

Request for Proposals

Overdose Prevention Center Consultant Services: Feasibility Assessment, Stakeholder Engagement, & Planning

Issued: April 20, 2023

Due: May 19, 2023

Contract Award: \$120,000

Introduction

The Yale Global Health Justice Partnership (GHJP) seeks an experienced consultant to oversee a three-phase project that will (a) determine the feasibility of an Overdose Prevention Center (OPC) in New Haven, Connecticut; (b) engage a variety of stakeholders to inform siting, policies, and operations; and (c) develop an implementation plan for launching such a program.

GHJP was established in 2012 as a joint program of the Yale Law School and Yale School of Public Health. It works at the interface of health, rights, and justice, engaging students, scholars, and practitioners to promote interdisciplinary, innovative, and effective responses to global health disparities. GHJP also works closely with local nonprofit and community-based organizations to move research into action.

Under this RFP, GHJP will work with a local community-based organization (CBO) to determine the relative risks and benefits of an OPC. The CBO will serve as the primary point-of-contact through the duration of the project. GHJP is serving strictly as an intermediary facilitator during the RFP phase of the bidding process; the contract will be held between the CBO and the Awarded Bidder.

The most appropriate bidders under this RFP will be individuals who have worked in an established OPC, or who have been part of planning and program development teams to launch an OPC or other harm reduction, overdose prevention services. They should be experienced in real-world application and operations, but also well-versed in the legal and financial barriers and community engagement hurdles. They should also feel comfortable with stakeholder engagement—including working closely with people

who use drugs (PWUD's), conduct sex work, have experienced homelessness, or have other relevant life experiences that will inform the project—as well as broader engagement with community leaders, elected officials, business owners, and others.

Note: This RFP is not a contract offer and no contract will exist unless and until a written contract is signed between the CBO and the Awarded Bidder.

Background

Harm reduction is a crucial part of the continuum of care for substance use disorder, as recognized by SAMHSA's comprehensive prevention strategy. Overdose prevention centers (OPCs) provide a range of services that support this approach, including:

- Overdose education, counseling, and referral to treatment for infectious diseases and substance use disorders
- Distribution of opioid overdose reversal medications to those most at risk of experiencing or witnessing an overdose
- Provision of syringes and safe use supplies to decrease the harms associated with drug use and related behaviors.
- Creating a safe and welcoming space for people who use drugs, free of stigma and judgment.

The inclusion of supervised consumption as a component of harm reduction services is the logical progression of service provision within these centers. OnPoint, the first sanctioned OPC in the United States, offers an array of services to the community, including a no-barrier drop-in center that provides hot meals, showers, free health and wellness services, mental health services, and case management. Monitored drug consumption is a small aspect of the program, the primary goal is to serve people who use drugs and the surrounding community.

From 2015 to 2022, New Haven recorded 548 overdose deaths; in 2018-2020 alone, New Haven recorded 1,865 nonfatal overdoses. To address the trends in overdose mortality, a transition team convened by the Mayor of New Haven recommended initiating dialogue in support of an OPC in a 2020 report. Since then the City of New Haven has established a Harm Reduction Taskforce to share information and collaborate on a range of initiatives connected to harm reduction. The taskforce hosted several presentations by experts on OPC's. In 2021, the Board of Health received and reviewed a report assembled by key experts on advancing progressive harm reduction strategies in New Haven; one of these strategies called for exploring the creation of an OPC.

Harm reduction stakeholders, working with the GHJP, are now seeking a consultant to conduct a feasibility study for an overdose prevention center followed by a comprehensive community engagement

and planning process. The consultant will (a) determine the feasibility for a specific community-based organization to implement an OPC program, (b) analyze the needs of individuals at risk of overdose in the New Haven community and assess the existing harm reduction services' ability to provide healthcare, case management, and overdose prevention support, and (c) assess the broader public health and community benefits of an OPC in New Haven. The outcome of the study will be a plan for implementing an OPC.

Project Dates

Start Date: Jul 10, 2023

End Date: June 30, 2023

Host Organization

This project will be carried out under the auspices of a local CBO and its Board of Directors. The consultant will work directly with the organization's Executive Director. At the conclusion of each phase, as outlined below, the consultant will offer a written report and presentation to the host organization's Board of Directors. The host agency is a trusted and well-established community-based organization, currently providing a range of direct services to the intended population.

Scope of Services

The work will be conducted in three phases:

PHASE 1: Feasibility Study (July 10 – September 15, 2023)

This phase will focus on the organizational feasibility of the host agency to implement an OPC. The study will provide a clear cost-benefit analysis, including a focused needs assessment of the prospective client base and potential for public health and broader community benefits, as well as an organizational risk analysis that includes an assessment of legal, financial, and strategic implications.

PHASE 2: Stakeholder Engagement (September 18 – December 31, 2023)

The consultant will spearhead OPC stakeholder engagement, convening a core OPC planning group and ad hoc groups as required. The consultant will initiate and implement a community consultation process with people vulnerable to overdose, harm reduction service recipients, business owners, elected officials and other relevant stakeholders. The findings from the community research process

will inform program design, architectural and siting considerations, and public safety strategies to enable the operation of an overdose prevention center.

PHASE 3: Operational and Implementation Plan (January 1 – June 30, 2024)

The consultant will work with the host agency to develop an operational and implementation plan (including site selection) with a proposed launch of the OPC in May 2024.

Expectations and Requirements

The consultant will be expected to work locally for significant portions of the contract, with in-person meetings with the host organization and a range of stakeholders. The consultant must be experienced in stakeholder engagement and project management, able to work independently and collaboratively, and have an expert knowledge in harm reduction strategies, overdose prevention, and public health best practices.

Throughout the phases, the consultant will be expected to engage with the local drug-using community for the purposes of program design and operations feedback, collect and analyze qualitative data, and serve as a liaison with state and local officials (including public health and community services officials, elected officials, zoning officials, and law enforcement).

Deliverables

At the conclusion of each of the above phases, the consultant will provide a written report and presentation to the host agency's Board of Directors, which will include at least the following:

Phase 1 Report:

Background

- Overview of the Overdose Problem in New Haven
- Desired Outcomes of establishing an Overdose Prevention Center (OPC)
 - Reduction in public drug use and associated waste
 - Decrease in overdose morbidity and mortality.
 - Increased coordination and access to services, including:
 - Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment (MOUD)
 - Housing
 - Mental Health Services
 - Pharmaceutical and Primary Care Services

Legal and Authority Assessment

- Overview of legal barriers to the operation of OPCs
- The city's legal authority to establish OPCs without state endorsement or legislation.
- Legal liability considerations and protection methods for the host organization

Funding Strategies and Sustainability

- Budgetary requirements for multi-year OPC operation
- Overview of public and private funding options
- Utilization of Opioid Settlement Dollars

Phase 2 Report:

Stakeholder Engagement

- Focus groups, interviews with People with Lived Experience (PWLE)
- Testimonials from successful program participants in other locations

Community Data Collection and Analysis

- Identification of community concerns regarding the OPC in New Haven
- Identification of community benefits associated with the OPC.
- Strategies for addressing community concerns.
- Effective messaging and communication approaches to support the OPC.

Design, Outreach and Location Considerations

- Factors that enable service utilization
- Racial and gender equity considerations
- Identification of community partners and co-located services for warm handoff opportunities
- Outreach and marketing strategy for promoting the OPC and reaching individuals who may benefit from the program.

Phase 3 Report:

Implementation Strategy and Timeline

- Operations guidelines
- Policies and procedures
- Data collection and reporting protocols, including data management and privacy.
- Neighborhood engagement and community relations strategies
- Collaboration and coordination with other service providers
- Training and staffing plan, including staff qualifications and skills.

Evaluation Considerations

- Metrics and indicators for monitoring and evaluating the OPC program.
- Program monitoring and continuous improvement process for regularly monitoring the program's progress and effectiveness and making necessary adjustments.

Response Expectations

Contractor will be selected based on overall quality response, relevance of experience. The GHJP, in consultation with the CBO, reserves the right to negotiate and may modify the overall scope of the work to be performed by the selected contractor.

Please provide the following information:

1. Cover Letter, outlining professional background and relevant experience, expertise, strengths, and reason(s) for interest in this project.
2. Professional Resume/CV.
3. List of at least three professional/academic references, including name, current affiliation, email address, phone number, and nature of relationship.

Responses to this RFP must be emailed as a PDF to Francesca Maviglia at francesca.maviglia@yale.edu **no later than Friday, May 19, 2023 by 5:00 pm.**

Right of Rejection & Clarification

GHJP and the host organization reserve the right to reject any and all statements of qualifications and to request clarification of information.

Independent Contractor

The Awarded Bidder shall be and operate as an independent contractor in the performance of consultant services. The Awarded Bidder will not be an employee of the host organization or GHJP in any respect.

Compliance with Laws

The Awarded Bidder shall comply with all applicable laws, bylaws and regulations, Federal, State, and any political subdivision thereof, including but not limited to, unemployment and workers' compensation, occupational safety, equal employment and affirmative action and wage and price laws insofar as applicable to the performance of the contract.

Subcontractors

The Awarded Bidder shall not subcontract any of its work or services to be performed to others without the express prior written consent of the host organization.

Nondisclosure

The Awarded Bidder shall agree that it will not divulge to third parties, without the written consent of the host organization, any information obtained from or through the host organization, GHJP, or others in connection with the project, except to the extent necessary to comply with this RFP.

Nondiscrimination

The Host Organization actively fosters an open, welcoming, and equitable environment and therefore does not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person on the grounds of race, color, age, sex (including pregnancy), religion, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, housing status, conviction history, financial condition, disability, past or present history of mental disorder, genetic information, HIV infection, AIDS or AIDS-related complex. This policy pertains specifically to employment and internships, advancement opportunities, compensation, discipline, termination, access to benefits and training, and any person accessing programs or services rendered at or by the agency; by extension and spirit, it also pertains to contractors. This policy also pertains to board membership, volunteer assignments, and all services provided, whether part of the agency's regular programs or those that are short-term. The agency will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship.

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