



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Sojourns Pathway Program:
Hospital-Based Palliative Care Implementation Grants

PROPOSALS ACCEPTED: Between January 8 and August 6, 2010

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 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 ON PALLIATIVE CARE

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. 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 tends 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 through new or expanded community partnerships

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

IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

The Regence Foundation is offering implementation grants ranging from up to \$125,000 to \$250,000 (Project period: one to two years) to nonprofit hospitals to establish viable and sustainable palliative care programs. Any hospital meeting the eligibility requirements listed below may apply for an implementation grant. However, hospitals that first receive a *Sojourns* Pathway planning grant and complete the required two-day Palliative Care Leadership Center training will receive special consideration from the Foundation.

Successful proposals will provide evidence of strong clinical leadership, institutional support, and comprehensive project plans. Plans should include strategies for implementing clinical protocols and procedures, securing staff, incorporating quality improvement processes, collecting data, and marketing the program.

Grantees are required to provide in-kind contributions of 50% of the overall budget project.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply for an implementation grant, hospitals must:

- Be a nonprofit or public hospital with 100 or more beds
- Serve communities in Washington, Oregon, Idaho or Utah
- Provide no or limited palliative care services, or have provided services intermittently for two years or less

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

Grantees are expected to:

1. Implement a palliative care program in their hospital:
 - Implement strategies to engage key stakeholders
 - Implement a clinical model suited to the hospital's needs
 - Secure appropriate staffing for the service, with clearly designated roles and responsibilities
 - Develop the financial case and a sustainability plan
 - Develop and implement a palliative care database; collect and analyze data
 - Implement an internal marketing program
 - Develop community partnerships
 - Provide palliative care education for staff, patients and families
2. Provide palliative care services to patients during the grant period
3. Submit interim project reports and a final report

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. Executive Summary

- Identify the community and geographic area served by the hospital, number of hospital beds, and occupancy rate
- Describe the palliative care service to be developed
- Specify the requested funding amount

B. Organizational Capacity

- Describe the project team, including the roles and responsibilities of each staff member; team members' clinical experience or palliative care education or certification
- Describe how this project aligns with your institution's strategic priorities

C. Project Description

- Briefly describe real or potential barriers to implementing a palliative care program in your hospital
- Describe the problems (patient, clinical, system) that would be addressed with a palliative care program
- Describe the palliative care model and specific services that will be provided
- Describe the interdisciplinary clinical team that would provide the service, and the approximate full-time equivalents for each discipline, including plans for staff recruitment
- Map the timeline for key project activities
- Project the number of patients to be seen during the grant period
- Discuss opportunities and ideas to market the palliative care program to hospital staff, patients, families and referring providers

D. Sustainability

- Discuss strategies for sustaining the palliative care program after the grant period ends; include likely sources of funding
- Describe plans to cultivate administrative leadership and any additional internal or external stakeholders to sustain the palliative care program

E. Evaluation

- Describe expected outcomes and how they relate to the program goal and objectives. These outcomes should indicate changes that will result from implementation of the palliative care program
- 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?

2) Attachments:

1. Letter of commitment signed by the hospital or health agency's Chief Executive Officer
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. A copy of the hospital's tax exempt status letter

Notes on Project Budgets

- Eligible expenses include staff support; office supplies (photocopying, paper, etc.); travel and lodging to visit other palliative care programs or related trainings; training fees; meeting expenses; and indirect expenses (10%).
- Grant funding may not be used to purchase computers or other equipment of any kind.
- Required In-Kind Contribution: Hospitals are required to provide an additional 50% in-kind contribution. These contributions could include clinical staff hours; administrative support; technology supports (computer support, etc.); data collection and recording; project-related travel costs; and certification in palliative care.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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