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Developing an APCD Request for Proposal: Guidance for States



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Document Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide guidance to states that are planning to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) and/or Request for Information (RFI) for All-Payer Claims Database (APCD). The information in this paper was derived from the review of previously issued state RFPs and RFIs, and input collected through technical assistance, national workshops, and the Learning Network functions of the APCD Council.

Background

APCDs are large-scale databases that systematically collect data on health care claims from a variety of public and private payer sources. Payers include insurance carriers, third party administrators (TPAs), pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), dental benefit administrators, state Medicaid agencies, and CMS (Medicare). Though states typically have not included Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB), TRICARE administrators, or other Federal payers (such as Indian Health Service), these payers are likely to be approached in the future as APCD systems advance.

The insurance market structure in a state affects implementation costs, and a system-wide inventory of the insurance market is greatly beneficial in planning for an APCD (for more information about the general issues related to building an APCD, please refer to the following APCD Council issue brief:

http://apcdouncil.org/sites/apcdouncil.org/files/APCD%20Technical%20Build%20Guidance%20Document_FINALa.pdf). The inventory generally gathers the following information from each payer:

- Total number of platforms for each data type (medical, dental, pharmacy, eligibility)
- Specify carve-out services (e.g. pharmacy, mental health) and other contractual relationships
- The data formats/layouts for each file type for each platform

The information from the insurance market inventory should inform the RFP, by providing key characteristics about the expected size and scope of the APCD. These considerations will factor into the responses from the vendors, and will provide important information about the project's scope.

Why are states issuing RFIs or RFPs for statewide APCDs?

The expansion of statewide health care data collection through APCD development is occurring at a time in which states' workforces are experiencing reductions, and legislators are reluctant to build the internal technical capacities in state agencies. Additionally, APCDs pose tremendous technical and political challenges demanding innovative and cost-effective solutions. Thus, states often seek vendors to support APCD development and analysis through strong public-private collaborations, which starts with the RFP process.

APCDs consolidate multiple data feeds from multiple payers. Even within a single payer, data feeds originate from different platforms. This results in technically complicated work that often requires expertise outside of what is available within state agencies. Thus, many states are opting to outsource implementation functions to external vendors experienced in the aggregation, management, and analysis of medical claims data.

What is the difference between an RFP and an RFI?

A number of states, including, Maine, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Utah, and Minnesota have successfully used RFIs and/or RFPs for development of the APCD in their states. However, prior to writing an RFI or RFP it is important to consider the differences between the two, as well as how those differences align with an organization's needs and resources.

RFPs and RFIs are similar in concept, but represent different stages of development and different perceived timeframes. As the name suggests, an RFP is a call for proposals. Generally, an RFP will include some background, the scope of work, goals and objectives, a projected timeline, and a budget for a given project. The RFP exists to facilitate the selection of a vendor whose vision and experience matches that of the organization. RFPs generally lead to contractual relationships to perform the work identified in the RFP.

An RFI, on the other hand, is neither an actual procurement; rather, it is a tool for soliciting information to inform planning about prospective vendors in the APCD space, and target possible solutions to unresolved questions and issues the state faces. The purpose of an RFI is as a means of technical discovery and information gathering. The RFI is a useful for gathering information, both about the capabilities of the potential vendors and about the expectations of the state that will be reflected in an RFP (should the project continue to that phase). States that provide expectations for the project and ask for cost estimates can use the information in the RFI process to inform how the available project budget aligns to the expectations for the APCD contract. The process of drafting, reviewing, and issuing an RFI can be a time-consuming and resource-intensive process--resources and time that APCD initiatives might not have. Additionally, some qualified vendors may not respond due to the cost and effort associated with a credible response and the concerns about revealing proprietary information, for something that is, by nature, not going to lead to a contractual relationship. However, if done well, the RFI process can be an important building block to an eventual RFP.

What are the major considerations in writing an RFP for an APCD?

States vary in their political and technical environments, so one RFP solution will not fit all. Legislation may require outsourcing functions to the private sector, while others may find they are prohibited from hiring new staff. State staff should define major functions needed for their APCD, and then conduct a capacity assessment and map desired functionalities to these existing capacities. It is also important to consider partnerships with partner agencies like Medicaid, public health, or insurance. There may be synergies and opportunities to leverage existing infrastructure within the government. The gap analysis will guide the development of either internal infrastructure or the RFP's scope of work—or both.

The most important first step in RFP development is deciding which functions of the APCD will be included in the vendor contract, and, thus, described in the RFP. A decision must be made whether to outsource all or part of the functions of the APCD. Careful consideration should be made as to what capacity should be retained internally. Not everything should be outsourced to the vendor, but states may vary in their mix of internal and external infrastructure development decisions.

Early APCD states generally issued one RFP for both data aggregation and analysis in one RFP (and having those functions in one contract), but more recently, states have separated those into different RFPs. The analytic functions are distinct from aggregation functions, and some states have developed separate RFPs for these functions. This can allow for more breadth of experience being brought to the APCD (through multiple contractors). In some cases, the RFPs may be separate, but the same bidder may be selected for both the

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aggregation and analytic functions. Also, some states want to have the analytic capacity for the APCD internally, but want data aggregation to be outsourced. States have indicated that retaining some basic analytic capacity within the state is essential for responding to policy maker information requests and ad-hoc queries.

Once the overall functions to be included in the RFP (or RFPs) are decided, the state must then describe the services to be outsourced in enough detail as to allow prospective bidders to estimate what they will charge to provide the services. A well-written RFP will allow the state to maintain the maximum control of the procurement process. A poorly written RFP will put the state at a disadvantage by limiting the quality or number of submitted proposals and increasing the risk of securing a less than optimal contract.

What do state APCD RFPs typically contain?

Examples of state RFPs are available at: <http://apcdouncil.org/awards-and-requests-proposals>. From these, major areas of RFP content are described below.

1. Introduction and Background

The introduction and background section of an RFP sets the stage for the rest of the document. It is often informed by the previously mentioned gap analysis, and provides key information about the history of the organization, current resources, infrastructure, and capacity, as well as other state specific context that may help guide and inform a potential vendor's proposal. This can include the rationale for the APCD as specified in legislation, known ways in which the state intends to use the data, and the governance structure for the APCD. Rhode Island's RFP included this language:

“Under a RI law enacted in 2008, Chapter 23-17.17-9 Health Care Quality and Value Database, the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) was directed to establish and maintain an APCD, including defining and overseeing data collection and release. The law directs private and public payers to submit claims for health services paid on behalf of enrollees. States with APCDs are in a stronger position to make informed decisions regarding the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

HEALTH has the authority and responsibility under statute for the APCD. This includes the authority to require payers, both public and private, to provide claims data for health services paid on behalf of enrollees. HEALTH has the responsibility to protect privacy, including developing a data use policy, consistent with HIPAA privacy and security rules. HEALTH is also responsible for assuring transparency, which includes the creation of a public use database (to be defined in the data use policy) that is broadly available.

The APCD is necessary to support new state requirements under the ACA including health plan premium rate review, risk adjustment across the small group and individual market, and reinsurance in the individual market. Additionally, the APCD will provide the Exchange with information to offer efficient and affordable health insurance products, to comply with Exchange federal reporting requirements (e.g. readmission rates), and to evaluate the impact of the Exchange on access, quality, utilization, and cost of care. The APCD will also be used by RI's Medicaid Program to support managed care rate setting and for the redesign of the delivery of care for dual eligibles.”¹

If the RFP is for an existing APCD, historical perspective about data submission history, previous uses of the data, historical data quality, and other information can be helpful background information for potential

¹ Moynihan, J. D., (2011). Request for proposals #7449224: All Payor Data Base (APCD) Data Aggregator Vendor. Available at: <http://www.apcdouncil.org/awards-and-requests-proposals>

vendors. Information about the insurance market (as previously described) in the state – including which payers are likely to be required to submit, the number of covered lives, the distribution of commercial versus public insurance coverage, etc. – can be helpful for the bidders to estimate the resources required to support an individual’s state APCD.

2. Purpose

The statement of purpose should explicitly state the reason for the RFP or RFI and the intended and desired result. In short, the statement of purpose is a clear articulation of the practical result of the RFP or RFI process. For example, Utah’s RFP includes this language:

“The purpose of this request for proposal is to obtain a contractor with the experience, capabilities, and facilities to collect, process, edit, and analyze health care claims data and to support the staff at the Office of Health Care Statistics (OHCS) within the Utah Department of Health (DOH) to maintain and improve Utah’s All Payer Database (APD) data and information.”²

3. Goals and Objectives

The section on goals and objectives is intended to explicitly describe the major products of the RFP. It is important here for the contractor to be clear about the intended output, while still affording the vendor flexibility. For example, in Utah the RFP described one of the objectives as follows:

“The contractor will work with OHCS staff and key stakeholders in Utah to build on the existing APD reporting system infrastructure and implement needed modifications that improve Utah’s APD data administration and enhance analytic capabilities. Activities under this RFP may include, but are not limited, to the following: improve APD data validity and consistency; update specifications and processes that align with the latest national standards for claims reporting; design applications and technologies that can migrate to evolving methods/technologies in the future; promote consistent and accessible information for a broad range of uses and users; and promote patient and provider linkages and potential shared services with other data systems.”³

This example illustrates the need to balance structure and flexibility in the language used to describe goals, objectives, and tasks to prospective vendors.

4. Scope of Work

The scope of work is a detailed description of the work to be performed by the contractor. It is typically organized to reflect the order in which the work will be performed. The work sequence should identify the major task headings and subtasks for performing that work. The scope of work section describes each task as carefully and with as much detail as possible. State personnel should make a thorough analysis of existing problems, goals, and some alternative methods of achieving the goals. This section is an important part of the RFP. If appropriately done it will produce responsive proposals and ease the task of managing the project/contract. The scope of work sections needs to balance including enough detail to ensure that all the major components of work are addressed in the RFP response, while also allowing enough flexibility for vendors to describe existing and/or innovate approaches to the work that states maximize the vendors’ experiences and technologies. This may be achieved by focusing more on the desired deliverables, not necessarily the methods that the state seeks from the vendor.

^{2,3} State of Utah (2013). Request for proposals PR13053: Data Aggregation & Analytics for Utah’s All Payer Claims Database (APCD).

The scope of work may also contain the administrative details of managing the project, including:

- Period of performance
- Timelines
- Location of vendor—any local liaison
- Billing and Payments
- Privacy and security of the information and data
- Submission compliance—when to inform state of non-submission or invalid submissions
- Frequency of reporting by vendor and other communications
- Notification of termination and transition issues
- Data and proprietary ownership issues

Generalizing best practices in RFPs is challenging because of the newness of APCDs as a whole, and because of state-based variability in resources, infrastructure, and capacity. Furthermore, if the state issuing the RFP is uncertain about the overall scope and specifications of the project, writing the RFP may be very difficult or may result in unpredictable vendor proposals. Given these challenges it is important that when writing the scope of work, the state addresses the following considerations related to their APCD program in Table 1.

Table 1. Scope of work considerations

Data submission specifications	Will the state require national standards (e.g., PACDR standards), or state-specific fields? Will the state create the data submission guides for plans or include this in the vendor scope of work?
Data compliance	Compliance requires continuous monitoring by a designated staff person. The system itself must be capable of tracking data supplier submissions and indicate to each data supplier relevant submission failures. Will state staff monitor and assure compliance with each plan, or contract with the vendor to do this?
Data management	Data management is the foundation of the APCD and includes the development and execution of architectures, policies, practices and procedures that properly manage the full data lifecycle needs of an enterprise ⁴ . In building an APCD, every state should consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the state have internal capacity to manage the database and relationships with payers, or should this function be outsourced? • Are there resources available to ensure high quality data, and/or improved provide identification? Should these functions be supported in-house, or outsourced?
Editing and data fixes	Will the vendor utilize its proprietary edit protocols? Will the vendor design standard payer data quality feedback reports, and how often?
Data warehouse/hosting services	Within a state agency? With the vendor? Or a combination? How will data access rights be assigned and monitored?
Update specifications	Do processes align with the latest national standards for claims reporting?
Promote patient and provider linkages	Can this be done through the use of potential shared services with other data systems?
File building	What will vendor deliver to the state?
Analytics	What will they provide—and when?
Data Users	What services will be provided to data users, if any? Training, user groups, etc.?

⁴ Data Management Association International, available at: <http://www.dama.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1>

What are key considerations of the RFP Review Process?

Evaluation

An important component of any RFP is a clearly laid out process for how the proposals and vendor capacity will be evaluated, and who will be evaluating them. In most cases the organization will establish a committee tasked to assess the proposals. An effective committee often consists of a small group of stakeholders and decision-makers with varying backgrounds and expertise.

The committee will evaluate the proposals against a set of criteria. Each area of the evaluation criteria must be addressed in detail in proposal, and the weight given to each criterion should reflect the priority of importance of the information articulated for in the RFP. RFP evaluation criteria may be as simple as listing minimum qualifications and experience requirements, and asking for financial statements, certifications or licenses, references, resumes, and insurance. On the other hand, it may involve a detailed process for reviewing and assessing whether or not prospective contractors meet the criteria set out in the RFP (Appendix B and C). When designing the evaluation criteria and process for a given RFP, it is important to keep in mind the obligations and objectives set out in the proposal. For example, if there are any mandatory or minimum requirements, the evaluation committee must reject any proposals not meeting those requirements.

Transparency

Transparency in an RFP facilitates communication between the prospective contractors and the organization putting out the RFP; however, it also serves to foster competition between vendors. Vendor calls and conferences, as well as publically available FAQs, are all ways in which an organization can and should create a forum for dialogue around the RFP. Calls and conferences allow vendors to voice concerns and questions about the RFP. Moreover, they allow the organization sponsoring the RFP to clarify what it is they hope to get out of the RFP, what their resources are, and what the timeline is. Additionally, the calls and conferences provide a basis for publicly available FAQs, thereby making sure all prospective contractors have the same information. Not only do many vendors have deep experience with claims databases and understand their limitations, most have developed analytic tools and methods to maximize the utility of the underlying data, such as risk adjustment, grouping, episode building, etc. However, states need to understand if there are limits to the release of any proprietary information when releasing reports into the public domain. States should ask about restrictions about the publication of the description of methods used for data processing or analytics. Also, states should be explicit about the expectations about the rights of the state and/or the state's future contractors to use data, methods, and tools at the termination of the vendor contract. It is important to discuss these issues during the RFP process.

What are key lessons learned from states that have released RFPs?

The RFP is a reflection of the state's roadmap for APCD implementation, including requirements, timelines, and tools to manage the collection, analysis, and release of information. Although RFP practices are evolving, the following considerations can help guide the process:

1. *Clearly consolidating or compartmentalizing functions/tasks in an RFP allows a vendor the ability to easily assess and delegate specific projects.*

APCD development is comprised of a series of tasks. Some states have mapped the tasks into the following functional domains, which may result in a better bidder response:

- **Data Collection/Capture:** This generally refers to the processes that the vendor will use to receive the data feeds from payers, often including the mechanisms that will encrypt sensitive

data fields. This can also include specifying the management of the relationships with payers, and specifying how data submission issues will be handled by the vendor.

- **Data Processing/Management:** This generally refers to the processes that the vendor will use to aggregate the multiple data feeds, address differences in file and field formats across payers, and methods to develop analytic data files.
- **Analytics/Output:** This generally refers to the processes that the vendor will use to analyze the APCD data, according to the analytic needs identified by the state. As previously mentioned, there is a trend in states separating the data capture and processing functions described above into one RFP, and analysis into a separate RFP.
- **Data Security:** While not a separate function, states often require detailed descriptions that the vendor will take to assure data are securely handled and stored at every stage of the collection, processing, and analysis processes.

Such separation provides a structure to the RFP and allows a potential vendor to assign specific tasks to specific groups thereby allowing full focus and attention to be directed toward a domain. APCD and RFP development agencies can benefit from clarity of purpose and the efficiency that it affords.

2. *The RFP may request the bidders to propose options for various approaches in the proposal.*

The state agency issuing the RFP may not know what solutions are best for their APCD development as they create the RFP. Some states have invited bidders to propose options for these functions. For example:

- Describe the process for on-boarding Medicaid data into the data warehouse
- Describe data warehouse hosting options and the pros and cons for each

3. *Modularize product costs and pricing.*

Determining product pricing in an APCD RFP is a considerable challenge. On one hand states may strive to foster competition among vendors by not releasing cost constraints for the project. On the other hand, vendors may be better able to address the goals and needs of the project if they are fully informed of the resources and infrastructure that currently exist. One way of mitigating this challenge is to introduce the modularization of product pricing. States may initially focus on data management/consolidation, with attention shifting to analytic functions as the data warehouse is established. Provider directories and assigning attribution is an example of add-ons or modules that could be priced separately from core functions.

4. *In APCD development, the vendor often acts as a partner to help build internal capacity and knowledge while providing technical expertise and support.*

The process of APCD development is extremely iterative and can be greatly improved through collaboration and partnership between state and vendor. Many of the most successful cases have resulted from vendors and states acting as partners in development.

5. *Inclusion of a transition plan and data ownership rights upon contract termination.*

There have been some missteps in APCD RFP development with respect to termination clauses and vendor contracts. It is important when designing an RFP to be aware of these, particularly for projects that are not happening in-house. Such precautions may prevent the loss of analytic files, benchmarks, and other products that may be outsourced in the development process.

Top 7 RFP Problems: A Bidder's Perspective

*Pam Conrad, Senior Director
Business Development, State Government
Truven Health Analytics*

Typical problems that cause a good company to “no-bid” an RFP:

1. Too little time to submit a proposal – 2 months for an APCD is good, with extra time if the response period spans two or more 3-day holidays.
2. Too little time between RFP Q-A (publishing of final answers) and proposal due date – Bidders need at least 3 weeks, because the answers to RFP questions sometimes can cause significant change in the solution and scope.
3. An unrealistically small budget for the project given the requirements and the scope – We encourage buyers to disclose their project budgets in the RFP; doing so prevents bids from exceeding budget. The forces of competition will ensure that the bids don't automatically rise to the level of budget available.
4. Unrealistic implementation timeframes mandates– For a data aggregation RFP, assume 6 months if there are few and/or ready data suppliers or 12 months if there are many and/or unready data suppliers. Allow the bidders to propose realistic phase-in of the data sources. Late submission of complete and useable data by the data suppliers is the primary cause of implementation delays. Consider starting with fewer data suppliers – those that can submit data of acceptable quality – and adding the other suppliers later.
5. Too many technological barriers to bidding – Allow the bidders to propose the technological means and methods that most efficiently meet your business needs and objectives.
6. Too many legal barriers to bidding – For example, high bid bonds, high performance bonds, excessive performance penalties, excess liability, or inflexible ownership demands. Liability should not exceed the total contract value.
7. Too many practical barriers to making a reasonable profit – For example, excessive staffing demands, a combination of a low budget and high set-aside requirements, or excessive project management oversight that drives unnecessary deliverable documentation work. The deliverables should be proportionate to the size of the project. A \$1,000,000 project needs about ten deliverables; a \$10,000,000 project needs 30 deliverables.

Conclusions

A state RFP or RFI is a reflection of an extensive stakeholder input and planning process. The RFP lays out a roadmap or framework for implementation of the APCD. While states vary in their APCD structures and governance, the RFP is a means for building a comprehensive infrastructure for APCD data collection, analysis, and reporting. The more clarity the state can provide in desired functionality and requirements, the better the bidder response is likely to be. While APCD platforms and analytics are largely proprietary products, many are well-documented, and allow states to understand the protocols being implemented. In addition, as APCD development progresses, it is likely that open source measures, methods, and tools will become more readily available. These tools should be modularized to be able to integrate with proprietary methods, to give state more flexibility and comparability in reporting.

About the Authors

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APPENDIX A: Sample state RFP and RFI structures

Table 1: RFI Structures

Wisconsin (RFI)	Massachusetts (RFI)
Executive summary	Introduction
Project overview	Governance
RFI requirements	Funding
Vendor profile	Scope
Past experience	Uses of APCD data
Approach	MA APCD Infrastructure
Methodologies	Questions for response
Flexibility	Data Completeness
Implementation	Data validation
Service and business model	Data enhancement
Cost assessment	Master physician index
Participation to RFI	Data warehousing/meta data
RFI schedule	Data release
Questions, clarification, and submission	Online analytic processing
High level business requirements	Bench matrixing
Functional requirements	Data management/transformation
Interface	Tools
Integration	Response instructions
Information security requirements	Submission instructions
Performance requirements	Format
Availability	Additional RFP information
Technology	Comm-pass
Response format	RFI amendments
	Use of RFI info

Table 2: RFP Structures

Minnesota (RFP)	Maine (RFP)
Project overview	Introduction
Goal	Purpose and background
Tasks	General provisions
Data elements and format	Eligibility
Data collection: structure and management	Contract terms
Data collection: processing, validation, database development	Number of awards
Summary reporting: quality and completeness	Scope of services
Training and technical support	Data structure
Data access services	Current state
Project management	Planned technical architecture
General Contract responsibilities	Project management
Task timeline	Staged build
Eligibility	Roles and responsibilities
Proposal content	Training
Project summary	Operations
Project description	Budget
Background and experience	Key RFP events
Role of the state	Timeline
Location of services	Bidders conference
References	Questions
Cost Proposal	Submission
Submission	Submission requirements
Total contract costs	Format
Proposal evaluation	Content
General requirements	Evaluation and selection
Noncollusion	Process
COI	Scoring
Proposal contents	Selection and award
Disposition of responses	Appeal
Contingency fees	Contract administration
Sample contract	Document
Reimbursements	State agreement policies
Organization COI	RFP appendices

Table 2: RFP Structures, continued

Utah (RFP)	Rhode Island (RFP)
Introduction	Introduction
Background	Instructions/notifications
Future goals/objectives	Background
Statement of work	Purpose/Rationale
Data acceptance/transmittal	Scope of work
Data validation	Task 1: Development of submission requirements
Data Consolidation	Task 2: Data collection/aggregation
Analytic Services	Task 3: Database maintenance
Data dictionary	Task 4: Special projects
Evaluation	Proposal Submission
	Technical Proposal
	Executive summary
	Relevant experience
	Workplan
	Capacity
	Cost proposal
	Evaluation/award
	Terms/conditions

*APPENDIX B: Sample Evaluation Criteria, Utah RFP*⁵

Demonstrated ability to meet the scope of work

Understanding of the project

- a. How well has the contractor demonstrated a thorough understanding of the purpose and scope of the project
- b. How well has the contractor identified pertinent issues and potential problems related to the project?
- c. To what degree has the contractor demonstrated an understanding of the deliverables the state expects it to provide
Response to all sections 1-6 required
- d. Has the contractor demonstrated an understanding of the state's time schedule and can meet it.

Demonstrated technical capability

Methodology used

- a. How comprehensive is the methodology and does it depict a logical approach to fulfilling the requirements of the RFP
- b. How well does the methodology interface with the time schedule in the proposal

Management Plan for the Project

- a. How well does the management plan support the project requirements and logically lead to the deliverables required in the RFP?
- b. How well is accountability completely and clearly defined?
- c. Is the organization of the project team clear?
- d. How well does the management plan illustrate the lines of authority and communication?
- e. To what extent does the contractor already have the hardware, software, equipment and licenses necessary to perform contract?
- f. Has the contractor gone beyond the minimum tasks necessary to meet the objectives of the RFP?
- g. To what degree is the proposal practical and feasible?
- h. To what extent has the contractor identified potential problems?

Qualification and expertise of staff proposed for this project

- a. Do the individuals assigned to the project have experience on similar projects?
- b. Are resumes complete and do they demonstrate backgrounds that would be desirable for individuals engaged in the work the RFP requires?
- c. How extensive is the applicable education and experience of the personnel designated to work on the project?
- d. Has the contractor demonstrated experience in working on similar projects/data systems?
- e. Has the firm demonstrated experience in completing similar projects on time and within budget?
- f. If a subcontractor will perform work on the project, how well do they measure up to the evaluation used for the contractor?

Performance references for similar projects

- a. Have references been included?

⁵ State of Utah (2013). Request for proposals PR13053: Data Aggregation & Analytics for Utah's All Payer Claims Database (APCD).

APPENDIX C: Sample Evaluation Scoring, Utah RFP⁶

Score will be assigned as follows:

- 0 = Failure, no response
- 1 = Poor, inadequate, fails to meet requirement
- 2 = Fair, only partially responsive
- 3 = Average, meets minimum requirement
- 4 = Above average, exceeds minimum requirement
- 5 = Superior

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Technical Capabilities with Comparable Projects (40 points):
 - Evidence that the respondent fully understands the deliverables through the written proposal
 - Demonstrated ability to produce deliverables of similar size and scope in a timely and effective manner
 - Evidence of processes and systems to ensure the accuracy of work products
 - Evidence that respondent has the appropriate staffing resources to complete the work in a timely and high-quality manner
2. Total Cost (30 points):
 - Thoughtful estimates of startup and ongoing costs
 - Evidence of creative strategies to meet deliverables in the most cost effective manner
 - Past performance related to budget
3. Project Management Capabilities (30 points):
 - Demonstrated effectiveness in project planning, problem solving, attention to detail and follow-through
 - Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with project sponsors, including effective processes for timely and effective communication, progress reports and trouble-shooting
 - Past performance related to budget
 - Evidence of effective contingency planning, including risk mitigation tools and processes

Note: Cost will be a key factor in our ultimate purchasing decision. It is weighted more modestly at this stage in the evaluation in recognition of the need for greater mutual understanding of the capabilities of the respondent and the ways in which they might factor into our overall solution.

Evaluation Criteria:

- 30% Cost
- 30% Demonstrated ability to meet the scope of work
- 15% Demonstrated technical capability
- 20% Qualification and expertise of staff proposed for this project
- 5% Performance references for similar projects

⁶ State of Utah (2013). Request for proposals PR13053: Data Aggregation & Analytics for Utah's All Payer Claims Database (APCD).