



Elevating *The Safety Net*

*An L.A. Care Health Plan Initiative to
Strengthen the Provider Safety Net in L.A. County*

Provider Recruitment Program FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Please review the Request for Applications (RFA) for more details



**ELEVATING
HEALTHCARE**
IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SINCE 1997



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Program Overview and Contracted Provider Eligibility

The purpose of the Provider Recruitment Program (PRP) is to increase health care access for low-income populations in Los Angeles County by providing grant funds to recruit primary care providers who are new to L.A. Care Health Plan's (L.A. Care) Medi-Cal network. The program is open to entities contracted with L.A. Care, including independent private practices. The program is designed to recruit five (5) types of disciplines practicing in primary care settings, including: (1) pediatricians, (2) OB/GYNs, (3) family and (4) internal medicine physicians, and (5) psychiatrists.¹

Request for Applications (RFA) document

1 How do I apply?

The application submission process is outlined in the RFA. All applicants must submit electronic application materials as described in the RFA, Section VIII: APPLICATION SUBMISSION. If you would like to apply for a PRP grant, please request the *Grant Application, Budget Template* and *W-9 form* by sending an email to both CommunityBenefits@lacare.org **AND** RLewis@lacare.org. Once you have completed the application materials, please email the application, one-page budget, and other required documents to CommunityBenefits@lacare.org as instructed.

2 When is the deadline to apply?

Each grant cycle has its own specific application deadline. Please see the deadlines indicated in the RFA for the cycle under which you are applying.

3 Do I need to identify a provider prior to applying?

If you are hiring one provider, then the provider must start employment no later than the date identified in the RFA and the application for the cycle under which you are applying. If you are hiring two providers, then at least one of the providers must start employment no later than the date identified in the RFA and the application for the cycle under which you are applying.

¹ Eligible providers must be an employee of the contracted entity in L.A. Care's Medi-Cal network and must be practicing in a primary care setting.

4 If I hired a provider prior to submitting my application, am I eligible for funds?

Yes, applicants qualify for funds if hiring occurred as early as four (4) months prior to the cycle application deadline, in addition to meeting all other eligibility criteria. The specific hiring timeframe is specified in the RFA and grant application for the cycle under which you are applying.

5 What if I hire more than one (1) provider during a given application cycle?

Applicants are limited to two (2) providers per funding cycle. However, applicants may not apply for more than three (3) providers across the three (3) funding cycles in L.A. Care's FY 2020-2021, which starts October 1, 2020 and ends September 30, 2021. **Please note that grant funds to cover two physicians in any given cycle will not be distributed until BOTH physicians have started employment with your organization.**

6 If we are seeking to hire two (2) providers in a given cycle, do we need to submit one application per provider?

No, applicants must submit one (1) application to cover up to two (2) providers. For example, if there are two (2) full-time providers (32 hours per week), the applicant may apply for up to \$250,000. For example, if there is one (1) full-time provider (32 hours per week) and one (1) part-time provider (16 hours per week), the applicant may apply for up to \$187,500.

7 Can I apply and get an award every cycle?

You may only apply if you have met all the requirements of the previous cycles, including hiring a provider under a PRP grant awarded under a previous cycle. The provider hired under the previous cycle must still be employed with the applicant. For all previous PRP grantees, if any hired provider under a previous PRP grant has left your practice, the provider must have been replaced with another provider that serves the same number of hours as the departed provider. The applicant is eligible to apply for another grant once the departed provider has been replaced with another provider that serves the same number of hours. Additionally, no more than three providers will be funded for one entity in a single fiscal year. Please refer to the RFA, Section III: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA for details.

8 Can I use these funds to hire a part-time provider?

Yes. However, the provider must be responsible for at least 16 hours of direct patient care per week. The full award amount of \$125,000 is only available if provider is responsible for at least 32 hours of direct patient care. Funds will be prorated based on direct patient care hours.

9 Can I use these funds to cover an independently contracted physician?

No, PRP funds are to be used solely for physicians that are employed by the hiring entity and receive a salary and benefits from the clinic or private practice.

10 Can my clinic/practice hire any other type of provider beyond the five (5) prioritized in the RFA and application?

No, PRP funds are to be used solely for hiring any one of the five (5) provider types specified in the RFA and application.

11 Is an applicant eligible to apply if it wants to replace a physician that recently left its practice?

Yes, an applicant that wants to apply for PRP funds to replace a physician is eligible to apply. However, applicants that are seeking to create a new position will receive priority consideration over applicants that are seeking to replace a physician. Applicants seeking to hire physicians for new positions will be placed in a Tier A category. Applicants seeking to replace a physician will be placed in a Tier B category. L.A. Care considers a new position to be one that does not exist at the time your application is submitted. If you are intending to hire a physician to replace a provider that has left your practice, this is **NOT** considered a new position.

12 Should we apply and be awarded a PRP grant, is our practice obligated to hire the Provider Type indicated in the application and place the Provider in the clinic site indicated in the application as well?

Given the competitive nature of PRP grantmaking, information indicated in the applications is a critical component of L.A. Care staff's decision making related to grant awards. Grant awardees are expected to hire physicians in a manner that is consistent with the funding request. Applicants can identify up to three different provider types it plans to hire, giving clinics more options when hiring. The rationale for identifying provider types should be explained in question #15 in the grant application. Although there is a choice of up to three provider types, grantees will be obligated to place the hired provider type in the specific placement site(s) indicated in the application. L.A. Care may make exceptions based on specific circumstances but there should be no expectation of exceptions to be granted.

13 Would a psychiatrist employed by a medical group be eligible for PRP funding?

No, the psychiatrist must be an employee of a contracted entity in L.A. Care's Medi-Cal network. Only psychiatrists employed in primary care settings are eligible for PRP funding.

14 Are funds available to hire mid-levels and specialists?

The only specialists funded under PRP at this time are psychiatrists employed in primary care settings. Otherwise, no other specialists nor mid-levels are eligible for PRP funding.

15 Do Doctors of Osteopathy (DO) qualify for this program?

Yes. However, DO's must also meet all other criteria listed in RFA, Section III Eligibility Criteria.

16 Will all applicants receive an award?

This is a competitive process and a number of factors will be considered, such as need and the ability of the contracted entity to support future patient growth. Therefore, not all applicants may receive an award. For more details, refer to the RFA, Section IV: COMPETITIVE PROPOSALS.

17 How and when will applicants be notified of official awards?

Upon review of all applications, L.A. Care will notify applicants of official awards via email within ten (10) weeks from the cycle deadline.

18 If awarded, how soon can I expect to receive funds?

If awarded, a grant agreement will be drafted once a provider has started employment with the grantee. Formal documentation that substantiates terms of the provider's employment must be provided to L.A. Care from the grantee. Once an executed grant agreement is signed by all parties, 50% of funds will be disbursed within 30 days thereafter. The remaining 50% will be disbursed when the provider meets one of two conditions: (a) internal verification by L.A. Care that the physician(s) has been fully credentialed by L.A. Care or (b) the hired physician(s) has provided at least six months of cumulative service as substantiated by formal documentation.

19 What happens if the hired provider does not complete at least 36 months of service?

The contracted entity is required to replace the provider within 36 months from the start date of the grant period to fulfill the remaining service requirement. Should the provider leave before completing the required 36 months of continuous service, the contracted entity is obligated to notify L.A. Care of this disruption within 15 calendar days from the provider's last date of employment. Written notice should be sent via email to RLewis@lacare.org with a cc: to CommunityBenefits@lacare.org. Should the contracted entity fail to notify L.A. Care of the provider's departure within this timeframe, L.A. Care reserves the right to withhold further payments and to not consider contracted entity for future PRP grant opportunities. No further grant awards will be provided until the provider has been replaced.

20 How can I get more information about PRP grants and the application process?

We strongly recommend you to join at least one of the informational calls offered during the application cycle. Please refer to the RFA Section VII: INFORMATIONAL CONFERENCE CALLS for dates, times and instructions. For more information, you may also visit our website www.lacare.org/elevateproviders.

21 Can IPAs submit an application?

No. Only contracted entities such as FQHCs, FQHC Look-A-Likes, Licensed 501c3 clinics, and independent practice providers that directly hire providers and provide direct clinical services are eligible to apply for this program.

22 How do I know if I am in good standing with L.A. Care?

Good standing will be determined based on your performance and history with L.A. Care. Various factors will be considered in assessing performance history including, but not limited to: timeliness and accuracy of progress reporting related to any other previous or current L.A. Care grants, most recent Pay 4 Performance (P4P) rating, HEDIS scores, etc.

23 Can I also refer a provider to apply for the Physician Loan Repayment funds?

Yes, we highly encourage individual providers who meet program criteria to apply for Physician Loan Repayment Program funds. For more information, please refer to the RFA, Section VI Physician Loan Repayment Program or visit: www.lacare.org/elevateproviders.

Application document

24 I have “x” amount of sites/locations within my practice/clinic. Can the hired provider practice at multiple sites?

Yes, and when calculating the hours of direct patient care for the application, the hours should be cumulative across sites. Please keep in mind providers are not allowed to practice at more than four (4) sites, per L.A. Care policy.

25 In the questions regarding patient population for Section II: APPLICANT PATIENT DATA (questions #1 - #5) and Section III: PROVIDER PROFILE INFORMATION (questions #9 - #11) of the application, do you want to know the total patient population of my entire practice/clinic network or just the sites locations where the provider will practice?

Yes, all sites contracted under L.A. Care Health Plan’s Medi-Cal network.

26 My practice doesn’t have a mission statement for Section IV: STATEMENT OF NEED (question #16). How should I answer this question?

Focus on evidence of your practice’s commitment to serve Medi-Cal and/or uninsured populations.

Budget document

27 Can I use all of the funds for the provider’s salary and benefits?

Yes, you may use the entire award for the provider’s salary and benefits. The total award amount will still be prorated based on the hours of direct patient care given, using 32 hours of direct patient care as a baseline to receive 100% of the award amount. The total of the proposed salary and benefits must be at minimum more than 50% of the requested grant funds.

28 **Is there a percentage cap for the benefit calculation**

There is no cap for the benefits calculation.

29 **Do you allow indirect costs?**

We do not permit indirect costs for this RFA.

30 **Can we add the costs of a recruitment firm to the budget?**

Recruitment firms are not an allowable cost.