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GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor

DATE: November 18, 2022

TO: California Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)

FROM: Robert Schechter, MD  
Branch Chief  
Immunization Branch

SUBJECT: Request for Application to assess and improve adult immunization levels in Community Health Centers: Funding for July 2022- June 2023 up to \$127,000; Applications Due 12/23/22

**GRANT AGREEMENT FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT/RELEASE**

Adult immunization levels are low nationwide and in California, and disparities exist with respect to race/ethnicity, income level, and insurance coverage. Recent data suggests there are gaps in adult rates for flu, shingles, tetanus, and pneumococcal vaccines. ([Routine Vaccinations: Adult Rates Vary by Vaccine Type and Other Factors | U.S. GAO](#)). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is urging providers to maintain routine immunization services for adults. Efforts to improve adult vaccinations could include expanding the number of vaccines offered, raising public and provider awareness, partnering with organizations to encourage vaccination and offering free routine vaccines to certain adults. Maintaining adult immunization rates can prevent infectious disease outbreaks and also prevent long-term illness, hospitalization, and even death from vaccine-preventable diseases.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Immunization Branch has been awarded a supplemental grant to assess and improve adult immunization rates in Community Health Centers (CHCs). CDPH is seeking a large Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) to assess immunization levels and implement quality improvement activities to strengthen immunization practices in an identified adult patient population. FQHCs will select a vaccination to focus on and will identify a specific adult patient population of focus based on local priorities with accompanying justification. Staff from the CDPH immunization branch will provide support and technical assistance to the selected grantee.

The grant term is 7/01/2022 (or upon approval) to 6/30/2023.

CDPH has authority to grant funds for the Project under Health and Safety Code, Section 120440 (C): to compile and disseminate statistical information of immunization status on groups of patients or clients or populations in California, without identifying information for these patients or clients included in these groups or populations.



### **RELATED CALIFORNIA STATUTES**

- Under Health and Safety Code Section HSC 131085 (a) (2), (5) and (b) (4), the department may perform any of the following activities relating to the protection, preservation, and advancement of public health and award grants for the performance of the activity.
- Health and Safety Code, Section 120440 (K)(2), which permits collection of immunization data from all ages including adults.

**FUNDING AMOUNT** for the FQHC for the duration of the grant will not exceed \$127,000

### **REQUEST FOR APPLICATION SPECIFICATIONS**

#### **Section 1: Eligibility**

FQHCs and FQHC look-alikes must meet all the following criteria to be eligible to apply:

1. Nonprofit status
2. Operating in California, included in the list at <https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov> and with more than 50,000 total patients based on 2021 Uniform Data System National Health Center Data. <https://bphc.hrsa.gov/uds/datacenter.aspx>
3. Can identify a Quality Improvement (QI) lead for the project with expertise and responsibility for clinical QI
4. Has the ability to pull data across clinic locations
5. Uses an electronic health record (EHR) that is uploading via data exchange to the California Immunization Registry (CAIR)
6. Have a mechanism to accept a 1 year CDPH grant for financial support of IT/QI staff

A minimum score for grant awardee will be at least 85 points out of a total 100 points.

#### **Section 2: Types of Activities to be Funded**

The FQHCs must use funds to:

1. Fund a QI staff person (new or existing) to assess baseline immunization levels in an identified population of adult CHC patients and implement immunization quality improvement activities in the identified adult patient population. The baseline assessment will incorporate data from the California Immunization Registry (CAIR), as provided by CDPH, to include immunizations not given on site. Select at least one of the following vaccines to focus on:
  - ☐ Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B or combined Hepatitis A/Hepatitis B
  - ☐ Pneumococcal vaccine
  - ☐ Tdap
  - ☐ Shingles
  - ☐ COVID-19
  - ☐ Influenza (if selected, the focus should be co-administration with COVID-19)

Examples of an adult patient population include homeless adults, older adults or adults with underlying medical conditions. Projects should focus on vaccination efforts of a specific

- population and ensuring that the population is up-to-date on recommended vaccines, particularly ones with recent changes to the immunization schedule in the past year.
2. Work with CDPH to identify key adult immunization practices (such as immunization workflows, referral procedures, etc.) in clinics.
  3. Work with CDPH to discuss, document, and share “lessons learned”.

### Section 3: Review Team and Selection Criteria

CDPH will establish a panel consisting of experienced public health professionals to review and rank applications. The final decision on awards and the amount to be awarded will be made by the CDPH Immunization Branch, in consultation with the corresponding local health department and the California Primary Care Association. The panel will use the following criteria to score the applications, in accordance with the point assignments in the table below:

- Clear identification of an adult patient population and selection of a vaccine or vaccines including justification for selections.
- Clear, appropriate plans for implementing quality improvement activities.
- Realistic budget to accomplish project objectives.
- High probability that the project will be successful in achieving its goals.

### Section 4: RFA Instructions and Point Allocation for Application Scoring

In no more than 4 single-spaced pages, please include criteria below:

Criterion	Max. points
1. Attest to meeting all criteria in Section 1	Pass/Fail
2. Identify a vaccination of focus and an adult patient population; justify selections	15
3. Explain how your FQHC will conduct activities listed in Section 2	50
4. Discuss existing resources that can support implementation of QI activities	15
5. Provide budget spreadsheet	20
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>100</b>

### APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND DEADLINES:

Application must be submitted and received via email by the CDPH Immunization Branch by **5:00 PM on Friday, December 23, 2022**. Email your application to: [Robina.Escalada@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Robina.Escalada@cdph.ca.gov), telephone number (510) 620-3729. A completed application must include: 1) Narrative response, including evidence of nonprofit status and 2) budget.

State contracting regulations require grantors be paid in arrears for activities undertaken. Typically, a grant or submitting an invoice at the end of each 3-month quarter receives payment during the following quarter. Those applying for funds shall clearly understand this will be the method of reimbursement from CDPH.

Please direct written questions regarding the application process to [Brittany.Quy@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Brittany.Quy@cdph.ca.gov) by December 16, 2022, 5:00 p.m.

RFA Release Date:	November 18, 2022
Last Day to Submit Written Questions:	December 16, 2022, 5 P.M. PT
Application Due Date:	December 23, 2022, 5 P.M. PT
Notice of Intent to Award:	January 6, 2023
Grant Start Date:	July 1, 2022 or Upon Approval
Grant End Date:	June 30, 2023

#### **GRANT AWARD APPEAL PROCEDURES**

An applicant who has submitted an application and was not funded may file an appeal with CDPH Immunization Branch. Appeals must state the reason, law, rule, regulation, or practice that the applicant believes has been improperly applied in regard to the evaluation or selection process. There is no appeal process for applications that are submitted late or are incomplete. Appeals shall be limited to the following grounds:

1. The CDPH Immunization Branch failed to correctly apply the application review process, the format requirements or evaluating the applications as specified in the RFA.
2. The CDPH Immunization Branch failed to follow the methods for evaluating and scoring the applications as specified in the RFA.

Appeals must be sent by email to [Noemi.Marin@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:Noemi.Marin@cdph.ca.gov) and received within five (5) business days from the date you received notification that your grant application was denied. The CDPH Immunization Branch Chief, or her designee, will then come to a decision based on the written appeal letter. The decision of the CDPH Immunization Branch Chief, or the Chief's designee, shall be the final remedy. Appellants will be notified by email with 15 days of the consideration of the written appeal letter. CDPH Immunization Branch reserves the right to award the agreement when it believes all appeals have been resolved, withdrawn, or responded to the satisfaction of the Immunization Branch.