

Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program

Request for Proposals

October 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025

Overview:

The Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program, under the leadership of AgeSpan, Inc., is seeking to fund five to ten community-based provider partnerships from across the state to better reach, educate, and counsel Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries on preventing, detecting, and reporting healthcare errors, fraud, and abuse with particular focus being given to the following populations:

- Inner-city
- BIPOC
- Homebound
- Disabled
- Limited English proficient (LEP)
- Blind and visually impaired
- Deaf and hard of hearing
- LGBTQ+
- Rural
- Reentries
- Homeless, and
- Other hard-to-reach, vulnerable and disenfranchised communities

The MA SMP Program will make approximately \$200,000 available to fund community-based provider partnerships that have access and the existing infrastructure to serve target populations, and ensure that beneficiaries, family members, and caregivers are reached, educated, and counseled on how to prevent, detect, and report healthcare errors, fraud, and abuse. The MA SMP Program is part of a national initiative funded by the Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. There are 54 SMP Programs, one in each state and one in the territories of Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Washington D.C., all with the same charge of reaching, educating, and counseling Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, family members and caregivers on preventing, detecting, and reporting Medicare fraud. The MA SMP is a Program of AgeSpan, Inc., an Aging Services Access Point (ASAP) located in Lawrence, MA. The MA SMP achieves its mission of empowering Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, family members, and caregivers on preventing, detecting, and reporting healthcare errors, fraud, and abuse by promoting consumer engagement in their healthcare. It's critical that consumers understand their health benefits eligibility and how to navigate the everchanging healthcare delivery system. Engaged consumers are the first line of defense to combating healthcare errors, fraud

and abuse which cost American taxpayers billions of dollars annually and can have devastating health related outcomes.

Description of Procurement:

The MA SMP Program will make approximately \$200,000 available to fund 5 to 10 partnerships across the state from October 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025. Each community-based provider partnership should already have the infrastructure, cultural and linguistic capacity, and proven experience of working with diverse segments of the above-mentioned populations. Through these funded partnerships, the MA SMP Program will bolster the MA SMP presence and ability to seamlessly reach, educate, and counsel target populations on preventing, detecting, and reporting healthcare errors, fraud, and abuse. Staff and volunteers from community-based provider partnerships will work in collaboration with the MA SMP Program staff to conduct outreach and education, schedule SMP educational sessions, present the SMP Educational Sessions and refer appropriate complaints pertaining to healthcare errors, fraud, and/or abuse to the MA SMP Program for (individual interactions) comprehensive intakes. All other interactions with consumers will be tracked and reported to the MA SMP Program to be captured in the SMP Information and Reporting System (SIRS) national database. Community-based provider partnership staff will help identify needed informational materials to be developed, translated, printed, and design a dissemination plan to ensure target populations are reached more equitably. Grantees will collaborate with the MA SMP Program to strategize and implement a statewide multi-pronged media outreach and education campaign on preventing, detecting, and reporting healthcare errors, fraud, and abuse.

Community-based provider partnership staff and volunteers will attend monthly meetings and trainings offered by the MA SMP Program and Serving Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE) to further develop partnerships' staff capacity and expertise to serve target communities to better understand their health benefits eligibility and on preventing, detecting, and reporting healthcare errors, fraud, and abuse. Areas of the state with high concentrations of the target populations will be given priority over other regions.

Grantees will satisfy all MA SMP Program reporting and billing requirements. Billing will be submitted to Joanne Simone at JSimone@AgeSpan.org no later than the 15th of each month for the services rendered during the prior month, along with a short monthly progress report. (Template will be provided.)

Staff and volunteers from community-based provider partnerships will attend the following mandatory meetings and health benefits and SMP trainings:

- **SMP Foundations Training—*Mandatory Training*** offered by the MA SMP Program
- **Health Benefits University—*Mandatory Training*** offered by SHINE
- **MA SMP Program’s Monthly Statewide Team Member Meetings**
- **MA SMP Program’s Monthly Regional Advisory Council Meetings**

The MA SMP Program will provide SMP Foundations Training and mentoring on an ongoing basis to all staff and volunteers affiliated with grantees’ organizations.

Application Process Information and Instructions:

Important information RE: Grant Award: AgeSpan will award the Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Program grants to a lead organization for the community-based provider partnership. (Lead organization is the one submitting the grant application.) The MA SMP Program encourages the fostering of partnerships among community-based organizations, Councils on Aging and with regional SHINE Programs.

Deadline: All Applications must be submitted via email to MASMPRFP@AgeSpan.org by **Friday, August 30, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m.** Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed. **There will be no exceptions to the deadline.**

* **Templates can be downloaded from the MA SMP Program website, www.masmp.org.**

1. Read Request for Proposal Notice
2. Please submit a Letter of Intent by August 9, 2024 (Optional but recommended)
3. Submit a Comprehensive Detailed Proposal—Project Narrative outlining the responsibilities of each partner. (*8 pages maximum, using Times New Roman, size 12 font, double spaced*)
4. Scope of Work outlining the responsibilities of each partner
5. Work Plan* (Please use provided Work Plan template.)
6. Detailed Budget Narrative* (Please use provided Budget Narrative template.)
7. Non-Profit Certificate
8. Lobby Form
9. W-9

Applicants are prohibited from communicating with any employees of the MA SMP Program or AgeSpan regarding this RFP, except as otherwise specified, and no other MA SMP Program or AgeSpan employee, is authorized to provide any information or respond to any question concerning this RFP. **Questions may be submitted through August 15, 2024, via email to MASMPRFP@AgeSpan.org.**

Grant Submission Process Timeline

- A. August 5, 2024:** MA SMP Program Grant Bidders Conference Call **11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**
- B. August 9, 2024:** Letters of Intent are optional, but highly recommended. This will help determine the number of possible applications that will be received for this funding opportunity. Please email Letters of Intent to the attention of Lucilia Prates, director, MA SMP Program at MASMPRFP@AgeSpan.org.
- C. August 15, 2024:** Last day to submit RFP questions. RFP Questions must be submitted via email to MASMPRFP@AgeSpan.org
- D. August 30, 2024: Application Deadline:** All Applications must be submitted via email to MASMPRFP@AgeSpan.org by **Friday, August 30, 2024**, no later than 11:59 p.m. Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed.
There will be no exceptions to this deadline.
- E.** All applications will be reviewed by the Proposal Review Committee, which will make recommendations for funding and funding levels. Notification of awards will be sent by **Friday, September 13, 2024.**

Interested applicants are recommended to attend the Bidders Conference Call which will take place on Monday, August 5, 2024, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Application Format/Content

Proposals should follow outline stated below and should not exceed 8 pages. Please number all pages, double space, use Times New Roman, size 12 font. Proposals should outline the responsibilities of each partner.

A. Proposal Summary (Maximum 2 pages)

This should be a brief narrative that outlines the overall proposal, demographics and scope of services that will be provided and how the partnership will meet the goals of reaching and serving the target population/s. Describe how the partnership will reach and educate beneficiaries on understanding their health benefits eligibility and on preventing, detecting, and reporting healthcare errors, fraud and abuse.

B. Proposal Narrative (Maximum of 8 pages, Proposal Summary)

This section should include program goals, objectives and program work plan. Include a list of sites for service delivery, identifying those that are accessible for persons with disabilities and/or include your plan for meeting the needs of those with disabilities.

Describe the structure of the community-based provider partnership and staffing. This section should also include a copy of the job description/s and/or resumes of the staff that will work on the project, if available. Proposal Narrative should also include how the partnership will capture and evaluate the program's qualitative and quantitative outcomes.

C. Criteria for Selection and Awarding Funds

Funds will be awarded on a competitive basis. The following criteria will be used by the Proposal Review Committee to evaluate the applications:

1. Clearly defined roles for each provider within the partnership
2. Demonstrated ability, experience, and infrastructure to implement project
3. Identify project need, goals, and objectives
4. Demonstrate innovation and creativity

D. Evaluation

Measurement of performance under this grant will be conducted by standardized reporting systems: SIRS, Monthly Progress Reports, Client Satisfaction Surveys, as well as No. of Beneficiaries Reached, No. of Volunteers Recruited, and No. of Individual Interactions Referred to the MA SMP Program for comprehensive intakes. Additionally, there will be one monitoring visit during the funding cycle.

E. Compliance Documentation

Applicants are required to attach to the grant application the Civil Rights Assurance (the Affirmative Action Plan or Statement and proof of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)), a copy of the agency's current financial audit, a copy of the most current (within 5 years) documentation of status as 501© (3) non-profit entity, and a list of current board members and offices held.

F. Appeal Procedure

The MA SMP Program will send out written notices of awards and denials by September 13, 2024. If the applicant believes the denial was due to arbitrary or unsubstantiated grounds, then a request for an appeal must be mailed, registered mail, to Lucilia Prates, Director, MA SMP Program, **AgeSpan, Inc**, 280 Merrimack Street, Suite 400, Lawrence, MA 01843 within 10 days of adverse notification by the MA SMP Program Director.

G. Amendment or Withdrawal of RFP

AgeSpan reserves the right to amend the RFP at any time prior to the deadline for submission of proposals and to terminate this procurement in whole or in part at any time. Amendments and clarifications, if any, will be posted to www.masmp.org.

Contract Term: It is anticipated that any Contract awarded under this RFP shall have an initial Contract term scheduled to commence on October 1, 2024, and end on May 31, 2025.

AA/EEO Affirmative Market Program: AgeSpan is an EEO/AA agency. AgeSpan strongly encourages the participation of minority and/or women owned business enterprise (MWBE). Applicants who wish to be considered as an MWBE, must submit certification of their MWBE status with their application. To learn about certification, visit the Commonwealth's Supplier Diversity Office at <http://www.somwba.state.ma.us/default.aspx>.

Confidentiality

All Providers under contract to AgeSpan must comply with all state and federal laws and regulations, Executive Orders, and relevant Elder Affairs and Executive Office of Health and Human Services policies and procedures related to data security, privacy, and confidentiality, including without limitation the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), MGL c. 66A (FIPA), MGL c. 93H (Identity Theft), 201 CMR 17.00 et seq. (Standards for the Protection of Personal Information), Executive Order 504 (Order Regarding the Security and Confidentiality of Personal Information), and EOEA PI-97-55 (Privacy and Confidentiality) and its successors, and PI-00-07 (Elder Rights Review Committee and Protection of Clients as Research Subjects) and its successors.

Appropriations: Any contract awarded under this RFP is subject to appropriation of sufficient funding.