

# FY 2011 Supplemental Beacon Health Center Funding Opportunity

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Below are common questions and answers for the FY 2011 Supplemental Beacon Health Center funding opportunity. The FAQs are organized under the following topics:

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## **ISSUE: General Information and Eligibility**

### **1. What is the purpose of the Beacon supplemental funding opportunity?**

The purpose of the Beacon supplemental funding opportunity is to enable health centers to participate in community-wide health care improvement initiatives that contain a strong information technology component. The recipient health centers are expected to use the supplemental funds to collaborate with Beacon Community Program grantees and improve their individual health center's capacity to share data and information within the Beacon Community.

### **2. What is a Beacon Community Program?**

The Beacon Community Program is a signature Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act initiative designed to support 17 selected communities throughout the United States with higher than average health information technology (IT) infrastructure to build and strengthen a health IT infrastructure; utilize it to improve health outcomes, care quality, and cost efficiencies; and spearhead innovations to achieve better health and health care. Each Beacon Community has a defined catchment area and a governance body comprised of different health care systems, clinicians, payers, employers, patient advocates, and IT leaders.

### **3. How can we get in touch with Beacon community leadership in my area?**

The contact information for Beacon Community Program leaders that health centers should contact is available in the form of an attachment with the Announcement for the Supplemental Funding for Health Centers in the Beacon Communities catchment areas. The list of Beacon Community grantees indicates which Beacon grantee each health center should contact. Additional information about each Beacon Community Program is available at [http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt/community/healthit\\_hhs\\_gov\\_onc\\_beacon\\_community\\_program\\_improving\\_health\\_through\\_health\\_it/1805](http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt/community/healthit_hhs_gov_onc_beacon_community_program_improving_health_through_health_it/1805)

### **4. What is the cap for Federal funds that can be requested?**

Eligible health centers can request up to \$100,000 in supplemental funds.

**5. When will funds for the Beacon project be available?**

The supplemental awards for Beacon projects will be issued on or around September 15, 2011.

**6. What is the length of the project period?**

HRSA has established a one-year project period.

**7. Who can apply for the Beacon supplemental funding?**

Eligible applicants are existing Health Center Program grantees that operate at least one site within a Beacon Community Program service area.

## **ISSUE: Application Development and Submission**

**8. Where can I get the Beacon supplemental funding instructions?**

The submission instructions for the Beacon supplemental funding were e-mailed to all eligible health center grantees and can be found on the technical assistance website

<http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/apply/assistance/beacon>.

**9. Does an applicant organization need to submit a letter of support?**

Yes. A letter of support from the geographical Beacon Community Program grantee must be submitted with the application. The letter should describe collaborative goals and how they will be achieved.

**10. How do I submit my application and when is it due?**

The application will be submitted through the Prior Approval Module in the EHB. Please refer to the *User Guide* distributed with the application instructions. The due date in EHB is July 29, 2011 at 8:00 PM ET.

## **ISSUE: Eligible Use of Funds NEW!**

**11. NEW What is the earliest date an expense can be incurred to be eligible for this funding?**

Beacon supplemental funds are not intended to replace existing resources. The use of these funds must be limited to costs, including equipment, incurred after the supplement was announced to health centers on June 21, 2011. The expense must be tied to the larger Beacon Community effort. Please note that all application budgets will be reviewed by HRSA for reasonableness and if expenses before the award date are not approved for use of Federal funds, the grantee will be responsible for those costs.

**12. NEW Can the Beacon supplemental funds be used to support enhancement of Electronic Health Records (EHR)?**

The budget must demonstrate how the proposed expenses will integrate the health center's activities with the specific Beacon Community goals and its quality improvement initiatives. Costs associated with an EHR system would be allowable if it enhances quality improvement initiatives and ties to the larger Beacon Community effort. Supplemental Beacon funds may not be used to supplant other Federal grants that have been awarded to health centers or health center controlled networks for certified EHR adoption.

**13. NEW Are there any restrictions on using funds for staffing or equipment purchases?**

Project activities and associated costs must tie to the larger Beacon effort. Costs for staff time, consultants, or equipment are allowable if they contribute to quality improvement initiatives and the larger Beacon Community effort.

## **ISSUE: Budget**

**14. Please provide instructions on what you want for the budget justification.**

A detailed budget justification in line-item format must be completed for the 12-month project period. **The budget justification must clearly describe each cost element and explain how each cost contributes to meeting the project's goals.** The budget justification also should include a clear description of the health center's sustainability approach.

**15. Can these funds replace existing funds for health information technology?**

No. Supplementary Beacon funds may not be used to supplant HRSA funds that have been allocated for similar HIT or EHR activities, such as Capital Improvement Program or Health Center Controlled Networks funding. Supplementary Beacon funds also may not be used to supplant existing contracts or grants with Beacon Community Programs.

**16. If I have specific questions on preparing my application budget, who should I contact?**

Please contact Brian Feldman in the Division of Grants Management Operations at [bfeldman@hrsa.gov](mailto:bfeldman@hrsa.gov) or 301-443-3190.

## **ISSUE: Technical Assistance and Contact Information**

**17. If I encounter technical difficulties when trying to submit my application electronically in HRSA's EHB, who should I contact?**

Please contact the BPHC Helpline for technical assistance on submitting an application in the HRSA EHBs. The BPHC Helpline can be reached at [BPHCHelpline@hrsa.gov](mailto:BPHCHelpline@hrsa.gov) or 1-877-974-2742.

**18. Who should I contact with programmatic questions concerning the Beacon Program and application requirements?**

Please contact Anna Poker in the Bureau of Primary Health Care's (BPHC) Office of Quality and Data at [BPHC\\_HIT@hrsa.gov](mailto:BPHC_HIT@hrsa.gov) or 301-443-1866.

**19. Will we have access to technical assistance during the project period?**

Health centers will have access to the Beacon Community learning network that spans across the nation and includes five domains (leadership and governance, clinical transformation, health IT and meaningful use, data and performance measurement, and sustainability) and several affinity groups on specific topics. To implement specific activities using the supplemental funding, health centers should partner with their local Beacon Community.