

FHIO Florida Health Information Organization

February 25, 2010

Thomas W. Arnold, Secretary
Agency for Health Care Administration
2727 Mahan Dr.
Tallahassee, FL 32803

Dear Secretary Arnold:

Pursuant to your request for communication from qualified parties, the *Florida Health Information Organization* wishes to register its interest in submitting a proposal to obtain the grant or contract to implement a state-level electronic health information exchange service in Florida, as part of the proposed Cooperative Agreement funded under HITECH provisions of the Recovery Act of 2009.

The Florida Health Information Organization ("FHIO") is a voluntary, nonprofit corporation whose members represent key stakeholders and entities engaged in delivery of health care services and operation of health information exchange networks serving providers, patients, agencies, and businesses in Florida. FHIO was created to serve as a statewide resource for stakeholders with mutual interest in establishing an integrated statewide HIE system to improve health care delivery, quality and outcomes throughout the State of Florida.

As the Florida grantee or contractor, FHIO will work collaboratively with AHCA, the HIECC, the Department of Health, and all Florida stakeholders to create a statewide health information organization known as the FHIN (Florida Health Information Network). The FHIN will build on and coordinate with Florida's existing HIE infrastructure, consistent with federal and state requirements, to enable high levels of information exchange and meaningful use of HIT by physicians, hospitals, clinics, and eligible providers. We will build a valuable, trusted and sustainable service that enables secure exchange of patient health information between and among authorized care providers. We will oversee technical design and implementation of the FHIN, manage its day-to-day operations, ensure its security, integrity and reliability as an information resource, and make reports to AHCA, the Governor, and the Legislature on FHIN activities. FHIO will bring strong business management, information technology and health care expertise, and a high level of accountability and transparency in its operation of the network. Utilizing available grant funds and other resources, we expect to build a sustainable HIE enterprise for Florida's future.

FHIO is prepared to address key objectives identified in the State HIE Plan, namely:

- Build state-level infrastructure and service capabilities for health information exchange
- Offer secure and reliable HIE services as identified and prioritized by stakeholders
- Offer connectivity with a variety of certified EHR systems used by Florida providers
- Enable prompt and reliable delivery of electronic health records to authorized clinicians
- Negotiate special rates and services from HIT vendors for Florida health care providers
- Facilitate affordable access to HIT broadband connections for rural health care providers

- Facilitate linkage of electronic patient health records with clinical decision support tools
- Enable bi-directional exchange of patient data during transitions in care
- Assist providers in meeting criteria for all stages of Meaningful Use of health IT
- Support use of health IT to manage costs through efficiency and eliminating redundancy
- Facilitate use of state/regional data to enhance public health activity and population health
- Enable HIE interoperability outside Florida through the NHIN and other resources.

We have reviewed the preliminary criteria and expectations for this grant/contract and expect to respond to the formal request for applications when it is issued. We are in the midst of reviewing organizational policies and structures, and will provide a full listing of our members, board of directors, and executive leadership as part of the application process.

Sincerely,

Christine Isham

Christine Isham
Designated Agent and Acting Director

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