



**Request for Proposal  
Carle Foundation  
611 West Park Street  
Urbana, IL 618001**

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## Background and Goals

Serving a population of 1.3 million people and based in Urbana, Ill., the Carle Foundation is the not-for-profit parent company of an integrated network of healthcare services. At its core are Carle Foundation Hospital, Carle Hoopeston Regional Health Center, Carle Physician Group and Health Alliance Medical Plans.

Established in 1931 the foundation has grown to a 393-bed regional care hospital and has achieved Magnet® designation, the nation's highest honor for nursing care. It offers a more advanced level of clinical expertise and technology than any area hospital, housing the area's only Level I Trauma Center. Recent statistics indicate that the Hospital admitted more than 22,000 patients and treated more than 71,300 patients in the emergency room. The Mills Breast Cancer Institute, Carle Cancer Center, Carle Spine Institute and Carle Heart and Vascular Institute bring additional advanced diagnostic and treatment options.

The Carle Physician Group is comprised of 400 physicians dedicated to providing the highest quality care in more than 80 specialties located in 14 communities across central Illinois.

Carle is ranked as a Best Hospital by U.S. News and World Report, by HealthGrades as one of America's 100 Best Hospitals™ and among the top 5% nationally for critical care, and top 10% nationally for stroke care, pulmonary care and gastrointestinal care. This and numerous other awards can be seen on the foundations web site at <https://carle.org/>

The goal of the Healthcare Connect Program is to connect all the remote sites to the hospital's information systems to provide a central source for patient information. Connecting the clinics to the hospital's network allows the clinics to access all of its resources including primary EMR applications, current and NextGen information services.

This RFP addresses the telecommunications and network maintenance to interconnect the main hospital, the data center and the remote clinics and doctor's offices. This includes: bandwidth for general Internet connectivity, voice, data circuits for sending and receiving medical billing info, files and/or images to and from remote locations, medical administration & telemedicine.

## Sites that are participating in this consortium are:

HCP NO.	HCP Name	HCP Address
10658	Hoopeston Regional Health Center	701 East Orange St., Hoopeston, Illinois 60942-1871
13141	Cissna Park Medical Clinic	141 West Garfield, Cissna Park, Illinois 60924
16456	TCFH-Carle Mattoon on Lerna Road	200 Lerna Rd South, Mattoon, Illinois 61938
22304	The Carle Foundation Hospital	611 West Park Street, Urbana, Illinois 61801
25647	Carle at Tuscola	301 East Southline Road, Tuscola, Illinois 61953
27893	TCFH-Carle Clinic-Rantoul	1540 E. Grove Street, Rantoul, Illinois 61866
27901	TCFH-Carle Medical Clinic-Mahomet	1001 Heather Drive, Mahomet, Illinois 61853
27902	TCFH-Carle in Monticello	1002 Medical Center Drive, Monticello, Illinois 61856
27903	TCFH-Carle Physicians Group-Effingham	401 N. Keller Drive, Suite 3 & 4, Effingham, Illinois 62401
38119	Charlotte Ann Russel Medical Center	801 E Orange St, Hoopeston, Illinois 60942

38123	Milford Clinic	322 Chicago Street, Milford, Illinois 60953
38124	The Roberts Clinic	845 South 4th Street, Watseka, Illinois 60970
45139	Carle at Watseka	1490 East Walnut, Wateseka, Illinois 60970
50672	Carle Mattoon on Hurst Drive	2512 Hurst Drive, Mattoon, Illinois 61938

## General Provisions

1. Frequently, sites have completed their original contract term, and have the benefit of being month to month, while maintaining their originally contracted rate. Requested bid contract terms are: 5 year, 3 year, 1 year and month to month.
2. To warrant consideration for an award of contract resulting from this RFP, proposers must agree to participation in the FCC Healthcare Connect Fund (HCF) as administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) mechanism as provided for and authorized under the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 (Reference 47 U.S.C. § 254, "Universal Service").
3. Vendors acknowledge that any contractual relationship resulting from this solicitation of proposals may be partially or entirely dependent upon the successful receipt of HCF subsidies.
4. Carle Foundation will contract directly with organizations capable of performing the requirements of this RFP. Proposers must be represented directly. Participation by brokers or commissioned agents will not be allowed during the proposal process.
5. Carle Foundation is not responsible for any costs incurred by a vendor related to the preparation or delivery of the proposal, or any other activities carried out by the vendor as it relates to this RFP. Changes in applicable laws and rules may affect the award process or any resulting contracts. Vendors are responsible for ascertaining pertinent legal requirements and restrictions. Vendors are encouraged to visit the official FCC website pertaining to the Healthcare Connect Fund, at: <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/rural-health-care#HCF>.
6. Carle Foundation may seek clarifications concerning the submitted proposal.
7. This RFP will become part of the contract with the selected proposer(s) for services. The proposer(s) will be bound to perform according to the terms of this RFP and their Proposals. The contract is to be a consortium-level contract and Carle Foundation will sign the contract for all locations.
8. The bidding period is 28 days from the day it is posted on the USAC web site. The proposal evaluation period is anticipated to be 2 business days.
9. In some cases, bids are being requested for connections and services that already have circuits in place and are under existing contracts. Vendors holding these contracts should view this RFP as an opportunity to extend or expand what is already in place and are under existing contract. If existing vendors' bids are deemed to be the most "cost effective," the existing vendors' solutions may be selected with whatever contract modifications are required to meet the new circumstances and HCF rules. New vendors are welcome to bid on services.
10. Quotes may be requested for variable levels of service. This will enable Carle Foundation to weigh the pros and cons of higher levels of service against the additional cost incurred. However,

it is recognized that for a variety of reasons different service providers will have different increments of service that they can provide. Vendors should feel free to quote the increments of service (even if not identical to what is in our request) they are in a position to deploy.

11. In those circumstances in which variable levels of bandwidth are being requested and quoted, vendors will be asked to incorporate the variable bandwidth levels and associated costs into the contract in order to allow HCPs to "turn up their bandwidths" without the need to engage in a new competitive bidding process.
12. In accordance with the Site and Substitution Rules found in the Order (47 C.F.R §54.646) Carle Foundation will extend this RFP to include new healthcare providers that become new members of our consortium during the length of this agreement.
13. The vendor(s) will be responsible for all network hardware purchasing and maintenance to terminate the new connection at the premise and provide a single point of demarcation.
14. Vendor(s) may be required to purchase local access from the local exchange carrier to complete last-mile connectivity to nearest POP. The end user site would be responsible for internal wiring and connection to the room locations where the telehealth equipment will be located. The vendor will be responsible for all network hardware purchasing and maintenance in accordance with the site needs the parts list included. The vendor shall provide network services in a manner that meets HIPAA requirements concerning telecommunications.

## Notice of Intent to Bid and Submissions of Questions and Requests for Clarification

1. A letter signifying the bidder's intent to bid on this project must be received via email (hardcopy optional) no later than 10 days after the RFP is posted for bidding. The "letter of intent" should be sent to:

**David Wagner, Managing Member**  
**Pem Filling, LLC**  
**50 Waterbury Road #357**  
**Prospect, CT 06712**  
[david@pemfilings.com](mailto:david@pemfilings.com)  
**203-437-6546**

The following information should be included: a) name and address of the company; b) the company's authorized representative's name, title, address, phone and email address. Only bidders submitting such a notice will be eligible and receive the answers of questions submitted by all bidders concerning this RFP. This does not preclude any bidder from submitting a bid.

2. Questions concerning this RFP should be submitted to David Wagner at the above address. Vendors are invited to submit written questions and/or requests, interpretations, consideration, or acceptance concerning this RFP within 15 business days from the posting of the RFP. Any communications not sent to the email address above will not be entertained. In addition, please ensure that the subject line of the email references "Carle Foundation Consortium Network – Letter of Intent to Bid."
3. All questions and responses will be shared with all bidders who have submitted a letter of intent to bid as outlined in Item 1 above via email.
4. In the event it becomes necessary to amend, add to or delete any part of the RFP, the amendment will be posted on the USAC website. All those bidders who provided a letter of intent to bid as outlined in Item 1 will be notified of the revision.

# Proposal Requirements

Proposer is the person responding to the RFP.

1. Provide name address, telephone number and email address and any other relevant contact information.
2. Please provide pricing for a range of contract terms per 1 in General Provisions. Provide the date the bid expires.
3. State non-recurring cost and identify what the cost covers. Include all estimated taxes, surcharges and fees, if applicable.
4. State monthly recurring cost of each requested service, separately identified, including all estimated taxes, surcharges and fees, if applicable.
5. Provide name(s) of billing party/parties.
6. Provide sample bill for services. Explain whether services will require multiple accounts with you company.
7. The Healthcare Connect Fund Order requires that the successful bidder obtain a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN). This may be obtained from USAC at <http://www.usac.org/sp/default.aspx>. Please provide the Universal Service SPIN number of billing party/parties and indicate whether the billing party/parties have complied with all USAC requirements to participate in the Healthcare Connect Fund program.
8. Affirm that any and all hardware provided will be new and not refurbished equipment as well as a listing of such equipment.
9. Provide the process for Carle Foundation to report any problems with the facilities, circuits, network, and telecommunications services including the minimum response time that can be expected. Also, please state response time for arrival of an on-site technician for troubleshooting, if required.
10. Contract term should begin upon installation of the last circuit or the contract date, whichever is later. If other please specify.
11. Bid proposals must be sent via email to David Wagner at the above address no later than midnight Central Standard Time on the 28<sup>th</sup> day after the posting date as published on the USAC website; <http://www.usac.org/rhclhealthcare-connect/tools/search-posted-services/consortia.aspx>. Hard Copies are optional.

# **Project Management and Implementation Schedule**

Bidders shall include a Detailed Project Management Plan for implementing and installing the firewalls. The Detailed Project Management Plan shall include narrative information and detailed project milestone and schedule information presented in Microsoft Project file format. The Bidder shall include an estimated start time and completion date for the project. Bidders shall outline their implementation plan for the project described in the RFP. The plan should include timetables that address the following issues:

## **Project Management**

Provide a description of the Bidder's management team for this project. List all key personnel and their qualifications.

## **Project Schedule**

Provide an implementation schedule for the proposed service, including delivery dates, implementation milestones, task relationships and dependencies, and a timeline.

## **Broadband System (private Intranet) and public Internet Services System Architecture and Development**

Provide descriptions of how the service(s) will be designed, including details of customer testing and final implementation, the extent to which broadband (private Intranet) and public Internet connectivity to participating Carle Foundation entities will be guaranteed; how the private Intranet and public Internet service will deliver differentiated levels of service depending on the different bandwidth needs; quality of service (QoS) requirements of the Carle Foundation users.

## **Ongoing Service Maintenance and Assistance**

Bidders shall provide details of all maintenance activities and how assistance will be provided to Carle Foundation users.

## **Bidder Qualifications and References**

Bidders shall demonstrate their ability and competency to complete the project by providing the information below. A brief description of the Bidder Company and services offered, including:

1. Full legal company name.
2. Year business was established.
3. Number of people currently employed.
4. Most recent annual report, if a public company.
5. A description of the qualifications, experience, capability and/or capacity of the Bidder to successfully provide the broadband service and complete the project in a timely manner.
6. A description of the qualifications of the members of the proposed project team that will be assigned to the project.
7. Information on current broadband clients including: Total number of current Clients.
8. A list of broadband services provided to similar communities.
9. Evidence of successful completion of a project of a similar size and complexity.
10. References: Contact information for three references from projects similar in size, application and scope and a brief description of their broadband installations.
11. Previous experience with us: Bidders must state clearly any past business relationship with our legal entity or any of our locations listed in this RFP.
12. Bidder must provide evidence of financial stability.



## Pricing and Cost Information

Vendors submitting proposals should identify all costs associated with the solution they are quoting. All hardware must be new and not refurbished equipment. Bids must be accompanied by sufficient descriptive literature and/or specifications to clearly identify the item and provide for competitive evaluation. Quotes should include the following:

1. Implementation fees, including purchase of required new hardware for end-to-end connectivity and initial configuration of network hardware.
2. Ongoing transmission fees for end-to-end connectivity.
3. Ongoing manufacturer maintenance for the new hardware that will be purchased.
4. Any other costs associated with the solution that may add cost to participants.
5. Pricing for services or equipment that include an ineligible component must be provided for comparable services or piece of equipment that includes only eligible components. Ineligible components/services will not be covered by USAC.
6. The cost for (1) owning and (2) leasing any proposed infrastructure

Bid proposals should identify all costs that are included in bid in sufficient detail as to confirm the proposed solution, including installation, configuration, maintenance and any recurring costs. Bid needs to comply with the Healthcare Connect Fund's eligibility requirements. Identify the purchase price for each unit. Bundled pricing may be cited specified but individual components must be identified and detailed pricing provided. Shipping cost for each unit or shipment shall be included as well.

All bid proposals must understand and acknowledge USAC invoicing requirements and formats.

Bidder will conform to invoicing procedures and processes as promulgated by USAC. Any successful bidder(s) is required to have a current Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) as required by the Healthcare Connect Fund Order. A SPIN number may be obtained by contacting the Universal Services Administrative Company ([www.usac.org](http://www.usac.org)).

Bidder must provide copies of all paper bill formats

## Proposal Evaluations

Any and all costs incurred by Vendor(s) in preparing and submitting a proposal are the Vendor(s) responsibility and shall not be charged to the Consortium or reflected as an expense of the resulting contracts. Proposed vendor responses will be based on the following:

Criterion	Weight
Cost	35%
Prior experience, including past performance	35%
Quality/ Clarity/ Compliance of RFP response	20%
Single carrier solution	10%

Allowance of the substitution of sites and services over the life of the contract or participation in the HCF program is required. Carle Foundation may add sites and/or upgrade or change services throughout the length of the contract term without having to re-bid. Carle Foundation requests that bids allow site and service substitutions in accordance with Appendix D, 47 C.F.R. § 54.646.

All service providers must file FCC Form 498 to obtain a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN)/498 ID and acknowledge participation in the HCF Program on the FCC Form 498 to participate in the HCF Program. Service providers understand their responsibility to sign, certify, and submit proper invoices and documentation (included submitting bills for services with a breakdown of eligible and ineligible services) to be reimbursed. The invoicing deadline is 6 months after the end of the commitment period.

The selection will be based on all factors indicated in this section, and may not go to the lowest bidder if cost is outweighed by a combination of other features in the winning vendor's bid. The point scale listed above will determine the most cost-effective solution for Carle Foundation members.

Carle Foundation reserves the right to select bid proposals which, in the sole judgment of the Carle Foundation, most nearly conforms to the specifications set forth herein.

Carle Foundation reserves the right to waive any and all issues of form or presentation in considering bid presentations for acceptance or rejection, if, in the sole opinion of the Carle Foundation, such waiver is in the best interests of the project.

Changes in applicable laws and rules may affect the award process or any resulting contracts. Vendors are responsible for ascertaining pertinent legal requirements and restrictions. Vendors are encouraged to visit the official FCC website pertaining to the Healthcare Connect Fund, at:  
[www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/rural-health-care#HCF](http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/rural-health-care#HCF)

The selection decisions made by Carle Foundation and reported to USAC under this RFP are final, and appeals or re-submissions will not be considered.