



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): *Open Access Clinics*

Pre-Proposal Conference Held: July 7, 2023 | 2:30 p.m.
Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc.

BHSB Facilitators:

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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Does the clinic have to be located in these counties or do the clinics just have to be able to service these counties? Specifically, would a provider offering virtual services be eligible?

Clinics that only provide virtual services are eligible to apply if the clinic markets services to residents in Baltimore City and Baltimore, Howard and Carroll counties and serves residents in those counties.

Does the provider have to be available 24/7?

Open Access clinics are not required to schedule 24/7. Once they begin offering open access appointments, clinics will receive referrals from the 988 Helpline after hours and on weekends, but clinics are not required to respond to schedule an appointment with the consumer until the next business day.

Are extra points awarded if additional services are offered? E.g., OTP, PHP/ IOP/OP, OMHC?

No.

Is transportation limited to direct transport? Can it be applied to bus tokens? Can transportation be used to take patients home?

When developing the proposed budget, please include the types of transportation your clinic believes will best serve your consumer population. This can include bus tokens, cab rides or ride-sharing services and can include return transportation.

Will the provider also serve adolescents/youth?



Open Access clinics need to provide open access appointments to any population that they currently serve, but they do not have to expand to new populations that they don't currently serve.

I am contemplating submitting a proposal. However, what is the process to be listed as a referral site from 988 if I decide not to submit a proposal?

At this time 988 referrals are only going to open access pilot clinics. BHSB may expand the clinics to which referrals are made in the future to non-pilot clinics – if you are interested in this please email Chauna.brocht@bhsbaltimore.org and she will let you know when this available.

Is a financial compilation acceptable instead of the audit?

We can accept unaudited financial statements only if they are accompanied by a profit and loss statement. Audits are preferred.

How quickly are clients expected to be admitted after referral from 988?

The provider should contact the client by the next business day and offer the next available open access slot.

Individuals are screened via 988 and do not require crisis services and are assessed as requiring OP services. Would you happen to have an idea as to what the primary OP needs are? SUD? Mental health? Both?

The consumers that are screened via 988 have both SUD and mental health needs, and some consumers have both needs. The consumer is matched to the Open Access clinic based on the consumer's needs and the services provided by the clinic.

What does the consultant help with?

The consultant provides technical assistance, completes an organizational assessment, collects baseline and ongoing data, co-designs workplans tailored to needs of each pilot site, convenes a learning community, and develops staff training.

Can you elaborate on what an "open access slot" means?

Open Access refers to intake and diagnostic evaluation services for behavioral health available on the same day they are requested. For clarity, the Open Access model is not the same as walk-in services, which are accessed without an appointment.



How will the 988 portal integrate with the clinic?

The secure 988 portal will alert the clinic with a notification that there is a referral waiting for them. The provider will then log into the portal and accept or reject the client based on open access availability and the appropriateness of the referral. The clinic will then provide behavioral health services as usual.

Are there technical system requirements to access the portal and work with the consultant, CMAG?

No, there are no special requirements. The portal is web-based. CMAG will work within the providers' existing systems.

Will the consumers have both public and private insurance?

The insurance accepted would be whatever insurance the clinic already accepts. BHSB aims to have a mix of insurance types.

How will clinics bill uninsured consumers?

The clinic is not expected to offer services it doesn't already provide. So, it would bill uninsured consumers as it does in its existing policies. For example, if the clinic charges on a sliding scale, it would continue to do that.

Is there a monthly stipend?

The seed funding is \$95,000 per year (January 2024-December 2024) per clinic location. You do not need to spend it each month. You can spend it earlier or later in the program as needed.

Can you just briefly review the basic difference between "open access" and same day admission?

We use the terms interchangeably.

Is there a dedicated person to give application documents to?

You will use the Apply website to submit your application, including all documents. <https://bhsb.smapply.org/>. All questions about the procurement process should be addressed to procurements@bhsbaltimore.org.

Will other Open Access clinics in the cohort accept a referral if my clinic does not have the capacity to provide ongoing counseling services for the client?



If the provider does not have capacity to accept the referral, the clinic would reject the referral and the 988 counselor would find the consumer another clinic.

How many crisis calls are there on average?

There is no set number, but BHSB doesn't anticipate a clinic could be overwhelmed with referral requests. Clinics can decline referrals if they don't have the capacity to serve the consumer.

Does the clinic need to schedule the client within 24 hours or just have an intake appointment and speak with someone within 24 hours?

The clinic will need to contact the client by the next business day and offer the next available open access appointment.

Is there a minimum number of appointments/open access hours per week that providers must offer?

There is no minimum number of open access hours. The clinics will work with the consultant to determine the appropriate number of open access hours based on the clinic's size and staffing.

Do the deliverables include the number of consumers that clinics are expected to meet within the fiscal year?

There is no minimum number of consumers, but there is an expectation that a percentage of the consumers that you serve will be served through Open Access. Keep in mind that the clinic should do its own marketing in addition to accepting the 988 referrals that are sent to the clinic.

There are extra points for clinics serving pre- and peri-natal consumers. Will those populations be provided mental health services or would the clinic need to assess the mother?

This would be mental health services.

What is the audit process?

There is a quality audit in which BHSB staff will ensure that deliverables are being met.

What about the financial audit requested in the application?

Applicants should submit their most recent financial audit. This will typically include a signed letter from an auditor. If this is not available, the clinic can



submit unaudited financial statements, but it must also include its profit and loss statement.

At the end of the contract year, what happens with the open access program?

The clinic can opt to continue being a referral source for 988. Most of the previous cohort elected to continue to receive referrals from 988. The clinic will work with the consultant to determine a sustainability plan so that it can continue to offer Open Access appointments after the contract ends.

We are still waiting for the 2022 audit from our accountant. Can we send the latest one for 2021?

Yes. However, anything older will not be acceptable.

Did you say that you need the original Certificate of Good Standing?

We need a pdf of the actual certificate. This is as opposed to a screenshot from the State Department of Assessments and Taxation website.

Is there any data on which health insurance carriers are most frequently seen as the provider for Maryland residents?

Consumers referred through Open Access have a range of insurance types, but Open Access clinics only need to serve clients who have insurance that they currently accept.

Can you describe the connection between a clinic's submission on proposed services and the work with the program consultant to determine the extent of deliverables and staffing requirements?

The clinic's proposal and budget should describe how they anticipate using the seed funding to provide Open Access services. After meeting with the consultant if funding has been awarded, the clinic will have an opportunity to submit a budget modification to BHSB if they determine that they need to use the funding for different program purposes.

Are you able to describe the 988 online portal and how it communicates/integrates with the provider?

The clinic will get a notification that there is a referral waiting for them in the secure portal. The provider will then log into the portal and accept or reject the client based on open access availability and the appropriateness of the referral.

End of Questions and Answers