Questions & Answers

Q1: Will Bidders Conference be recorded with chat questions/answers to be able to review it later?

A1: The conference is a live only event, and will not be recorded. There is only an hour allotted for the meeting, so we are asking that any questions you have prior to the Bidder’s Conference be sent in writing to provider_services@help4seniors.org by Tuesday 2/23/21. This will help us get through as many questions as possible during that time.

If you have questions that occur to you during the conference you will be able to type them in the chat and we will answer as many as possible during the time allotted.

All questions submitted regarding RFP 002-21 and COA’s answers will be posted in writing with the RFP on our website no later than Thursday, 3/4/21. This includes any questions asked during the Bidder’s Conference.

Q2: Good afternoon, please advise is the Personal Emergency Response System and Service, part of this RFP 002-21 for Home Care Assistance for Butler, Hamilton and Warren Counties?

A2: Please refer to RFP 002-21: Elderly Services Program – Home Care Assistance posted on our website for further description of the Home Care Assistance Service.

You can find the RFP on the COA website here: https://www.help4seniors.org/Service-Providers/Elderly-Service-Program/ESP-Request-Proposals.aspx.
Q3: Could you please let us know if we need to do anything about it?
As far as I understood it, that is for new contractors.

A3: All Providers, both current and potential providers, who wish to contract to provide Home Care Assistance (HCA) services for the Elderly Service Program (ESP) for Butler, Hamilton, and/or Warren County are required to respond to the request for proposal. HCA includes homemaking, personal care, companion, and respite services.

Q4: Please explain why the company’s owner has to share her Personal Property Tax information?
Also, we have never been debarred, or suspended. What is this certification? Do we need this?
What is a Non-Collusion Affidavit?

A4: Personal Property tax information

This information is a requirement of the funder. As part of the bid process all Bidders are required to submit a Bidders Certification of Payment of Personal Property Tax. This is in compliance with Ohio Revised Code Section 5719.042. This document can be found as part of the Request for Proposal in Attachment 1: Bidder’s Forms.

Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Exclusion Certification and Non-Collusion Affidavit

Please reference the documents which can be found in Attachment 1: Bidder’s Forms. The documents include explanations to complete the forms in their entirety.

Q5: This will be my first time submitting a proposal, what all does or should a proposal include?

A5: Please reference RFP Section Four: Proposal Submission Requirements which lists the documentation necessary for the proposal to be considered a complete submission. All documents and forms referenced on this checklist must be included.
Q6: New Client Openings: What are the requirements for the initial client opening visit? Is an initial visit by a supervisor a requirement anymore and if so are these in-home visits or telephonic visits?

A6: Please follow the requirements of your Agency for the initial client opening visit. Effective May 1, 2021 with any contract that is result of this RFP process, the supervisory requirement which stated that prior to the start of services being provided to the client, the HCA Supervisor must complete and document an initial home visit has been removed.

Q7: Supervisory Visits: For clarification there are no more “frequency” requirements on Supervisory visits but rather visits are warranted based on the bullet points listed.

A7: The goal of supervisor intervention is to avoid service disruption. Supervisory visits will no longer be based on calendar days. Please reference Attachment 4: ESP Home Care Assistance Service Specification for the requirements of the supervisory visit or call (Section 3.3 Service Delivery).

This change is for the HCA Elderly Service Program for Butler, Hamilton, and Warren Counties only.

Q8: Supervision: During our audit 2 years ago they had me start doing a Supervisory Visit Attestation that an RN had to sign off that she reviewed these visits, etc. I want to clarify that supervision by an RN over an LPN and/or HMK Supervisor is no longer a requirement.

A8: Effective May 1, 2021 with any contract that is result of this RFP process, the requirement of the personal care Supervisor to be a RN or a LPN under the direction of a RN will be removed.

Please reference Attachment 4: ESP Home Care Assistance Service Specification for the qualifications of the Personal Care and Homemaking Supervisor (Section 3.2 Employees) and requirements of the supervisory visit or call (Section 3.3 Service Delivery).

This change is for the HCA Elderly Service Program for Butler, Hamilton, and Warren Counties only.

Q9: Do you want us to discuss our computer capabilities?

A9: No. A bidder just needs to be able to meet the computer requirements outlined in Appendix B: Computer Hardware & Systems Requirements.
Q10: Do you want to see our emergency preparedness plan or business continuity plan?

A10: No. A bidder is not required to submit their emergency preparedness plan, nor business continuity plan, as a requirement of RFP.

Q11: How often do the supervisory visits need to be completed for the ESP clients?

A11: Supervisory visits will no longer be based on calendar days. Please reference Attachment 4: ESP Home Care Assistance Service Specification for the requirements of the supervisory visit or call (Section 3.3 Service Delivery).

Q12: From what I am reading the supervisory visit and start of service does NOT have to be completed by a nurse. Correct?

A12: Correct. Effective May 1, 2021 with any contract that is result of this RFP process, the requirement of the personal care Supervisor to be a RN or a LPN under the direction of a RN will be removed.

Please reference Attachment 4: ESP Home Care Assistance Service Specification for the qualifications of the Personal Care and Homemaking Supervisor (Section 3.2 Employees).

This change is for the HCA Elderly Service Program for Butler, Hamilton, and Warren Counties only.

Q13: Is there still an inservice requirement for the ESP direct care providers to do? I did not see it listed in the service specification?

A13: Yes. Please reference Attachment 4: ESP Home Care Assistance Service Specification for inservice education [Provider Requirements Section 3.1 General (k)].
Q14: The RFP open is for Butler, Hamilton and Warren Counties. If and when will the Clinton County bid open?

A14: Due to the competitive bid process of RFPs COA does not notify bidders of future RFPs. The current Provider Network, and any businesses that have emailed requesting to be added to the COA bidders list, will receive an email notice each time a RFP is released.

Q15: What are the current threshold rates for each county. Current billable rate. Lowest and Highest Rate?

A15: This data is not currently available. COA has supplied the current average rate per unit in Answer #22 below.

Q16: In regard to qualification for HHA – see screenshot. Does the one year of employment require RN supervision, and must it be within a period of time? Ie: the last 24 months?

A16: The one year of employment experience must be supervised however does not require the supervision to be under a RN. The one year supervised employment does not have to be within a specified period of time.

Q17: To clarify Financial Analysis requirements.

Are you looking for the following to be provided, or other things in addition to these? To confirm also, since the proposal is due prior to Q1 2021 being over, you are not looking for any 2021 data?
• 2019 Tax Return (all schedules) + Balance Sheet + Income Statement
• 2020 Balance Sheet and Income Statement (signed by CFO)

A17: Please reference Section Four: Proposal Submission Requirements for financial requirements.

COA is looking for a full year (12 months) of fiscal data so this would need to be year 2020 or 2019 at the earliest.

Q18: The minimum wage may change in the next few years. Do you anticipate making an adjustment to the rates?

A18: At this time we do not anticipate making changes to the rates accepted and contracted by this RFP. If the need should arise due to issues outside the realm of COA and provider control we would first have to go to the Butler, Hamilton, and Warren Boards of County Commissioners to address the potential to adjust rates for any services before this could be considered.

Q19: Why isn't Clinton County included in this RFP?

A19: Many factors are considered before determining if a county will be included in the RFP process. It was determined at the time of publication of this RFP that Clinton County would not be included at this time. This is being monitored on a continual basis and if it is decided that Clinton County is in need of a RFP one will be published at that time.

Clinton County currently operates under a different set of service specifications instead of the Home Assistance Service.

Q20: Is there like a RFP template or sample for new potential businesses to go off of? To make sure it’s formatted correctly.

A20: There is not a template available. COA has listed in Section Four on pages 19 & 20 of the RFP a specific list of all items required for complete proposal submission.
Q21: For the most recent audited or unaudited Financial Statement, can we use current year (Jan and Feb 2021)

A21: COA is looking for a full year (12 months) so this would need to be year 2020 or 2019 at the earliest.

Q22: What is the average rate per unit?

A22: A unit for HCA = 15 mins. The current average rate per unit is $5.57.

Q23: RFP Page 22:

COA shall award a Service Agreement to the bidder(s) who submit the best bid proposal(s) based on evaluation of all bids as determined by COA, in its sole discretion unless COA rejects all bids

Selection. Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the information given by the bidder in this section. The examples of scoring are provided in each section, if applicable. Narratives should not exceed more than one page.

Not sure how we limit our response to one page.... is there something I'm not understanding in the highlighted sentence just above.

A23: The 2nd and 3rd level evaluation items include categories with bullet points. Responses should be limited to one page per bullet point within the “Category” column. This excludes any examples that are asked for in the section.

Q24: Section Six, page 22 Selection states “Narratives should not exceed more than one page.” Is the one page for each section in the Category list for each Level?

A24: Please see Answer #23 above.
Q25: Is there any pricing that's too high or too low? Is there anything to research for new businesses?

A25: This information would be determined by each Bidder's business model.

Q26: Page 5: Contracted providers would be eligible to bid on referrals and receive awards to furnish HCA services to eligible ESP clients as referred by the client's Care Manager. Does this mean that we will have to compete with other approved providers for referrals by "bidding"?? Contracted providers would be eligible to bid on referrals and receive awards to furnish HCA services to eligible ESP clients as referred by the client's Care Manager. Does this mean that we will have to compete with other approved providers for referrals by "bidding"? What is the basis of the bidding process?

A26: If a client does not have an agency specifically chosen from the available Provider Network, then the Care Management Team will send out a Request for Service (RFS) to all eligible HCA providers contracted in a client's zone. Providers can access these RFSs through the Provider Portal used with the ESP program. If a provider has capacity to take on the new client then they can accept the RFS. If multiple providers accept the RFS then multiple factors are considered when choosing the provider to be awarded the service including but not limited to: client preference, date provider can begin service, and cost.

A contracted provider will not be responding to each request for service with a new bid rate. The bid rate will be established in an awarded contract. "Bidding" is not submitting a rate per each referral but rather accepting or declining a request for service.

Q27: Can COA share as to how many providers are currently covering the COA need in regards to this RFP and if possible is COA able to disclose how many agencies will be used.

A27: COA is looking to contract with multiple providers to help meet client needs in Butler, Hamilton, and Warren County. Currently the HCA Provider Network in Butler, Hamilton, and Warren Counties consists of a total of 12 Providers. Please note that not all 12 of those Providers are contracted in all 3 counties.
Q28: In looking at the zones that are listed in the packet, I am confused with zones listing.

Under the COA Butler County I see 45013 listed in Butler County Central, but it is also listed in Hamilton County Zone 4 North?

COA Butler County I see 45014 is listed in the Southeast Zone of Butler County and also under the Hamilton County Zone 4 North. ?

Please advise.

A28: Due to the fact that some zip codes straddle over two county lines you will find they are listed in two different counties and zones. If you wish to be able to serve individuals in that zip code then you would want to bid on both applicable counties and zones.

For instance, if you want to be able to serve clients in zip code 45246 you would need to submit proposed rates for Butler County Southeast Zone and Hamilton County North Zone in order to be considered as a potential provider for that zip code.

Q29: When was the last HCA RFP?

A29: The last ESP Home Care Assistance RFP was posted in December 2013 with a contract start date of 11/1/14.

Q30: Under the 2nd Level of Evaluation regarding Electronic Visit Verification. If an organization will start this process in late March 2021 and should complete its implementation in June 2021, it would appear that this would be scored as 1 point, at the time of submission on March 12th. Would this assumption be correct?

A30: This interpretation is correct.