

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Mental Health and Addictions
Epidemiological and Demographic
Analysis



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL – Mental Health and Addictions

Background

In the March 2010 throne speech, the government of Nova Scotia committed to an evidence-based Mental Health Strategy for mental health and addiction services. In May 2010, the Auditor General of Nova Scotia released his report on Mental Health Services in Nova Scotia including 19 recommendations. The Mental Health Strategy Advisory Committee (MHSAC) was announced by the Minister of Health and Wellness in June 2010. The MHSAC represent a diverse group of stakeholders and is developing a strategy to address mental health and addiction services throughout the province. The Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation (NSHRF) was asked to oversee a neutral, comprehensive consultation process to ensure that the knowledge and input of stakeholders is included. The NSHRF will also act as secretariat to the MHSAC.

In developing the strategy, the MHSAC will ensure that it is evidence based and responsive to the needs identified by government reports, health research findings, and stakeholder consultations. For more information regarding the Mental Health Strategy please visit our website.

Overview

This request for proposals (RFP) is for a synthesis and epidemiological analysis of the mental health and addictions populations in Nova Scotia and the current services in place to address the needs of this population. To elaborate, we require a synthesis of the data currently available on mental health and addictions populations and services; furthermore we require an analysis of the usefulness and limitations of the data for informing the development of a mental health and addictions strategy as well as for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the mental health and addictions system. A background paper describing current service delivery in Nova Scotia and supporting bibliography is available to applicants on the NSHRF website. In addition, the NSHRF will support funded applicants with access to key contacts within the public system and relevant data sources.

Deliverables

The following is a description of three deliverables, and presents broad issues to be addressed by each deliverable:

- 1. Epidemiological Study** – This study will analyze data available for the mental health and addictions populations in Nova Scotia in terms of key variables of interest including (though not limited to):

- a. Demographic variables (gender, age, ethnicity);
- b. Determinants of health; and
- c. Other health system indicators (e.g., wait times, services accessed, length of stay).

This aspect of the research will provide information regarding who is currently using the mental health and/or addictions systems, their experiences with the system (e.g., types of conditions/illness, wait times and gaps in service) and will also offer insight into distinction and variation amongst underserved and difficult to serve populations across these two service systems.

2. Current state of service delivery study – This aspect of the research will provide an analysis and synthesis of the spectrum of services available to Nova Scotians facing a variety of mental health and/or addictions issues. This study will also include an analysis of the manner in which those services are delivered to enhance understanding of current service delivery models. Analysis and synthesis of the mental health and addictions services available at various points along the continuum of care is required; this includes (though is not limited to) reporting on promotion and prevention services, recovery and rehabilitation services, and community re-integration and maintenance services. In addition, an analysis of the distribution of services across the province and any gaps in service provincially or by district is required.

3. Report on state of data – This aspect of program will analyze and report on the current state of data and information available to inform the development of the Strategy and for monitoring and evaluating the mental health and addictions systems on an ongoing basis. A number of provincial and national data sources are available for these purposes, for example, databases maintained by the Canadian Institute of Health Information, the Population Health Research Unit at Dalhousie University, and Statistics Canada databases among others. This research will offer a clear picture of the utility of these data and their limitations. Specifically, we require an analysis of:

- a. The data that are currently being collected and made available on mental health and addictions issues in Nova Scotia;
- b. The adequacy of current data for informing decision making and policy development around mental health and addictions;
- c. Limitations of the currently available data in terms of how they are collected and maintained (e.g., validity, reliability, comprehensiveness);

- d. Gaps in data; and
- e. Opportunities to improve data collection.

The applicant will not be required to provide specific recommendations as part of this work. These reports will provide information to be considered by the Advisory Committee as they develop the Mental Health Strategy.

Details of Submission Process

Applicants are expected to demonstrate the following in their proposal:

- Understanding of the RFP requirements;
- Clearly delineated methodology for identifying the appropriate literature and other information sources;
- Appropriate project timeline, work plan and approach, including identification of key personnel; and
- Appropriate budget, detailing key personnel.

The maximum budget that will be considered for this proposal is \$30,000

Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. A researcher with an academic appointment at a university or affiliated research institution or an appointment (with research responsibilities) at an affiliated hospital/research centre/institute; ¹and
2. Has held funding from a provincial/national/international peer reviewed program. Applicants from outside of Nova Scotia must include a Nova Scotia team member.

¹ The following are considered to be academic appointments for the purpose of the grants competition: probationary tenure-track appointments; tenure-track appointments; tenured appointments; and limited-term appointments. Appointments may also include clinical scientists, clinical faculty or other senior official-approved (i.e., CEO or VP Research) appointments. Adjunct and instructor appointments are not considered academic appointments for the purposes of this grant requirement.

Evaluation Criteria

The following are **mandatory requirements**. (Proposals not meeting these criteria will receive no further consideration during the evaluation process):

- Applicants must possess an acceptable level of experience or qualifications to successfully complete the project and CVs must be provided for key personnel. Any team member with an academic appointment must provide Canada Common CV; other team members may provide a standard professional CV. A minimum of three years of relevant experience is required;
- Applicants must provide a minimum of two references relevant to their capacity to meet the goals of this project. These references must be related to similar projects completed within the past five years; and
- Since applications will be evaluated based on the best value for money expressed in the proposals, applicants should include all anticipated project costs in the budget. A detailed budget must be submitted outlining personnel, administrative and all other costs associated with the completion of this project.

The following criteria will be evaluated for proposals that satisfy the mandatory criteria:

Factor	Value
<i>Expertise of Applicant(s)</i> Profile of key personnel – CV (Common CV is the team member has an academic appointment) demonstrating qualifications and years of experience, adequacy of staff resources to complete the project; record of competence in undertaking similar work; anticipated level and type of involvement of key personnel in project.	20
<i>Project-Specific Expertise</i> Knowledge and experience in conducting knowledge synthesis; knowledge of the health research/health system environment; knowledge of mental health and addictions systems and services provincially, nationally and or internationally	30
<i>Overall Approach Proposed</i> Clear and appropriate methodology for conducting literature search and analysis; adequacy of proposed work plan to address project objectives; recognition of potential challenges and strategies to overcome these challenges.	40
<i>Project Costs/Budgets</i> Lower half of bids receive full point value	10

Time Frame

RFP will be posted by **February 21, 2011**

Proposals must be submitted by **March 25, 2011**

Successful applicants will be notified by **April 8, 2011**

Completed work must be submitted to the NSHRF by **June 30, 2011**

Proposal Submission

Proposals are to be submitted to NSHRF via one of the following:

Mailing address:

Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation
PO Box 2684
Halifax, NS B3J 3P7

Courier address:

1660 Hollis Street, 9th Floor
Suite 905
Halifax, NS B3J 1V7

Email: info@nshrf.ca

Fax: 902.424.7753

Questions regarding Requests for Proposals may be directed to: Terry W. Taylor, Manager, Special Projects, terry.taylor@gov.ns.ca, or phone 902-424-1522.