

Grant Initiatives

The MetroWest Health Foundation recently completed a new strategic plan that will guide our grantmaking and program activities for the next five years. This plan calls for the foundation to move from an issue-based programmatic approach to a cross-cutting and more integrated approach focused on building resilient, healthy and equitable communities. Our new focus will be on engaging communities – residents, leaders, grantees and others – in a shared goal of creating long-lasting change. The plan also expands our focus on health equity so that all residents have full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to lead healthy lives.

In keeping with the recommendations of the plan, we are pleased to solicit proposals from eligible nonprofit and government organizations for the following grantmaking initiatives:

- Health Equity
- Coalition Strengthening
- Responsive

Application Information

Proposals must be submitted online and be received by the foundation by **4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 5**. Instructions for the online application are available on the foundation’s website at www.mwhealth.org.

The application process consists of easy-to-follow steps, including completion of Word and Excel narrative and budget forms, entry of information directly into the online system, and uploading of required documents. The system allows users to save an unfinished application and return to it later for completion. Incomplete or late proposals will not be considered for review.

Grant Applicant Open House

The foundation will host an all-day “open house” on February 14, from 9:30 to 4:00. Potential applicants are encouraged to stop by to: discuss their funding idea; learn about the applicant portal; understand what our reviewers look for in a successful proposal; increase their understanding of logic models; and much more. All staff will be available. You do not need to RSVP – just come to our offices at 161 Worcester Road, Suite 202, in Framingham.

Concept Papers

The foundation requires applicants to submit concept papers prior to a full proposal. Concept papers help the foundation assess whether the proposed project is aligned with its funding priorities. One-page concept papers must be accompanied by a cover sheet and a draft logic model and be submitted by **4:00 p.m. on March 15**. Please send concept papers to Rebecca Donham at rdonham@mwhealth.org.

Foundation Support

Once a grant is made, foundation staff work with grantees to ensure that project outcomes are achievable and measurable, that project activities are connected to larger community efforts to address area health needs, and that grantees have access to technical assistance and training to help them achieve success. The foundation also seeks to learn from each grant, using site visits and grantee reports to record lessons learned that can inform our work and that of future grantees. We encourage grantees to consider the foundation as a resource throughout the duration of the grant.

General Restrictions

The foundation supports programs that directly benefit the health of those who live and work in one of the 25 communities served by the foundation. Such support is limited to organizations that qualify as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code, or organizations that are recognized as instrumentalities of state or local government.

The foundation does not provide grants to individuals, nor does it provide funds for endowments, fundraising drives and events, retirement of debt, operating deficits, projects that directly influence legislation, political activities or candidates for public office or programs that are customarily operated by hospitals in Massachusetts.

The foundation does not award grants to organizations that discriminate in the provision of services on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, disability, citizenship, sexual orientation or veteran status.

About the Foundation

The MetroWest Health Foundation's mission is to improve the health status of the community, its individuals and families through informed and innovative leadership. The foundation serves the following communities: Ashland, Bellingham, Dover, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopedale, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Medfield, Medway, Mendon, Milford, Millis, Natick, Needham, Norfolk, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Wayland, Wellesley and Westborough.

Health Equity Grants

Introduction

Under its new strategic plan, the foundation will advance health equity with the goal of supporting broad community resident representation and participation in health-related initiatives and increasing diversity and equity capacity of the health and social service workforce.

This will be achieved by 1) supporting health equity and inclusion transformation in MetroWest organizations; 2) training the region's health and social service workforce to meet diversity, equity and inclusion needs; and 3) increasing the diversity pipeline of future leaders in the health and social sectors.

Grants in this category are designed to help agencies further build the capacity needed to systematically address health inequities in MetroWest. For more information on the foundation's health equity strategy, see our [FY19 Health Equity Plan](#) and supporting documents.

Activities and Outcomes

The foundation is seeking grant proposals from qualified organizations that address the following objectives:

- 1. Support and promote a diverse workforce.** Support for recruiting and retaining staff at all levels of an agency that represent the community being served, as well as ongoing training for all staff on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. The foundation will support projects that create pipelines for diverse staff to move into leadership roles; innovative ideas on recruitment of diverse candidates; programs designed to retain diverse staff; and cultural competency training for staff and volunteers.
- 2. Increase the number of Portuguese and Spanish speaking mental health clinicians.** Support for projects that create educational opportunities for staff who speak Portuguese and/or Spanish to become licensed clinicians and innovative ideas on recruitment and retention of Portuguese and Spanish speaking clinicians.
- 3. Capacity building grants to support agencies led by people of color working on issues of health equity in their communities.** Support to improve sustainability and increase the reach of agencies led by people representative of the populations they serve. Agencies led by people of color is defined as agencies with people of color in leadership positions on the board and staff levels, as well as involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of services. Some examples of capacity building are: strategic planning and

growth; professional development for staff and/or volunteers; improving financial systems; improving or creating evaluation systems; and board development.

- 4. Increase organizational understanding of barriers to achieving health equity and strategies for addressing those barriers.** Support for innovative ideas on building the knowledge of and buy-in from board members and agency leadership for addressing issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. This also includes engaging the populations being served in identifying barriers they face in achieving optimal health and potential ways to overcome those barriers.

Funding

Grants are for a maximum of \$30,000. Grants are made for one year with the possibility of two additional years of continuation funding.

Coalition Strengthening

Introduction

The MetroWest region is home to many coalitions working to improve the health of the region. To maximize the impact of these important coalitions, the foundation will provide funding designed to build and strengthen these existing groups. Eligible coalitions will be those that are aligned with the foundation's mission of building resilient, healthy and equitable communities.

Activities and Outcomes

The foundation will provide funding that builds coalitions' capacity to achieve their stated objectives. Such capacity building could include consulting, technical assistance, member training, technology, or other organizational enhancements. Since funding is for one-time capacity building activities, the foundation will not fund new positions or salaries for existing coalition staff or leadership.

Funding

The maximum grant amount is \$25,000 and grants are for one year only and are not eligible for continuation funding.

Responsive Grants

Introduction

The foundation will fund limited responsive grants, defined as health projects that fall outside of the foundation's defined initiatives. These grants will focus on providing limited and short-term funding for approaches to address unmet health needs in communities served by the foundation.

Activities and Outcomes

Because responsive grants are short term, the foundation encourages submission of applications for which ongoing support and sustainability are not required. In this round of funding, the foundation will provide grants through the following specific responsive categories:

1. Activities that respond to community health concerns or issues. Documentation of need can be identified through regional Community Health Assessments (CHAs), Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs), the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey and other surveys and needs assessments that would support a need for funding.
2. Capacity building to help organizations prepare for a changing health care delivery system that will require greater partnership and integration between health care providers, payers and community-based social service organizations. Areas for capacity building could include technical assistance and/or training focused on but not limited to: refinement of patient-centered metrics; technological capacity for enhancing referrals; contract and payment methodologies; financial modeling; and improved ability to share patient-level information using secure and HIPPA-compliant methods.
3. Other capacity building activities, including helping community organizations implement best or emerging practices; pilot or start-up programs with identified funding sources beyond the pilot year; improve technology; or the one-time purchase of equipment or materials.

Applicants must be prepared to collect and report on short-term outcomes by the end of the grant period.

Funding

The foundation will fund only a limited number of proposals through its responsive grantmaking. The maximum grant amount is \$20,000 and grants are for one year only and are not eligible for continuation funding.

Community Health Innovation Grants

In the fall of 2018, the foundation funded its first Community Health Innovation projects. These grants are designed to identify and invest in the planning and development of new solutions that can address some of the health challenges facing our region. The innovation grant program is an opportunity for area organizations to collectively engage in a problem-solving process that will lead to more effective, equitable and sustainable solutions.

The foundation plans to solicit additional Community Health Innovation Grant proposals in the fall of 2019. We hope to incorporate lessons learned from our last round of funding and to identify potential new areas of focus. In the meantime, we encourage individuals and organizations in MetroWest to begin planning for the fall solicitation, and to discuss potential ideas with us prior to the issuance of the next request for proposals.

For more information or to discuss an idea contact Rebecca Gallo or Rebecca Donham at 508-879-7625.

Upcoming Learning Opportunities

Best Practices in Health Equity

When: Thursday, March 14, 2019 from 8:30am – 4:30pm

Where: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Natick

Lead Presenter: Mo Barbosa, Director of Community Engagement, Health Resources in Action

The workshop will explore the implications of inequities on health & healthcare in our region, and look at best practices from across the state for the promotion of health equity through program and community interventions. This workshop is open to all those working or volunteering in the region; grantees are expected to attend.

For more information or to register go to <https://tinyurl.com/y84c1nl2> or contact Rebecca Gallo at rgallo@mwhealth.org or 508-879-7625 x207.

MetroWest Health Foundation 20th Anniversary Symposium Moving Forward: Innovation in Health and Human Services

When: Friday, March 29, 2019 from 8:30am – 12:00pm

Where: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Natick

Keynote Speaker: Stephanie Berzin, Dean, Simmons University School of Social Sciences, Policy & Practice and author of *Innovation from Within – Redefining How Nonprofits Solve Problems*

Join us as we engage area leaders from health and human services, education and politics in a discussion about creating bringing change and innovation to the region.

To register go to <https://tinyurl.com/y9n6whwa>.