

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
DIVISION OF
HEALTH PROMOTION AND CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL 58810029

PRIMECARRE Loan Repayment Program

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SECTION 1 -- GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

1.01 Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) 58810029 is to solicit proposals (also called applications for the purpose of this RFP), that will enable the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) to select applicants to receive assistance in repaying medical or health care education loans. The PRIMECARRE (Primary Care Recruitment and Retention Endeavor) Loan Repayment Program was authorized by the Iowa Legislature in 1994 to encourage qualified health care professionals to provide primary care services in designated health professional shortage areas (HPSAs) in Iowa. IDPH seeks to award those applicants who are most likely to provide services to populations in greatest need of care in a manner which distributes assistance fairly and effectively. The award process is NOT based on whether the applicant is the most deserving as a health professional but on whether the applicant is in a position to most effectively meet the needs of Iowans living in health professional shortage areas.

These activities relate to Healthy Iowans 2010, Chapter 1 (Access to Quality Health Services), Goal Statement 1-2.

The PRIMECARRE program exists for the benefit of citizens so that access to health care is made available to underserved populations, including rural and urban underserved populations, and for preservation of the public's health.

1.02 Project Period/Contract Term

The project and contract period is expected to be from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2012. The contract period specified in this Request for Proposal is subject to adjustment due to funding delays at the federal or state level or other unforeseen occurrences. The issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by IDPH to award a contract.

The loan repayment project & contract period will not automatically coincide with the dates covered by the applicant's employment agreement.

1.03 Eligible Applicants and Service Delivery Area

The IDPH, Bureau of Health Care Access, **requires a successful grant applicant to sign a contract obligating the grant recipient to provide primary health care services at a public or non-profit private entity clinical site located in a federally-designated HPSA for a period of two years.** "Public" is defined as a governmental entity, such as a state-run facility or county-run hospital. Employment with any type of corporation or business which operates in a "for-profit" status does not fulfill the service obligation for the PRIMECARRE program. Grants are issued for the contract term only and reviewed therein to ensure proper performance. No applicant will be eligible to receive more than one grant per award cycle.

Health professionals interested in applying for the program must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- ✚ be a citizen of the United States
- ✚ be licensed, registered and board certified in Iowa to practice as one of the following:
(all candidates must be licensed in order to receive PRIMECARRE loan repayment, regardless of the criteria for employment by other state or federal regulations)
 - primary care physician (family medicine, general practice, general internal medicine, general pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, general psychiatry, geriatrics)
 - dentist
 - pediatric dentist
 - dental hygienist
 - physician assistant
 - psychiatrist
 - registered nurse practitioner
 - certified nurse midwife
 - clinical psychologist
 - clinical social worker (LISW only)
 - psychiatric nurse specialist
 - mental health counselor
 - marriage and family therapist
- ✚ provide full-time primary care clinical services in a designated health professional shortage area (HPSA) for a minimum of two years, beginning at the start date of the PRIMECARRE contract (prior service does not fulfill the service obligation). Primary care providers must practice full-time in a primary care HPSA; dental health professionals must practice full-time in a dental HPSA; and mental health professionals must practice full-time in a mental health HPSA. **HPSA status can be obtained at: <http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov>. HPSA must be designated as of April 23, 2010; HPSAs that are “proposed for withdrawal” are not eligible areas for purposes of this program.**

Full-time primary care clinical service is defined as:

- For all health professionals, full-time clinical practice is defined as a minimum of 40 hours per week of patient care at an approved service site, with no more than 8 of those hours per week devoted to practice-related administrative activities. Research and teaching are **not** considered to be “clinical practice.”
- For all health professionals except obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN) physicians, family practice physicians who practice obstetrics on a regular basis, a provider of geriatric services, pediatric dentist, certified nurse midwives, and behavioral and mental health providers, at least 32 of the minimum 40 hours per week must be spent providing direct patient care. These services must be conducted during normally scheduled clinic hours in the ambulatory care setting office(s). The remaining 8 hours must be spent providing direct patient care in the outpatient ambulatory care settings (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, shelters) as directed by the approved practice site(s), or performing practice-related administrative activities.
- For OB/GYN physicians, family practice physicians who practice obstetrics on a regular basis, a provider of geriatric services, pediatric dentists, certified nurse midwives, and behavioral and mental health providers, at least 21 of the minimum 40 hours per week must be spent providing direct primary health services (direct patient counseling for behavioral/mental health providers) in the outpatient ambulatory care setting(s) at the approved practice site(s) during normally scheduled office hours. The remaining 19 hours of the minimum 40 hours per week must be spent providing clinical services to patients in the approved practice site(s), or providing clinical services in alternative settings (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, shelters) as directed by the approved practice

site(s), or performing practice-related administrative activities.

- For all practitioners, practice-related administrative or other non-clinical activities must not exceed 8 hours per week.

- + have qualifying education-related debts. Qualifying education loans are government and commercial loans for actual costs paid for tuition and reasonable educational and living expenses related to the undergraduate or graduate education of the participant leading to a degree in the health profession in which the participant will satisfy his or her State Loan Repayment Program service commitment.
- + certify that the applicant will satisfy any previously incurred obligation for health professional service to the federal, state or local government or other entity prior to July 1, 2010 and will not enter into another obligation for the duration of the PRIMECARRE contract (a health professional cannot serve a National Health Service Corps obligation while serving a PRIMECARRE obligation). **Loan repayment agreements as part of employment contracts are considered an obligation and cannot be entered into while serving a PRIMECARRE obligation.**
- + certify that the applicant is not in breach of a health professional service contract to the federal, state or local government or other entity.
- + certify that health services will not be denied on the basis of a patient's ability to pay for the services or because payment for the services will be through Medicaid/Medicare reimbursement.
- + certify that the charge for services is at the prevailing rate in the area and charge fees on a sliding fee scale.

Loan repayment shall not be granted for a health provider whose license or certification is restricted by a medical regulatory authority of any jurisdiction of the United States or other nations or territories.

Individuals are responsible for securing an employment agreement or contract **prior to** application under this RFP. Preference will be given to applicants who have never received loan repayment assistance prior to this application (refer to scoring criteria section 4.02 for details).

Practice site employment must continue through the entire loan repayment contract period. Failure to maintain employment at the practice site will result in repayment and liquidated damages to the grant recipient; the liquidated damages will be clearly delineated in the contract. Liquidated damages will NOT be pro-rated based on the portion of the employment obligation the recipient has served. The two-year commitment is a MINIMUM commitment for participation in the program. Upon full execution of the contract; *death of the grant recipient is the only permissible basis for canceling the contract.* IDPH cannot cancel the contract in order to allow the grant recipient to participate in the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Program or for any other reason. In the event that employment with the practice site must discontinue, the department will attempt to place the recipient at another qualifying site. This site may not be in the same geographic location as the original practice site. In this instance, the recipient may be required to relocate in order to complete the service obligation. In the event that there is a break in service between the original practice site and the reassigned practice site, the applicant will be required to extend the contract so that a full 24 months of full-time service is performed.

1.04 Available Funds

Grants to primary care professionals for repayment of education loans are provided through Federal State Loan Repayment funds granted through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and public and private match funding from Des Moines University, Iowa Health System, Mercy Medical Center-Des Moines, University of Iowa Health Care, and the State of Iowa. Awards in the competitive process are distributed in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code 641 chapter 176.

IDPH expects to award up to \$200,000 for the contract period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2012. The anticipated maximum award available to eligible applicants for each year of the two-year contract is:

Up to \$30,000 per year for:

Physicians
Psychiatrists
Clinical Psychologists

Up to \$20,000 per year for:

Dentists

Up to \$15,000 per year for:

Physician assistants
Registered nurse practitioners
Certified nurse midwives
Dental hygienists
Clinical social workers (LISW only)
Psychiatric nurse specialists
Mental health counselors
Marriage and family therapists

1.05 Schedule of Events (All times and dates listed are local Iowa time.)

The following dates are set forth for informational purposes. IDPH reserves the right to change them.

RFP Issued	March 15, 2010
Written Questions Due	March 30, 2010
IDPH Responses to Written Questions Issued	April 7, 2010
Proposals Due	April 23, 2010 by 4:00 PM
Issue Notice of Award	May 24, 2010

- A. RFP Issued
March 15, 2010. IDPH will post the RFP on the IDPH Web page under *Grants, Bids and Proposals*: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us>. IDPH will email a notice of availability of the RFP to current program contractors. IDPH will send a copy of an RFP to any person or entity which requests the RFP.

- B. Written Questions Due
March 30, 2010. Written questions and comments related to the terms and conditions of the RFP must be received by Stacey Hewitt by March 30, 2010. Questions or comments must be submitted by electronic mail at shewitt@idph.state.ia.us; or by facsimile at (515) 281-3789; or by mail to Stacey Hewitt, Contract Administrator, Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, 321 East Twelfth Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319 – 0075.
- If the question or comment pertains to a specific section of the RFP, the section and page must be referenced. Oral/verbal questions will not be accepted.
- C. Response to Written Questions Issued
April 7, 2010. IDPH will prepare written responses to all pertinent and properly submitted questions and post the written questions and responses on the IDPH Web page. IDPH's written responses will be considered part of the RFP.
- D. Proposals Due
April 23, 2010. **Proposals must be received by Stacey Hewitt at the address below by 4:00 p.m. (local time) on April 23, 2010.** This mandatory requirement will **not** be subject to waiver as a minor deficiency.

The original plus four (4) copies of the application shall be submitted to:

Stacey Hewitt, Contract Administrator
Iowa Department of Public Health
Lucas State Office Building - 6th Floor
321 East Twelfth Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075

Proposals received by IDPH after the due date and time will be rejected, returned to the applicant, and not reviewed by IDPH.

Electronic mail and faxed copies of the proposal **will not** be accepted. Applicants who choose to mail proposals must allow ample mail delivery time to ensure timely receipt of their proposals by IDPH. Postmarking by the due date will not substitute for actual receipt of the proposal by IDPH. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the proposal is date and time stamped as received by IDPH prior to the deadline.

Any information submitted separately from the proposal will not be considered in the review process.

- E. Release of Names of Applicants
April 28, 2010. The names of all applicants who submitted properly dated and time stamped proposals shall be released to all who have, in writing, requested such notification.

F. Notice of Award

May 24, 2010. The successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified electronically via email from the IDPH Contract Administrator. A letter in PDF format will be emailed to the recipient email addresses listed on the proposal cover page. IDPH is not responsible for delayed receipts of notifications due to misspelled or invalid email addresses the applicant lists on the cover page. Recipients shall accept the provision of a read receipt to IDPH upon opening the email.

G. Contract Negotiations and Execution of the Contract

Following issuance of the notice of award, the successful applicant will receive a contract document. The successful applicant has ten (10) working days from date of receipt in which to negotiate and sign a contract with IDPH. If a contract has not been executed within ten (10) working days, IDPH reserves the right to cancel the award and to begin negotiations with the next highest ranked applicant or other entity deemed appropriate by IDPH. IDPH may, at its sole discretion, extend the time period for negotiations of the contract.

1.06 Inquiries

During the period following release of this RFP and during the period of evaluation, applicants should contact only Stacey Hewitt in the manner provided for in section 1.05(C). Unauthorized contact regarding this RFP with other state employees may result in disqualification. In no case shall verbal communications override written communications. Only written communications are binding on IDPH.

IDPH assumes no responsibility for representations made by its officers or employees prior to the execution of a legal contract, unless such representations are specifically incorporated into the RFP or the contract.

Any verbal information provided by the applicant shall not be considered part of its proposal.

1.07 Amendments to the RFP

IDPH reserves the right to amend the RFP at any time. In the event it becomes necessary to amend, add to, or delete any part of this RFP, a written amendment will be posted on the IDPH Web site. The applicant is advised to check the IDPH Web site periodically for amendments to this RFP.

1.08 Open competition

No attempt shall be made by the applicant to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition.

1.09 Withdrawal of proposals

Proposals may be withdrawn, modified and resubmitted at any time prior to the stated due date and time for the receipt of proposals. An applicant desiring to withdraw its proposal after the submission time shall notify the Contract Administrator in writing.

1.10 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

A. An applicant's submission of a proposal constitutes acceptance of the terms, conditions, criteria and requirements set forth in the RFP and operates as a waiver of any and all objections to the contents of the RFP. By submitting a proposal, an applicant agrees that it will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against IDPH or the state of Iowa based on the terms or conditions of the RFP or the procurement process.

B. IDPH reserves the right to accept or reject any exception taken by an applicant to the terms and conditions of this RFP. Should the successful applicant take exception to the terms and conditions required by IDPH, the successful applicant's exceptions may be rejected and IDPH may elect to terminate negotiations with that applicant. However, IDPH may elect to negotiate with the successful applicant regarding contract terms which do not materially alter the substantive requirements of the RFP or the contents of the applicant's proposal.

1.11 Costs of Proposal Preparation

All costs of preparing the proposal are the sole responsibility of the applicant. IDPH is not responsible for any costs incurred by the applicant which are related to the preparation or delivery of the proposal or any other activities undertaken by the applicant related in any way to this RFP.

1.12 Multiple Proposals

Only one proposal will be accepted from each applicant.

1.13 Rejection of Proposals

A. IDPH reserves the right to reject, in whole or in part, any or all proposals, to advertise for new proposals, to arrange to receive or itself perform the services herein, to abandon the need for such services, and to cancel this RFP if it is in the best interests of IDPH.

B. Any proposal will be rejected outright and not evaluated for any of the following reasons:

1. The applicant fails to deliver the proposal by the relevant dates and times stated in section 1.05.
2. The applicant is not qualified for the program based on eligibility requirements, including those listed in section 1.03 and in federal guidance and state requirements for the program.

C. Any proposal may be rejected outright and not evaluated for any one of the following reasons:

1. The applicant fails to include required information or fails to include sufficient information to determine whether an RFP requirement has been satisfied.
2. The applicant fails to follow the proposal format instructions or presents information requested by this RFP in a format inconsistent with the instructions of the RFP.
3. The applicant provides misleading or inaccurate answers.
4. The applicant states that a mandatory requirement cannot be satisfied.
5. The applicant's response materially changes a mandatory requirement.

6. The applicant's response limits the right of IDPH.
7. The applicant fails to respond to IDPH's request for information, documents, or references.
8. The applicant fails to include any signature, certification, authorization, or stipulation requested by this RFP.
9. The applicant initiates unauthorized contact regarding the RFP with a state employee.

1.14 Restrictions on Gifts and Activities

Iowa Code chapter 68B contains laws which restrict gifts which may be given or received by state employees and requires certain individuals to disclose information concerning their activities with state government. Applicants are responsible for determining the applicability of this chapter to their activities and for complying with these requirements.

In addition, Iowa Code chapter 722 provides that it is a felony offense to bribe a public official.

1.15 Reference Checks

IDPH reserves the right to contact any reference to assist in the evaluation of the proposal, to verify information contained in the proposal and to discuss the applicant's qualifications and the qualifications of any subcontractor identified in the proposal.

1.16 Criminal Background Checks

IDPH reserves the right to conduct criminal history and other background investigations into the applicant, its officers, directors, managerial and supervisory personnel, clerical or support personnel, and health care professional personnel retained by the applicant for duties related to the performance of the contract. Such information may be used in determining contract awards. The applicant shall cause all waivers to be executed by appropriate persons to effectuate the investigations.

1.17 Information From Other Sources

IDPH reserves the right to obtain and consider information from other sources concerning an applicant, including the applicant's product or services, personnel, and subcontractors, and the applicant's capability and performance under other state contracts and contracts with private entities. IDPH may use any of this information in evaluating an applicant's proposal.

1.18 Verification of Proposal Contents

The contents of a proposal submitted by an applicant are subject to verification. Misleading or inaccurate responses shall result in rejection of the proposal pursuant to section 1.14.

1.19 Bid Proposal Clarification Process

IDPH may request clarification from applicants for the purpose of resolving ambiguities or questioning information presented in the proposals. Clarifications may occur throughout the proposal evaluation process. Clarification responses shall be in writing and shall address only the information requested. Responses shall be submitted to IDPH within the time stipulated at the time of the request. An applicant will not be permitted to modify or amend its proposal if contacted by IDPH for this reason.

1.20 Waivers and Variances

IDPH reserves the right to waive or permit cure of nonmaterial variances in the proposal's form and content providing such action is in the best interest of IDPH. In the event IDPH waives or permits cure of nonmaterial variances, such waiver or cure will not modify the RFP requirements or excuse the applicant from full compliance with RFP specifications or other contract requirements if the applicant is awarded the contract. The determination of materiality is in the sole discretion of IDPH.

1.21 Disposition of Proposals

All proposals become the property of IDPH and shall not be returned to the applicant unless all proposals are rejected. In the event all proposals are rejected, applicants will be asked to send prepaid shipping instruments to IDPH for return of the proposals submitted. In the event the IDPH does not receive shipping instruments, IDPH will destroy the proposals.

If IDPH awards funds to an applicant, the contents of all proposals will be in the public domain at the conclusion of the selection process and will be open to inspection by interested parties subject to exceptions provided in Iowa Code Chapter 22 or other provision of law.

1.22 Public Records

All information submitted by an applicant will be treated as public information following the conclusion of the selection process unless the applicant properly requests that information be treated as confidential at the time the proposal is submitted.

Any request for confidential treatment of information must be included in the transmittal letter with the applicant's proposal. In addition, the applicant must enumerate the specific grounds in Iowa Code chapter 22 which support treatment of the material as confidential. The request for confidential treatment of information must also include the name, address, and telephone number of the person authorized by the applicant to respond to any inquiries by IDPH concerning the confidential status of the materials.

Any proposal submitted which contains confidential information must be conspicuously marked on as containing confidential information and must indicate which sections of the proposal should be treated as confidential. Identification of the entire proposal as confidential shall be deemed non-responsive and shall disqualify the applicant.

The applicant must submit one copy of the proposal from which the confidential information had been excised. The confidential material must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the material removed and to retain as much of the proposal as possible.

In the event IDPH receives a public request for RFP information marked confidential, written notice shall be given to the applicant seventy-two (72) hours prior to the release of the information to allow the applicant to seek injunctive relief pursuant to Iowa Code section 22.8. The information marked confidential shall be treated as confidential information to the extent such information is determined confidential under Iowa Code Chapter 22 or other provisions of law by a court of competent jurisdiction.

The applicant's failure to request confidential treatment of material pursuant to this section and the relevant law will be deemed by IDPH as a waiver of any right to confidentiality which the applicant may have had.

1.23 Copyrights

By submitting a proposal, the applicant agrees that IDPH may copy the proposal for the purpose of facilitating the evaluation of the proposal or to respond to requests for public records. By submitting the proposal, the applicant consents to such copying and warrants and represents that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party. IDPH shall have the right to use ideas or adaptations of ideas that are presented in the proposals. In the event the applicant copyrights its proposal, the department may reject the proposal as noncompliant.

1.24 Appeal of Award Decision

Applicants may appeal the award decision by filing a written appeal to IDPH within ten (10) working days of receipt of the award decision in accordance with 641 Iowa Administrative Code 176. Appeals shall be submitted in writing, return receipt requested, to Stacey Hewitt, Contract Administrator, Division of Administration and Professional Licensure, Iowa Department of Public Health, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0075. Appeals must clearly and fully identify all issues being contested and demonstrate what procedures in the proposal were not followed. In the event of an appeal, the Department will continue working with the successful applicant pending the outcome of the appeal.

1.25 Definition of Contract

The full execution of a written contract by both parties shall constitute the making of a contract for services and no applicant shall acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract until the contract has been fully executed by the successful applicant and the IDPH.

1.26 Construction of RFP

This RFP shall be construed in light of pertinent legal requirements and the laws of the State of Iowa. Changes in applicable statutes and rules may affect the award process or the resulting contract. Applicants are responsible for ascertaining the relevant legal requirements.

SECTION 2 – DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The PRIMECARRE Loan Repayment Program is part of Iowa's effort to assure access to health care for underserved populations. Loan repayment is a recruitment and retention tool, assisting in access to care in underserved areas including, but not limited to, rural areas and urban underserved areas.

The award process is NOT based on whether the applicant is the most deserving as a health professional but on whether the applicant is in a position to most effectively meet the needs of Iowans with the greatest needs for service.

2.01 Program Awards

Up to \$30,000 per year for:

physicians
psychiatrists
clinical psychologists

Up to \$20,000 per year for:

dentists

Up to \$15,000 per year for:

physician assistants
registered nurse practitioners
certified nurse midwives
dental hygienists
clinical social workers (LISW only)
psychiatric nurse specialists
mental health counselors
marriage and family therapists

2.02 Award Distribution

The disbursement of funds will be made by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (ICSAC). A successful applicant for the loan repayment program will be awarded a single loan repayment distribution each year for two years. It is the intent of IDPH to disburse the first payment approximately 1 year after the start of the contract between the Iowa Department of Public Health and the recipient. It is the intent of IDPH to disburse the award for the second year at the completion of the second year.

2.03 Use of Funds

Loan Repayment Program awards can be expended only to pay the qualifying educational loans of health professionals who have entered into State Loan Repayment Program (PRIMECARRE) contracts. Qualifying education loans are Government and commercial loans for actual costs paid for tuition and reasonable educational and living expenses related to the undergraduate or graduate education of the participant leading to a degree in the health profession in which the participant will satisfy his or her State Loan Repayment Program service commitment.

If an applicant has consolidated or refinanced loans, the applicant must provide a copy of the original loan documentation to establish the educational purpose and contemporaneous nature of such loans. If an eligible educational loan is consolidated/refinanced with any other debt other than another eligible educational loan of the applicant, no portion of the consolidated/refinanced loan will be eligible for loan repayment.

One loan or a series of educational loans can be fully or partially repaid from the award funds.

2.04 Program Monitoring

The IDPH Bureau of Health Care Access delegates the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (ICSAC) the duty to track and monitor loan repayment recipients throughout each contract period. ICSAC will disburse loan repayment funds, ensure that funds are used for repayment of educational loans, and track the continued employment of each recipient at contracted employment sites.

2.05 Tax Liability

Loan Repayment Program awards are no longer subject to federal or state income taxes. Public Law 108-357, the American Jobs Creation Act, enacted October 22, 2004, excludes from gross federal income and employment taxes any educational loan repayment funds provided under the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program or under the State Loan Repayment Program (SLRP). PRIMECARRE is Iowa's SLRP.

The provision also provides that such repayments are not taken into account as wages in determining benefits under the Social Security Act. The provision is effective with respect to loan repayment grants received in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2003. Iowa income taxes were coupled with the Internal Revenue Code as of January 31, 2005, thereby exempting PRIMECARRE funds from state income taxes under the same effective dates reflected in federal legislation.

2.06 Required Provider Reports

Successful applicants/loan repayment recipients will be contractually required to submit a six-month progress report and an annual report during each year of the contract period. Reports are submitted to the program coordinator at the Iowa Department of Public Health.

The reports shall include:

1. a narrative describing all activities involving grant funds
2. the geographic region served
3. the number of Medicaid and Medicare patients served
4. the recipient's work schedule

2.07 Site Visit

A site visit will be required between the healthcare provider (loan repayment recipient), the clinical site representative and the program coordinator from IDPH during each contract period.

SECTION 3 -- APPLICATION FORMAT AND CONTENT

These instructions prescribe the format and content of the bid proposal and are designed to facilitate the submission of a proposal that is easy to understand, review, and evaluate. Failure to adhere to these requirements and proposal content may result in disqualification of the proposal.

3.01 Technical Requirements

- A. Applications must be typewritten and follow the format delineated herein. Photocopies or exact computer-generated replicas are permissible.

Aspect	Requirement
Length	Narrative sections are limited to one page per essay question.
Font size	Essays and narratives must be typewritten, minimum of 12 point font. A smaller font may be used for tables, figures or maps.
Margins	Must be a minimum of one inch on all sides.
Layout & Spacing	Essay and narrative paragraphs may be single or double-spaced. Please sequentially number all pages of the essay and narratives, including attachments or appendices.
Copies	Submit one (1) original application, signed with non-black ink, and four (4) photocopies.
Binding	Clip or staple each copy. Do not use specially prepared binders, dividers, or face sheets. Binder clips are permitted.

- B. Do not submit promotional materials. Promotional materials or items other than required by this RFP will not be considered during the review process.
- C. Any information or materials submitted separately from the proposal will not be considered in the review process.

3.02 Proposal Content

The content of a PRIMECARRE application for a loan repayment grant is submitted in lieu of a personal interview. Please complete the application form and the narratives with the same attention you would give to a personal interview. Complete and submit the "Health Provider Application" (Attachment A). Do NOT include this entire RFP with your submission, only Attachment A and the items listed below. Respond to all questions clearly and concisely. All responses by an applicant are subject to verification.

The award process is NOT based on whether the applicant is the most deserving as a health professional but on whether the applicant is in a position to most effectively meet the needs of lowans with the greatest needs for service.

Using the Health Provider Application form as posted on the website in a zipped file attachment (or a computerized facsimile of this form); compile application elements in the following order and label each item with a tab indicating the item number and title:

A. Health Provider Application (Attachment A) – Attach completed application form, answering each item. **Please ensure they are signed by the necessary individuals in non-black ink.** In addition to fully completing Attachment A, the application must include the following items:

1. **Proof of citizenship** - Attach a copy of your birth certificate or documentation showing naturalization. Do NOT include original documents.
2. **University attendance dates** - Obtain an original, signed statement from the schools or universities showing dates of attendance for all qualifying education for which are you submitting debt, including undergraduate or associates degrees. You may substitute official transcripts, which include dates of attendance.
3. **Proof of Iowa licensure or registration** - Provide verification of your license from your licensing board. Go to www.licensediniowa.gov or to your profession's independent licensing board for verification.
4. **Documentation of loan balance** - Submit documentation from your lenders indicating the current balance for each loan to be considered as part of your outstanding debt. This may include the most recent billing statement, balance information printed from your online account, or other documents from your lenders. **If you have consolidated loans or refinanced loans, you must provide a copy of the original loan documentation to establish the educational purpose and contemporaneous nature of such loans.** If an eligible educational loan is consolidated/refinanced with any other debt other than another eligible educational loan of the applicant, no portion of the consolidated/refinanced loan will be eligible for loan repayment. IDPH reserves the right to request further documentation, including promissory notes, to verify qualifying educational loans.
5. **Status of practice site** - Attach documentation that the practice site is a public or non-profit private entity. "Public" is defined as a governmental entity, such as a state-run facility or county-run hospital. Employment with any type of corporation or business which operates in a "for-profit" status does not fulfill the service obligation for the PRIMECARRE program. Attach a copy of the state license, including the tax identification number if the clinical practice site is licensed as a not-for-profit organization.
6. **Contract between clinical practice site and health provider** - Provide a copy of the employment agreement or contract. The employment agreement or contract must contain at least the following items:
 - name and location of the practice site,
 - the beginning and ending dates of the provider's practice,
 - the name of the authorized representative of the practice site, and
 - the signatures of the site representative and the health professional.

In the event that employment is not contractual, such as in the case of a state employee, provide a notarized statement, signed by the practice site representative, from the employer showing the date employment began and explaining that employment is not handled on a contractual basis for this practice site.

7. **Letters of support** – Obtain a minimum of three letters of support for your new or continued employment at the practice site. One of the three letters should be from your practice site. Letters should provide evidence of broad community support for loan repayment assistance for your position. Consider the source and content of support letters carefully. Letters of support may be used to strengthen the applicant's score in the area of commitment to the practice site and community. **In general, letters of support should indicate choice and intention to serve underserved populations in the practice site community due to the community population's need.** The letters of support must be included with your application; do not send them separately. Items received by IDPH separately from the application will not be considered in the evaluation process.

B. Practice Narratives: In essay format using **Attachment B**, complete the following four (4) practice narratives:

1. Practice Narrative #1- Describe your experience or familiarity in rural areas or low-income neighborhoods, and your experience with the county and site of employment. Please indicate how long you have lived in and practiced in the community (or similar community), including family ties and previous work experience.
2. Practice Narrative #2 - Describe your long-term commitment to your practice site. Include factors that influenced your decision to choose the community and practice site, as well as evidence of commitment to the community. Describe long-term personal and professional goals for you and your family (if applicable) in the community. Identify factors that may influence your decision to remain in the area beyond a two-year contract period, such as home ownership, membership in community organizations, length of time practicing in the area, etc.
3. Practice Narrative #3 – Describe the patient population to which you provide services, including any health disparities experienced by the community population, and describe how you, as a health care provider, will address these disparities and/or increase the health outcomes of the patient population. You may include references from sources such as newspaper articles, newsletters, community planning documents, Census Bureau statistics, and other relevant data to describe the needs in the community.
4. Practice Narrative #4 – Describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities that you possess and that you will utilize in your practice to improve delivery of health services to the population served. Reference unique aspects of your background, specialty, or practice that make you a well-qualified candidate for serving the underserved population in your community.

3.03 Litigation or Investigation

The applicant shall list and summarize pending or threatened litigation, administrative, or regulatory proceedings or similar matters which could affect the ability of the applicant to perform the required services. Failure to disclose such matters may result in rejection of the proposal or in termination of any subsequent contract. This is a continuing disclosure requirement. Any such matter commencing after submission of a proposal must be disclosed in a timely manner in a written statement to the IDPH. In the event that the contract is terminated, repayment and full liquidated damages will apply and will NOT be pro-rated based on the portion of the service obligation which has been fulfilled. **The two-year commitment is a MINIMUM commitment for participation in the program.**

3.04 Proposal Checklist

This checklist is provided as a tool for applicants to use when compiling information for submission. The checklist does not need to be submitted with the application materials.

Original and 4 copies submitted	
Application Cover Page (Page1) is complete (and signed in non-black ink)	
 Site is located in a federal HPSA: (HPSA status can be obtained at: http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov . HPSA must be designated as of April 23, 2010; HPSAs that are “proposed for withdrawal” are not eligible areas for purposes of this program.)	
Health Provider Application (Attachment A) is complete	
Health Provider Certification is complete and notarized	
Assurances and Certification is complete and notarized	
Proof of citizenship (copy of birth certificate or naturalization form)	
Official transcript(s) or documentation of school attendance dates	
Proof of Iowa licensure or registration	
Documentation of current loan balances	
Status of practice site documented (public or private non-profit)	
Employment Agreement or Contract between practice site and provider included	
Letters of support (minimum of three letters; one from practice site)	
Four (4) Practice Narrative essays are complete (Attachment B)	

SECTION 4 -- EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

4.01 Overview of Evaluation Process

Evaluation of proposals submitted under this RFP will be conducted in three phases.

Phase I -- Technical Review: The first phase will involve a preliminary review by the IDPH staff of an applicant's compliance with the mandatory requirements for submitted proposals. Proposals which fail to satisfy technical requirements may be eliminated from the proposal review. These proposals will be returned to the applicant via United States Postal Service, first class mail. The IDPH reserves the right to waive minor variances at the sole discretion of the IDPH.

Phase II -- Review Committee: Proposals determined to be compliant with technical requirements will be accepted for the second phase of evaluation, which shall be completed by a review committee or committees established by the IDPH. The membership of the review committee(s) shall be determined by the bureau chief with input and oversight from the respective division director. The review committee(s) shall evaluate proposals in accordance with a point system. Each committee member will review the proposals and the evaluation criteria outlined in this chapter and assign a point total for each criterion.

The total score awarded by each committee member will be averaged to arrive at the final score (rounded to the nearest whole number) for each proposal and the proposals will then be ranked based on the average of the evaluation scores. IDPH staff may solicit additional input and recommendations from the review committee(s).

In the event competitive proposals receive an equal number of points, two division directors and the respective bureau chief administering the program may conduct a second review utilizing the same scoring process.

Phase III -- IDPH Review and Award: The third phase will be a final review. The IDPH will consider the submitted proposals and the review committee's scores and recommendations. The IDPH may also consider geographical distribution of previous awards along with geographic distribution of current applicants, budget information, any information received pursuant to sections 1.17 - 1.21 of the RFP, recommendations in the strategic plan developed in accordance with Iowa Code 135.164 and any other information received pursuant to the procurement process. IDPH reserves the right not to award the contract to the applicants with the highest point averages.

4.02 Scoring of Proposals

A maximum of 100 points may be awarded to each proposal. A minimum average score of 60 or greater is required for the proposal to be considered for funding.

Accepted proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- A. All parts of each section are included and addressed.
- B. Descriptions and detail are clear, organized and understandable.
- C. Descriptions are responsive to the intent of the RFP objectives, particularly the ability of the applicant to serve the Iowa population(s) in greatest need of service.
- D. The overall commitment to and ability of the applicant, as judged by the evaluation committee, to successfully complete their service obligation to lowans in the greatest need of services. This judgment will be based upon factors such as letters of support and responses to narrative questions.

Points will be assigned for each item listed as follows (unless otherwise indicated by the scores listed in the scoring tool):

- 5 Applicant's proposal or capability is exceptional and exceeds expectations for this criterion.
- 4 Applicant's proposal or capability is superior and slightly exceeds expectations for this criterion.
- 3 Applicant's proposal or capability is satisfactory and meets expectations for this criterion.
- 2 Applicant's proposal or capability is unsatisfactory and contains numerous deficiencies for this criterion.
- 1 Applicant's proposal or capability is not acceptable or applicable for this criterion.

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The maximum points to be awarded for each proposal section are as follows:

<u>Proposal Component</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Potential Maximum Score</u>
General (sum of items below)		4
Applicant provided information in a thorough and easy-to-read manner (yes = 1, no = 0)	X 2	2
Applicant appears to have strong organizational and/or community support based on letters of support (yes = 1, no = 0)	X 2	2
Financial need		10
Received debt assistance before: None = 5 Nurse Education Loan, Nursing Scholarship, Employer, or other assistance = 4 NHSC = 3 PRIMECARRE = 2	X2	10
Assessment of need in county of employment (sum of items below)		26
HPSA score (as of March 15, 2010) - primary care, mental health or oral health, as applies to applicant's profession: Raw score: 1-5 = 1 point 6-10 = 2 points 11-15 = 3 points 16-20 = 4 points Above 20 (or FQHC or state correctional facility) = 5 points	X 2	10
Practice located in a rural (non MSA) county Non-MSA location = 3 points MSA location = 0 points	X 2	6
Percent of population at or below 200% of poverty level (also serves as proxy for uninsured): Up to 10% = 1 point 11 to 20% = 2 points 21 to 30% = 3 points 31 to 40% = 4 points 41% and over = 5 points	X 2	10
Practice Narratives (see Attachment B) (sum of items below)		60
Practice Narrative #1 Experience or familiarity with rural areas or low-income neighborhoods. (1-5 points)	X 3	15
Practice Narrative #2 Long-term commitment to your practice site; include factors that influenced your decision to choose the community and practice site. (1-5 points)	X3	15
Practice Narrative #3 Describe patient population and how you will address health disparities and/or increase health outcomes (1-5 points)	X 3	15
Practice Narrative #4 Knowledge, skills, and abilities that you possess and will utilize in your practice to improve delivery of health services (1-5 points)	X3	15
TOTAL MAXIMUM POINTS		100

SECTION 5 – CONTRACT

5.01 Conditions

Any contract awarded by the IDPH shall include specific Loan Repayment Program contract provisions (Special Conditions) outlined in the attached contract sample (**Appendix I**) and the IDPH General Conditions effective October 1, 2009 as posted on the IDPH Web page www.idph.state.ia.us under *Grants, Bids and Proposals link*. The contract terms contained in the general conditions are not intended to be a complete listing of all contract terms, but are provided only to enable applicants to better evaluate the responsibilities associated with the RFP and the potential resulting contract.

Results of the review process or changes in federal or state law may require additions or changes in final contract conditions requirements.

The resulting contract from this RFP will be paid from ARRA funds, and thus the contractor will be required to comply with the reporting requirements and the Standard Terms and Conditions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). See **Appendix II**.

5.02 Incorporation of Documents

The RFP, any amendments and written responses to applicant questions, and the proposal submitted in response to the RFP form a part of the contract. The parties are obligated to perform all services described in the RFP and proposal unless the contract specifically directs otherwise.

5.03 Order of Priority

In the event of a conflict between the contract, the RFP and the proposal, the conflict shall be resolved according to the following priorities, ranked in descending order:

1. the Contract;
2. the RFP;
3. the Proposal.

5.04 Contractual Payments

The disbursement of funds will be made by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (ICSAC). It is the intent of the Department to disburse the first payment approximately one year after the start of the contract between the Iowa Department of Public Health and the recipient. It is the intent of the Department to disburse the award for the second year at the completion of the second year. IDPH reserves the right to adjust the payment schedule prior to finalizing a contract.

5.05 Cancellation Under Contract

Practice site employment must continue through the entire loan repayment contract period. Failure to maintain employment at the practice site will result in repayment and liquidated damages to the grant recipient; the liquidated damages will be clearly delineated in the contract. Liquidated damages will NOT be pro-rated based on the portion of the employment obligation the recipient has served. The two-year commitment is a MINIMUM commitment for participation in the program. Upon full execution of the contract; ***death of the grant recipient is the only permissible basis for canceling the contract.*** IDPH cannot cancel the contract in order to allow the grant recipient to participate in the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Program or for any other reason. In the event that employment with the practice site must discontinue, the department will attempt to place the recipient at another qualifying site. This site may not be in the same geographic location as the original practice site. In this instance, the recipient may be required to relocate in order to complete the service obligation. In the event that there is a break in service between the original practice site and the reassigned practice site, the applicant will be required to extend the contract so that a full 24 months of full-time service is performed.