



Request for Proposals Medicaid

INTRODUCTION

As part of its efforts to attract a broader set of grantees, the Commonwealth Fund's Medicaid program is issuing a request for proposals (RFP) to engage historically underrepresented researchers, early-career researchers, and researchers or institutions that have not previously received Fund support. Applicants should submit a two-page letter of intent (LOI); those selected will be invited to submit a full proposal. Typical Medicaid program grants range from \$50,000 to \$120,000. Depending on the proposals submitted, we anticipate funding three to six projects through this RFP.

ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH FUND AND THE MEDICAID PROGRAM

The Commonwealth Fund's mission is to promote a high-performing health care system that achieves better access, improved quality, and greater efficiency, particularly for society's most vulnerable, including people with low income, individuals without health insurance, and people of color. The Fund carries out this mandate by supporting independent health policy research and making grants to improve health care practice and policy. More information on the foundation can be found [here](#).

The Fund's Medicaid program has two goals: 1) to inform efforts to maximize Medicaid enrollment under current law, and 2) to improve the quality of enrollees' health care and health outcomes. Focus areas include increasing access to affordable care and leveraging promising care delivery models. The Medicaid program works closely with the Fund's Vulnerable Populations program, which aims to help individuals with low income and people of color, who have greater difficulty obtaining health care, receive lower-quality care, and experience poorer health outcomes.

DEADLINES

July 31, 2020 by
1:00 p.m. EST:

Letters of intent
due to Fund

On or before
Aug. 31, 2020:

Fund to request
full proposals

Sept. 18, 2020 by
1:00 p.m. EST:

Full proposals
(*invited applicants
only*) due to Fund

On or before
Oct. 23, 2020:

Awards announced

Currently, the Fund's Medicaid program supports research documenting Medicaid's value to beneficiaries, providers, and the broader health system. In light of the unique pressures Medicaid programs face during the COVID-19 crisis, the Fund seeks to identify state and federal strategies for maintaining or expanding coverage while ensuring fiscal sustainability at the state and federal levels. Given Medicaid's central importance in meeting the needs of the nation's most vulnerable populations, addressing health equity concerns is an area of emphasis.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The Medicaid program is currently requesting LOIs for policy-relevant projects addressing the following two questions:

1. How can we deepen our understanding of health disparities within the Medicaid population and leverage the program to reduce disparities and achieve health equity?
 - a. How prevalent are health disparities across Medicaid-covered populations and what is the impact of these disparities? How does this prevalence and impact compare to other coverage sources?
 - b. What approaches have Medicaid programs taken to address disparities and achieve health equity at the state and federal levels? What results have these approaches yielded?
 - c. What factors have contributed to the success of initiatives that reduce health disparities within Medicaid populations? What barriers or challenges prevent broad adoption? What improvements have been seen, and among which groups?
2. What impact has COVID-19 had on Medicaid beneficiaries, providers, and delivery innovations at the state level? What successes, gaps, and deficiencies has the pandemic revealed within state Medicaid programs?
 - a. How did Medicaid facilitate or hinder rapid adjustments to delivery of care?
 - b. Are there changes to Medicaid payment models or delivery systems that should continue after the immediate emergency ends?
 - c. What role has Medicaid eligibility expansion played in states' ability to respond?

ELIGIBILITY

The Commonwealth Fund values differences among individuals across multiple dimensions including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, socioeconomic status, and veteran status. Building on a long history of working to address disparities in health care, the Fund strongly encourages underrepresented researchers to apply.

To be eligible to submit an LOI:

- You must have completed postgraduate studies.
- You cannot have been a principal investigator on a previous Fund grant.
- You must apply as an individual researcher and be employed by a tax-exempt organization, a 501(c)(3) institution, or a public agency.
- You **CANNOT** apply for funding to be used for:
 - general support, ongoing activities or existing deficits
 - endowment or capital costs, including construction, renovation or equipment
 - basic biomedical research
 - conferences, symposia, major media projects, or documentaries
 - individuals or scholarships
 - activities conducted by churches or other religious organizations, unless the projects for which you are seeking funding are secular in nature.

SELECTION CRITERIA

LOIs will be evaluated based on their relevance to the program, the research design, the significance of the proposed study, and their policy relevance.

APPLICATION PROCESS

All applicants will be required to submit the LOI and application materials through our [online portal](#).

Interested applicants must submit the following:

1. Application form
2. Letter of intent
3. Résumé or CV.

An LOI is an opportunity to introduce a research proposal to the Commonwealth Fund. If selected, researchers will be invited to develop a full proposal to be considered for funding. LOIs must not exceed two single-spaced pages, with one-inch margins, and must be in standard 11- or 12-point font. You are expected to dedicate most of your LOI to defining the research question and describing the research design, methods, and project activities. LOIs should contain a general budget estimate that includes a short description of key costs. Proposals must be relevant to the Fund program's current priorities and should include a brief description of the qualifications and responsibilities of key investigator(s).

Please consider the following questions before submitting the LOI:

1. Does the proposal address an important policy question or set of questions consistent with the priority areas described above?
 - a. Applicants should clearly state their primary questions and/or hypotheses, explain their importance, and describe their relevance to the Fund's interests as well as to current Medicaid policy debate.
2. What is the likely policy contribution of this project, and why is this an ideal time to pursue?
 - a. Applicants should be aware of prior research in the field and state the specific outcomes expected, as well as how the project will contribute to the field.
3. Do the research design, methods, and proposed data appropriately address the research question(s)?
 - a. This section should clearly delineate how and why the chosen data and methods is appropriate to answering the research question

Application materials will be accepted until July 31, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. EST. After reviewing all LOIs, Fund staff will alert applicants by August 31, 2020, if a full proposal is requested. Selected applicants will be advised of the proposal guidelines. All proposals are due by September 18, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. EST. Grant awards will be announced by October 23, 2020.

Programmatic questions should be sent to rfp@cmwf.org. Answers to all questions will be posted weekly [here](#).

Technical questions regarding the online application system should be addressed to Grants and Systems Administrator Caitlyn Duer at cd@cmwf.org.