Hospitals are required to use their planning grant to:

1. Form an interdisciplinary team with clinical and administrative representation to explore the possibility of establishing a palliative care service.
2. Send up to six team members (including senior administrative and financial leaders, physicians, nurses, and social workers) to a two-day Palliative Care Leadership Center (PCLC) training in Portland, Oregon in February 2010. The training provides a comprehensive overview of the financial and operational aspects of building and running a palliative care program, with specifics on developing clinical leadership, infrastructure and institutional support. Following the training, technical support will be available to grantees.
3. Submit a report at the conclusion of the grant period.

USE OF FUNDS

Grant funds must be used to pay tuition for the PCLC training, and to cover travel and lodging to Portland for up to six people per hospital to participate (applies to hospitals located outside of the Portland area).

The balance of grant funds may be used for travel and lodging to visit other hospital-based palliative care programs or related trainings; training fees; meeting expenses; consulting/ personnel fees related to conducting analyses and drafting a proposal for a *Sojourns Pathway* implementation grant; office supplies (photocopying, paper, etc.); and indirect expenses (not to exceed 10%).

Grantees may not use the grant to purchase computers or other equipment of any kind.

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. A brief description of the hospital including services provided, number of hospital beds, and occupancy rate
2. A brief description of the community and geographic area served by the hospital
3. A narrative summary describing how the planning grant will be used and who will be involved in the planning process and grant-funded activities, not to exceed 1,000 words
4. Project budget with narrative line-item justification
5. Letter of support signed by the hospital or health agency's Chief Executive Officer. Please upload the letter as an attachment to your online application. Alternately, fax the letter to (503) 276-1996, Attn: Michelle McClellan, M/S E12C
6. A copy of the hospital's tax exempt status letter
7. Board of directors list

SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

- Completed applications must be submitted by 12:00 midnight on October 19, 2009
- 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 the Foundation board of directors meeting in December 2009

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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