EngageWell IPA'S FCC Connected Care Pilot Program: The "Care Your Way" Initiative

Request for Qualifications: Telehealth Platform Vendor

Background

EngageWell Independent Practice Association (IPA) is a start-up entity launched in 2016 to enable not-for-profit, community-based organizations an opportunity to participate in New York State Medicaid's transition to value-based payment (VBP) arrangements with health care payers interested in controlling rising healthcare costs (Medicaid Managed Care organizations, medical IPAs, hospitals and others). EngageWell, in partnership with its 16 participating provider organizations, is seeking to increase access to services that advance the dignity and well-being of marginalized populations, particularly those with chronic medical conditions and behavioral health (BH) issues, including mental health and substance use disorders. Together, EngageWell and its providers are developing innovative interventions to address complex behavioral, medical and long-term care needs that drive a large volume of high-cost Medicaid services in all five boroughs of New York City.

With a decades-long history of serving people with HIV/AIDS, EngageWell providers understand the devastating impact emerging infectious diseases can have on low-income communities. However, no one was ready for the unprecedented impact COVID-19 had on NYC's health and safety-net systems. EngageWell providers quickly realized that their clients may experience higher rates of COVID-19 infection/death than the general population due to higher rates of poverty, homelessness, and pre-existing chronic health issues. They are especially concerned for clients with BH issues because social distancing and isolation can trigger mental health symptoms and/or substance use relapse.

In response to COVID-19, EngageWell's service providers have transitioned to provide both in-person and remote/virtual services to accommodate client needs and maintain a high level of safety for staff and clients. This change has introduced a variety of new challenges for community-based organizations and the clients they serve, such as ensuring staff and clients have reliable access to proper hardware and software, adopting new communication strategies, and supporting staff through remote administrative and clinical supervision. During these unprecedented times, EngageWell is seeking ways to ensure staff and clients remain healthy, informed, and protected, while establishing new policies/procedures that help us prepare for future COVID-19 outbreaks and other city-wide emergencies. EngageWell also seeks to create a future where telehealth increases client access to services, improves health outcomes, and decreases health disparities among marginalized populations.

Scope of Project

EngageWell was recently awarded Connected Care Pilot Program funds from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to support the development of connected care services, defined as telehealth, remote patient monitoring technology, and access to broadband internet service. Over the

next three years, EngageWell, with the help of various stakeholders, will use FCC funds to invest in and launch state-of-the-art connected care services that provides clients and staff virtual access to clinical and non-clinical services across the network. Currently, EngageWell has 33 health care provider (HCP) in its consortium. Please see a chart at the bottom of this document for the full HCP list. In the end, EngageWell hopes to demonstrate the role connected care services have on controlling healthcare costs and improving patient and provider satisfaction. When complete, EngageWell's suite of face-to-face and virtual health and social services will revolutionize our network's system of care, ensuring expedient and equitable access to life-saving care for some of NYC's most marginalized communities.

EngageWell's "Care Your Way" Initiative

The EngageWell IPA will utilize the Connected Care Pilot Program funds to support its "Care Your Way" Initiative, a network-wide intervention and hybrid care delivery model that provides Medicaid beneficiaries and other low-income patients diagnosed with chronic medical and behavioral health conditions a choice in how and where they receive their care. The IPA network has dozens of brick-and-mortar community-based clinics and programs, and the "Care Your Way" Initiative will augment face-to-face, outpatient care with virtual, connected care services via telehealth visits, store-and-forward technology, and remote patient monitoring tools. Specifically, clients who enroll in the "Care Your Way" pilot program will be eligible to receive wireless internet access free of cost to support their engagement in outpatient medical and behavioral health care and virtual services and reduce ER visits, urgent care, and hospitalizations. Clients who enroll in the "Care Your Way" initiative will also be able to address common social barriers to medical care and behavioral health treatment, including food insecurity and financial hardship, all offered through state-of-the-art, connected care technology.

Request for Proposals

EngageWell IPA is soliciting proposals from qualified vendors for selection of a **Telehealth Platform.** The platform will be used by health care providers across EngageWell IPA agencies for virtual, outpatient medical visits and/or behavioral health treatment, as well as a broad array of other qualifying health or psychosocial services, including medication adherence support, medical nutrition therapy, medical transportation assistance, harm reduction counseling, home/community-based services, medical case management, and more. This will require separate implementations at different agencies across the EngageWell IPA network. Services rendered are primarily for Medicaid beneficiaries, though not all services will be insurance billable, so the system will need to comply with all necessary State/Federal security/privacy regulations and allow providers to measure and evaluate with ease all appointments completed. The hired vendor will be asked to provide key technical and functional requirements, described below, that address a myriad of use cases including a) pre-scheduled, synchronous video visits; b) synchronous video visits and/or messaging to foster intra- and inter-agency consultation between clinics/providers; and c) immediate (not pre-scheduled) synchronous video or audio visits between patients and provider(s).

Technical Requirements
- The platform must allow HIPAA-compliant video/audio communications between care team members (i.e. clinical and social service providers) and a client/patient who may be located anywhere throughout NYC, including clinical locations and non-clinical office locations. Clients may also be completing visits in the community or from home where high-speed internet may be limited.

Solution must meet Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and American Telemedicine Association (ATA) standards for video quality and bandwidth.
- The system must have a strong track record for high-reliability (high percentage uptime) and high-quality connectivity (minimum of 480p).
- The system must function on computers, tablets and hand-held devices (smart phones) with Windows, Apple (MacOs and iOs) and Google (Chrome and Android) operating systems.
- The system must be able to provide adequate (480p) video over cellular connections.
- The system must have at least rudimentary pan, zoom, and focus capability with a smart phone, tablet and webcam.
- The system should allow for screen capture and screen sharing, if needed.
- The system must be able to adjust to low-bandwidth environments without disrupting connection, as many EngageWell clients utilize phone data for connection and do not have access to a stable Wi-Fi connection.
- The interface should utilize an open API design to support future connections with other systems (care management systems and electronic health records) and seamless exchange of data.

Functional Requirements
- The system must provide HIPAA-compliant technology and allow for scheduled and immediate video visits.
- Ease-of-access and -use are a key priority; platform should not require clients to create and remember usernames and passwords to access the service. One-click access for clients and for staff is ideal.
- The company/vendor must be able to handle a large variety of use-cases, including primary and specialty medical care, behavioral health treatment, psychosocial support, and supportive social services.
- Capacity to create permalinks for providers.
- Capacity to create customized landing pages with agency branding for different agencies across the EngageWell IPA network.
- Built-in data analytics and reporting, including but not limited to: # of telehealth visits scheduled/completed, length of visit, no-show rate calculation, and visit type.
- Allow for audio-only and text chat between the client and the provider.
- Capacity to send text and email notifications or reminders to the client/patient.
- Ability to provide real-time chat support for clients and providers as technological issues arise.

Proposal/Qualifications Format
Please limit responses to eight (8), single-spaced pages. In your response to this RFQ, please address the following topics/questions:

Section I: Candidate Profile and Professional Experience
- Identify key staff/account executive(s) to lead the project, including a summary of experience, number of people available, number of hours per week available, and relevant qualifications.
- Provide an overview of your company, including number of years in business; your ownership structure; financial model overview; special populations served; and relevant certifications held.
- Provide 3 references for current clients that are the most similar in size and complexity to EngageWell. Experience with non-profit, community-based, health and human service organizations serving Medicaid populations highly encouraged.

- Please highlight experience implementing telehealth services for agencies/companies serving low-income clients with limited literacy and technological experience.

Section II: Technical Capabilities and Services
Feel free to provide screenshots when relevant/helpful.
- Provide an overview of your telehealth solution's key capabilities and notable features.
- Describe your system architecture and the general application framework. Is your platform hosted in the cloud or on premise? If on premise, include documentation on your data center(s) and how you ensure redundancy in your platform.
- Describe the provider's and user's video visit experience. Note any technical requirements or special equipment or connectivity.
- List all operating systems that are supported by software, including mobile operating systems.
- Describe specific ways that the software is intuitive to use and otherwise user friendly for non-technical users, who also may have limited English and/or health literacy. Describe the contextual aids and other resources available to users throughout the application.
- Describe capacity for clients/patients to see, complete, and sign provider health forms (i.e. psychosocial assessments) and consent forms prior to and during the visit.
- Describe your company's EHR integration capabilities and standards. Describe your EHR integration process and list previous EHR integrations.
- Describe your business continuity and disaster recovery capability and backup procedures.
- Is your platform accessible for non-English speaking patients? If yes, list other languages. Is tech-support offered in these languages as well?
- Describe reporting and data analytics built into your platform, including but not limited to: # of telehealth visits scheduled/completed, length of visit, no-show rate calculation, # of visits per unique client, client satisfaction, and client time saved.
- Highlight any special features or enhancements planned for the next 12 months.

Section III: Implementation and Maintenance
- Describe your proposed approach/methodology in achieving the project scope over the next three years. Include a high-level, project workplan and timeline, including role/responsibilities of key implementation team members for the first 12 months of the project.
- Discuss your agency's capacity to start work within 30 business days of start of intervention.
- Describe how you support customers before and after the platform launches at their site (e.g., day-to-day support for end-users, report generation, adjusting configurations, first-tier troubleshooting, etc.).
- Describe customer's resources/infrastructure required for implementing your telehealth solution. How much time will be required of the provider and customer tech team members during implementation?
- What type of user training – patient, care team member, agency IT departments – is provided with the software platform? Is additional training available (and at what cost, if any)?
- Have there been any third-party studies of the effectiveness of your telehealth solutions? Have there been any third-party studies of the ROI your customers can expect from implementing your solution?
- Is there any data or other evidence that use of your telehealth services reduces unnecessary use of emergency/inpatient care and/or improves ambulatory visit show-rates?
- Describe your capacity to address issues in real time.

Section IV: Fees
- Please present a cost estimate/justification for each stage of proposed work, including but not limited to: (a) licensing/software tiers and associated fees (i.e. annual vs month-to-month), (b) training costs, (c) implementation and maintenance fees, (d) any other one-time or recurring costs, and (e) EHR integration or special customization costs. **Please note any discounts available to 501c(3) nonprofits.**
    - Estimated number of agencies who will need agency-specific platform implementation and training: 3-16
    - Estimated number of telehealth licenses to be used by all agencies across the network, per year: 150-300
    - If prices change depending on number of agencies to onboard and number of licenses, please provide pricing for all scenarios

Proposals will be evaluated by a committee of EngageWell's participating health care providers based on the following factors:

Evaluation Metric	Description	Weight
Prior Experience, including past performance	Includes the Proposer's experience and history providing the requested scope of work for complex health organizations or networks with different types of service providers, similar to EngageWell.	10%
Reliability of Service	Includes Proposer's ability to meet technical and functional requirements per Section II. Other factors to be evaluated include Business Associate Agreement (BAA) requirements, hardware and software capabilities/options, speed of technology (startup and while in conference), reliability, server status, backup plans, and technical support.	30%
Project Management Plan	Includes Proposer's implementation methodology and team for a phased implementation. Other factors to be evaluated include Proposer's future roadmap of technological and logistical improvements, as well as their ability to adapt to future needs, performance management, and technological changes.	20%
Cost	Includes itemized cost and overall cost to EngageWell for the scope of work outlined in this. This is a 3-year intervention, so if costs vary by year, or if services require re-valuation after Year 1, please note this in your proposal.	40%

Vendor Selection Process
Within two weeks after the 28-day public posting period, EngageWell may invite vendors to answer clarifying questions in 1:1 presentations. EngageWell anticipates all vendors will be selected within 60 days of RFP posting date. Selected vendor costs will be included in EngageWell's final budget submission to the FCC Connected Care Pilot Program. FCC is expected to make Award Commitments in Fall 2022; EngageWell anticipates executing a contract with all selected vendors on or before 9/30/2022.

Contracts will be executed with 3-year contract terms, likely October 2022-September 2025.

EngageWell Contact

Please submit proposals the USAC website. You can reach out to Christopher Joseph, Executive Director, christopher@engagewellipa.com, with specific questions to this RFP. Due to high-volume of questions, please be patient for a response.

EngageWell's FCC-Approved Health Care Provider Sites (HCPs)

Approved HCP	HCP Identifier	Approved HCP	HCP Identifier
Acacia – La Casa De Salud Health Center	99558	BOOM!Health	82713
Acacia – Ramon Velez Health Center	110116	Diaspora Health Home	109111
Acacia – La Casa de Salud D&TC (966 Prospect Ave)	110112	FSNNY Broadway	83974
ACQC 161st Street	85172	FSNNY Brownsville	83966
ACQC Central Ave	85179	FSNNY Bushwick	83954
ACQC Jamaica Ave	85187	FSNNY St Albans	83961
ACQC Woodside Ave	85183	GMHC	82339
Alliance CASA	82319	Harlem United SEP Lenox	82987
Alliance Keith Haring	83531	Harlem United W 124	82762
Alliance LES	83558	Harlem United W 133	82787
Alliance Midtown	83566	Housing Works 2640 Pitkin	83261
Alliance Pelham	83582	Housing Works 57 Willoughby + SEP	83264
Argus 156 Street/Melrose	82454	Housing Works E 9th Street	83263
Argus 160 Street	84145	Housing Works W 37th Street	83266
Argus ARU W 145th Street	83259	NADAP Health Home	106195
BAC Broadway	82565	NYHRE	82492
BAC Church Ave	82895	SACHR	82169
Bailey House	82316	WHCP	82531