



Suspension of Competition Acquisition Request

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1. Fully describe the product(s) and/or service(s) being requested.

The contractor will complete activities related to community health worker (CHW) interventions in a clinical setting that address health literacy, care coordination services, and health prevention methods for conditions exacerbated by COVID-19 to residents living in the rural areas. Activities will include:

 - 1) Administration of social determinants of health (SDoH) screeners, providing individualized referrals to services that will alleviate barriers to health, referrals to other community support services, and COVID-19 education and outreach in rural settings located on the westside of Fresno County and other high burdened areas.
 - 2) Implement health prevention measures for conditions exacerbated by COVID-19 by establishing an evidence-based lifestyle program(s) and providing enrollment/referrals to services while addressing SDoH within Fresno County Healthy Places Index (HPI) Quartile 1 communities.
 - 3) Participate and promote rural mobile health clinics, collaborate with internal program interventions to enhance referrals to clinical services through CHWs, with an emphasis placed on employees in the agricultural industry.
2. Identify the selected vendor and contact person; include the address, phone number and e-mail address for each.

Avenal Community Health Center dba Aria Community Health Center
PO BOX 580
Lemoore, CA 93245
240-636-8984
Samuel Griffith, Interim COO
sgriffith@ariachc.org
3. What is the total cost of the acquisition? If an agreement, state the total cost of the initial term and the amounts for potential renewal terms.

The total cost of the acquisition is \$464,068 for a two-year term from July 1, 2024 through May 30, 2026 with the option to extend up to two additional twelve (12) month periods, dependent on the contractor's satisfactory performance and availability of funds.
4. Identify the unique qualities and/or capabilities of the service(s) and/or product(s) that qualify this as a Suspension of Competition acquisition.

Aria Community Health Center (Aria) is uniquely qualified due to their extensive experience in providing health literacy interventions and other health prevention measures to the targeted populations of the rural areas, including agricultural workers in Fresno County. Aria is the only federally qualified health center (FQHC) that has training and access to Care Coordination Systems (CCS), which acts as Fresno County's data management system and referral platform for CHW contracted partners. Aria has also established an internal referral process that enrolls their clinical patients into the CHW program based on demonstrated needs. The referrals are then tracked and monitored through the CCS centralized data system, managed by FCDPH.

Aria was one of three organizations previously selected following the county's purchasing process to implement Fresno County's Advancing Health Literacy (AHL) Intervention Program. From the three organizations previously selected, Aria was one of two FQHCs that have staff fully trained in Fresno County's CHW Program protocols. As a previous contractor, Aria is familiar with County policies and program deliverables. Aria's program staff and CHWs have also undergone extensive training that align with the program's CHW efforts and services. Trainings completed include Health Equity, Culturally Linguistically Appropriate Services, CHW core specific competencies trainings, Adverse Childhood Exposures, Mental Health, Dispelling Misinformation, CHW Workforce, and Motivational Interviewing, amongst other training. Moreover, Aria's extensive experience and expertise has attributed to successful outcomes in implementing a CHW model within a clinical setting.

Aria has also developed relationships and have become familiar with the residents within their respective communities, as well as gaining firsthand experience providing care coordination services. Aria's expertise and efforts align with the current program activities that promote health literacy, health prevention, rural mobile health efforts, and barriers related to health disparities.
5. Identify from Administrative Policy #34 what circumstances constitute a Suspension of Competition.
 - In an emergency when goods or services are immediately necessary for the preservation of the public health, welfare, or safety, or for the protection of County property.
 - When the contract is with a federal, state, or local governmental agency.
 - When the department head, with the concurrence of the Purchasing Agent, finds that the cost of preparing and administering a competitive bidding process in a particular case will equal or exceed the estimated contract amount or \$2,500 whichever is more.
 - When a contract provides only for payment of per diem and travel expenses and there is to be no payment for services rendered.
 - When obtaining the services of expert witnesses for litigation or special counsel to assist the County.

When in unusual or extraordinary circumstances, the Board of Supervisors or the Purchasing Agent/Purchasing Manager determines that the best interests of the County would be served by not securing competitive bids or issuing a request for proposal.

6. Explain why the unique qualities and/or capabilities described above are essential to your department.

Aria's experience and already developed community connections with the population of focus will expedite the program's implementation timeline. They have first-hand knowledge and user access to the CCS system, which would offset training costs and resources that would entail internal referral and resource integration. Aria can begin interventions upon execution of an agreement; whereas, contracting with a new organization will require a hiring and onboarding period, staff training, as well as other costs and time commitments required in starting a brand-new program. Given the limited term of the agreement, an immediate start of the program is crucial to overall success and reach of the program.

It would not be in the County's best interest to pursue the competitive bid process at this time as it would be very challenging for the Department to achieve its scope of work grant requirements in this limited timeframe. This suspension of competition will result in cost savings due to the amount of staff time and resources a formal competitive bid process takes. It will also ensure that the County can meet grant contract obligations given the limited timeframe for the execution of these additional activities. Additionally, Aria is working towards sustainable efforts that include alignment with other contracted agencies implementing CHW intervention efforts and enhancing the referral process to maximize reach in unduplicated service areas.

7. Provide a comprehensive explanation of the research done to verify that the recommended vendor is the only vendor with the unique qualities and/or capabilities stated above. Include a list of all other vendors contacted, what they were asked, and their responses.

On November 8, 2021, FCDPH released a request for proposal (RFP) #22-025 for qualified vendors to provide health intervention activities for implementation of Fresno County's Advancing Health Literacy (AHL) Intervention Program. At least one of the vendors was required to be an FQHC servicing Fresno County's rural community. To identify the best suited FQHC vendor, the Fresno County's AHL Program conducted an internal assessment of potential qualifying FQHC partners since the RFP had no FQHC applicants. In this process, three partners were considered, Valley Health Team, Reedley Community Hospital dba, Adventist Health Reedley, and Aria Community Health Center. In the internal assessment, the target population reach, previous experience in health education and community linkages, and demonstrated capabilities through previous and/or existing partnership outcomes was considered. Aria was one of the two chosen FQHCs that was contracted to implement this work following the internal review, the other being Adventist Health Reedley. Due to Aria's demonstrated success in reaching the AHL program's goals and adhering to the required trainings and County processes, Aria was determined to be the best suited partner for the continuation of this intervention in a clinical setting serving the rural community.

Aria's experience and firsthand knowledge about community connections with the population of focus will expedite the program's implementation timeline. Additionally, these culminating factors will enable Aria to provide services immediately once a contract is executed. Contracting with Aria will also be cost-effective and will save the County money since Aria will be able to begin program services immediately and do not need to go through any County training or hiring and onboarding period.

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Requested By:

Staff Analyst

Title

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I approve this request to suspend competition for the service(s) and/or product(s) identified herein.

dluchini 5/8/2024 1:27:21 PM

Department Head Signature

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mvilanova 5/20/2024 1:17:10 PM

Purchasing Manager Signature

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