

**RFP 120142**  
**Questions and Answers**  
**January 6, 2014**

*Questions that were identical or very similar in content were consolidated. Questions that were not relevant to the core proposal were not considered. Questions that could be answered by information readily accessible within the RFP were not considered. Questions that involved subject matter outside the core scope of services were not considered. Where the response “TBD” is given, that shall mean “to be determined at a later date.”*

- 1) **Q:** On pg. 29 and pg. 31 of the RFP, the length of the Executive Summary is indicated to be 2 or 3 pages – can the state confirm the desired page limit for this element of the proposal?  
**A:** The Executive Summary should be no more than two pages. Please refer to page 29.
  
- 2) **Q:** Does the State expect respondents to use their Labor Rate Template, as provided on page 37 of the RFP, or may respondents create their own? The job titles listed in the example did not mirror all job titles for project staff.  
**A:** Use the enclosed format. If need be, modify the job titles.
  
- 3) **Q:** For proposals, the RFP indicates that the “Organizational Capacity” section of the outline should not exceed 10 pages. Should this section include the “Organizational Capacity,” “Relevant Experience and Expertise,” “Responder References,” and “Staffing Plan” sections found under 4.2 Technical Proposal? Or did the state contemplate a different composition of elements for the “Organizational Capacity” section of the proposal?  
**A:** The Organizational Capability Section, which is limited to 10 pages, should include answers to (L) Organizational Capacity on page 33, (M) Relevant Experience and Expertise on pages 33-34, (N) Responder References on page 35, and (O) Staffing Plan on page 35.
  
- 4) **Q:** Will a respondent need to provide references that correspond to the projects detailed in item 1 of Section M, Relevant Experience and Expertise, under the 4.2 Technical Proposal section of the RFP?  
**A:** It is preferable that the references correspond to the projects, but not required.
  
- 5) **Q:** On p. 11, the “Intellectual Property” section states that all operations must be turned over to the state within 60 days of expiration or termination of the contract – can the state confirm that only data and records will be required to be turned over? Or will the turnover process also include equipment, infrastructure, personnel, etc.?  
**A:** Turnover process includes all assets.

- 6) **Q:** Is the cost proposal intended to be a firm fixed price, time and materials, or a combination of the two?  
**A:** Firm fixed price.
- 7) **Q:** Should the cost proposal be prepared using the Cost Proposal Template and Labor Rates Template provided on p. 37 and 38 of the RFP?  
**A:** YES
- 8) **Q:** Will appendices count towards the overall page limit of proposals?  
**A:** Appendices will not count towards the overall page limit.
- 9) **Q:** How will AID evaluate conflicts of interest?  
**A:** HIRRD will carefully follow the “conflicts of interest” guidelines detailed in Cycle III FOA APPENDIX F - Conflict of Interest Requirements (Page # 74 in CFDA 93.511).
- 10) **Q:** The RFP requires the contractor to “comply with Arkansas Act 954 of 1977.” We were unable to locate this legislation on the Arkansas government’s website. Would you please provide a summary or URL that explains the content of Arkansas Act 954 of 1977?  
**A:** RE: Standard Terms and Conditions of State of Arkansas Procurement & Discrimination
- 11) **Q:** The RFP states that one of the goals of the APCD is to measure “qualified health plan quality.” Does HIRRD have specific measures and benchmarks in mind for accomplishing this goal?  
**A:** TBD
- 12) **Q:** The RFP requires the provision of “secure storage separate from other activities, including segregated storage for Medicare Data.” If the Medicare data are intended to be a part of the integrated APCD, what is meant here with regard to "segregated"?  
**A:** The CMS State Agency Medicare data request program allows certain uses of the Medicare files. The Data Manager will serve as a Custodian of the files and furthermore must ensure that all APCD reporting that includes Medicare data is consistent with CMS data use agreements and that original files and extracted information are protected pursuant to the data management plan. Information regarding the State Agency Request Program, including application materials and data use agreements, is available at the following link. <http://www.resdac.org/cms-data/request/state-agency>.

- 13) **Q:** The Milestone Schedule cites Version 2.0 and Version 2.5 reports, which are not defined elsewhere in the RFP. Would you please provide additional detail regarding the types, volume, and delivery mechanism(s) desired for these reports.  
**A:** Later deliverables include provider-specific cost and quality reporting, reporting that provide assistance in choosing high value, high quality care, and website and/or mobile apps to distribute information. The Public Reporting Plan will be based on HIRRD approval.
- 14) **Q:** Would you please provide additional detail regarding which components of the required stakeholder support activities are expected to be completed prior to the completion of the carrier kick-off meeting on July 30, 2014?  
**A:** Bidders should include proposed stakeholder support activities in their proposed plan.
- 15) **Q:** In the Cost Proposal's Task Cost Summary Template, what information should be supplied in the Year 3 column if the contract period is for 18 months only?  
**A:** Bidders should only complete the Year 1 and Year 2 columns in the template provided
- 16) **Q:** "In the case of a joint proposal" – must both parties in the joint proposal meet the requirements of a Data Center as defined in Section 1.4?  
**A:** YES
- 17) **Q:** What is meant by 'turn over the complete operation', e.g. does HIRRD own vendor 'code'?  
**A:** All HIRRD RFP asset ownership, including intellectual property rights and derivatives, will be transferred to the Arkansas Insurance Department on or before the completion date of the RFP.
- 18) **Q:** Would HIRRD own vendor code in the event of contract termination? Does this mean that solution code/tools cannot be proprietary to the vendor?  
**A:** YES, YES
- 19) **Q:** Is the intent for the control of the complete operation to reside with the governance board?  
**A:** HIRRD will have total oversight control (as funder) until January 15, 2015. After that date, the Governance Board will have total authority, including but not limited to, approval of strategies, reports, data rules, work plans, agendas, operational budgets, and expenditures. The Governor will appoint the eleven members of the APCD Governance Board.
- 20) **Q:** Should our binder tabs reflect those in section 3.7.C or something else?  
**A:** Use 3.7.C

- 21) **Q:** If an organization uses other funding outside those available through this RFP to develop the APCD for other agencies' needs, how does this expenditure affect the ownership of the intellectual property?  
**A:** All intellectual property ownership rights, or derivatives thereof, resulting from development of this RFP, will reside with the Arkansas Insurance Department.
- 22) **Q:** Since HIRRD would own the APCD records and data, if the sustainability plan includes contributions from other state agencies, for example, and HIRRD does not want to continue to provide funding, what is the process to maintain the APCD with current contractor to continue these operations?  
**A:** HIRRD assumes that sufficient and ongoing funding will be available to the APCD Governance Board to continue APCD operations following the completion of this RFP.
- 23) **Q:** How will the proposed APCD solution in this RFP support the current or planned Rate Review process? How will it support or interact iRATE?  
**A:** Transparency is the most important objective facing the funder and the Contractor. Rate Review, iRATE, the Exchange (Arkansas Health Connector), as well as other stakeholders, will be subset organizations utilizing data and analyses relevant to their tasks.
- 24) **Q:** Is there an anticipated role for ACHI's Health Data Initiative? If so, what role?  
**A:** The role of other data initiatives will be determined by the APCD Governance Board.
- 25) **Q:** Is there an anticipated role for the Advanced Health Information Network? If so, what role?  
**A:** See Response to Question #24 above.
- 26) **Q:** What should be included in an operational data warehouse?  
**A:** The requirements for the operational database warehouse are set out at Section 3.1 Page 17.
- 27) **Q:** This May 2014 date referenced is not in alignment with the Milestone Schedule on page 28. When must the APCD be operational?  
**A:** As stated, the Data Warehouse is to be operational by June 15, 2014.
- 28) **Q:** Will the APCD be limited to Arkansas residents only?  
**A:** YES
- 29) **Q:** Is there a minimum number of participating carriers required for year 1?  
**A:** YES

- 30) **Q:** Which 6 commercial carriers will be included?  
**A:** At a minimum, the three largest commercial carriers in the individual and the three largest in the small group market.
- 31) **Q:** How much historical data is expected initially (September 2014), with the understanding that a minimum of 3 years must be kept in the data warehouse in future years?  
**A:** Three years
- 32) **Q:** Does the contractor have to be a CMS Qualified Entity?  
**A:** The successful respondent must agree to work toward becoming a CMS Qualified Entity.
- 33) **Q:** When will stakeholders be appointed, if at all?  
**A:** Within sixty days or less of contract award
- 34) **Q:** Are these individuals identified in this section different from the stakeholders from 3.3.A.1?  
**A:** NO
- 35) **Q:** Can the contractor submit a different governance structure with the same responsibilities?  
**A:** NO
- 36) **Q:** How much data is expected on a voluntary basis?  
**A:** TBD
- 37) **Q:** When will the mandate for data provision be in place? Under what authority will the mandate originate? Will there be any expectation that the contractor will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the mandated data submission requirements?  
**A:** These issues should be addressed as part of the RFP response. As stated in the RFP at §3.1, p 17, “The contractor shall develop a multi-phase APCD data collection plan that establishes a methodology and framework for collecting data during both *voluntary and a mandatory data collection authority.*” Emphasis added.
- 38) **Q:** Are the quarterly reports ongoing or for the implementation period only?  
**A:** Ongoing
- 39) **Q:** Will data feeds from the designated carriers be monthly, quarterly, or annual?  
**A:** TBD
- 40) **Q:** Is a specific data submission standard required, e.g. ACS X12 837N PACDR, NCPDP, other?  
**A:** TBD

- 41) **Q:** Different entities define individuals using different identifying requirements. Does the SHARE unique person identifier meet AID and HIRRD requirements? If not, when will it need to be amended to meet these requirements?  
**A:** The successful respondent will be required to collaborate with SHARE to meet AID and HIRRD requirements.
- 42) **Q:** What sources (other than claims data) will provide provider pricing, if any?  
**A:** Since this requirement is part of the voluntary data submission, the sources have yet to be determined (see p.19, 3.3.B.3.b.i).
- 43) **Q:** There will be more individuals with claims data than are present in SHARE. Should SHARE still generate the ID even though no clinical data exists? Or, is the expectation that the SHARE identification processes be replicated in the solution?  
**A:** See response to Question #42
- 44) **Q:** Will any data be from capitated plans, and therefore considered “encounters” without any charge or payment amounts?  
**A:** TBD
- 45) **Q:** If projects require IRB, will HIRRD own that process?  
**A:** The HIRRD does not anticipate an IRB requirement, but will manage this process if required.
- 46) **Q:** Must insurance as required in Section 4.2 E be provided, included automobile liability insurance when no vehicles are owned by the organization?  
**A:** YES
- 47) **Q:** Does this prohibit use by external researchers with interest in other areas than those related to Rate Review and the Arkansas health insurance?  
**A:** TBD
- 48) **Q:** Based on the answer to Question #41, how long will it take HIRRD to review and approve?  
**A:** An answer to this question is not necessary to respond to the RFP. HIRRD anticipates these issues being addressed by the APCD Advisory and Governance Board.
- 49) **Q:** What is meant by ‘other activities’?  
**A:** The Data Center must create a secure data intake and production environment that does not commingle APCD data with other data in the Data Center's possession, unless specifically authorized by HIRRD.

- 50) **Q:** Why does Medicare data need to be segregated?  
**A:** It is HIRRD's understanding that this is a CMS requirement.
- 51) **Q:** Is billing or service provider required?  
**A:** Provider level data should be considered by the respondent for future data models.
- 52) **Q:** Does cost in this context mean charges or paid amount?  
**A:** Both charges and paid amounts should be addressed.
- 53) **Q:** What is the definition of charge? Price?  
**A:** See response to Question #52
- 54) **Q:** What types of data fields are required for price and cost?  
**A:** See response to Question #52
- 55) **Q:** Who would provide the requirements for these reports? Does this presume that the respondent will develop these requirements?  
**A:** The successful respondent should provide deliverables that adhere to APCD industry standards for these reports.
- 56) **Q:** Does this methodology have to reside with the contracted solution or can the data be sent to SHARE for id assignment?  
**A:** See response to Question #42
- 57) **Q:** Which grouping software is required?  
**A:** As stated in the RFP, the successful respondent will identify an industry standard tool or methodology for grouping patients. During the contract development, the grouping software used will be determined by the HIRRD and the successful respondent.
- 58) **Q:** Does it have to align with existing carriers and/or the Arkansas Payment Improvement Initiative?  
**A:** See response to Question 42. The grouping software selected will be determined by the parties with consideration given to alignment with other carriers and initiatives.
- 59) **Q:** Is integration with SHARE required the first year? Second year?  
**A:** The successful respondent is expected to collaborate and integrate with SHARE during the first phase of the contract.

60) **Q:** How will the collected fees be used?

**A:** An answer to this question is not necessary to respond to the RFP. HIRRD anticipates that the Governance Board will evaluate those issues.

61) **Q:** When must the website be operational?

**A:** TBD

62) **Q:** What data/reports must be available on the website?

**A:** TBD

63) **Q:** The data model cannot be completed for the RFP process. Is a conceptual data model acceptable since final data sources and variables will not be known until the project begins?

**A:** See p. 31-32, 4.2 (l)

64) **Q:** How does the requirement for the Responder to share resources comport with HIRRD ownership described in Section 1.19?

**A:** Sharing data resources cannot occur until the project is operational and contains useable data and analysis. HIRRD will set the initial parameters, but the final data and resource rules will be set by the Governance Board.

65) **Q:** Does HIRRD see the APCD solution supporting other state agencies' need for data for evaluation purposes?

**A:** YES

66) **Q:** Does HIRRD foresee any additional funding being available for developing the APCD to meet the needs of other state agencies' that fall outside the rate review needs covered in the Cycle III funding?

**A:** YES

67) **Q:** Please define the following: "The Arkansas APCD must be operational by May 2014." What is meant by operational? What functions are required to be functional as of May 2014?

**A:** "Operational" shall mean a fully functioning enterprise with adequate assets, expertise, and presence; having demonstrated the ability to accomplish the stated goals and objectives and delivering measurable results within the specified timelines.

"Functions" shall include, but not be limited to:

- The database being able to accept test data from submitters
- An APCD Data Submission Guide has been created
- The Data Center is providing ongoing data warehousing, security, and reports
- The Contractor will have developed a multi-phase APCD data collection plan