

Responses to RFP # 12-007-02, Title X Family Planning Services

1. In providing information about pregnancy termination, is it sufficient to have the referral information available in writing? *No.*

Pregnant women should be offered information and counseling regarding their pregnancies. Those requesting information on options for the management of an unintended pregnancy are to be given non-directive counseling on the following alternative courses of action and referral upon request:

- a. Prenatal care and delivery*
 - b. Infant care, foster care or adoption*
 - c. Pregnancy termination (Staff in family planning clinics counseling a client with a positive pregnancy test have a responsibility to provide information on all options but not to direct the client in reaching a decision. Staff persons are not permitted to make appointments for an abortion or provide transportation to abortion services.)*
2. If the information about pregnancy termination is provided, is the contractor allowed to indicate in writing (NOT coerce) – on the referral sheet or in the office- that
 - a. it does not provide that service because of its beliefs. No*
 - b. or, is the contractor never allowed to indicate its position or why it does not offer the service? No.*

Face-to face counseling must be available at the time the pregnancy test results are given. Pregnant women should be offered information and counseling regarding their pregnancies. Those requesting information on options for the management of an unintended pregnancy are to be given non-directive counseling about all alternative courses of action and referral upon request. Family Planning programs are responsible for assuring that all staff persons who provide pregnancy options counseling including registered nurse, nurse practitioners, nurses, and counselors, have the skills and knowledge ability to help the woman identify her feelings and examine the advantages and disadvantages of each of the alternatives so that she can make an informed decision. The beliefs/position of the Contractor about pregnancy termination should not be a part of this process.

3. On page 11, Section F, the RFP states that “a list of current and former clients with a similar profile to Shelby County” would be helpful. In the interests of confidentiality, is it sufficient to offer numbers of clients without identifying information?

It is not necessary to provide individual names or other client specific identifying information in this response. A Client Profile should be a formal summary or analysis of aggregate data describing distinctive characteristics of the contractor's clients such as race/ethnicity, age, income level, education and other pertinent socio-demographic information. Client Profiles should not include names of clients or any other type of personally identifying information.

4. Can you provide a link to a complete description of the TN STD program?

The web address for the CDC STD guidelines is www.cdc.gov/mmwr

5. On page 14, #47, please define "flexible" hours of operation.

Evening and Saturday clinic hours that enhance client access to Family Planning program services will be considered as flexible hours of operation by the Shelby County Government's Family Planning Program.

6. On page 14, #52, please describe the Shelby County Government's Family Planning Program Schedule for meetings and conference calls.

Family Planning meetings will be scheduled at least once a month. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed. Prior notice will be given for all scheduled meetings and conference calls.

7. Is there a page limit for the proposal narrative or attachments?

There is no page limit stated in the RFP for the proposal narrative or attachments.

8. What is the minimum contract amount?

Cannot provide.

9. What is the maximum contract amount?

Cannot provide.

10. What is the total Title X budget for Shelby County for the period 10/1/2011 – 6/30/2012?

Total Title X allocation to Shelby County for FY'12 is \$1,345,000.

11. Does the Shelby County Health Department plan to continue to provide Title X services? If yes, what services will be provided at which locations? This information will allow our agency to make a proposal that minimizes duplication with services provided by the Health Department.

Request is being made for proposals to award a contract(s) to vendors of comprehensive family planning services to serve family planning clients in one or more clinic sites located in Shelby County, Tennessee. The purpose of this RFP is to expand access points for Title X Family Planning Family Planning services to low income persons in Shelby County. At a minimum, the Shelby County Health Department will continue to provide comprehensive Title X Family Planning services at the following 5 clinics, Cawthon, Hickory Hill, Millington, Shelby Crossing, and the University of Memphis.

12. For services provided to qualified uninsured clients, is it permissible to supplement Title X payment for services with other non-governmental funds? This question refers to both covered and non-covered services.

Unable to respond in that the meaning of the question is unclear.

13. **P.12, paragraph 5:** If a contraceptive method is not provided on site by a provider because of the provider's ethical beliefs, can the provider refer the client to another Title X provider who offers this method? If so, does the referring provider have to pay for the service?

The Tennessee Department of Health Family Planning Program policy states that the content of the various types of family planning visits shall be guided by federal requirements as stated in the Program Guidelines for Project Grants for Family Planning Services, January 2001. All clinics must offer a broad range of acceptable and effective medically approved family planning methods and services either on-site or by referral (Exhibit 1 of RFP, Page 20).

The Contractor cannot choose to not provide a contraceptive method because of their ethical beliefs. According to T.C.A. 68-34-104(3): "Nothing in this chapter shall inhibit a physician from refusing to furnish any contraceptive procedures, supplies or information where such refusal is for medical reasons." The Contractor will be required to provide all of the contraceptive methods as those currently being provided at Shelby County Health Department Family Planning clinics. These methods are as follows:

Emergency Contraception
IUD
Hormonal Implant
Hormonal Injection
Oral Contraceptives
Hormonal Patch
Vaginal Ring
Diaphragm/Cervical cap
Contraceptive Sponge
Female condom
Spermicidal Methods or Products
Fertility Awareness Method
Abstinence Education
Male condom

14. **P.13, paragraph 20** Requires \$1M/\$3M professional liability insurance. As a federally qualified health center, our agency has “deemed” status under the Federal Tort Claims Act. This coverage is the equivalent of the required coverage but it does not conform to the specified coverage. What information should we submit to demonstrate equivalency? Does FTCA coverage meet the specifications?

The FQHC insurance status is adequate under the FTCA.

15. **P.13, paragraph 33** Requires written plans for patient education that are to be reviewed and approved by the Shelby County Family Planning Office and the Medical Director. Are these to be incorporated into the response to the RFP? What is the process and timeframe for review and approval?

All agencies must have written plans for client education that have been submitted to and approved by Shelby County Government Family Planning Office and approved and signed by the Shelby County Health Department’s Medical Director.

Client education plans do not have to be included in the RFP response. The approval process for education plans will be developed by the Contractor.

16. **Exhibit 4** The form asks for the service area for each service delivery site. Our agency defines its service areas by census tracts. Is census tract information acceptable?

Describing the service area(s) generally by neighborhood or by boundaries is preferable and further defining the service areas by census tracts is acceptable.

17. What is the dollar amount of the contract that Providers are being asked to obligate to?

Cannot provide.

18. Under Required Services (Scope of Work), page 13 mentions that written plans for client education must be submitted to and approved by the Shelby County Health Department’s Medical Director? Who is the County’s Medical Director, to whom are these plans submitted, and what is the timeline for these submissions?

All agencies must have written plans for client education that have been submitted to and approved by Shelby County Government Family Planning Office and approved and signed by the Shelby County Health Department’s Medical Director (RFP, Page 10-11).

Client education plans do not have to be included in the RFP response. The approval process for education plans will be developed by the Contractor.