

Request for Proposal – Learning Collaborative to Strengthen Revenue Generation for Organizations in the Maternal/Infant Health Space

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PURPOSE

First Year Cleveland (FYC), in partnership with the Woodruff and Bruening foundations, is seeking to identify and engage a consultant to convene and facilitate a learning collaborative of three to five community-based organizations (CBOs) addressing maternal/infant physical and mental health to help them optimize their revenue from reimbursement (from Medicaid and other payers) and enhance their sustainability. FYC, whose mission is to address racial disparities in maternal and infant health in Cuyahoga County, will convene the learning collaborative, and CBOs invited to participate will be specifically those working to address the disparate health outcomes for Black and Brown women and infants, as compared to their White counterparts. The engagement will involve several group convenings as well as individualized technical support for each participating organization.

SITUATION

Cuyahoga County has one of the highest infant and maternal mortality rates in the country for Black women and babies. In 2022, the infant mortality rate for Black babies in Cuyahoga County was 15.4 per 1,000 live births, compared to 6.9 per 1,000 for White babies, and Black women in Cuyahoga County face two to three times the risk of maternal mortality when compared to their White counterparts. In addition, while one in 10 women suffer from postpartum depression, in the U.S., 44% of Black mothers experience postpartum depressive symptoms, compared to 33% of White mothers. Some factors that contribute to these higher rates include systemic racism in healthcare, lack of equitable access to resources and conditions necessary to thrive, and lack of fair and just treatment of Black communities.

Several CBOs have been formed over the past 5-10 years to address these stark racial disparities in Black maternal and infant health outcomes. These organizations have been coordinated and funded by the backbone entity, First Year Cleveland (FYC, formed in 2015), with dollars provided by the Ohio Department of Medicaid as well as private philanthropy. Collectively, these organizations provide a spectrum of services to Black pregnant and post-partum women, including prenatal care, postnatal primary care, doula services, peer support and mental health care.

While these organizations were initially provided with start-up support from Ohio Department of Medicaid (passed through by FYC), the Ohio Department of Health and others, they have faced a steep learning curve in optimizing their operations to be able to capture meaningful levels of reimbursement from Medicaid and other payers. In several cases, actual reimbursement amounts captured by these organizations have been far below what was initially projected. Some services, such as the doula services, will be billable to Medicaid in Ohio for the first time in 2025.

The purpose of this request for proposal (RFP) is to engage a consultant to convene a learning collaborative of three to five of these newer Black-led, primarily Black-serving organizations in the infant and maternal health space and provide each with customized technical support to be able to optimize the revenue they are capturing from reimbursement. The consultant will assist the organizations in learning the tasks, building the infrastructure, and acquiring the resources necessary to become more self-sustaining. While each participating CBO will likely have differing needs, we expect the scope of the project to include staffing needs, workflow design, coding, provider credentialing/paneling, productivity requirements needed for sustainability, and forecasting and realistic budgeting for philanthropic requests, among other skills needed to capture available revenue. FYC hopes this project will enhance the sustainability of these organizations over the long-term and reduce their dependence on less reliable government grant funding, particularly as administrations turn over.

SCOPE

1. Create a forum for peer-learning focused on organizational sustainability for a cohort of up to 5 CBOs working in the maternal/infant health space.
 - Facilitate at least 3 convenings with the CBOs. The first will entail didactic presentations about issues related to revenue generation, while the second two will entail knowledge sharing among organizations as well as didactic instruction.
2. Provide CBOs working in the maternal/infant health space with tailored consulting support to enhance their operations and improve their internal processes to optimize their revenue from reimbursement.
 - Conduct an individualized assessment of each organization in concert with the leadership and staff of each participating CBO. The assessment should include (but is not limited to) an examination of staffing levels, revenue capture, workflow/processes, billing/coding procedures, technical systems, claims submission/appeal protocols, documentation protocols, etc.
3. Assist CBOs with identifying the resources (technical, staff, board, or other) each needs to optimize their revenue capture and strengthen their long-term sustainability.
 - Work with the leadership and staff of each CBO to identify areas for optimization and develop an implementation plan aimed at capturing as much possible revenue from payers.
 - Provide a detailed implementation plan customized to the needs of each organization,
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of the learning collaborative.
 - Survey participants on their perceptions on the effectiveness of the engagement in enhancing their organizational sustainability and produce a final report on the outcomes of the project, summarizing key points of learning and cross-cohort themes.

TIMELINE

We anticipate learning collaborative to take place over a period of approximately 6-9 months, but this timeframe may be adjusted after the consultant completes the individualized

assessment phase, as some CBOs may need more intensive support over a longer period of time than others.

PROPOSAL, SUBMISSION AND DEADLINES

FYC will consider proposals from independent consultants, consulting firms and nonprofit organizations that provide research/consulting services. FYC also welcomes collaborative proposals from teams of sole practitioners that wish to partner for the purposes of this engagement.

A complete proposal should address the following:

- A statement of consultant experience and qualifications
- Past demonstrated experience in managing projects of a similar purpose and scope
- Experience working with with diverse organizations with varying levels of experience and expertise
- Who will be involved in providing consulting services and their scope of involvement and experience if not specified above
- Familiarity with Medicaid revenue cycle optimization and workflow design for maternal and infant physical and behavioral health care
- A clear and accurate cost proposal
- A brief description of similar/relevant past consulting work conducted by the consultant(s)
- Contact information for three past clients or individuals the consultant has worked with in a previous professional capacity

In addition to a proposal and budget, applicants will be asked to submit a supplier form, an ACH enrollment form, and an underrepresented minority filing (if applicable) to make any future payment more efficient. The link below includes both the supplier information form and ACH application:

<https://case.edu/procurement/sites/default/files/2024-05/SIF%20FORM%20ACH%20FORM%20SUB%20W9%20FORM%20RVMay2024.pdf>

Minority and marginalized vendors can inquire as to qualification for expedited payment here: <https://case.edu/procurement/diversity-sustainability/get-started-diversity-vendor>

Complete proposals should be submitted on or before **February 24, 2025**, by email to Angela Newman-White at axn656@case.edu