



Provider Workforce Development Round 2: Workforce Training and Development Innovation Fund Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Q & A

General

- 1. I have used WizeHive in the past for a different grant application, can I reuse my account and password?**

No. New applications will need a brand-new profile as the grants management system does not link profiles from previously submitted grant applications.

- 2. What level of detail would you like for the budget?**

Please include line items in the budget template that will allow for proposal scoring and monitoring of the grant funds/spending. Typical categories of spending that are identified include salaries and benefits, operational costs, information technology, etc.

- 3. Is it \$1 million per organization for the duration of the grant or per year?**

The total grant would be a maximum of \$1 million per organization for up to 5 years. Grant applications may request less than \$1 million.

- 4. Is there a recommended range for the project budget?**

We recommend applications to be submitted for the amount that the program/initiative implementation may require. Applications should also include a clear outline of direct and indirect costs, including partner budgets and expenditures. This round of grants will award maximum grant amounts of \$1 million. Requests that exceed \$1 million will be disqualified.

- 5. Will we get a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, and will the recorded Bidder's Conference meeting be made available to us?**

The Bidder's Conference presentation and recording is available on our [Provider Workforce Development Initiative](#) website.



6. *This is a short-term grant. How would increased salaries and other long-term expenses for retention be sustained beyond the grant period?*

Applicants will need to describe sustainability plans in their applications.

7. *Does the financial statement need to be audited and can a CPA provide it? Also, what standards and certification are needed for the auditing of the financial statement?*

Yes, audited financial statements or an audit report issued by an external CPA can be used. If you do not have audited financials, please submit financial documentation that can demonstrate the financial solvency of your organization.

8. *What time period should be utilized for the financials?*

CalOptima Health requests three years of financial statements as part of the application.

9. *Do we get to pick our program start date or must it be implemented within six months of the grant start date of January 1st 2025?*

You can specify the timeline for your proposed grant program in your proposal. If awarded, the start of the grant will be the first date of the term of your grant agreement.

10. *Do you have a minimum number of professionals who would benefit from the opportunity?*

No, but applicants would need to provide an estimate of the projected increase in the number of health care workers resulting from the program.

11. *For the section on uploading the program budget/financial plan, are they uploaded as a combined attachment?*

Yes, if you have more than one document, please combine the documents into a single PDF attachment.

12. *What do you mean by "residency programs" in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)?*

We are referencing clinical rotations, practicums, and internship opportunities that may be carried out in a clinical setting that lead to certification.



13. How many proposals can an agency submit?

We will accept one proposal per applicant.

14. Will CalOptima Health only be choosing five projects at \$1 million each?

CalOptima Health will be awarding up to a maximum of \$5 million in total grant funding through this round of grants. The maximum grant that can be awarded to a single organization is \$1 million. The applicant should request the amount they require for the proposed program *up to* a maximum of \$1 million.

15. Is there a specific term for the grant program/award? One year, two years, up to five years?

Applicants determine the duration of their proposed program, for up to a maximum of a five-year term.

16. Does behavioral health include substance use disorders?

Yes.

17. Regarding “training and upskilling programs that include wraparound supports,” could you please elaborate on wraparound supports or provide examples?

Wraparound supports could include housing, childcare, coaching, transportation, and other supports.

18. Will there be another grant opportunity in the future that supports future health care professionals in Orange County?

Currently there are no further approved grant opportunities as part of the Health Care Provider Workforce Initiative. Any new grant opportunities would need to be approved by the CalOptima Health Board of Directors.

[Applicant Eligibility](#)

19. Do you recommend that newer organizations without audited financials apply?

In this grant application, we are interested in funding organizations that are established and have the ability to carry out the requirements of the grant agreement.

20. Can one organization have multiple applications?

No, this grant is limited to one application per organization.



21. Is this round more focused on community-based organizations? Or is there an organizational focus for this funding?

Through this round of funding, we are accepting applications from provider organizations or community-based organizations.

22. If we are partnering with graduate programs, do those graduate programs need to be in Orange County?

Participating graduate programs would need to be serving Orange County students/health professionals.

23. Would mental health peer specialist or Community Health Worker (CHW) programs focused on mental health qualify?

The proposed program should target identified shortages in the health care workforce serving CalOptima Health members including primary care, behavioral health and allied health. Priority will be given to projects that address behavioral health provider shortages. The proposed program would be evaluated through the grant application review process.

24. Is a community clinic that is funded through a university or connected through a university eligible?

Yes, the community clinic would be eligible because it is a provider organization. The community clinic would need to be the applicant for the grant.

25. If a health care organization is working with a community agency on a joint project, can both apply for different aspects of the same project?

It is encouraged that it be combined into a single application.

26. Would pharmacists be included in this?

Yes, pharmacists can be included in this round.

27. Would an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with another partnering organization be considered a formal agreement?

Yes, an MOU would be considered a formal agreement.



28. Do our offices need to be located in a designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) in mental health or primary care in order to be eligible for this program? Or does that only apply to retention incentives?

There is no requirement to be located in a designated HPSA to be eligible for funding.

29. Can a CBO partner with a health care workforce college to implement the program?

Yes. The CBO would need to be the applicant. We encourage applicants with partnerships to adequately describe the partnership and demonstrate that the partnership is established.

30. We are an FQHC (lead applicant). Would we be able to partner with an academic institution to develop and deliver professional development and standard training curriculums? I know you mentioned academic institutions would not be funded under this funding opportunity, but could we contract with them?

Yes, you can partner with an educational institution. The FQHC would need to be the applicant.

31. The Proposal Evaluation Criteria mentioned eligibility criteria "must be a provider organization or community-based organization." Would I assume correctly that a university would not be eligible?

Educational institutions are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity; however, an educational institution can be part of an application with another eligible organization through a partnership arrangement.

Program Eligibility

32. It sounds like this funding is geared toward behavioral health. If a community health center developed a paid internship to help associate counselors receive training to become licensed would that fall under this grant? Would Community Health Worker programs qualify?

The proposed program would be evaluated through the grant application review process.



33. What type behavioral health providers should the proposed program/project target?

Proposed programs related to behavioral health should be focused on the non-physician workforce.

34. Would a certified Community Mental Health worker apprenticeship program qualify? It's a community mental health worker apprenticeship program providing a thousand hours of on-the-job training and an in class instructional design for 200 hours. The curriculum was developed to replace the four-year degree program.

The proposed program would be evaluated through the grant application review process.

35. Our agency serves many CalOptima Health members through specialty mental health, but we are only contracted with CalOptima Health for Enhanced Care Management (ECM) and CHW services currently. Could this grant fund workforce development programs for our specialty mental health employees as well?

Grant funding must be used to help increase the health care workforce in the areas of non-physician primary care, behavioral health, and allied health through training, development, and retention. Grant funds may not be used to fund covered benefits and services.

36. Would a bonus program for recruitment or retention of employees to address workforce shortages be eligible?

Yes, eligible programs include retention incentives for high-need, shortage professions with high turnover rates in the areas of non-physician primary care (e.g. PA, NP, RN, LVN), behavioral health and allied health. Please refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for information on the types of projects that would be eligible.

37. Could this fund a program that supports transition aged youth, 16-24, in identifying their career interests and enrolling them in a certificate program or four-year university for a career in the health field?

The proposed program would be evaluated through the grant application review process.

38. Are pharmacy programs eligible for this round?

Yes, pharmacy programs are eligible.



39. Are programs in counseling and human services by educational institutions that help prepare students to enter the health care workforce eligible?

Educational institutions are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity.

40. When you say this is funding for health care professionals, do programs that expose postsecondary students to health care pathways (like behavioral health) fit this criterion?

The proposed program would be evaluated through the grant application review process.

41. We serve Orange County Medi-Cal members, but we are located in Los Angeles. Would we qualify?

As outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, grant funds may only be utilized for training, development, and retention opportunities for Orange County health care professionals. Projects that include components that encourage health professionals to serve Medi-Cal members in Orange County will be prioritized.

42. Will this round of funding include expanding the physician workforce such as supporting training physicians in primary care residency programs?

Proposed programs should focus on training, development, and retention of *non-physician* primary care (e.g. PA, NP, RN, LVN), behavioral health and allied health.

43. Does the grant cover primary care?

Proposed programs should focus on training, development, and retention of *non-physician* primary care (e.g. PA, NP, RN, LVN), behavioral health and allied health.

44. For Allied Health professions, do Nurse Assistant, Medical Assistant, and Dental Assistant training programs qualify?

Allied Health professions for purposes of this funding opportunity may include but not be limited to audiologists and speech language pathologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists and respiratory therapists, diagnostic medical personnel, imaging specialists, physician assistants, counselors (mental health counselors and family therapists), pharmacy personnel (pharmacy technicians and assistants) and other health care providers and support personnel, such as medical assistants. It will be important to provide information in the grant application related to how the



proposed program addresses an identified health professional shortage related to the Medi-Cal population. Other allied health professions will be considered if associated with an identified health professional shortage.

45. For your allied health care professions, is physical therapy considered in that group?

Please see answer to Question 44.

46. Will this also cover positions like medical assistant, home care and other similar roles?

Please see answer to Question 44.

47. The NOFO mentioned: “Eligible proposals will be from health systems, provider organizations and CBOs that encourage health professionals to serve Medi-Cal members in Orange County.” Can you define health systems?

A health system would be a large provider organization.

48. We oversee interns from local colleges each year, who are pursuing their doctoral degree in psychology. We also host M.D. residents in psychiatry from a local university. This NOFO seems to be emphasizing non-physician. Because the interns and residents are in the field of behavioral health, would this allow us to apply for the funds?

Proposed programs should focus on training, development, and retention of *non-physician* primary care (e.g. PA, NP, RN, LVN), behavioral health and allied health.

49. Regarding “funding for residency programs that have a focus on the safety net,” does this exclude resident positions from Internal Medicine and Psychiatry?

Proposed programs should focus on training, development, and retention of *non-physician* primary care (e.g. PA, NP, RN, LVN), behavioral health and allied health.

Acceptable Uses of Funding

50. Can we use the funding to assist with reimbursement for current health care professionals?

No, these funds may not be used for reimbursement of covered benefits and services.



51. If we are planning on developing a behavioral health internship program, would consultant fees be an allowable cost in supporting development of such a program?

The proposed program should include activities that benefit participants and have a reasonable allocation for administrative expenses. Any needed consultant fees should be included in the proposed budget.

52. Can funds be used to incentivize clinical worksites to participate? An offset to their supervision and training costs?

Yes, grant funds may be used for clinical rotations, practicums and internship programs that have a focus on the safety net and training in community health settings.

53. Can grant funds be used to support facilities providing on-the-job/practicum training?

Yes, grant funds may be used for clinical rotations, practicums and internship programs that have a focus on the safety net and training in community health settings.

54. I want to confirm my understanding that these funds will not cover the costs of hiring new staff to provide direct services. One could hire staff to promote the training/development of one's existing workforce, but one can't hire a new LCSW to expand capacity?

Correct. This grant funding may not be used to hire additional positions to expand capacity. This program aims to increase the health care provider workforce.

55. Can funds be used for certified peer support specialists?

The proposed program would be evaluated through the grant application review process.

56. Can funds be used to pay livable wages to Vocational Nursing students in a full-time program?

Programs provided by educational institutions are not eligible applicants for this funding opportunity. Funding can be used to provide financial support through a provider organization or community-based organization to health professionals seeking to advance in their careers.



57. Could funding be used to support the infrastructure at a nonprofit clinic to expand our clinical rotation program for the non-physician workforce?

Yes, funding to expand access to clinical rotations for health professional programs would be an eligible activity under the grant application.

58. Would incentive for recruiting health care professionals to come work for a homeless and housing services provider be eligible?

This funding opportunity is only available for programs addressing workforce shortages in the areas of non-physician primary care (e.g. PA, NP, RN, LVN), behavioral health and allied health.

59. Would an incentive for an intern to an employee program be eligible?

Internship programs that address training needed to enter the health care workforce would be eligible. Hiring interns to expand staff capacity alone is not an eligible program.

60. Would intern incentives in general; (maybe tied to interning for CalAIM program i.e. launching Day Rehab in shelter, etc.) be eligible?

See the answer to Question 59.

61. Would it be allowable to use granted funds to offer stipends to second-year MSW students?

Educational institutions are not eligible to apply for this funding opportunity.

62. We currently partner with a nursing school whose students intern at our recuperative care facilities. Could we use the funds to pay salary for their first three months of training after graduation, which would lead to us hiring them full time?

Yes, this would be an eligible activity if the potential grantee is an eligible applicant.

63. Will this funding pay for staff to complete degrees in the health care related fields? Assuming they are currently enrolled in school in Orange County?

Yes, funding can be used to support health care workforce advancement in their careers. The funding must be provided through a provider organization or community-based organization.



64. Can the funding be used to create a retention bonus program to ensure new hires stay for at least two years (or a specific time frame)?

Yes, eligible programs include retention incentives for high-need, shortage professions with high turnover rates. Please refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for information on the types of projects that would be eligible.

65. What will the grant funds NOT cover?

Grant funds may not be used to supplant other available federal or state funding sources. Grant funds may not be used to provide direct services. Specific information related to proposed programs must be submitted in the grant application for review.

66. We are a nonprofit organization in Orange County. Can this funding be used to support office overhead costs for health care employees such as laptops, WiFi, etc.?

Grant funding must be used to help increase the health care workforce in the areas of non-physician primary care, behavioral health, and allied health. Providing office overhead alone to existing workforce would not meet the objectives of the grant program. However, overhead costs may be part of a proposed workforce development program and must be detailed in the submitted program budget.