

RHPI Project Participation Requirements

RHPI Selection Considerations

RHPI funds hospitals that meet [Selection Consideration Criteria](#). Hospitals must be willing to participate in the RHPI Project as defined in the Office of Rural Health Policy (HRSA / DHHS) *Selection Considerations Criteria*. Hospitals are expected to participate in all steps of the performance improvement process, which includes development of the scope of work, training activities that support sustainability, and project follow up for outcomes documentation. Program training activities include [HELP webinars](#), Performance Management Group (PMG) calls, and conferences. The goal of the RHPI trainings is to assist supported hospitals with building staff capacity and sustaining performance gains post project.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) must be actively involved and engaged to lead and facilitate the project. RHPI works directly with the CEO to develop the project. The CEO should build awareness of the project with their Board members and staff. Projects are expected to be pushed down to management level to be implemented within the hospital. Reports should be shared with the Board and appropriate staff.

Hospitals are expected to implement consultant recommendations to sustain the projects. Therefore, hospitals should demonstrate performance gains with measurable outcomes. The CEO will work with the consultant and RHPI staff to 1) clarify the anticipated outcomes when developing the scope of work, and 2) identify indicators to measure the anticipated outcomes during the project. The indicators utilized to evaluate ongoing performance improvement should be industry accepted financial, operational, and/or quality standard(s). RHPI and Consultants are not responsible for outcomes. Outcomes are dependent upon the implementation of the recommendations by the hospital executive and management teams.

RHPI must report individual project outcomes to the Office of Rural Health Policy (HRSA/ DHHS). The CEO should document progress and successes following the completion of the project to be considered for future funding. Previously funded projects should be documented prior to the initiation of the next supported performance improvement activity (PIA). Rhonda Barcus, RHPI Project Associate, will schedule an interview call with about 9 months after the project to document project outcomes. You may contact Rhonda at RBarcus@mtnstatesgroup.org or 904-553-7452.

CEO Role in RHPI Projects

RHPI on-site consultations are large projects that provide valuable services to eligible hospitals. The projects require a commitment from the hospital CEO, Board, executive and management team members. Therefore, the CEO must be actively involved and engaged to facilitate the project and implement performance improvement recommendations. *RHPI Project works directly with the CEO, and does not accept a designated representative.* The CEO role and

involvement is critical to the overall success of the project. **The CEO is expected to facilitate the consultation project by:**

1. Responding in a timely manner to the program manager, RHPI staff, and the Consultant
2. Taking a leading role in the project
3. Scheduling the on-site consultation dates early while developing the SOW
4. Building awareness of the importance of the project with hospital Board and staff
5. Providing necessary data to the Consultant in a timely manner
6. Allocating adequate time to the Consultant for an effective and efficient on-site visit
7. Completing the project according to the SOW timetable
8. Working with the Consultant to develop recommendations
9. Finalizing the report by providing appropriate feedback to the Consultant in a timely manner
10. Implementing Consultant recommendations immediately to further support a successful project
11. Documenting project success, outcomes, and/or benefits of participation with the RHPI Project

Hospital Readiness – Hospitals Must be Ready to Move Forward

Hospitals should be ready to plan and initiate the project, and move forward with the project as per the established timeline within the finalized scope of work (SOW). If the CEO is unable to complete the planning process within a reasonable timeframe, initiate the project, and maintain the scheduled onsite visits as per the SOW, then the funding shall be redirected to another hospital. RHPI will place the hospital back in queue and serve the facility at a more convenient time for the CEO and/or the board. If the hospital is unable to meet participation requirements after initiation of the project, then the project will be terminated at that point, and the remaining funds directed to another facility.

Project Completion Dates

RHPI projects should be completed within 6 – 8 months and as per the CEO's confirmed scope of work (SOW). All projects must be completed and reported as per the SOW deadline for your hospital. RHPI Project is unable to roll projects over to the next fiscal year. Therefore, regardless of the status of your hospital project, the funding will be eliminated and project terminated if not completed within the project time frame.

Scope of Work: Pre-determined Anticipated Outcomes, Sustainability Plan, & Measurable Outcomes

The CEO is required to work with the program manager and Consultant to develop the Scope of Work (SOW). The SOW must contain pre-determined anticipated outcomes and a sustainability plan. The CEO must plan the initial implementation process while developing the SOW with the Consultant. The SOW should include, at least, an action plan to initiate the implementation of Consultant recommendations. The SOW may contain follow up visits, train-the-trainer models, staff training, and coaching calls to assist the CEO and executive team with the first phases of the implementation process. The CEO should also work with the consultant during the project to identify metrics to support the pre-determined anticipated outcomes in the scope of work. Final reports should include identified metrics to measure outcomes. Measures should be standard industry accepted financial, operational, and/or quality indicator(s).

Changes to the Scope of Work (SOW) are Not Permitted Once the Project is Finalized

The SOW and onsite dates are forwarded to the Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP), which is the RHPI Project funding agency. Since the program submits the SOW to the ORHP, changes to the onsite schedule and the SOW are not permitted once the project is finalized.

Changes to Consultant Onsite Dates are Not Permitted Once the Project is Finalized

All onsite dates must be selected and confirmed by the hospital CEO and Consultant prior to the project for funding. The SOW and onsite dates (consultant visit dates) are forwarded to the Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP), which is the RHPI Project funding agency. Because the program submits the consultant onsite date and project timeline to the ORHP, changes to the consultant onsite schedule are not permitted once the project is finalized. Onsite schedule changes, even at the request of the administrator, are not at the Consultant's discretion since he/she is under contract with the RHPI Project. Changes that impact the travel budget and/or the SOW must be approved with the RHPI Project. **Non-approved changes to the Consultant onsite visit schedule may negatively impact your hospital's total obligated funds and the services provided.** Contact Bethany Adams, program manager, directly at 904-553-0081 to discuss possible changes in the SOW and/or travel plans.

Development of Recommendations

Recommendations are required for all RHPI Projects, and action plans are required for all projects. The CEO should work collaboratively with the Consultant to develop the recommendations. *It is the CEO's responsibility to 1) request to review the recommendations prior to finalizing the report, and 2) review the recommendations to ensure that they meet the hospital's needs.* The Consultant is required by the RHPI Project to provide the CEO a deadline for feedback and revisions. *After the deadline, the recommendations are considered finalized.* This ensures that the project stays on track per the SOW timeline.

Final Report

It's the CEO's responsibility to review the final report to ensure that it meets the hospital's needs. The CEO should contact the Consultant to request a copy of the preliminary report, and provide feedback to finalize it. The Consultant is required by the RHPI Project to provide the CEO a deadline for feedback and revisions. *After the deadline, the report is considered finalized.* This ensures that the project stays on track per the SOW timeline.

Recommendation Adoption Progress (RAP): Documentation of Project Success

The Rural Hospital Performance Improvement (RHPI) Project is a federally-funded initiative that supports performance and quality improvement projects in eligible rural hospitals in the Mississippi Delta. As such, RHPI Project is required to report outcomes for both hospital projects and the program to the Office of Rural Health Policy (HRSA/ DHHS). Therefore, in Fiscal Year 2010 the RHPI project adopted a new process and report, called the **Recommendation Adoption Progress (RAP)** report. The purpose of the RAP is to gather information on the adoption of consultant recommendations, and ultimately project outcomes, by interviewing CEOs approximately one year after completion of an RHPI-sponsored onsite consultation. The goal of RAP is to demonstrate a hospital's progress over time by showing the extent to which a facility has implemented consultant recommendations. To be considered for funding, the CEO should

document project success and measurable outcomes with the program through a RAP interview with Rhonda Barcus, RHPI Project Associate. Contact Rhonda Barcus at 904-553-7452 or email her at rbarcus@mtnstatesgroup.org for more information on RAP process. To review the RAP questionnaire, go to:

<http://www.mtnstatesgroup.org/resources/rhpi/Project%20Outcomes%20Documentation.htm>

Participation in RHPI Sustainability Trainings

RHPI funds hospitals with onsite consultations that meet [Selection Consideration Criteria](#). To receive funding for onsite consultations, hospitals must be willing to participate in all steps of the performance improvement process, which includes program activities that support sustainability such as the HELP webinars, Performance Management Group (PMG) calls, and conferences. If the hospital has not participated in RHPI trainings, then the CEO should show evidence that staff has participated / is participating in other trainings such as those supported through the state office of rural health and hospital association. However, training must be targeted to all levels of the hospital, which includes executive and management team members and front-line staff. The goal of the sustainability trainings is to assist supported hospitals with building staff capacity and sustaining performance gains.

RHPI Process and Participation Requirements

1. CEO shall work with the program manager to define service needs.
2. CEO shall work with the program manager to select a Consultant.
3. CEO is responsible for developing a scope of work (SOW) with the Consultant.
4. SOW must include:
 - a Timeline for the project that contains a completion date. All projects must be completed within 6 – 8 months.
 - b Pre-scheduled on-site dates. Onsite dates must be pre-scheduled in the SOW in order to obligate funding for the project.
 - c A sustainability plan to initiate implementation of Consultant recommendations.
 - d Anticipated measureable outcomes.
5. CEO shall confirm with the program manager that the SOW is acceptable and it meets the hospital's performance improvement needs. Funding will be obligated after the program manager receives the CEO's confirmation.
6. Data must be submitted to the Consultant prior to funding, if applicable to the project. RHPI will finalize the contract for services for your hospital after data is submitted to the consultant.
7. The hospital must be ready to move forward. Hospitals that are unable to complete steps 1 – 6 will be placed back in queue and served at a later date, that is, when the hospital is ready to move forward. Hospitals must complete steps 1 – 6 in order to receive RHPI assistance and funding for its performance improvement project.
8. The CEO shall initiate the project according to the SOW. If the hospital is unable to initiate the project as per the SOW, then project should be terminated and the funding redirected to another hospital. The hospital would be placed back in queue and funded for when the administration is ready to move forward with the project.
9. CEO shall communicate with program manager during the project to ensure that it is on track as per the SOW. It's the CEO's / Administrator's responsibility to communicate concerns about the project to the program manager as it develops. This is especially important if the project is not moving forward to the satisfaction and expectation of the CEO and Executive Team.
10. The project should be completed as per the SOW timeline. The CEO shall work collaboratively with the Consultant to complete project activities and finalize the report.
11. CEO shall initiate the implementation of Consultant recommendations. The hospital is expected to implement recommendations to sustain the project and demonstrate measurable outcomes.
12. CEO must document project successes, outcomes, and/or benefits of participation through a follow up interview 9 – 12 months later. Post-project documentation is required for future funding.