

**Request for Proposals
Proposal Narrative Response Form**

**OPTIONS
Home Health Services
Personal Care Services
Home Support Services**

A. Proposer Profile and Experience

1. Indicate your primary and secondary service area choices as referenced in Appendix B.
 - **Primary Choice – Area 2**
 - **Second Choice – Area 3**
 - **Willing to be considered to provide services in all three service areas**
2. Indicate the calendar year that the Proposer first offered services to older adults.
 - **The proposer first offered services to older adults in 1997**
3. Is Proposer a subsidiary or franchise of a multi-purpose organization? If so, provide description of the parent organization. If so, do you see any barriers?

The proposer is a wholly incorporated subsidiary of a parent corporation. The parent corporation is a multi faceted corporation and is one of the largest community-based, non-profit human services and special education organization in the country. More than 10,500 staff provides care to almost 40,000 adults and children throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Virginia, New York, Maryland, Delaware, Louisiana, and Michigan. The corporation has developed a unique continuum of care providing services in the areas of mental health, addictive diseases, education, juvenile justice, foster care and permanency, autism, intellectual and developmental disabilities, elder care and many more specialized programs. Services across the life span provides a continuum of care services that span life cycles and provide competent and specialized services throughout individuals' lives. From serving infants in foster care and child care supports and service, to providing in home supports for individuals with disabilities under the OBRA, Independence, CommCare and Aging waivers. Proposer has the expertise to provide individualized, person centered supports through living/aging in place philosophy of care.

There are no barriers that would hinder the delivery of these services. As a subsidiary of a large corporation, there are resources available that provide expert assistance in finance, billing, hiring/recruiting, facilities, operations, strategic planning, subject matter experts, and more.

4. Do you operate as an employer or as a registry?
 - **Direct Employer**

5. Does the Proposer have an administrative or supervisory office within Allegheny County? If not, what is the location of the closest administrative or supervisory office, in miles, to Allegheny County?

o Yes

List the largest current or prior contracts (maximum of ten) for In-home services to older adults that your organization holds or has held within the last five years. Were any of the contracts cancelled before scheduled end date? If yes, list contract and reason for cancellation:

Contracting Organization	Services Provided	Size of Contract (Dollar Amount)	Contract Start/End Dates
Agging Waiver	Personal Care, Personal Assistance, Respite	Fee for Service Program	July 1997 to current
Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging	Personal Care, Personal Assistance, Home Support Options Services, Respite	Fee for Service Program	July 2001 to current
Agging Waiver	Older Adult Mental Health In-Home Counseling Services	Fee for Services	July 1997 thru July 2012 ended services due to reduction in reimbursement rates by the state of Pennsylvania
Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging	In-Home Mental Health Counseling Program, Senior Center Behavioral Health Program	Fee for Service	July 1997 thru July 2012 ended services due to a reduction in reimbursement rates.

6. Indicate the volume in total units of service provided (one unit = one hour) and unduplicated number of Participants for the following In-home services for the most recent fiscal year. Exclude Home Health Services:

Service Type	Total Units of In-Home	Total Units of In-Home	Number of Unduplicated	Number of Unduplicated
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	Services 1 Unit = 1 Hour	Services To Older Adults 1 Unit = 1 Hour	Participants Served in Home	Older Adults Served in Home
Personal Care	62241	62241	70	70
Home Support Housekeeping	9883	9883	26	26
Home Support Chore	0	0	0	0

B. Management of Staffing, Training, Direct Care Worker Recruitment and Retention

Staffing and Training

1. Describe Proposer’s hiring process in very specific detail.
 - Proposer utilizes an on-line application system for all applicants. This system provides applicants with the ability to provide a potential employer with all information necessary to, as appropriate, schedule an in person interview.
 - If decided upon an in-person interview is scheduled with a program supervisor, all interviews must be completed in person.
 - Upon being chosen for job offer the potential hire is contacted and offered the position. If the proposer’s offer is accepted the potential hired is sent an offer proposal.
 - When the offer is accepted by the potential hire multiple activities begin to occur including the beginning of the completion of background checks, sending potential hire for a physical and two step TB test.
 - Upon successful completion of pre-hire activities, including background checks, the individual is asked to complete the *Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Personal Care Home Direct Care Staff Person Training and Test* and provided a new hire start date.
2. Describe Proposer’s orientation and training process in very specific detail.
 - a) Attach training curriculum and specify training hours for each topic. –
 - Training curriculum *attached*
 - Training for any management team member will include training in the **SAMS system.**
 - b) Specify how many hours of training are provided directly on-site under an instructor’s supervision. –
 - All newly hired direct care staff will receive between **35-40 hours of instruction.**
 - c) Specify how many hours of training are completed electronically on a computer.

- **Approximately 6-7 hours of training is currently being completed electronically on a computer.**
- d) Specify what specific hands-on skills are included in the training program, for example, assistance with bathing, assistance with ambulation, changing bed linens. Identify which skills include on-site practice and supervision.
 - **Consumer introduction is a 4-6 hours in person training where staff are introduced to various consumers and practice the skills they have learned. The consumers are visited for this piece of the training agree to the visits and consumers who are chosen are changed in order to assure that consumer needs are being met and consumers find this process beneficial. New workers have the opportunity to engage consumers, ask questions, observe activities, and engage in activities before they work independently with consumers. Each direct care staff have individual skill levels and experience and therefore the supervisor is able to provide the level of hands on training required to make each direct care staff successful.**
- e). Specify how many hours of training are completed before the worker touches the Participant.
 - **Each newly hired direct care worker will have approximately 28-34 hours of training before he/she comes into contact with a participant.**
- f) List all ongoing mandatory training programs provided to direct care workers in the last two fiscal years. Specifically describe how training program was presented, for example, remotely by mail, computer or classroom.
 - **Due to the variety of staff that works as direct care staff, trainings are provided via a variety of mechanisms including classroom and computer. Trainings are not completed remotely by mail.**
 - **The use of College of Direct Support and PA Learning Center are utilized also**
 - **Mandatory yearly and bi-annual training include**
 - **OSHA**
 - **Fire Safety**
 - **CPR/First Aide (renewed according to issuing agency guidelines)**
 - **Duty to Protect**
 - **Direct Professional Competency**
 - **Driver Safety**
 - **Adult Protective Services (renewed according to Department of Human Service Guidelines)**

- g) Is continuing education offered to direct care workers? If yes, is it optional or required? How many hours per fiscal year?
 - **All direct care staff are required to have a minimum of 20 hours of additional trainings each fiscal year. The training is not optional and is a requirement to maintain the position of direct care worker.**
 - **Proposer also has optional trainings internally and externally that are offered to direct care workers, that allows them to enhance their knowledge base; IE; PA Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition webinars and forums.**
 - **Proposer also offers to full time employees tuition reimbursement**
- 3. Identify minimum direct care worker competencies required prior to working with Participants and describe how those competencies are evaluated.
 - **Each staff must have taken and passed the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Personal Care Home Direct Care Staff Person Training program. Staff is also evaluated throughout training by the instructors that provide trainings.**
- 4. Supervision of workers from a distance provides unique challenges. Describe Proposer's procedure for supervision of direct care workers.
 - a) Specify how often workers are supervised.
 - **Currently direct care workers are supervised via onsite visits as needed.**
 - b) Describe how direct care worker's performance is evaluated.
 - **Performance is evaluated via onsite visits and consumer and stakeholder satisfaction surveys.**
 - c) Describe how evaluation of worker's performance is shared with the worker.
 - **The worker is provided with his/her performance evaluation and during onsite evaluations workers are provided instructions and recommendations.**

Recruitment and Retention

- 5. Recruitment of direct care workers is a continuous challenge. Describe specific strategies that have been implemented to recruit new direct care workers.
 - **Enhanced pay – We are in the process of rolling out to all employees an option for an increased rate in lieu of receiving benefit coverage. This will give employees the option (if they are receiving benefits through another means) to increase their pay by \$2/hr.**
 - **Partnership with 3rd party media/marketing company. We are now using TMP to help us improve our digital footprint and get our positions onto more computer screens. We now have the option to utilize sponsorship to make sure that our job openings are appearing on the first page of the top recruiting**

websites (primarily Indeed.com). They also help us partner with some of the smaller niche websites that target specific groups and skill sets (nurses, direct care workers, etc.)

- **New applicant tracking system. ADP has switched platforms from Virtual Edge to Recruiting Management (RM). With this change come a few advantages to attracting and finding candidates and new talent. The new system is much more user friendly from the applicants standpoint and requires less work for them to actually apply for a job. The site is actually mobile optimized so that the info they need to fill out is easy to do on their smart phones. This optimization will also allow us to partner with Google in promoting our positions as well.**
6. Does the Proposer have a targeted program to address retention of direct care workers? If so, detail specific strategies utilized to address the challenge of worker retention?
- **Create a management experience, which begins with a new manager's hire or promotion, that provides first level leadership training serving to develop the tools and approach to effectively engage employees, promote their development, resolve conflicts, and recognize employee contributions to the organization.**
 - **Implement a consistent and automated mechanism for gathering employee feedback regarding their NHS employment experience and prospects of remaining. Create a similar approach for exiting employees.**
 - **Develop resources and training to implement an effective performance management program for all employees providing realistic, measurable goals, personal development plans, and merit based compensation rewards.**
7. Detail the annualized turnover rate of direct care workers in each of the last two fiscal years.
- **2015: 30.8**
 - **2016: 30.0**
8. Does the Proposer look for creative solutions to scheduling that contribute to worker efficiency and satisfaction? If so, briefly detail scheduling practices that contribute to worker efficiency and satisfaction.
- **Proposer initially requests potential candidates to provide list of availability, request for number of hours desired to work, and areas where potential candidate desires to work.**

- **Proposer then allows staff to update their availability with two week's notice, allows schedule changes are appropriate to meet changing needs of the staff.**

C. Management of Service Delivery

1. Describe the process utilized to ensure accurate and timely documentation of service delivery to Participants. Include process for verifying service delivery.
 - **Proposer utilizes the "CareWatch" Telephonic attendance and documentation system for all older adult in-home services. This system allows proposer to see in real time when staff are working in the consumers home as the staff call in to the system when arriving at a consumer's home, this then documents for management arrival at a consumer's home. The system then requires that staff clock out of the consumer's home and complete documentation at the end of the staff visit. The system matches the number called from with the consumer and highlights any discrepancies. If the system notes discrepancies the services are not billed until discrepancy is confirmed via consumer signature and not billed if services cannot be confirmed.**
 - **Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) "CareWatch" is the means of electronically verifying that a caregiver is physically at a specific patient's home or location using the regular patient's home phone.**
2. Allegheny County faces unique challenges in serving Participants in certain geographic areas that are remote or lack public transportation. Has the Proposer implemented specific planning to address the travel and transportation needs of direct care workers?
 - **Proposer currently provides services throughout remote geographic regions and has experience hiring and maintaining a workforce that is not reliant on public transportation in order to meet the needs of consumers. Proposer will recruit staff specifically who have the means and the ability to provide services to a population that is outside of public transportation routes and service areas.**
3. Has the Proposer implemented any new strategies to improve service capacity to older adults in the last 2 years?
 - a) Describe the strategies that have been implemented.
 - **Proposer has added full time staff who act as partial supervisors/partial direct care staff. That supervising direct care staffs are responsible to provide services directly to consumers during times when staffs are difficult to find/assign to a consumer.**
 - b) Identify the results of the strategy including the percent increase in service capacity.

- **The proposer currently provides coverage at a rate of over 95% of total authorized units. The proposer is able to provide full service authorizations for over 95% of consumers. Reasons for not fully providing service authorizations are consumer choice, including the refusal to accept a particular staff for various reasons.**
- 4. Identify the strategies implemented to expand geographic service area in the last 2 years.
 - **Currently the proposer is able to provide services throughout the proposer's current geographic region.**
 - **Proposer reached out to new Managed Care Organizations in another state and is now the provider of the PASRR Level II assessments for the entire state through three managed care entities**
 - **Proposer has been involved with the MLTSS CHC initiative and has reached out to all of the responding entities to become a network provider if awarded. Have already signed a letter of intent with one MCO for their submission and have received 4 more to complete. Have an internal committee working on enrollment once award is given.**
 - **Researched the application process to become a Home Health Agency and have an internal committee working on this.**
 - **Proposer is hoping to expand service area through expansion of services into Allegheny County.**
- 5. Describe the Proposer's plan to meet the benchmarks listed in the RFP and required in the contract.
 - a) Accept 80% of new Participant referrals in the first year.
 - **Currently the proposer is able to accept over 90% of new participant referrals and continue to accept new participant referrals at a high rate. The proposer will work with the proposer's recruiting department to ensure that staff is hired throughout the service area in order to minimize travel time and increase the ability to ensure the proposer is able to accept more than the 80% benchmark of new participant referrals.**
 - b) Accept 90% of new Participant referrals in each of the subsequent contract years.
 - **Currently the proposer is able to accept over 90% of new participant referrals and continue to accept new participant referrals at a high rate. The proposer will work with the proposer's recruiting department to ensure that staffs are hired throughout the service area in order to minimize travel time and increase the ability to ensure the proposer is able to accept 90% of new participant referrals.**

6. Describe the Proposer's staffing plan to address un/anticipated worker call-offs and no-shows so that substitute workers are available 100 % of the time?
 - **Proposer has an on-call system which includes having supervisors on call 365 days a year. The system allows staff to call off for a shift at any time during the day and night and then contact the consumer (during appropriate hours) to offer a substitute staff, this will allow the consumer to choose to accept replacement staff. The acceptance or non-acceptance of replacement staff will then be documented in the consumer's file and as appropriate in the SAMS system.**
7. Describe the process for communicating when a worker calls off or does not show-up as scheduled.
 - **Proposer has an on-call system which includes having supervisors on call 365 days a year. The system allows staff to call off for a shift at any time during the day and night and then contact the consumer (during appropriate hours) to offer a substitute staff, this will allow the consumer to choose to accept replacement staff. The acceptance or non-acceptance of replacement staff will then be documented in the consumer's file and as appropriate in the SAMS system.**
8. Describe how the Proposer meets the needs of a culturally diverse population and those with special needs.
 - **Proposer has over 46 years of experience working with culturally diverse and special needs populations. The proposer currently serves diverse populations throughout Allegheny County in the areas of mental health and intellectual disability services.**
 - **Proposer also has a Corporate Policy in place addressing Limited English Proficiency**

D. Management of Communication

1. How does your direct care worker report Participant status changes to supervisors?
 - **The CareWatch system allows staff to document changes in consumer status via a question asked at the end of each visit. The staff also instructed via the CareWatch system to contact his/her supervisor to report changes in consumer status. Staffs are also trained to report to his/her supervisor changes in consumer status.**
2. Describe the process by which staff communicates Participant changes to other health care and care management professionals, family members, or other informal caregivers.

- Each consumer has a book in the consumer home, this book includes consumer basic information, treatment plan, paper documentation (for use during times when telephone access may not be available), and note section. The note section is used to communicate information concerning participant status to natural and paid supports. Also, with release of information, program supervisor's contact supports as appropriate to provide updated information on consumer status. Supervisors will also use mechanisms approved by Allegheny County to communicate timely consumer status changes (email, fax, phone calls).
3. Provide two recent examples of situations where a direct care worker identified and reported a problem or issue for which the Participant required assistance to resolve. Specifically discuss the communication process between Participant, direct care worker, agency and any individuals or resources contacted to resolve the issue.
- **Example 1**
 - Consumer was in the need of services that would provide transportation to the consumer's medical appointments. Consumer was unable to meet with his/her medical professionals as needed to maintain basic health needs. The consumer reported that he/she was unable to attend appointments and the direct care worker contacted his/her supervisor to report the consumer's issue. The supervisor contacted the consumer's Area Agency on Aging care manager to discuss the concern at which point the care manager discussed his/her inability to determine a solution. The supervisor then contacted various community organizations to determine if those organizations had any programs that would assist the consumer. An organization was found, and the supervisor contacted the consumer then assisted the consumer with application to the organization for medical transportation that would provide door to door service. The consumer is currently able to reach each of his/her appointments and the supervisor and direct care workers check up on the consumer to ensure he/she continues to meet his medical appointment needs.
 - **Example 2**
 - Consumer care was of a concern. The direct care worker was concerned that the consumer was in a situation where he/she was being possibly exploited by a natural support. The direct care worker contacted the supervisor to discuss his/her concerns. The direct care worker as a mandated reporter recognized his/her responsibility to contact adult protective services if he/she felt the consumer was being exploited. The direct care worker with support from the supervisor contacted adult

protective services and the consumer Area Agency on Aging case manager. Investigation followed and it was determined that this consumer was indeed being financially exploited by his/her natural support. The consumer's financial situation was resolved and controls put in to ensure that the consumer's financial situation could no longer be exploited. The proposers Quality and Compliance Organization were notified and the corporate policy qco#0102115 Reporting Instances of Harm or Abuse was followed.

E. Management of Program Quality

1. How do you measure quality in service delivery to the participant?
 - The provider's Quality Improvement Program has key indicators to measure quality. Quality is measured via program file audits, stakeholder, consumer, and natural supports quality call back surveys.
 - Quality Assurance is coordinated and supported by the Quality and Compliance Organization (QCO) which is led by the Senior Vice President of Quality and Integrity. The quality assurance systems embedded in the QCO include a recurring documentation audit process in which records are reviewed either monthly or quarterly following a PQI Audit Plan and results are analyzed within and between Programs of the same type in organization-wide recurring meetings termed "Product Teams". In these meetings corrective action plans, best practices and policy modifications are discussed. Additionally, quality assurance is included in the safety reviews and business integrity and operations hotline where any issues relating to quality and compliance are designated for review by a QCO member in collaboration with Programs. Program leaders across the organization develop and implement performance improvement strategies that are driven by the data aggregated by the QCO and presented to the Program. The QCO assists in implementation and monitoring as well to ensure consistency and follow up to actions recommended based on the data. The QCO works directly with Program management to ensure a thorough and well defined response to all deficiencies and shares best practices identified in other parts of the organization to help strengthen the quality of the services provided. All of the above actions are cataloged and tracked within the QCO's case management database to support universal change and monitoring of efficacy.
2. How do you handle participant complaints?

- **Consumer complaints are taken seriously and documented. Consumer complaints vary in degree from complaints that are easily remedied such as misunderstandings to complaints that involve possible inappropriate behavior by direct care professionals. Depending on the complaint the program management will take the complaint over the phone or in person. If the complaint involves a reportable event the program supervisor will report the situation to Adult Protective Services and the Allegheny County care manager. The supervisor then remains in contact with the consumer to resolve the complaint as appropriate. If consumer complaints involve situations that are not able to be remedied by the supervisor due to reason such as not within the provision of service, the resolution is a violation of federal or state regulations, or a similar reason the supervisor reports this information to the consumer and the consumer's Allegheny County care manager. All grievances/complaints are reported through the organizations Quality and Compliance Organization (QCO) and all plans of corrections are reviewed on a continuous basis.**
 - **Proposer also has a Corporate Policy in place addressing this serious issue.**
3. Does the Proposer solicit Participant feedback regarding service satisfaction and performance of the direct care worker and what is done with the information?
- If so, provide questionnaire or interview schedule utilized to solicit Participant feedback and satisfaction.
 - **Yes proposer does solicit feedback (See attached)**
 - **Proposer also has a Corporate Policy addressing this issue**
4. Describe your process for handling a billing discrepancy
- With the current OPTIONS services that the proposer provides the following process is implemented when a billing discrepancy for OPTIONS services is found.
 - **Proposer completes random audits of consumer billing throughout each fiscal year.**
 - **If proposer determines that OPTIONS was billed for services in error the proposer subtracts the billing from the next months OPTIONS billing form**
 - **Area Agency on Aging is notified immediately as is the proposers Quality and Compliance Organization**
 - **The proposer's next reimbursement is reduced by the local Area Agency on Aging to correct the billing error if the error is an overage.**
 - **Proposers Quality and Compliance Organization (QCO) is also informed and plan of correction is put in place**