

## **Justification for Other than Full and Open Competition Online Peer Support**

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of Acquisition Operations  
Strategic Acquisition Center  
10300 Spotsylvania Avenue, Suite 400  
Fredericksburg, VA 22408
  
2. Description of Action: This proposed action is to award a firm-fixed-priced single award contract to Prevail Health Solutions, LLC, to provide the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) with a three (3) month bridge services that will provide easy access to Online Peer Support/Cognitive Based Therapy (CBT) that can assist Veterans, who may not have any Mental Health assistance through the VA and can access these services 24/7 via the use of any device, i.e. smartphone, laptop, etc., that will connect to the internet. This acquisition is in support of Office of Rural Health (ORH), which administers the Online Peer Support services program.
  
3. Description of Supplies/Services: VA SAC, in partnership with the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Office of Rural Health, are tasked to deliver a contract vehicle that will promote healthy medical measures for Veterans and their respective families in remote locations who do not have direct access to VA healthcare facilities and medical professionals. The Office of Rural Health has an ongoing requirement that can provide easy access to Online Peer Support/Cognitive Based Therapy (CBT) that can assist Veterans, who may not have any Mental Health assistance through the VA and can access these services 24/7 via the use of any device, i.e. smartphone, laptop, etc., that can connect to the internet.

VHA has a contract in place with Prevail Health Solutions, LLC under Contract VA741-16-C-0006 which expires on 29 March 2017. Clause 52.217-8 has already been utilized on this contract and therefore there is no possibility of an extension. Currently, there is a follow-on procurement in process for the required services; however, this requirement for CBT services will not be awarded prior to expiration of the current contract.

A short-term bridge contract is necessary to ensure continuity of the services through award of the follow-on contract for CBT services. Currently, VA has 971 Veterans are currently using this service and an additional 1,048 Veterans communicated through the Peer Support Chat Line provided under this service on a monthly basis. In addition, every month, there are about 1,000 Veterans who are not receiving Mental Health care that if they had access to this website, would make a difference on being assessed as to whether they need further care by VA hospitals and health professionals. A lapse in this service will result in a loss in patient care that is critical for medical support and patient assessment.

The proposed contract action is for a single-award contract with a total period of performance of 3 months, beginning March 30, 2017 through June 29, 2017. This will allow adequate time to award the new contract, as well as a ramp-up and transition period after award.

## **Justification for Other than Full and Open Competition Online Peer Support**

The estimated value for the procurement is \$375,000. This estimate is based on the 3 months of pricing from the previous contract which was determined to be fair and reasonable. The Program Office provided a Government Cost Estimate on the individual labor categories that support a cost of \$300,664.00; however, this did not the cost for additional services such as marketing. Therefore, both cost estimates will be used to determine that the price is fair and reasonable.

4. Statutory Authority and Supporting Rationale: The statutory authority permitting other than full and open competition is in accordance with 10. U.S.C. 2304(c)(1), and FAR 6.302-1(a)(2), Only One Responsible Source and No Other Supplies or Services Will Satisfy Agency Requirements.

5. Rationale Supporting the Authority Cited Above: The primary impetus for this proposed, short-term contract is the delay in services caused by the refining of requirements, coupled with the expiration of the existing contract. The Government performed extensive market research in preparation of the re-compete and is aware that there are numerous sources that could potentially provide the recomputed CBT services. The Government has issued multiple Requests for Information (RFIs) for the purpose of conducting market research to enhance VA's understanding of industry capabilities. However, there is insufficient time for the Government to compete and award a contract prior to the expiration of the existing contract on March 29, 2017. Online Peer Support services are required worldwide, which includes sufficient and sufficiently trained Peer Support employees and facilities for nationwide support. While certain competitors may have the ability to stand-up the needed services given sufficient time for preparation to include hiring employees, the risk with entrusting a non-incumbent contractor to be at 100% capacity on March 30, 2017, is too great to pursue. Failure of providing these services is not an option to VA because these services are critical in supporting Veterans at remote locations. As a result, the Government plans to award a sole-source contract to the incumbent contractor, Prevail Health Solutions, LLC since this contractor is the only vendor in a position to provide the required services at remote world-wide locations by March 30, 2017.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 13.501(a)(2), this action will be synopsisized at award on the Federal Business Opportunities Page (FBO) and the justification will be made publicly available. Market research was conducted, details of which are in the market research section of this document. There is no competition anticipated for this acquisition based on the need for immediate performance. However, in an effort to obtain competition for future requirements, the re-compete contract will be resolicited as full and open using fbo.gov.

7. Determination of Fair and Reasonable Cost: The contracting officer does not expect the costs to increase under this bridge effort for Online Peer support services for the period of performance of 3 months. However, the contracting officer shall determine that all prices for the proposed bridge contract are fair and reasonable by comparing the

**Justification for Other than Full and Open Competition  
Online Peer Support**

Prevail Health Solutions, LLC's proposed prices with historical pricing under previous contracts for the same services and comparing them to GSA prices. The Contracting Officer will verify all pricing is fair and reasonable using the price analysis techniques provided in FAR 15.404(1)(b)(2)(ii), (iv) and (v).

8. Market Research: The Government performed extensive market research in preparation for solicitation VA119-17-Q-0195 and received inquiries from numerous sources that could perform the requirement under the follow-on contract. However, there is insufficient time for the Government to hold a competition prior to the expiration of the existing contract on March 30, 2017. Furthermore, it is highly probable that potential vendors would be unable to begin performance within several weeks and have the ability to support both CONUS and OCONUS facilities without significant start-up delays. As a result, additional market research was conducted under solicitation VA119A-17-Q-0195.

9. Any Other Facts Supporting this Justification: None.

10. A Listing of Sources, if any, that Expressed an Interest in the Acquisition: None.

11. Actions to Increase Competition: No barriers to future competition is anticipated. If any source other than Prevail Health Solutions, LLC expresses an interest in performing this requirement, it would require time to learn what is required to include having hiring employees to provide the required services. It is in the Agency's best interest to proceed with the proposed acquisition strategy.

12. Technical and Requirements Certification: I certify that the supporting data under my cognizance, which are included in this justification, are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen DeVolder  
Contracting Officer's Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

13. Determination of Best Value/Procuring Officer Certification: I hereby determine that the proposed contract action will represent the best value to the Government consistent with FAR 13.501(a)(2) and certify that this justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Shepard  
Contracting Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Justification for Other than Full and Open Competition  
Online Peer Support**

14. Legal Sufficiency Certification: I have reviewed this justification and find it adequate to support a limited source award and deem it legally sufficient as set forth in FAR 6.302-1(a)(2) and 10. U.S.C. 2304(c)(1).

N/A Under \$500K  
Legal Counsel

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Approval**

Based on the foregoing justification, I hereby approve the acquisition of Online Peer Support Services to Prevail Health Solutions, LLC, in the estimated amount of \$375,000.00, on an other than full and open basis, pursuant to the authority cited in Section 10. U.S.C. 2304(c)(1) and FAR 6.302-1(a)(2), Only One Responsible Source and No Other Supplies or Services Will Satisfy Agency Requirements, subject to availability of funds, and provided that the services and commodities herein described have otherwise been authorized for acquisition.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Shepard  
Contracting Officer  
Strategic Acquisition Center

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date