

NYS Physician Profile RFP (No. FAU 0903231208)

Questions and Answers - Technical

Question 1: Where in the Technical Proposal outline should bidders include their response to Attachment 5, NYSDOH Security Requirements?

Answer: Bidders should complete Attachment 5 and include it as part of the Technical Proposal.

Question 2: “The successor contractor shall assume responsibility, without interruption of service to physicians, consumers and other users, for the maintenance and development of forms, manuals, procedures and documentation for all current operations.” Is any outage during weekends or non-business hours acceptable?

Answer: We realize that from time to time there may be outages necessary for maintenance and/or update activities, however, the contractor must receive prior approval of any planned downtimes and the downtimes should be on weekend and/or off hours.

Question 3: Please detail the “computer hardware necessary to support profile processing functions” that is not provide by the State and must be proposed by bidders?

Answer: Bidders must determine the computer hardware necessary to host the Physician Profile websites, based on the requirements described in the RFP and system documentation.

File Transfer

Question 4: How will we be notified of newly licensed and registered physicians? Is this a file transfer from the state? If so, what is the file format?

Answer: Contractor will receive periodic updates electronically from the Department.

Question 5: Are the monthly updates from AMA and AOA provided via hard copy or electronic with the ability for automated updating?

Answer: The monthly updates are electronic.

Question 6: “Updates to Physician Profile data were received and process daily...” How are the updates to the Physician data processed? Is it a manual or automatic process?

Answer: Updates are both manual and automatic.

Question 7: What user profile information must be collected and reported to the Department?

Answer: Please refer to Section, Detailed Specification starting on page 15 of the RFP and Attachment 18, the Initial Profile Survey.

Question 8: Periodic updates to the central repository databases were made from independent sources....” What are the independent sources of profile information? Is the data transmitted electronically or sent in hard copy form?

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Answer: Please refer to Section C, Detailed Specifications starting on page 15 of the RFP.

Question 9: “All other information necessary for pre-populating the Initial Profile Surveys will be provided by “The Department.” Is the data provided electronically? Is so, please provide the specifications of the data provided.

Answer: The data is provided electronically and the data sources are provided in the Documentation Library.

Question 10: “The contractor must maintain the capability for physicians to update required information electronically as well as by hard copy....” Are there existing procedures to ensure the sync between the hard copy and electronic copy updates?

Answer: Our experience indicates, when a physician, updates his or her profile electronically they do not submit a hard copy with the same changes.

Question 11: Are the monthly updates provided by the Department complete refreshes of the file or only data elements that have been updated/changed?

Answer: The updated files provided by the Department only refresh the data elements that have changes or updated information.

Question 12: What is the approximate size of the Department produced field?

Answer: Information available regarding the Department produced field is contained in the Documentation Library.

Verification

Question 13: Are the data entry and verification applications part of the turnover applications?

Answer: Yes.

Question 14: Can we obtain a copy of the data verification protocols developed by the Department?

Answer: These protocols change from time to time and are confidential. They will be turned over to the successor contractor during the Takeover Period. It is important to note, that the RFP requires the contractor to conduct approximately 4, 000 to 6,000 inquiries annually to NPDB and HIPDB, please refer to page 16 of the RFP.

Question 15: What is the process for resolving reporting discrepancies with the Data Banks (e.g. Does the Contractor notify the Data Bank directly that a discrepancy exists, or does the Contractor direct this information through the Department)?

Answer: While it is a rare occurrence, if a discrepancy is noted by the Contractor, the Contractor must notify the appropriate data bank and the physician.

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Bandwidth

Question 16: Are there any bandwidth measurements available from the current contract?

Answer: Please see Section C, Detailed Specifications, page 25.

Question 17: Current Internet Bandwidth?

Answer: Please see response to question 16.

Licenses

Question 18: Do the computer programs provided to the contractor by the State (e.g. Oracle) include any licenses that may be required?

Answer: To the extent that license are required and transferrable, they will be.

Question 19: “The Contractor will become a designated agent of the Department for the purpose of accessing the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) and Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank (HIPDB).” What is the process for becoming a designated agent of the Department?

Answer: The Contractor must submit an application to the data banks.

Question 20: Can a list of specific software applications that will be turned over be provided for clarity? Does the list of software include Oracle licenses, reporting software and sever operating software?

Answer: Descriptions of the software utilized that are available is part of the Documentation Library.

Question 21: Please provide a list of all software licenses currently in use.

Answer: Please see answer in question 18.

Disaster Recovery

Question 22: Please provide a copy of the network architecture and current Disaster Recovery Plan. The Physician Profile Documentation Library does not contain this information.

Answer: Please see Section C, Detailed Specifications, page 22 of the RFP.

Question 23: May we have a copy of the current Disaster Recovery Plan?

Answer: Please see Section C, Detailed Specifications, page 22 of the RFP.

Question 24: Is this application to be hosed in multiple locations for Disaster Recovery purposes? If so, are all of the host sites required to be within the State of New York?

Answer: Please see Section C, Detailed Specifications, page 22 of the RFP.

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Question 25: “The successor Contractor will be responsible for developing a Disaster Plan, presented as part of the proposal, into a fully functional and documented arrangement during the takeover process.” Are we correct to assume the proposal version of the Disaster Plan describes at a high-level how the system will back-up if there is a complete system failure. If not, please provide more detail of your expectation.

Answer: The Disaster Recovery Plan should include as many details as possible which describe the techniques and processes that will be used to ensure system availability and business continuity.

Applications

Question 26: Is there any technical documentation available for the current system, which includes the technical environment for development; tools used for developing this application; and the reporting tools?

Answer: The technical documentation available is included in the Documentation Library

Question 27: “The contractor will house the database server, web server and physician profile application...” Please provide the detailed documentation for the hardware and software requirements for these components. The Physician Profile Documentation Library does not contain this information.

Answer: Bidders must determine the computer hardware and software necessary to host the Physician Profile websites, based on the requirements described in the RFP.

Question 28: Application Server?

Answer: Please see response the question 27.

Question 29: Client Application?

Answer: Please see response the question 27.

Question 30: What version of Oracle database is used?

Answer: Please see response the question 27.

Question 31: What programming languages have been used to develop this application? Will Source Code be provided?

Answer: Source Code will be provided during the Takeover Period.

Web Application

Question 32: “Both the Initial Physician Profile Survey and self-reporting Web Application were pre-tested...” What is the mechanism in place for pre-testing this data? Are there any software tools available for this testing or is it manual?

Answer: Bidders should include in their Technical Proposal mechanisms that they would utilize for pre-testing this data.

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Question 33: How many database links to the Physician Profile web site exist today? Please provide the specific database names, content and source. How large are the existing databases?

Answer: Available descriptions are included in the Documentation Library.

Question 34: “The contractor must make changes to the public web site as approved and requested by DOH...” Does DOH have Application DOH have Application Change Management software in place for changes to the web site? If yes, please provide the details of software being used.

Answer: Under the direction of the Department Project Manager, the contractor is responsible for all application development, including change management.

Question 35: “The contractor must maintain the capability of the public web site to handle up to 25,000 visitors...” Does DOH use any load testing software for making sure the optimal performance of the web site? If yes, please provide the details of the software being used.

Answer: Under the direction of the Department Project Manager, the contractor is responsible for load testing the application.

Question 36: Are there any availability requirements for the public web site or the physicians’ self-update site?

Answer: The self-reporting site and the public website must always be available.

Question 37: What is the average daily number of hits on the consumer web site? Is the current performance of the web site satisfactory?

Answer: To date the Physician Profile experienced over 6,000,000 visits to the website. The current performance is satisfactory.

Question 38: Web Server?

Answer: Please see response the question 27.

Databases

Question 39: Page 17, Section 2.a states that the contractor is responsible for maintaining the Provider Profile Database and this section implies that there are actually two databases. Please clarify which entity is responsible for maintaining these databases and the activities associated with both.

Answer: The contractor is responsible for maintaining all databases associated with Physician Profile project.

Question 40: Is it required to locate the center for maintaining and updating the database within the State of New York?

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Answer: Centers for maintaining and updating the databases must be within the United States. Off-shore application or database hosting, application development, or maintenance is NOT permitted.

Question 41: Database? Number of concurrent users?

Answer: This information will be provided during the Takeover Period.

Question 42: Is it required to house the Web Server, Database Server and the Physician Profile Application within the State of New York?

Answer: Centers for maintaining and updating the databases must be within the United States. Off-shore application or database hosting, application development, or maintenance is NOT permitted.

Question 43: How many warehouse tables need to be maintained? Please provide specific table size and content.

Answer: Available information is in the Documentation Library

Question 44: How many GBs of storage is currently being utilized and what if any is the projected growth?

Answer: This information will be provided during the Takeover Period.

MBE/WBE

Question 45: Please provide a list of MBE/WBE contractors being utilized by the current contractor.

Answer: Bidders should complete Attachment 10, M/WBE Forms.

Question 46: Please indicate if the MBE/WBE Utilization plan should be included in the technical proposal, the financial proposal, or separately sealed

Answer: The Utilization Plan should be part of the Financial Proposal.

Question 47: Please indicate how the MBE/WBE utilization impacts the scoring of the proposal.

Answer: This is not scored or weighted; it is a pass/fail. Although this not scored, the Department works to achieve minority owned business enterprise (MBE) goals.

T1 Lines

Question 48: Will the existing T1 line be transferred to the new contractor?

Answer: Accommodations will be made to ensure access to the T1 line.

Question 49: “Log files sent over an existing T1 line” Are we to assume this is a dedicated point-to-point data line from the contractors site to the Department of Health?

Answer: Yes

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Question 50: What are the two endpoints of the existing T1 line? How will costs associated with moving/connecting the line to the successful Contractor be handled?

Answer: The Department will work the successor contractor during the Takeover period for T1 line connection.

Tracking System

Question 51: Is there a defect tracking system (DFS) in place for the existing system? A history of the defects, their nature and resolution helps in retaining or enhancing the value of existing systems, procedures and operating practices. The data history of the various problems reported by physicians and consumers of the public website, call center and their resolutions are also requested.

Answer: This information is contained as part of the Call Center log and will be made available to the successor contractor during the Takeover period.

Question 52: Will the call center issue tracking system and associated data from the system be made available to the successor contractor? What software tools are used for generating these reports?

Answer: Yes, during the Takeover Period, the successor contractor will have access to information from the Call Center log. The Department receives monthly call center reports in an Excel format.

Equipment

Question 53: Equipment backup must be tested for compatibility and capacity, with any identified shortcomings corrected.” Will there be an annual test for this purpose?

Answer: It is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure compatibility and capacity and identify and correct shortcomings.

Question 54: Does the equipment provided to the Contractor include the DB Server, Web Server, and Server running the Physician profile application? Does the equipment include copiers, printers or PCs?

Answer: All hardware and/or computer related equipment for hosting the application and meeting the requirements of the RFP must be provided by the contractor.

Security

Question 55: Can bidders have the requirements specifications of the current system? This is necessary to understand the current system for cost/effort estimation of the enhancements.

Answer: All requirements of the current system are provided in the RFP and in the technical documentation made available in the Documentation Library.

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Question 56: Is any additional hardware or software used for access control?

Answer: This information will be provided to the successor contractor during the Takeover period.

Question 57: “Data systems hosted within NYSDOH networks and made available to external entities must utilize the NYSDOH’s existing account systems for at least primary authentication unless explicitly approved by NYSDOH CISO. Data systems to be hosted outside the NYSDOH’s networks are encouraged to use these systems as well, however, vendor proposals must include plans to secure the inter-network communications and ensure security of this configuration.” Does the current system utilize NYSDOH’s existing account systems? If so, is the Bidder expected to maintain existing procedures for securing inter-network communications?

Answer: The current application uses NYSDOH’s HCS account system for authentication, however, the bidder may implement any process which is in-line with the requirements stated in the RFP. This will include using the HCS account system, but may be managed in a way different than the existing system, up to the vendor to propose.

Question 58: “Bidder needs to describe their proposed security testing procedures and include contractor’s responsibilities for security testing in their security plan. Contractors working with systems on NYSDON-managed networks are encouraged to use the source code analysis and application security scanning tools managed by the NYSDOH CISO, but may specify alternatives. Alternatives must be approved by NYSDOH CISO.” Are there existing security testing policies/procedures in place with the existing application that are expected to continue or is it the Bidder’s responsibility to identify these policies?

Answer: The security policy and procedures were included in the security section(s) of the RFP.

Question 59: What is used to connect existing system with the internet (Firewall/Routers/etc.)?

Answer: This information will be provided during the Takeover Period.

Question 60: Please provide more information about current application specifically around:

- Current Technology in use for web application, database, security
- Infrastructure in use including servers, monitoring
- Number of staff currently supporting developers, help desk.

Answer: Available information is in the Documentation Library. Please see answer to question to 128 in the Question and Answers – Program.

Question 61: “An acceptable security plan is mandatory and the bidder’s security plan will be scored.” Section D. Proposal Requirement and Format does not provide instructions for a Security Plan, yet this section states it is mandatory and will be scored. Please provide instruction for where in the proposal the Plan should be included.

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Answer: Bidder's should complete the security spreadsheet including as much detail as possible.

Question 62: Is there any VPN or secure access allowed by existing vendor? If so, how is this being done and what are the security devices in place?

Answer: This information will be provided during the Takeover Period.

Question 63: Is encryption required for data at rest?

Answer: It is the responsibility of the contractor to safeguard the security and integrity of confidential information, but not limited to, medical malpractice data.

Question 64: "If software other than the current software is used, it must be modified to meet Profile requirements, fully tested and proven to the State's satisfactions to provide adequate support to assume completions of all required functions." Are the detailed Profile requirements available? The Physician Profile Documentation Library does not contain this information.

Answer: All requirements of the current system are provided in the RFP and in the technical documentation made available in the Documentation Library.

Question 66: Do the current web sites meet the NYS Accessibility requirements? If they do not will the new contractor be required to meet the requirements after Takeover is completed? Will NYSDOH issue a change order for this requirement?

Answer: A successor contractor will be responsible for ensuring that all of the NYS Accessibility requirements are met. There will be no change order to meet this requirement.

Infrastructure

Question 66: We understand NYSDOH will be responsible for HW/Infrastructure, software licenses, operating system, data base support, disaster recovery, high availability, backup/restore for non-production, production environments during all aspects of the project. Is our understanding correct?

Answer: No. The contractor is responsible for these aspects of the project.

Question 67: If not, are we to assume that the new vendor is expected to procure a brand new hardware infrastructure and software licenses and implement the existing application on this new platform?

Answer: All hardware for hosting the application and meeting the requirements of the RFP must be provided by the contractor.

Enhancements

Question 68: Does NYSDOH IT already have development process/methodology with development tools (for e.g., version control) in place?

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Answer: The contractor is responsible for all application development processes and tools.

Question 69: Are all enhancements needed to be implemented in a phased approach or all in a single phase? Is there any timelines for Systems Enhancements?

Answer: Enhancements are to be implemented in a manner that meets the needs and requirements of the Department of Health. All timelines known at this time are published in the RFP.

Additional Questions

Question 70: What is the current technology/code used for the existing system?

Answer: The available technical information in the Documentation Library.

Question 71: Can you share with us the current security infrastructure the existing contractor is using?

Answer: This information will be provided during the Takeover Period.

Question 72: Should we respond to sections in the security requirements that references “networks” we don’t intend to use on this project?

Answer: Please see response to question 61.

Question 73: In the RFP, it has been mentioned that the internal DOH system will be used for physician authentication. How will consumers be authenticated?

Answer: The consumer website is a public site.