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

**Request for Qualifications:** Medication Adherence Digital Health Tool

**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 37 health care providers (HCPs) in its consortium, four (4) are currently seeking a new medication adhrence platform in this RFP. See those four (4) entities listed in the chart at the bottom of this document. 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 **Medication Adherence Digital Health/Remote Patient Monitoring Tool (Synchronous, Asynchronous or Store-and-Forward).** The application/program will be used by patients enrolled in outpatient, community-based primary medical and behavioral health treatment programs, including psychosocial rehabilitation programs with prescribing medical providers. The goal will be to increase client health through medication adherence and to reduce unnecessary ER and inpatient visits associated with low medication adherence. The hired vendor will be asked to provide key technical and functional requirements, described below.

**Technical Requirements**
- The application/program must be HIPAA-compliant.
- The application/program must function anywhere throughout New York City's five boroughs.
- The application/program 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 application/program must be able to function using cellular data, without relying on high connectivity Wi-Fi.

**Functional Requirements**

- The application/program should incorporate cognitive behavioral methodologies (i.e. positive reinforcement) or other evidence-based motivational and self-management techniques to increase long-term adherence beyond the use of the application.
- Ease-of-access and -use by patients are key priorities; one-click access for clients and for staff is ideal.
- Prioritize ease of use for clients with low health and technological literacy.
- The vendor should be able to share regular data on client adherence rates and other patient interactions to the patient's health care providers.
- The application/program should have built-in reminders and other outreach protocol to augment the core adherence functionality to assist with uptake for clients who need it.

### *Proposal/Qualifications Format*

Please limit responses to five (5), 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 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.
- Highlight experience with low-income and/or aging populations and patients with co-morbid medical and behavioral health conditions.
- Provide 3 references for current clients that are the most similar in size and complexity to EngageWell.

### Section II: Technical Capabilities and Services

- Provide an overview of your medication adherence 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 user's application/program 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 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?
- Highlight any features or enhancements planned for the next 12 months.

- Describe how cognitive behavioral and/or self-management methodologies are incorporated into your solution (i.e. client incentives, health education, reminders/notifications, wrap around services to support the program).
- List the data reporting capabilities provided through the application and by your team of data analysts.
- Describe any provider alerts and client report workflows to keep care teams/health care providers abreast of client medication adherence.

### Section III: Implementation, Maintenance, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation

- 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 program launch (estimated Q2 2022).
- Describe how you support customers after go-live (e.g., day-to-day support for end-users, report generation, adjusting configurations, first-tier troubleshooting, etc.).
- What type of user training – patient, care team member, agency IT departments – is provided with the application/program? Is additional training available (and at what cost, if any)?
- Described your preferred methodology for testing and implementing your intervention(s) – do you have a minimum enrollment? Do you prefer rolling admissions, or do you prefer a set intervention period for each cohort of patients?
- Provide an overview of steps taken with clients and their provider teams to improve adherence when there is low uptake.
- Briefly describe your evaluation strategies and data analysis capacities. How do you measure success of your product?
- Have there been any third-party studies of the effectiveness of your medication adherence solution? 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 services reduces unnecessary use of emergency/inpatient care and/or improves ambulatory visit show-rates?

### Section IV: Fees

Please present a cost estimate/justification for each stage of proposed work, including but not limited to: (a) any one-time enrollment and start up fees; (b) recurring fees and frequency; (c) license fees and cost model or tiers (i.e. annual cost, per client per month costs); (d) costs for add-ons or customizations (i.e. client incentives, electronic assessments) if not bundled into other recurring monthly cost; (e) training costs. Please note any discounts available to 501c(3) nonprofits.

If costs differ depending on number of patients/clients served, please list all costs for the range of 100-1000 patients/clients. Our estimated number of clients served in year 1 is 300 and is subject to change based on pricing and funds available.

**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, ease of use, reliable technical support for patients and staff, and inclusion of evidence-based, cognitive behavioral and self-management methodologies. | 30% |
| Project Management Plan | Includes Proposer's implementation methodology and team for a phased implementation. Other factors to be evaluated include Proposer's data to support efficacy of application/program, and ease of implementation. | 20% |
| Cost | Includes the affordability of the Per Client Per Month (or annual) Rate and the total cost to EngageWell consortium for the scope of work outlined in this RFP. Please unbundle technology and non-technology costs. | 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 Summer 2023; EngageWell anticipates executing a contract with all selected vendors on or before 7/1/2023.

**Executed Service Agreements will have multi-year contract terms (auto-renewals), likely July 2023-Deceber 2025, for a total term of 24 (min)-36 (max) months.**

## *Submission Process & Questions*

Please submit proposals to Christopher Joseph, Executive Director, christopher@engagewellipa.com. Questions related to this RFP can also be sent to Mr. Joseph. Due to high-volume of questions, please be patient for a response.

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

| HCP Number | HCP Name | HCP Address |
|---|---|---|
| 75008 | Metropolitan Center for Mental Health (MCMH) | 160 W 86TH ST, NEW YORK, NY 10024 |
| 82563 | Bleuler Psychotherapy Center (BPC) | 10470 QUEENS BLVD, STE 200, FOREST HILLS, NY 11375 |
| 62103 | SUNY Downstate Medical Center | 450 Clarkson Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11203 |
| 115437 | Elmcor Outpatient Behavioral Health | 107-20 Northern Blvd, Corona, NY 11368-1236 |