

JUSTIFICATION FOR SINGLE SOURCE AWARDS IAW FAR 13.106-1
(OVER MICRO-PURCHASE THRESHOLD(\$3K) BUT NOT EXCEEDING THE SAT (\$150K))

IAW FAR13.104, COs must promote competition to the maximum extent practicable to obtain supplies and services from the source whose offer is the most advantageous to the Government, considering the administrative cost of the purchase. When competition is not practicable, IAW FAR13.106-1(b), COs solicit from a single source for purchases not exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold. COs may solicit from one source if the CO determines that the circumstances of the contract action deem only one source reasonably available (e.g., urgency, exclusive licensing agreements, brand-name or industrial mobilization). IAW FAR13.106-3(b)(3), COs are required to include additional statements **explaining the absence of competition** (see 13.106-1 for brand name purchases) if only one source is solicited and the acquisition does not exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (does not apply to an acquisition of utility services available from only one source) or supporting the award decision if other than price-related factors were considered in selecting the supplier. This template when completed can be used to document single source awards IAW FAR13.106-3(b)(3). Note: Statements such as "only known source" or "only source which can meet the required delivery date" are inadequate to support a sole source purchase.

1. PURCHASE REQUEST OR REQUISITION NUMBER:

554-16-1-054-0006

**1A. PROJECT/TASK
NUMBER**

1B. ESTIMATED AMOUNT:

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SUPPLIES OR SERVICES REQUIRED AND THE INTENDED USE:

This contracting activity proposes to negotiate a sole source, firm fixed price acquisition, with UpToDate, Inc. for an online diagnosis and treatment database from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016. The estimated cost for FY-16 is [REDACTED] and total contract value is [REDACTED].

3. UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS THAT LIMIT AVAILABILITY TO ONLY ONE SOURCE, WITH THE REASON NO OTHER SUPPLIES OR SERVICES CAN BE USED:

The requirement is to procure online access to UpToDate, a comprehensive, integrated differential diagnosis and treatment database to all providers and any other staff as needed who work at any location in VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System. The information is primarily narrative in format and contains extensive rationales for diagnosis and treatment decisions as well as charts, graphs, and calculators. It is updated at least quarterly. The emphasis is on internal medicine and internal medicine subspecialties including cardiology, dermatology, sleep medicine, emergency medicine, endocrinology, rheumatology, gynecology, infectious diseases, oncology, gastroenterology, hematology, and hospital medicine. The database must be available online and authenticated by IP address. UpToDate is unique intellectual property and a proprietary database. See attached license agreement.

4. REASON THAT SUGGESTED SOURCE IS THE ONLY SOURCE, WHICH CAN PROVIDE THE SUPPLIES OR SERVICES:

- a. UpToDate is a proprietary database and is not sold by any vendor other than the UpToDate, Inc. See paragraph 2 in the copyright and license information on UpToDate's site.
- b. UpToDate has over 8300 topics reviews, which dwarfs competitors like Dynamed (3200) and ACP PIER (490).
- c. The database gives extensive narrative rationales for diagnosis and treatment decisions. Competitors such as Dynamed and FIRSTConsult are formatted more in outline form and are designed for quick lookup at point of care. ACP PIER, another database that provides evidence-based medicine, has been purchased on a national contract and is already available to VA Montana providers, but it is comparable to Dynamed and is not adequate or a substitute for UpToDate at this time due to its very limited scope.
- d. UpToDate focuses on internal medicine and internal medicine subspecialties. Dynamed, ACP Pier, and FIRSTConsult focus on primary care. A review of Dynamed and FIRSTConsult in the July 2005 issue of the Journal of the Medical Library Association confirms both the primary care focus and the focus on quick lookup.
- e. VA Montana providers tested Dynamed in October and November 2009 and reported that UpToDate does not provide adequate narrative rationales for recommendations. Ease of use was also cited as was the extensiveness of the topics and the focus on internal medicine topics. UpToDate ranked highest in satisfaction among clinicians in a study cited in the Evidence Based Library and Information Practice journal (Vol. 2, No. 3, 2007). This study included FIRSTConsult and ACP Pier.

5. DESCRIPTION OF MARKET RESEARCH CONDUCTED AND RESULTS OR STATEMENT WHY IT WAS NOT CONDUCTED:

Dynamed was offered as a trial to physicians in October and November of 2009. Feedback was almost unanimous in wanting to retain UpToDate given the unique qualifications of the database. Internet research on vendor websites verified accuracy of number of topic reviews and "drill down/outline" format of other databases (as opposed to extensive narration) as well as the focus on primary care vs. internal medicine. A PubMed search was conducted to locate reviews of comparable products (see d. and e. in paragraph 5 above).

Dynamed, ACP Pier, and FIRSTConsult were identified as diagnosis and treatment databases that compete with UpToDate. Literature reviews [see embedded links in paragraph 5(d) and 5(e)], vendor product descriptions of depth and breadth of databases, focus on primary care vs. internal medicine, trial subscriptions (Dynamed) and hands on experience showed that UpToDate has unique qualifications not present in the other databases at this time.

6. Contracting Officer's Certification: *Purchase is approved in accordance with FAR13.106-1(b). I certify that the foregoing justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.*

Date: 18 Sep 15