



request for applications

safety net integration 2014: advancing primary care and behavioral health integration through community collaboration

Important Dates

Informational Webinar:

Thursday, February 20, 2014

11:00am – 12:00pm (PST)

Register [here](#)

Applications Due:

By 5:00pm Friday, March 14, 2014

Notification of Grant Awards:

June 2014

How to Apply:

http://www.cybergrants.com/BSCF/SNI_2014

Eligibility – All applicants must:

- Be California safety net organizations working together, or pursuing new collaborations, to improve the integration of behavioral health and primary care
- Qualify as nonprofit, governmental, or tribal healthcare organizations, as listed on page 2 of the Request for Application
- Comply with other eligibility requirements on page 2 of the Request for Application

We strongly prefer to receive only one proposal per county. Proposals from multi-county or regional applicants are also acceptable.

Contact Information

Content Questions:

Technical Questions:

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1. Background

Blue Shield of California Foundation's Mission: Improve the lives of all Californians, particularly the underserved, by making health care accessible, effective, and affordable, and by ending domestic violence.

With full implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) now underway, the U.S. healthcare system is undergoing major changes aimed at improving access to high-quality care. In addition to expanding healthcare coverage, the ACA is encouraging innovation among providers, payers, and policymakers in order to achieve: more coordinated care-delivery models, particularly for complex populations; alternative payment methodologies that reward quality and value instead of volume; and, a wide variety of collaborative, co-located, and integrated service models designed to treat the “whole person”.

In California, the implementation of the Low Income Health Program (LIHP) created an opportunity for many safety net providers and county agencies to work together for the first time. The program's benefits package required new partnerships between primary care and behavioral health systems, which previously operated independently. These newly-integrated systems helped lay the groundwork for Medi-Cal expansion, and on January 1, 2014, the State Department of Health Care Services broadened the Medi-Cal services available to include mental health and substance abuse support. These new benefits require enhanced collaboration between Medi-Cal managed care plans and community-based safety net providers to ensure access to, and coordination of, services.

While these changes may be experienced as disruptive, they can also stimulate efforts to develop truly integrated systems of primary care and behavioral health across communities in California. Some communities have fully embraced the early opportunities for change. Others have only just begun the conversation.

In this Request for Applications (RFA), Blue Shield of California Foundation aims to support communities engaged in, or seeking to engage in, collaborative planning and action to improve systems-level integration of primary and behavioral health care. This initiative advances the Foundation's long-term objective to improve systems of care across the safety net by facilitating integration and coordination among providers and advancing system-wide delivery innovations. It also builds upon the Foundation's prior investments in the Low Income Health Programs and two rounds of safety net integration grantmaking in 2012-2013 that supported select communities in system-wide planning and testing of innovations for integrated care delivery.

While the initiative is designed to be responsive to the challenges and opportunities unique to each community, priority will be given to proposals that:

- Use the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Health Resources and Services Administration's [Six Levels of Collaboration/Integration Tool](#), the [Four Quadrant Model](#), or a similar system level planning tool to assess their community's level of integration, and design their efforts along the continuum to progress toward full integration for all populations

- Promote cross-system collaborations and partnerships to address the diverse physical, behavioral, social service and cultural needs of individuals across the spectrum – from those with mild to moderate to severe mental health conditions
- Consider the financing required to achieve and sustain an integrated system, engage Medi-Cal managed care organizations, and demonstrate knowledge of both the barriers and opportunities created by health reform
- Seek to collect, use, and analyze data to inform processes and enable information-sharing across systems
- Already include, or are willing to include, consumer perspectives and other patient-centered interactions into the planning and integration process
- Draw upon lessons learned from prior grant-funded pilots or integration initiatives, and incorporate promising models and strategies
- Reflect strong commitment and collaboration among a group of safety net organizations to advance shared goals

2. Eligibility

We request a single applicant, representing a larger group of local safety net organizations. In order to be eligible, the focus of the collaborative must be advancing integration of primary and behavioral health care at the systems level, not just within a single provider entity.

We strongly prefer to receive only one proposal per county. Proposals from multi-county or regional applicants are also acceptable.

Safety net organizations eligible to serve as lead applicants include:

- Community health centers that provide comprehensive primary care;
- Tribal health centers;
- Regional community health center consortia;
- County health or mental health agencies;
- County hospital systems;
- Local initiative health plans or county organized health systems;
- Healthcare districts;
- Private nonprofit safety net hospitals or systems; and
- Community-based organizations with deep involvement in the safety net healthcare system.

All applicants must meet Blue Shield of California Foundation's standard organizational requirements:

- Have a mission consistent with, or related to, the mission of Blue Shield of California Foundation
- Be a nonprofit and tax-exempt organization under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code (IRC) and defined as a public charity under 509(a) 1, 2, or 3 (types I, II, or a functionally integrated type III) or a governmental, tribal, or public entity
- Have a reputation of credibility and integrity
- Primarily serve Californians
- For past and current Foundation grantees, meet current grant agreement requirements, and be up-to-date on any and all reports from previous grants

3. Use of Funds

Grant activities may differ among communities. Some examples of activities eligible for support include:

- Regular meetings or convenings among primary care and behavioral health providers, counties, and Medi-Cal managed care plans to develop a shared vision and “blueprint” for system-wide integration of behavioral health and primary care
- Mapping existing access points and care pathways for primary care and behavioral health at the community level in order to identify and prioritize opportunities for integration
- Trainings and collective learning opportunities for partners and staff to learn about promising practices and develop new skills to facilitate primary care and behavioral health integration
- Designing or implementing integration models specifically tailored to reduce racial and ethnic disparities
- Development of key performance measures for assessing progress and quality of care across systems, and research into how these measures will be supported, implemented, and standardized
- Planning or piloting alternative payment strategies and documenting cost-effectiveness and operational efficiencies resulting from integrated behavioral-primary care models

For more information about what the Foundation does not fund, please visit:

<http://www.blueshieldcafoundation.org/grants/what-we-fund/eligibility-guidelines>

4. Grant Size and Term

Grant Size: \$100,000 - \$200,000

Applicants should align their proposed activities and grant amount with the degree to which the community is prepared for systems development or systems implementation. Factors to consider:

- Breadth and depth of existing collaborative relationships among key stakeholders in primary care, behavioral health and Medi-Cal managed care – does your community need to develop them or do they already exist?
- Degree of alignment among the stakeholders on solutions – does your community need to build knowledge and consensus around solutions or is it ready to implement them?
- Size, diversity and complexity of the community or communities served

Grant Term: 12 months, starting July 1, 2014

5. Proposal Evaluation

In evaluating proposals, we will look for a demonstration of:

- Compelling vision, commitment, and leadership among local safety net stakeholders to improve primary care and behavioral health integration *at a systems level*;
- History of collaboration among safety net providers and stakeholders, including prior

or existing forums in which safety net providers come together to discuss issues of mutual concern, or a serious commitment by safety net providers to develop this kind of forum;

- Integration approaches that build upon best practices within the fields of primary care and behavioral health;
- Collective accountability for the success or failure of funded activities across all partners;
- Quality and clarity of project objectives, work plan, and budget.

Review of, and due diligence on, the proposals will be conducted from March through May 2014. Applicants will be notified about their proposal's status by the end of June 2014.

6. How to Apply

1. Apply through our online grant system using the following custom link:

http://www.cybergrants.com/BSCF/SNI_2014

Note: Applications must be submitted using the link above. DO NOT submit through the Foundation's website.

2. Enter registered grantseeker email and password to login or register as a new grantseeker following the instructions at the top of the page.

Note: Only one grantseeker can be connected to each application.

3. On the Welcome page, scroll to the bottom of the page and click:

» **Start a New Application** «

4. After clicking the link, you will be directed to the application. There is a navigation bar at the top of each screen to allow for easy toggling between sections. At any time you can save information entered in the sections without completing it in full and move between sections or sign out and return to the application at a later time.

Notes:

- The name of this funding opportunity, "Safety Net Integration 2014," should appear above the navigation bar. If you do not see it, you are in the incorrect application. Exit the system and login through the link above.
 - Update organizational and contact information in the first two sections
 - Some fields in the application are pre-populated and cannot be edited
5. Click the "Submit" button on the preview application page to submit the application. You will receive an application receipt via email confirming your submission.

7. Contact Information

Content Questions: For questions related to the eligibility or content of the application, contact:

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(415) 229-6147
rachel.wick@blueshieldcafoundation.org

Technical Questions: For questions related to the online grants system or application process, contact:

Jessica Gau
Grants & Contracts Administrator
(415) 229-5468
Jessica.gau@blueshieldcafoundation.org

8. Key Dates

February 4, 2014	RFA Released
February 20, 2014 11:00am-12:00pm (PST)	Informational Webinar (optional) Register here (If you choose to participate, registration is required)
	FAQ's will be posted on Blue Shield of California Foundation website no later than Wednesday, February 26, 2014
March 14, 2014 5:00pm (PST)	Proposals due
March to May 2014	Proposals reviewed Due diligence and follow-up activities (as necessary)
June 2014	Notification of grant decisions
July 2014	Grant activities begin