# 2020 CARES Act Supported:

# Brain Health Support for Regional School Staff Project

## Purpose

The County Rural Offices of Social Services MHDS Region is a 28E-organized governmental entity comprised of seven counties in South Central Iowa. Those counties are Clarke, Decatur, Lucas, Marion, Monroe, Ringgold and Wayne. The Region is responsible for setting policy and funding priorities for Mental Health and Disability services for children and adults as assigned by the Iowa Legislature. For more information, please visit [www.crossmentalhealth.org](http://www.crossmentalhealth.org)

Under authority of the Federal government and pursuant to distribution of congressionally- appropriated CARES Act dollars to Iowa’s MHDS regions for the purpose of addressing mental health needs related to the 2020 COVID-19 health emergency, the CROSS Region is soliciting bids for mental wellness coaching and therapy services for school personnel who are employed by school districts within the seven-county area.\* Timing of this project is of essence as school staff need immediate support in order to be emotionally prepared for in-person and on-line teaching for the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. With an emphasis on adult mental wellness, students will begin the school year with teachers and staff who feel better about the health and safety of all.

## Duration of Contract

CROSS anticipates contracting with one or more mental health service providers for this service until the end of the 2020 calendar year or a later date if there is an extension of CARES Act funding.

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| Procurement Timetable | |
| Event | Date |
| CROSS releases RFP (via email to known providers in the region as well as on CROSS website) | 8/25/20 |
| CROSS accepts and responds to questions | 8/25/20-8/28/2020 |
| Proposals due by: | 5:00 pm on 8/31/2020 |
| Awards announced and granted | 9/4/20 |
| Rate Sheets updated or new contracts written | 9/8/20 |
| Anticipated start date for outreach and services | 9/8/20 |
| Services end | 12/31/20 |

## Project Scope and Specifications

Mental health service providers will offer the following:

* Outreach and education to inform school staff about the necessity to care for one’s own mental wellness during the trying times of a national pandemic
* Outreach and education to inform school staff of the availability of mental wellness coaching and therapy services available
* Appropriately trained and credentialed staff to provide mental wellness coaching
  + Mental wellness coaching consists of in-person, telephonic, or virtual sessions that provide school staff with tips on caring for their mental wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic. Coaching sessions will provide practical solutions for dealing with issues such as anxiety, insomnia, grief, the difficulty of dealing with day-to-day stresses, and the potential for longer term issues with chronic anxiety or depression.
  + Coaching sessions will also inform school staff of ways for helping students implement coping skills
* Mental health outpatient therapy as defined by Iowa Code 230A.106(2)”a”
* Aggregate reporting of utilization of the above services under this project and all data required by the federal government under the CARES Act guidelines

## Eligibility for Services

Traditional CROSS eligibility guidelines will not be applicable for this project. Successful bidders will be responsible for ensuring that anyone accessing mental wellness coaching or therapy under this project is employed by a school district in the seven-county area. Basic demographic information will also be gathered and reported.

Each school employee will be eligible for up to three (3) mental wellness coaching sessions and up to two (2) outpatient therapy sessions. Should a person need an intensity of services beyond this scope, CROSS eligibility guidelines will be enforced pursuant to the CROSS MHDS Services Management Plan.

## Budget

Maximum amounts available region-wide for each of the following:

Outreach and education = $10,000 discussion points on amounts, we don’t have clear idea of how many districts or employees will participate, the providers would have to be willing to accept a cap amount regardless of utilization

Mental Health coaching = $90,000

Outpatient therapy = $50,000

## Content of Proposals

Proposals from mental health providers located within the CROSS Region will be given priority. Although individual contracts will be considered, providers are also encouraged to submit proposals in partnership with others to ensure equitable access to the services of this project across the Region.

Agencies may bid for one or more of the allowable services or a combination thereof.

In order to facilitate prompt implementation of this project, proposals should be no longer than four (4) total pages and shall include the following:

* Name, location, contact information and licensure status of the proposed mental health provider(s)
* Description of the county or counties to be covered by the provider or provider partnership
* Description of the provider’s experience delivering services similar to those required above
* A preliminary plan for outreach and education activities
* A description of the mechanism to ensure eligibility i.e. that the person is employed by a school district located in the CROSS Region
* A plan for the provision of mental health coaching and description of delivery method(s)
* Description of how a person would be identified for therapy or other services beyond the initial coaching sessions
* Timeline for implementation
* Proposed budget and budget narrative
* A statement ensuring commitment for compliance with the Region’s federal reporting requirements of the CARES Act

## Proposal Submission

Proposals should be submitted via electronic mail no later than 5:00 pm on August 31, 2020 to:

Rachel Cecil

CROSS Region CEO

[Rachel.cecil@crossmhds.org](mailto:Rachel.cecil@crossmhds.org)

## Amendment to the RFP and Bid Proposal

CROSS reserves the right to amend or provide clarifications to the RFP at any time. Amendments will be posted to the CROSS’s website at [www.crossmentalhealth.org](http://www.crossmentalhealth.org). If the amendment occurs after the closing date for receipt of Bid Proposals or after a bidder has submitted their proposal, CROSS may, in its sole discretion, allow bidders to amend their Bid Proposals. If the bidder amends their Bid Proposal, the amendment shall be in writing and signed by the bidder. It is a mandatory requirement that the CEO shall receive any amendments by the deadline for submitting Bid Proposals. However, if the RFP is amended after receipt of proposals, any bid amendment must be received by the deadline set by the CROSS.

## Withdrawal of Bid Proposal

The bidder may withdraw a Proposal prior to the closing date for receipt of Proposals by submitting a written request to withdraw to the CROSS Region CEO.

## Costs of Preparing the Bid Proposal

The costs of preparation and delivery of Proposals are solely the responsibility of the bidder.

## Rejection of Bid Proposals

CROSS reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals, in whole and in part, and to cancel this RFP at any time prior to the execution of a written contract. Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the CROSS to enter into a contract.

## Review of Bid Proposals

Eligible Proposals shall be evaluated according to the following:

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| --- | --- |
| Summary of Bidder | * Name, address, contact information provided * Specific description of counties to be covered with proposal * Provider demonstrates sufficient experience delivering brain health services to adult populations |
| Financial Information | * Complete budget provided * Budget narrative provides adequate detail of plan for delivery of services |
| Service Delivery | * Proposal includes information on timeline, steps, and personnel responsible for outreach implementation * Proposal includes detail regarding eligibility determination, which is limited to proof that individuals served are employees of a regional school district * Proposal includes information on timeline, steps, and personnel responsible for brain health coaching * Proposal includes detail on identification criteria to transition a staff person from brain health coaching to outpatient therapy * Timeline for implementation demonstrates immediate implementation upon award and ability to continue through 12/30/20. |
| Reporting Assurances | * Proposal ensures commitment to assisting CROSS in meeting federal reporting requirements of the CARES Act |

Successful bidder(s) will be notified by electronic mail no later than 5:00 pm on September 4, 2020.

\**Funds will only be available for this project according to the guidelines in the federal CARES Act and during the time that those funds are available to the Region.*

*Recipient of funds agree to the following;*

**Monitoring, Review and Payment:**

1. The Recipient agrees to send invoice request for these grant dollars in a timely fashion to:

CROSS MHDS attn. Rachel Cecil, CEO

PO Box 627

Knoxville, IA 50138

*OR* by email to: [Rachel.cecil@crossmhds.org](mailto:Rachel.cecil@crossmhds.org) Subject: Cares Act Grant Invoice

1. The Recipient agrees to submit to CROSS MHDS a general invoice(s) including receipts and documentation (as well as the agency’s W-9) no later than December 14, 2020. Invoices received after December 14, 2020 will not be paid.
2. The Recipient shall keep detailed records and receipts for five years that show how funds were expended.
3. The Recipient shall provide detailed records and receipts, if requested, to CROSS MHDS by the end of the next business day or sooner if necessary due to a state or federal audit.
4. The Recipient acknowledges and agrees that payments from the Coronavirus Relief Fund only be used to cover expenses that:
   1. 1.      are necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID–19);  
      2.      were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020 (the date of enactment of the CARES Act) for the State or government; and  
      3.      were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020, and ends on December 30, 2020.
5. The Recipient agrees to participate in on-site regional reviews, if any, as well as participate in a federal audit of the Office of Inspector General should one be conducted.
6. The Recipient agrees to return any authorized COVID-19 Relief funds should it be determined through the course of an audit that it was found to be an unauthorized use of such funds.
7. The Recipient agrees that any items purchased under this grant shall do so as efficiently and effectively as possible and make every reasonable effort to ensure the commitment of public funds obtains the most value for the money spent.
8. The Recipient certifies that this funding is not duplicating other funding received for COVID-19 Relief.
9. The Recipient agrees to make every effort to expend funds received from this grant.

The Recipient agrees to refund to CROSS MHDS by December 30, 2020 any dollars paid by CROSS MHDS but not expended by December 14, 2020.