



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

Request for Proposals: Wireless Broadband Connectivity (minutes/data plans)

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 **wireless phone plans** (minutes + data) for health care providers and their patients. The phone connection services will be used for virtual, outpatient medical visits and/or behavioral health treatment, as well as a broad array of other qualifying health or psychosocial services, including medical nutrition therapy, medical transportation assistance, medication adherence support, harm reduction counseling, home/community-based services, medical case management, and more. The hired vendor will be asked to meet key broadband wireless requirements, described below, to allow for high-quality, video- and audio-based connected care services across the five boroughs of New York City.

Requirements

- Provide minimum of 4G wireless phone data connections that can maintain adequate video (480p) across New York City greater metropolitan area.
- Able to set up an estimated ~300 unlimited wireless phone plans within 3 months of project initiation and maintain data connection plans for 3+ years.
- Provide customer service as needed to all phone plan recipients, with experience working with low-income New Yorkers and others with limited technological literacy.
- As patients enroll and dis-enroll in the project, vendor must have capacity to cancel and add phone lines throughout the 3-year project period.
- For clients with an existing smart phone, vendor must be able to assist with transferring the phone number if the client has a different carrier.

Proposal/Qualifications Format

Please limit responses to no more than five (5), single-spaced pages. In your response to this RFP, 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 and relevant qualifications.
- Provide an overview of your company, including number of years in business; your ownership structure; financial model overview; experience serving low-income and other populations with low literacy and technological literacy; and relevant certifications held.
- Provide two (2) references for current non-profit clients similar to the EngageWell IPA or other health care partners benefiting from your services.

Section II: Technical Capabilities and Services

- Please provide a map showing your service connectivity across the five boroughs of New York City: Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, and Staten Island.
- Describe your customer service support for phone plan recipients. How do you support customers who have low technological literacy? What languages are available for customer service? Where is your customer service team based and when are they available? What are the methods for contacting customer service? What is the timeline for hearing back from customer service?
- Do you provide smart phone hardware with unlimited wireless connection plans? If not, how do you work with clients to set up phone connections with their existing smartphone? Do clients need to change their phone numbers and/or phone to use your data plan?

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 6 months of the project.
- If a phone line needs to be cancelled or the payment needs to be transferred to an individual client, please describe the processes for cancellation and payment transfer.
- If an additional phone line needs to be added during the timeline of the project, please describe the process and timeline for adding additional lines.
- Discuss your agency's capacity to start work within 30 business days of selection.

Section IV: Fees

Please present a cost estimate/justification for each stage of proposed work, including but not limited to: (a) unlimited data phone connection plans for 180-550 clients and healthcare providers across NYC; include annual and month-to-month plan rates and separate taxes and fees; if prices vary depending on the number of connections, please provide all cost estimates; (b) customer service needs for individuals

receiving phone data plans; (c) one-time initiation fees; (d) phone hardware costs, if not included in data connection plans. **Please note any discounts available to 501c(3) nonprofits.**

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.

Executed Service Agreements will request 3-year Contract Terms, October 2022-September 2025.

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 diverse networks of non-profit, community-based health and human service providers, similar to EngageWell. Clearly demonstrated experience and success implementing wireless broadband services for low-income communities (i.e. FCC’s Lifeline Program).	15%
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, reliability, technical support, and inclusion of hardware with wireless plans/ability to operationalize phone lines with existing client phones with ease for the client.	25%
Project Management Plan	Includes Proposer’s implementation methodology and team for a phased implementation – clear milestones in the first 30-60-90 days post contract execution is highly appreciated.	20%
Cost	Includes itemized cost and overall cost to EngageWell for the scope of work outlined in this RFP. 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%

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