

Brynne McBride

From: Austin, McKinney N - OCI [McKinney.Austin@wisconsin.gov]
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 2:28 PM
To: Brynne McBride
Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

Don't worry. I know that what you do isn't as readily quantifiable as the complaints function at OCI. In the grant FOA, it says "if applicable" on this portion, I suspect because HHS is aware that many consumer assistance functions aren't easily assigned a dollar value. If you (or Bobby) can answer this in a different way later, let me know and we can try to work it in if we need to.

I appreciate how responsive and helpful you've been.

Thanks,

McKinney Austin, Program & Policy Analyst
Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
(608) 264-8134
mckinney.austin@wisconsin.gov

From: Brynne McBride [mailto:bmcbride@safetyweb.org]
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 2:19 PM
To: Austin, McKinney N - OCI
Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

Hi-

This is a harder question for me to put into words. If you are able to give me some more time on this question, I'll let Bobby answer this one. He actually gave a presentation to another group on how we measure success. He's out of the office until tomorrow AM. Let me know if that's ok! (My way of describing it is that we "stick with our clients" until the matter or issue is resolved, whether applying for benefits, appealing a denial or troubleshooting a problem. If one form of coverage falls through, we find another or at least find some way to get a hospital bill paid and reduce medical debt. That might be too abstract for our purposes here! For this grant going forward, we have built a feature into our client database to track how matters were resolved via new "closing codes.")

Best,
Brynne

From: Austin, McKinney N - OCI [mailto:McKinney.Austin@wisconsin.gov]
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 12:59 PM
To: Brynne McBride
Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

Hi Brynne,

I have another quick (I hope) question for you. Do you have any other information about "recovered benefits" for Section c of the grant? In your materials, you refer to a dollar return of as much as 32 to 1. Do you have another way you can frame it? For example, number or percent of clients who successfully appealed, or some sort of quantitative evaluation of benefits recovered other than dollars?

If I'm being unclear, feel free to call me too.

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From: Brynne McBride [mailto:bmcbride@safetyweb.org]
Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 10:47 AM
To: Austin, McKinney N - OCI
Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

Hi, McKinney-

Thanks for your email. The short answer is, YES!

Part of our mission is to help people obtain and maintain benefits. In the current landscape of available public and private insurance benefits, we certainly help families apply for/prove eligibility for BadgerCare Plus, Medicaid programs (EBD, MAPP, Katie Beckett, etc), SSI/SSDI, HIRSP (State and Federal Plans) and related programs. This involves meeting with families or having a conversation over the phone to assess their coverage options, complete applications, provide verifications, follow up with families as they approach deadlines, renewals, transitions or benchmarks. We track the status of our client intake, enrollment and applications in our client database. Right now, if someone is interested in purchasing private insurance, we will help them identify an agent in their area, and assist them with tools that explain what private insurance is, definitions, rights, responsibilities, etc. For someone with an employer-sponsored plan, we'll help identify who their contact person is at their place of employment to learn of things like open enrollment, COBRA options, etc. (Our assistance with private insurance and group plans usually involves stages where disputes arise, including internal appeals or outside litigation.) Once private insurance exchanges are in place, we will work with you and DHS to make sure we are not duplicating the role of private insurance agents, and assist in those duties not otherwise served. We are developing software that can help in the "interview and assessment" stages, and that will most likely be something we incorporate into the second half of the grant period. I can provide more detail if you like—but thought I'd send this quickly if you are working on the RFP this morning!

Thanks!

Brynne

From: Austin, McKinney N - OCI [mailto:McKinney.Austin@wisconsin.gov]

Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2010 9:43 AM

To: Brynne McBride

Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

Hi Brynne,

I have a specific question about our referrals. To what extent can/will ABC aid consumers with enrollment? I know the materials you sent talk about intake software helping clients determine what type of coverage is best for them; is that the full extent of aiding them in enrollment? This is a required function of the program that is in the grant FOA and the statute creating the grant, but something that OCI really doesn't do (other than answering general questions about coverage options.) If you have any additional info about ABC's ability to handle this, please let me know so I can work it into our project narrative.

Thanks,

McKinney Austin, Program & Policy Analyst

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From: Brynne McBride [mailto:bmcbride@safetyweb.org]

Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2010 1:03 PM

To: Austin, McKinney N - OCI

Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

No problem! We'll talk again soon!

Brynne

From: Austin, McKinney N - OCI [mailto:McKinney.Austin@wisconsin.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2010 1:01 PM

To: Brynne McBride

Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

That's great. I think I was just confused when I read it in the paper the first time, but I've got it now. Thanks again

McKinney Austin, Program & Policy Analyst

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From: Brynne McBride [mailto:bmcbride@safetyweb.org]
Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2010 12:57 PM
To: Austin, McKinney N - OCI
Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

Hi, McKinney-

Good timing! I got your email as I was sending you one! In Section C "Project Accomplishments" in the materials we sent (the word doc titled "ABC elements of consumer assistance grant"), there is the following paragraph:

Total number of cases handled (most recent budget year):

In 2009, ABC responded to 2030 individual requests for assistance, a 76% increase over 2008. Most clients were female (86%) married individuals (40%) in nuclear family settings (32%). Fewer than 50% of our clients were Caucasian, though 76% were English-speaking. Not surprisingly, 75% of clients indicated they had "some" to "no" health insurance, and 75% had medical debt. The average ABC client in 2009 had a household income below 100% FPL. Client contacts to ABC reflect the declining economy, as individuals recently displaced from employment find themselves also without benefits. Client contacts also reflect a dynamic health care coverage landscape federally. Individuals have new and different coverage options and rely on the expertise of ABC to navigate these options for each family member. ABC has delivered Health Benefits Counseling services across Wisconsin to more than 32,500 family members requesting services since 1994.

We treat each "individual request" as a "case" so that would be 2030 cases in 2009. I could get you a number for 2010 first 6 months if you like, too. Let me know if you need anything different.

Thank you!

Brynne

From: Austin, McKinney N - OCI [mailto:McKinney.Austin@wisconsin.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2010 12:49 PM
To: Brynne McBride
Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

Hi Brynne,

In addition to what you are already working on for us, if you have the numbers available, can you tell me how many cases ABC handled last year alone? I see in the materials you already sent us the numbers going back to 1994, but I'm looking for an annual number if you have it.

Thanks,

McKinney Austin, Program & Policy Analyst

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From: Brynne McBride [mailto:bmcbride@safetyweb.org]
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2010 12:18 PM
To: Austin, McKinney N - OCI
Subject: RE: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

Hi, McKinney-

Thanks for your email. I'll work on getting you different budgets and sample letter of collaboration/intent to contract. I anticipate getting the letter to you very soon—maybe before the end of the day. The budget I can get to you most likely by tomorrow AM. Please let me know if this fits your timeline.

Thank you!

Brynne

From: Austin, McKinney N - OCI [mailto:McKinney.Austin@wisconsin.gov]

Sent: Monday, August 23, 2010 11:58 AM

To: bmcbride@safetyweb.org

Subject: Consumer Assistance Program Grant

Hi Brynne,

My name is McKinney and I'm with OCI. I am working on our application for the Consumer Assistance Program grant and will probably be working with you on this in the future. I am currently working on merging ABC's and OCI's materials together and I have a couple of questions/requests. The budget that ABC submitted was for \$600K. Can you please also submit a \$400K budget (which is what we anticipate working into our proposal to HHS) and a \$200K budget (which is so we know where the money would go if HHS awards only the minimum to us under the population-based formula)?

Also, it is my understanding that ABC is working on a letter of intent to contract, which we will submit to HHS as part of our grant application. When do you anticipate having a draft of that letter available?

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of this further, please don't hesitate to contact me by email or phone. Thanks for the work you've already done and for working under this compressed timeline. It has been very helpful.

Thanks,

McKinney Austin, Program & Policy Analyst

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