



**Community Benefit Programs 2008-2009
Community Health Investment Fund (CHIF)**

**Robert E. Tranquada, M.D. Safety Net Award II (Tranquada II)
Request for Proposals (RFP) Document**

I. ABOUT L.A. CARE HEALTH PLAN

L.A. Care is a local public agency serving the residents of Los Angeles County through a variety of programs, including Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, and Healthy Kids. With almost 800,000 enrolled members, L.A. Care is one of the largest health plans in California and is the nation's largest public agency health plan. L.A. Care is a leader in developing new programs through innovative coalitions and partnerships designed to support public health, the safety net, and health insurance coverage for vulnerable populations.

Since its inception as a health plan in 1997, L.A. Care has reinvested funds into the community to support low income, vulnerable populations and safety net providers. In 2000, L.A. Care created its Community Health Investment Fund (CHIF) to support specific community healthcare initiatives. Previous initiatives funded through CHIF include the following initiatives: 2001-02 Ambulatory Health, 2003-05 Oral Health, 2004-05 Asthma Community Health Improvement, 2006-07 People with Disabilities, 2007-2008 Robert E. Tranquada, M.D. Safety Net Award (Tranquada I) and the 2008-09 Health Information Technology awards. L.A. Care has also funded a number of health related ad hoc (responsive) grants for community-based organizations, community clinics and Los Angeles County Department of Health Services.

II. L. A. CARE'S TRANQUADA INITIATIVE

In 2005, L.A. Care established a Safety Net Infrastructure Award Initiative named after founding L.A. Care Board member and past Board Chair Robert E. Tranquada, M.D. (Tranquada Initiative). The purpose of the Tranquada Initiative is to provide funding opportunities to public and private safety net providers throughout Los Angeles County for the improvement of core infrastructure capabilities.

The Tranquada II Initiative aims to strengthen the infrastructure and capacities of small community clinics that provide primary care in underserved communities.

III. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for Tranquada II, an applicant must be a non-profit community-based safety net provider with a reported 2007 Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) revenue of \$5 million or less, and an organizational budget of no more than \$7 million for same year. Clinics must serve Los Angeles County low-income populations (such as the uninsured,

those who qualify for government-funded programs and Healthy Kids), and participate in Los Angeles County Department of Health Services' Public Private Partnership (PPP) program. Applicants must also participate in L.A. Care Health Plan's provider network, if applicable. Previous Tranquada grantees are not eligible for Tranquada II funds.

For purposes of this initiative, "safety net provider" includes stand-alone, non-profit, licensed free clinics, community clinics and federally qualified health centers that provide primary care services.

Applicants will be asked to submit projects that have clear milestones, sustainable programmatic and financial strategies, specific metrics and an evaluation to assess program impact. Funds will not be provided for direct services or operational expenses unrelated to infrastructure.

IV. GRANT PRIORITIES

GRANT PRIORITIES: Tranquada II will provide funding for needs assessment, planning and implementation of projects designed to enhance the infrastructure of small clinics such as:

- Strengthening primary care capacity (e.g., facility expansion, redesign or equipment);
- Enhancing capacity to deliver specialized clinical services (e.g., pharmacy, mental health, dental or specialty care);
- Strengthening information systems capacity;
- Obtaining FQHC Look-Alike status (not FQHC-Section 330 grantee designation)¹;
- Developing Managed Care infrastructure and capacity;
- Developing human resource management systems (e.g., development of policies and procedures, employment manuals or training programs); and/or
- Developing diversified and sustainable revenue sources to strengthen long-term financial viability.

Applicants do not need to propose new or expanded clinical programs to receive funding under this initiative, but they should describe how the proposed project will strengthen and better position the clinic for long-term success.

L.A. Care has allocated a total of \$1 million for this initiative. Funding will be structured in two distinct phases: 1) Assessment and Planning, and 2) Implementation. One set of grants will be awarded to support assessment and planning projects. Following the completion of the assessment and planning phase, a second set of grants will be awarded to support implementation of some of the planned projects.

Assessment and Planning:

Grants for assessment and planning will help clinics conduct needs assessments and develop business and work plans for projects to address an infrastructure need. Proposals should address one or more of the priorities outlined above. The planning process should include consideration of larger strategic issues related to the project and the clinic, development of a business case and development of an action plan. Up to five Assessment and Planning grants will be awarded for up to five months and for a maximum of \$50,000 each.

Assessment and planning funds can be used for:

- Hiring of project planning and business development consultants;

¹ Tranquada II funding for full FQHC 330's readiness projects might be available upon HRSA notification of new access points grants.

- Compensation of staff involved in planning process; and/or
- Other related expenses.

Assessment and Planning example: A clinic is interested in implementing a practice management system. The grant will assist with assessment and analysis of information needs, surveying the various system options; and with the development of a strategic plan to implement, finance and maintain the selected practice management system.

Implementation:

Implementation grants will help clinics implement infrastructure projects that were developed during the Assessment and Planning process. Recipients of assessment and planning grants will not automatically receive implementation grants. Grantees will be selected from the cohort of Assessment and Planning grantees only. Up to three Implementation grants will be awarded for up to two years and for a maximum of \$200,000 each.

Funds during implementation phase can be used for:

- Purchase of computer hardware and/or software;
- Purchase of medical and/or non-medical equipment, including diagnostic equipment;
- Remodeling or renovations that support provision of primary or specialty care services;
- Payment of project implementation consultants;
- Compensation of staff involved in implementation project; and/or
- Other related expenses.

V. ADDITIONAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Applications must be fully complete at the time of submission and include all required information and documentation. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. All final proposal applications will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary committee of both L.A. Care staff and external experts. The review committee will make recommendations for funding to L.A. Care’s Board of Governors. Evaluation of proposals will be based on a variety of additional criteria. The specifics of how the criteria below apply to the LOI or the full application will be outlined at the Bidders’ conference.

Technical Merit

- Project’s ability to improve the delivery of health services and programs with long-term impact.
- Measurable and attainable benchmarks, including a baseline and a quantifiable projected end result.²
- Outlines how the organization will evaluate project success, including metrics to be used.

Community Benefit

- Addresses patient and clinic need to improve service delivery with the goal of improved quality of care.
- Ability to enhance services for low-income, underserved populations in Los Angeles County.

Organizational capacity

- The organization’s strategic direction and/or strategic plan incorporate the proposed project.
- Readiness to implement proposed project.

² The objectives must include: (1) what will be done; (2) how much will be accomplished; (3) who will undertake the work; (4) how the work will be executed; and (5) an appropriate timeline.

- Organizational and staff experience and qualifications to implement proposed activities.
- Sound short and long-term programmatic plan.

Financial Stability

- Budget adequately describes and justifies proposed expenditures.
- Reasonable costs in relation to the benefits to the individuals and communities served.
- For the Implementation projects, evidence of submission to other funders or matching or in-kind funds to support the Implementation Phase.
- Financial sustainability plan.

Proposals will be scored and ranked in each of the above-referenced areas. However, the organization with the highest score is not assured of receiving a Tranquada II award. L.A. Care will also consider the demographic and geographic diversity of Los Angeles County and endeavor to ensure that diversity is reflected in the selected grantees. The ranked scores of submitted proposals will not be published or released to applicants, unless required by law. As part of the evaluation process, L.A. Care may perform site visits to organizations submitting proposals.

All grant awards are at the sole discretion of the L.A. Care's Board of Governors. Decisions are final and no appeals from grant applicants will be considered.

VI. MONITORING AND OTHER EXPECTATIONS

L.A. Care's Community Benefit Department will, during the course of any contract that may result from this RFP, monitor the selected organizations to assure that they are performing according to the contract terms. Grantees will be required to submit reports to L.A. Care that provide complete and accurate documentation of program activities. Reports must be made on forms provided by L.A. Care. Grantees may also be required to attend periodic meetings related to this Initiative. A hard copy, and when requested, an electronic copy of any enduring material developed with funds from this grant must be submitted to L.A. Care.

VII. BIDDERS' CONFERENCE AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Interested applicants are strongly encouraged to attend a bidders' conference to be held on Thursday, February 19, 2009 from 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. All conference participants need to **RSVP** no later than Tuesday, February 17 by 5:00 p.m. by emailing the attached bidders' conference form to Tony Casillas, Management Associate, at TCasillas@lacare.org. Mr. Casillas may also be reached at (213) 438-5701. Validated parking will be provided at the Pershing Square garage located at 5th and Olive.

L.A. Care will offer LOI and full proposal development assistance to interested applicants. It will also provide strategic planning and project implementation assistance to L.A. Care funded grantees. Applicants requesting technical assistance should contact the consultant within 48 hours after assignment for adequate preparation and planning. Questions before consulting sessions are encouraged and should be submitted via email.

VII. TERM OF AGREEMENT & PAYMENT OF GRANT FUNDS

The term of agreement for grantees will commence on the date noted in the contract. The initial payment will be made within 30 days of a fully executed contract. Remaining funds will be disbursed upon review and approval of the grantee's status report. Such reports must be submitted in a timely manner, and must demonstrate that the grantee is meeting or exceeding identified benchmarks.

IX. HOW TO APPLY

L. A. Care's Tranquada II Initiative requires a two phase submittal process:

Assessment and Planning

For the Assessment and Planning phase, applicant must first submit an LOI application due no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday, March 27, 2009. The LOI will be reviewed to determine best alignment with the Tranquada II Initiative. Applicants with competitive applications and who meet the criteria and priorities of the Initiative will be invited to submit a full application, which is due no later than 5:00 p.m., Monday, April 20. Please email and overnight applications as applicants are discouraged from walking in their applications. More specific information is provided in both the LOI and full application documents.

Implementation

Deadlines and further information specific to the implementation phase will be provided to qualified assessment and planning applicants at a later date.

For questions regarding this Tranquada II RFP document, please contact Icilda Sanford, Community Benefit Programs Specialist, at (213) 694-1250 ext. 4237 or isanford@lacare.org. For Tranquada II Initiative content related questions only, contact Roland Palencia, Director, Community Benefit Programs (213) 694-1250 ext. 4243 or rpalencia@lacare.org.

Any costs associated with preparation or submission of an LOI or a full proposal will be the sole responsibility of the organization applying and will not be reimbursed by L.A. Care.

To download this and other related Tranquada II Initiative documents, please go to:
www.lacare.org/aboutlacare/grantmaking/grantlist