



Howard County, MD Mental Health Marketing Campaign RFP Released August 6, 2018

Introduction

Summary

The Horizon Foundation seeks proposals to create and execute a 12-month social marketing campaign that encourages individuals needing mental health services in Howard County to seek treatment.

National data tell us that one in five individuals in the U.S. experience mental illness, but less than 40% of people living with mental illness receive treatment. Nearly half of all cases of mental illness begin by age 14, and three quarters by age 24. Oftentimes, those who are struggling do not seek or receive treatment until long after the first onset of these symptoms. People typically face an average delay of 8-10 years between onset of symptoms and intervention.

The Foundation's overall goal is to develop an awareness campaign aimed at encouraging residents to seek treatment if help is needed. The Foundation's recently completed 5-year strategic plan highlighted mental health as a top priority, and our board, staff and community are committed to making a measurable impact on the number of individuals seeking treatment. The successful firm will present a thoughtful proposal that helps us reach this goal.

The Foundation will sign a 12-month contract starting in October 2018 with the winning firm, with the possibility of renewal for additional years based on the campaign's success.

If you plan to bid, please alert Tiffany Callender at the Foundation (tcallender@thehorizonfoundation.org) of your intent by August 15, 2018.

About The Foundation

The Horizon Foundation is the largest independent health philanthropy in Maryland. We lead community change so *everyone* in Howard County can live a longer, better life. We are committed to improving health through innovative initiatives, collaborative partnerships, strategic grantmaking and thoughtful advocacy. Learn more at www.thehorizonfoundation.org.

Campaign Considerations

Overall goal

There are many potential avenues for a campaign that addresses mental health. Understanding that early intervention plays a vital role in an individual's success and recovery, the Foundation has chosen to focus its campaign on encouraging residents to seek treatment if treatment is needed.

The Foundation understands that residents may be in various stages of the treatment continuum. Therefore, we are interested in a campaign that takes into account the different stages of seeking help:

- Individuals who may need treatment but are hesitant to seek help.
- Individuals who wish to seek treatment but are having trouble initiating (e.g., not knowing where to start, who to call, etc.).
- Individuals who are currently in treatment and might need encouragement to remain in treatment.

Again, the overarching theme across all groups is to normalize treatment and reduce the stigma connected with obtaining mental health services. Your proposal should be mindful of the different perspectives our diverse residents have about mental health treatment and consider how to customize messages to best reach people at different stages of readiness.

Subgroups to Consider

Along with understanding that individuals fall along a continuum in their willingness to seek treatment, the Foundation is particularly interested in two subgroups and how best to message to these individuals: minorities and parents.

Data indicate that minority populations, particularly Asian Americans, African Americans and Latinos, receive treatment at disproportionately lower rates than White populations. Some of these challenges are based on misconceptions about treatment. For example, some Asian cultures connect mental illness to the presence of evil spirits and disharmony within the individual, which discourages treatment within this culture. A successful campaign should address how to particularly engage these populations and encourage them to seek treatment.

Along with minority populations, the Foundation has a particular interest in reaching parents who may need services for their children. In conjunction with this marketing campaign, the Foundation has partnered with the local school system to provide access to mental health counselors on-site in Howard County schools. This support is aimed at making it easier for parents to seek services for children and to help those who need treatment receive services earlier. A successful campaign should consider how best to communicate to parents and encourage them to seek services for their children where needed.

Potential Messengers

While we do not know the most effective way to communicate the overarching message of the campaign, the Foundation has heard several suggestions from the community about how best to encourage treatment and reduce stigma. These suggestions included utilizing peers, faith leaders and others to reach the community.

Peers play an integral role in normalizing behaviors. Social media and community groups set the tone for what is considered “normal” behavior. Successful proposals should thoughtfully consider potential opportunities to leverage peer-to-peer interactions to encourage individuals to seek treatment.

Research also tells us that faith identity is often a key factor in how an individual views mental health, and it can impact whether seeking treatment is acceptable. For example, some individuals view taking psychotropic medication as an admission of being spiritually unwell and so may avoid treatment or reaching out to others for help. Your proposal should consider if/how messaging from faith leaders might encourage seeking treatment where needed.

Model of Campaign Considerations

The following grid summarizes the overall campaign goal and the considerations your proposal should address:

| GOAL: ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS TO SEEK TREATMENT – NORMALIZE MENTAL HEALTH | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Individuals who may need services but are hesitant seeking treatment | Individuals who want treatment but have trouble initiating | Individuals currently in treatment who might need encouragement to continue |
| | <i>(with a particular consideration of how to reach minority groups and parents)</i> | | |
| Potential barriers to explore/consider when developing a campaign to encourage these residents to engage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stigma ▪ Fear of being seen as abnormal ▪ Misconceptions about having a mental illness ▪ Cultural stereotypes (e.g., that mental health challenges are brought on by evil spirits) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confusion about how to navigate the system ▪ Worries about time commitments and process ▪ Stigma ▪ Fear of being seen as abnormal ▪ Affordability ▪ Finding a provider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stigma ▪ Fear of being seen as abnormal ▪ History of misdiagnosis (e.g., repeated changes to diagnosis and treatment regimen) |
| Potential messengers | Peers? | Faith leaders? | Others? |

We recognize there are many elements indicated here for a potential campaign. We also recognize that this is not a comprehensive list of barriers or potential approaches, nor are these definitely the right messengers for the campaign.

While this grid outlines the Foundation’s overall goal and the considerations that have come to our attention, your proposal should weigh these elements and determine what is essential to a successful campaign. We are also open to campaigns with a narrower age target (e.g., focusing on parents and families, given our work with the school system on school-based mental health) if you believe this will be the most effective marketing approach. We look to your guidance on how best to reach our overall goal.

Substance Use

It is important to note that this campaign will focus on mental health treatment and not substance use treatment. We acknowledge that mental health and substance use often co-occur. We also recognize the increased use of opioids nationwide and the ongoing challenges with providing substance use treatment. However, given the goals of the Foundation’s strategic plan, this campaign will focus on mental health treatment.

Required Proposal Elements

Proposals should describe a comprehensive campaign that incorporates different mediums to effectively reach Howard County residents. Proposals should address how each of the following will be utilized:

1) Message Development/Market Research

- Use qualitative and/or quantitative methods to determine the most powerful, effective and emotional messages to convince Howard County residents to seek treatment if needed.
- Traditionally, minority populations are less likely to seek treatment. Therefore, where possible, messaging and market research data should be broken down by race/ethnicity.
- What messaging approach might also convince parents to get help for their child and utilize the new school based mental health system?

2) Marketing Approach

- Assist the Foundation in developing and executing a comprehensive integrated social marketing plan that delivers effective messages to our target population. Given the amount of money allocated and the intervention targets, the Foundation thinks that a campaign focused on the following could have significant impact the first year and should be included in your response:
 - Paid media
 - Develop a paid media strategy that includes, as appropriate, the development and purchase of sponsored social media posts, display ads, digital video ads, traditional mass media (e.g., cable TV, radio, etc.), text ads, etc.
 - Social media
 - Develop a social media strategy based on message testing that engages residents; focus on groups most likely to use and be impacted by social media.
 - Assist the Foundation in selecting the best social media outlets given our targets, conducting fan acquisition campaigns (if needed for your approach) and maintaining an effective social media presence.
 - Collateral materials
 - Create compelling print materials such as posters, rack cards, specialized materials for libraries, provider offices, hospitals, faith communities and other locations.

3) Evaluation

- Address how your firm will measure the effectiveness of its efforts.

Project Budget

- The Foundation has budgeted \$300,000 for all work associated with this proposal for a 12-month period (October 2018 – September 2019). A contract for that time period resulting from this **Request for Proposal** will be issued with an option to renew for additional years upon mutual agreement and based on performance.
- Provide an itemized budget and detailed budget narrative broken down by the **Required Proposal Elements** above, and ensuring the **Campaign Considerations** are addressed.
- Please include estimates on initial recommended print runs, if any, based on your campaign recommendations.

Submission Requirements

Proposals should be limited to no more than 20 pages (8 ½ x 11), with the exception of appendices. Please provide the following information in your response:

Agency Overview

- Briefly describe your agency/firm's capacity to complete our project on time and on budget (e.g., staff, equipment, software, office location, etc.).

Details of Current Proposal

- Detail how your firm would provide the **Required Proposal Elements** while taking into account the **Campaign Considerations**, as outlined above.
- Provide a proposed timeline for completion of the project.
- Provide an itemized budget and budget narrative for the 12-month time period.
- Identify any services that would be subcontracted, with the specific responsibilities and a brief background of the subcontractor.

References

- Provide current reference information including current names and phone numbers for three current or former clients.

Disclosure Statement

- Please disclose any activities or work for the health care industry within the past five years, including any work related to mental health (including substance use), end-of-life care, and lifestyle behaviors (e.g., nutrition, physical activity, etc.).

Required appendices (not subject to the 20-page limit):

- Provide select examples of past marketing campaigns you have worked on including any metrics that illustrate the effectiveness of the campaign. Include any former work you have done on similar health issues.
- Submit documentation about your firm's financial strength (e.g., an audited financial statement, a letter from your accountant or bank, etc.)
- Provide an organizational chart of the organization indicating location and anticipated supervisory responsibilities of management and staff assigned to this project. The organization chart must indicate any relationship to a parent company and subsidiaries.
- Include the names and resumes or bios of all individuals who would directly work on this project and outline each person's role.

Optional appendices (not subject to the 20-page limit):

- Examples of proposed creative work for this project as cited in the narrative section of the proposal.
- Examples of any former work you have done on similar health issues.

Evaluation Criteria

- Experience: The firm has a track record of high-quality design and vastly creative social marketing work as evidenced by samples included in the proposal.
- Suitability of the Proposal: The proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP by addressing the **Required Proposal Elements**, **Campaign Considerations**, **Budget** and **Submission Requirements** sections of this RFP, and providing a clear plan of work.

- Expertise: The firm demonstrates expertise in conducting the work required as evidenced by the proposal, references and proposed project team.
- Examples: The firm demonstrates successful completion of similar projects and demonstration of the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- Budget: The proposed budget is consistent with the value offered by the agency/firm.
- Presentation: Information is presented in a clear, logical, well-organized manner.

Timeframe

- Interim milestones will be determined after bid selection and award of contract.
- The successful agency/firm will be able to commence work on or before October 15, 2018 and be ready to launch the marketing portion of the campaign on or before March, 2019. Please include a proposed timeline in your response.

Assumptions and Agreements

- This is an open RFP process. We are interested in and open to working with new firms and so encourage all applications. If you decide to bid, please alert Tiffany Callender at the Horizon Foundation at tcallender@thehorizonfoundation.org by August 15, 2018.
- Full proposals must be received by September 14, 2018 at 5 PM EST. Any materials received after that time will not be considered.
- The Horizon Foundation reserves the right to dismiss any and all bids.
- The Horizon Foundation will negotiate contract terms upon selection.
- All contracts are subject to review by the Foundation legal counsel and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

Rights of Foundation

- Each bidder shall bear its own costs and expenses incurred in preparing and submitting the bid. It should be understood and agreed that the Foundation accepts no responsibility for any costs and expenses incurred by bidders in preparing and submitting such bids. The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer of the company submitting the proposal.
- The price you quote should be all-inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.
- It is understood that the aforementioned specifications are preliminary and subject to change at the discretion of the Foundation, the client. It is understood that meetings will need to be held with Bidder and Client groups to refine requirements for specific work plans.
- Bidder is required to bid on the requirements as detailed in this RFP. However, if they so wish, Bidder is encouraged to offer technologies and solutions beyond those specified here.
- All final materials, ideas, designs, code, artwork and products created or developed during work on this project are the sole property of the Foundation. It is agreed that the Foundation will hold the copyright and source materials for any and all work related to this project.
- All materials will be delivered to the Foundation's contact person at each major milestone in the schedule, in an electronic format.
- Award shall be made in accordance with the best interests of the Foundation, which in most cases shall be deemed to be the most responsible bidder that meets or exceeds specifications. The bidder understands that written notice of award will constitute acceptance of the bid offer, subject to such changes as may have been negotiated.
- Attention to detail, information security, and adherence to budget and timeline are essential.

Selection Process Schedule

| Task | Deadline |
|---|------------------------|
| RFP sent | August 6, 2018 |
| Notification of Bidding to Foundation by Interested Firms | August 15, 2018 |
| Bidders Conference | August 17, 2018 @ 2 PM |
| RFP Due to Foundation | September 14 – COB |
| Interviews (In Person, If Possible) with 3 to 4 Finalists | October 1 – 5, 2018 |
| Award Decision | by October 8, 2018 |
| Project Start Date | October 15, 2018 |
| Marketing Campaign Begins | by March 2019 |

Contact Information for Questions

Please direct questions related to this proposal to Tiffany Callender, Senior Program Officer, at the Horizon Foundation via email: tcallender@thehorizonfoundation.org. Questions will be fielded up until the RFP due date.

Questions for the benefit of the group will be posted and shared to all bidding firms. Please do not contact any other members of the Foundation staff with questions unless directed.

A bidder's Q&A conference will also be held on August 17, 2018 at 2 PM to allow for a live Q&A session with Foundation staff. Log-in information will be shared with firms once they alert the Foundation to their intent to bid.

Proposal Submission

Once you have indicated your intentions to bid on this RFP, instructions for submission will be sent via email. All responses are due by 5:00 PM (EST) on September 14, 2018.

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Appendix Additional Data and Background Information on Mental Health

Mental Health Basics (<https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm>)

What is mental illness?

Mental illnesses are conditions that affect a person's thinking, feeling, mood or behavior, such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. Such conditions may be occasional or long-lasting (chronic) and affect someone's ability to relate to others and function each day.

What is mental health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Although the terms are often used interchangeably, poor mental health and mental illness are not the same things. A person can experience poor mental health and not be diagnosed with a mental illness. Likewise, a person diagnosed with a mental illness can experience periods of physical, mental, and social well-being.

Why is mental health important for overall health?

Mental and physical health are equally important components of overall health. Mental illness, especially depression, increases the risk for many types of physical health problems, particularly long-lasting conditions like stroke, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease. Similarly, the presence of chronic conditions can increase the risk for mental illness.

Can your mental health change over time?

Yes, it's important to remember that a person's mental health can change over time, depending on many factors. When the demands placed on a person exceed their resources and coping abilities, their mental health could be impacted. For example, if someone is working long hours, caring for an ill relative or experiencing economic hardship they may experience poor mental health.

How common are mental illnesses?

Mental illnesses are among the most common health conditions in the United States:

- More than 50% will be diagnosed with a mental illness or disorder at some point in their lifetime
- 1 in 5 Americans will experience a mental illness in a given year
- 1 in 5 children, either currently or at some point during their life, have had a seriously debilitating mental illness
- 1 in 25 Americans lives with a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression

What causes mental illness?

There is no single cause for mental illness. A number of factors can contribute to risk for mental illness, such as:

- Early adverse life experiences, such as trauma or a history of abuse (for example, child abuse, sexual assault, witnessing violence, etc.)
- Experiences related to other ongoing (chronic) medical condition, such as cancer or diabetes

- Biological factors, such as genes or chemical imbalances in the brain
- Use of alcohol or recreational drugs
- Having few friends
- Having feeling of loneliness or isolation

Stigma (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/why-we-worry/201308/mental-health-stigma>)

Mental health stigma can be divided into two distinct types:

- **Social stigma** is characterized by prejudicial attitudes and discriminating behavior directed towards individuals with mental health problems as a result of the psychiatric label they have been given.
- In contrast, **perceived stigma** or **self-stigma** is the internalizing by the mental health sufferer of their perceptions of discrimination (Link, Cullen, Struening & Shrout, 1989), and perceived stigma can significantly affect feelings of shame and lead to poorer treatment outcomes (Perlick, Rosenheck, Clarkin, Sirey et al., 2001).

Martin, Pescosolido and Tuch (2000) identified the percentage of Americans reporting they are definitely or probably unwilling to have a person with mental illness:

- Move next door (38%)
- Spend an evening socializing with them (56%)
- Make friends with them (33%)
- Work closely with them (58%)
- Marry into their family (68%)

Treatment Frequency in Howard County (www.howardcountyhealthassessmentsurvey.com)

The 2016 Howard County Health Assessment Survey (HCHAS) found that 11% of adult residents report taking medication or receiving treatment from a doctor or other health professional for a mental health condition or emotional problem.

This is well below national estimates that one in five adults experiences mental illness in a given year. And while 11% is the aggregate number, race/ethnicity breakouts reveal a large disparity in mental health treatment – respectively:

- White (15%)
- African American (7%)
- Asian (2%)
- Hispanic (8%)

This likely indicates both the underreporting of treatment overall as well as a lower rate of seeking treatment among minority populations.

The 2016 HCHAS also asked parents if a doctor or health care provider ever told them that any child in their household had depression or anxiety problems. Responses showed that 11% of parents respond in the affirmative to this question; again, below what would be expected.

Howard County Youth Mental Health

<https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/ccdpc/Reports/Pages/yrbs.aspx#howard>

The 2016 Youth Risk Behavior Survey of Howard County students identified moderately high rates of depression and suicidality in high school and middle school students. Questions asked of students showed:

- The percentage of students who felt sad or hopeless (almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row so that they stopped doing some usual activities, ever during the 12 months before the survey)
 - High school (26.4%)
 - Middle school (21.5%)

- The percentage of students who seriously considered attempting suicide (during the 12 months before the survey)
 - 16.2%

- The percentage of students who made a plan about how they would attempt suicide (during the 12 months before the survey)
 - 13.8%

The high number of students who report feelings of sadness and hopelessness and the percentage of parents indicating that they have been told their child has a mental health challenge (11%, per the above mentioned HCHAS) also indicates a gap in treatment and the need for an approach that encourages seeking services where needed.