

Substance Use Disorder Community of Practice Request for Proposal Q&A

- Q. What is the expected frequency CoP meetings?
- A. **The expected frequency is quarterly.**
- Q. Will the meetings be held online (e.g., via Webex or Zoom) or in person?
- A. **The meetings will be online and in person depending on the participants' preference.**
- Q. Does DHS expect CoP meetings always to be "all member meetings" or would they be willing to support subcommittees?
- A. **Depending on the number of members, we may need subcommittees if we have a high number of members.**
- Q. To what extent will the vendor be able to influence/form the structure of the group/subgroups?
- A. **The vendor will definitely have influence, but it will be primarily a collective decision.**
- Q. What is DHS's desired number of CoP members? Is there a preferred number for possible subgroups?
- A. **The goal is to ensure we recruit and retain at least the minimum representation, which includes a diverse group of individuals.**
- Q. Under "Tasks and Deliverables" the RFP states the contractor will "recruit external participants (excluding government agencies) where representation is low or missing." Is there a target number of participants from each participant group?
- A. **There is no target number for each participant group. However, we want to recruit and retain individuals from all the participant groups on an ongoing basis. If representation is low in any participant group (excluding government agencies), the vendor will assist in recruitment.**
- Q. What is the mechanism by which the outcomes (reports/recommendations) of the CoP will bring about action/change?
- A. **Reports/recommendations will be shared with the Legislature.**
- Q. In our experience, incentives of stipends can be helpful for engaging members of committees such as the CoP, particularly for individuals with lived experience. Does DHS have specific expectations or guidelines for incentives or stipends for CoP members?
- A. **The following expenses may be included in the budget: mileage, parking, meals, lodging, \$55 per diem rate, and child care. The vendor may decide whether to budget for mileage, parking, meals, and lodging without input from the CoP. However, the \$55 per diem and child care funds require authorization from the SUD CoP. The SUD CoP will need to determine: 1) if compensation is allowed, 2) whether child care expenses may be reimbursed and 3) what qualifies as a day for making the \$55 daily compensation. These questions need to be discussed and voted on during the first CoP meeting. Under Minnesota statute 15.059, subdivision 3, participants:**

- “may be compensated at the rate of \$55 a day spent on [community of practice] activities, when authorized by the council or committee, plus expenses in the same manner and amount as authorized by the [commissioner's plan](#).”
- “[Participants] who, as a result of time spent attending council or committee meetings, incur child care expenses that would not otherwise have been incurred, may be reimbursed for those expenses upon [community of practice] authorization.” *Id.* “[Participants] who are state employees or employees of political subdivisions of the state may be reimbursed for child care expenses only for time spent on board activities that are outside their working hours.” *Id.* at (b).
- “[Participants] who are state employees or employees of political subdivisions must not receive the daily compensation for activities that occur during working hours for which they are compensated by the state or political subdivision. However, a state or political subdivision employee may receive the daily payment if the employee uses vacation time or compensatory time accumulated in accordance with a collective bargaining agreement or compensation plan for [community of practice] activity. Members who are state employees or employees of the political subdivisions of the state may receive the expenses provided for in this section unless the expenses are reimbursed by another source.” *Id.*

If there is an invited facilitator/presenter, then the vendor will decide if they will be paid a separate compensation but they cannot be paid twice for one day of attendance.

A federal W-9 tax form, the DHS vendor’s invoice form (DHS-1728F) with a breakdown of expenses, and a template instruction form will be provided by DHS for the vendor to track member compensation and reimbursement. The vendor will need to account for these expenses in their budget.

Q. To what extent is the CoP already established? What does the current membership consist of?

A. **Current membership for the CoP consists of a smaller group of planners who participated in monthly planning meetings in 2022.**

Q. Is the recruitment of consumers and family members for an ongoing role as CoP member or is it for other related opportunities that are more time limited?

A. **The goal is to recruit and retain people directly served and family members for an ongoing role as CoP members.**

Q. In addition to people directly served and family members, what other groups of participants do you intend to have participate in this group?

- A. Per [Minnesota Statutes 2021, Chapter 254B.151](#), the CoP must include the following participants:
- 1) researchers or members of the academic community who are substance use disorder subject matter experts, who do not have financial relationships with treatment providers;
 - 2) substance use disorder treatment providers;
 - 3) representatives from recovery community organizations;
 - 4) a representative from the Department of Human Services;
 - 5) a representative from the Department of Health;
 - 6) a representative from the Department of Corrections;
 - 7) representatives from county social services agencies;
 - 8) representatives from tribal nations or tribal social services providers;
 - 9) representatives from managed care organizations; and

10) individuals who have used substance use disorder treatment services and [the CoP] must highlight the voices and experiences of individuals who are Black, indigenous, people of color, and people from other communities that are disproportionately impacted by substance use disorders.

Q. Do you anticipate needing to hire presenters or other experts outside of DHS to present to the CoP or consult in some other manner?

A. Yes, there may be a need to hire presenters or other experts outside of DHS to present to the CoP. The vendor may include expenses to hire presenters or other experts outside of DHS in consultation with the CoP in their budget.

Q. Does the budget include compensation for members? And, if so, is there an estimated amount for this?

A. Compensation and reimbursement for members must follow State guidelines as stated on the bottom of page 1 and the top of page 2.

Q. Under tasks and deliverables for item 3 about identifying challenges, the RFP notes criteria on both a national and state level. Can you provide more information about your interest in the national level?

A. DHS is working to align State laws with the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria. ASAM is currently in its 3rd edition, however the 4th edition should be published in the next year. With the new edition coming, DHS would like to be prepared for additional steps that will be required within the State to meet the updated standards.

Q. Any limitations on how the funds are used? What are the expectations for reimbursement of CoP members?

A. There are no limitations on how funding is used as long as it falls within the parameters of the RFP guidelines. The work plan and budget justification will need to address how the funding will be used. Compensation and reimbursement for members must follow State guidelines as stated on the bottom of page 1 and the top of page 2.

Q. Can funding be shifted to following years?

A. No, funds cannot be shifted from one state fiscal year to the next.

Q. Under tasks and deliverables, could you please explain this statement: "Facilitate SUD CoP meetings including the following tasks"?

A. Facilitation of SUD CoP meetings includes attending pre-meeting strategy and planning sessions with identified DHS staff, creating meeting agendas, taking meeting notes to create an analysis of each meeting to share with DHS staff, provide full technical support (including but not limited to sharing polling questions and results during meetings, addressing noise disruptions, troubleshooting technical issues, etc.), maintain an active electronic contact mailing list of participants in the CoP and continue to seek participation from all stakeholders involved or impacted by SUD in Minnesota.

Q. Will DHS WebEx or Teams be available to use for CoP events and documentation?

A. Yes, DHS WebEx is a possibility. Teams does not have a call-in option so it will not be used. The vendor will work with DHS in deciding which communication tools will be used. In the event DHS WebEx is used for the CoP, the vendor will need to provide technical assistance during the CoP meetings. This

would include troubleshooting any technical issues and a willingness to learn the features of WebEx with guidance from DHS if this is a new meeting platform for the vendor to assure seamless meetings.

Q. Will DHS provide the Webex platform and expect that the vendor will handle scheduling of meetings, registration and any special services such as captioning etc.? Will the vendor be able to leverage DHS contracts for captioning, sign language, etc.?

A. If DHS WebEx is used as a platform, DHS will handle the scheduling of meetings with no registration needed for public CoP meetings. Should American Sign Language (ASL) services be necessary for members, DHS will provide accommodations if requested at least two weeks in advance. DHS will attempt to honor all requests for accommodations that require captioning, but these may not be guaranteed due to limited captioning vendor resources.

Q. Will the vendor would be providing documents that DHS will be posting on the SUD COP webpage?

A. Yes, the vendor would be providing documents that DHS will post on the [SUD CoP](#) webpage.

Q. In the RFP for task/deliverable #4 under b is “Collective knowledge of issues related to SUD.” Can you offer any more specifics about what you are looking for here?

A. An example of collective knowledge of issues can be found in deliverable #3. These factors play a critical role in providing a higher quality of care when provided in combination with SUD treatment services.

a. Support services (supported employment, housing, life-skills, trauma-informed care)

b. Integrated care (receiving other needed health or behavioral health services with SUD treatment)

c. Culturally specific models (addressing barriers to care due to culture)

d. Person-centered care (focusing on the elements of care, support and treatment that matter most to the patient, their family and their caregivers)

e. Any additional challenges implementing ASAM criteria

In addition, regarding the continuum of care, it is collective knowledge to work towards ensuring recipients have access to whatever level of care they need when the need it.

Q. A big portion of this project is the recruitment of participants. Has there been any background work done to get SMEs, others working in this space, and/or community members aware of and/or interested in joining this CoP? Or will the outreach and recruitment be sort of built from the start in this project?

A. Outreach to other state agencies and contacts representing all participant categories was initiated in 2022 during the monthly planning sessions. While outreach has started, there is more work needed in the area of outreach to ensure members from all participant categories are recruited and retained.

Q. Does DHS plan to dedicate a technical resource to the CoP in terms of scheduling and setting up the WebEx meetings, accessing captioning services, etc. (as differentiated from facilitating the meetings)?

A. The vendor will work with DHS in deciding which communication tools will be used. In the event DHS WebEx is used for the CoP, the vendor will need to provide technical assistance during the CoP meetings. This would include troubleshooting any technical issues and a willingness to learn the features of WebEx with guidance from DHS (if this is a new meeting platform for the vendor) to assure

seamless meetings. DHS will attempt to honor all requests for accommodations that require captioning, but these may not be guaranteed due to limited captioning vendor resources.

- Q. How do you see DHS staff partnering with the vendor on this work? What will be the role of DHS?
- A. **The partnership between DHS and the vendor will be collaborative partnership in which both DHS and the vendor will work together to facilitate a community-driven process where consumers, families and field experts will have the power to influence policies that drive investments in the field. The vendor will ensure the implementation of strategies in this community of practice to frame engagement in terms of shared values and opportunity to cultivate a sense of belonging.**
- Q. In responding to #1 under tasks and deliverables, is the RFP just wanting to know if we are capable of undertaking these tasks?
- A. **For deliverable #1, the prospective vendor should describe in detail how they are capable of undertaking the tasks listed.**
- Q. Do you know if it is clear whether these CoP meetings will be subject to Open Meeting Law?
- A. **All CoP meetings are subject to Open Meeting Law. The CoP must “highlight the voice and experience of individuals who are Black, indigenous, people of color, and people from other communities,” “enhance collective knowledge,” “use knowledge gathered through the CoP,” “increase knowledge about the challenges and opportunities learned,” and “develop capacity for community advocacy.” Based on this legislative language, the CoP will be open to the public.**