

LIMITED SOURCES JUSTIFICATION

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Office of Procurement, Acquisition, and Logistics
Technology Acquisition Center
23 Christopher Way
Eatontown, NJ 07724

2. Description of Action: The proposed action is a modification to extend the period of performance of Firm-Fixed Price Contract Number GS-35F-0363L, Task Order VA118-15-F-0047 with Vecna Technologies Incorporated (henceforth referred to as Vecna), for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) services support of the hardware and software for the VetLink kiosk system.

3. Description of Supplies or Services: The current O&M services support provided by Vecna, the Original Equipment Manufacturer, are for hardware and software maintenance for the VetLink kiosk system. The current task order, which expires on March 29, 2018, supports the O&M services support of the hardware and software for the VetLink kiosk system utilized by VA, Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Veterans Point of Service (VPS) program, which provides technologies and process improvements for clinical and administrative services. These O&M services support all VetLink kiosks including hardware, software, touchscreen monitor, privacy screen, thermal receipt printer, barcode optical scanner, magnetic card reader, audio jack, proximity sensor (freestanding and wall mount only), and applicable mounting bracket or hardware. The O&M services of the hardware and software for the VetLink kiosk system encompass service desk support including network and operational environment issues. Additionally, help desk services for the software will include VetLink software updates and fixes. O&M Services also include hardware repair and replacement under original manufacturer warranty as well as extended warranty services for hardware only. Vecna provides these O&M services for the VetLink kiosk system which operate in all VA Medical Centers (VAMC) and their satellite treatment facilities. The current O&M services with Vecna will expire on March 29, 2018, while the extended warranty support portion will expire on September 30, 2018. The proposed modification will extend the period of performance for six months from March 30, 2018 to September 30, 2018 for continuity of O&M services including service desk support without interruption with two, 6-month options for transition. [REDACTED]

4. Statutory Authority: This acquisition is conducted under the authority of the Multiple-Award Schedule Program. The specific authority providing for a limited source award is Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 8.405-6(a)(1)(i)(B), "Only one source is capable of providing the supplies or services required at the level of quality required because the supplies or services are unique or highly specialized."

5. Rationale Supporting Use of Authority Cited Above: The proposed source for this action is Vecna, 6404 Ivy Lane, Suite 500, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770.

The VHA VPS program has been in the process of awarding a competitive procurement for a new VPS Kiosk system, which was intended to include all services including the O&M services under the existing contract; however, there have been unanticipated delays in awarding the competitive contract. While the VPS program was undergoing the requirement refinement phase, the VA Secretary announced a major change in direction in the Electronic Health Record (EHR) initiative, which directly relates to the VPS Program. The VetLink kiosk systems provide Veterans the ability to check in to appointments, review and update their Protected Personal Information (PPI), co-pay balances, VA prescriptions and allergy information, and view and print upcoming appointments. The capability to provide the data for this functionality is through communication with the VA's Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA) architecture. On June 5, 2017, the VA Secretary announced that VA was going to abandon its present VistA Electronic Health Record (EHR) system in order to provide a seamless patient healthcare record for Veterans. For this reason, the Secretary announced that the VA will adopt the same EHR system as the Department of Defense (DoD), known as Military Health System GENESIS, of which Cerner Millennium is a core component.

This unanticipated change in course for the VA's EHR initiative has delayed the award of a competitive VPS Kiosk system contract because a new VPS solution will be required to interface with the new Cerner EHR as any solution would rely heavily on the underlying architecture platform for data sourcing, which will no longer be VistA, but Cerner Millennium. Therefore, from June 2017 to September 2017, the Government analyzed the VPS requirements to better understand what the transition to a Cerner EHR would mean for the deployment and sustainment of a new solution. During this timeframe, the Government was analyzing what Cerner healthcare packages including Veterans self-service solutions (e.g. kiosks) were being considered by VA as related to DoD's procured Cerner healthcare packages. This analysis required significant discovery sessions into what DoD procured, and if it would fit in with the long-term solution that VA was trying to adopt. The Government currently understands that the implementation of the Cerner EHR could take anywhere from six to ten years after award. Doing a full recompetes is a long term solution, but there is a significant risk that in six to ten years the program would have to shift gears again, and any time and money invested in a new program would be nullified. Therefore it was determined that it would be in the Government's best interest to only procure a hardware refresh of the existing VetLink Kiosk system and retain the existing Vecna software.

In light of the new direction for a Cerner EHR system, the VHA VPS program no longer has a requirement for a complete VPS kiosk system, but rather will conduct a competitive action for hardware refresh with O&M services for both the new hardware and the VetLink system until they are decommissioned throughout the VAMCs. However, with the current O&M services support for hardware and software for the VetLink kiosk system ending on March 29, 2018 and with the

extended warranty portion ending on September 30, 2018, awarding a competitive hardware refresh action encompassing the current O&M services will result in a break in services. Therefore, in order to provide continuity of the current O&M services until the competitive hardware refresh acquisition is awarded the VPS program requires the extension of the O&M services support for both hardware and software for continuity of operations.

No other source can provide the hardware and software O&M services support for the VetLink kiosk system. In order to keep the hardware maintained, VetLink brand name replacement parts are needed. Only Vecna can provide the VetLink brand name hardware to keep the hardware operational, which is critical to meeting VA's requirements. Specifically no other items can meet the VA's form, fit, and function requirements. Use of any other brand name hardware would not fit into the current deployed kiosks due to the proprietary design of the kiosks. Use of any other brand name hardware will result in inoperable VetLink systems.

In addition, in order to keep the software maintained, technical support is required to resolve software troubleshooting for VetLink system users including VA staff and Veterans. Only Vecna can provide the software technical support to meet VA's requirements due to the proprietary nature of the software. Only Vecna has access to the proprietary source code necessary for the VetLink kiosk software systems to operate. This code is critical in diagnosing any issues with the software which contains proprietary coding that can only be analyzed and diagnosed by a source with access to the propriety code. Access to this code is also required to ensure any services provided on the software are properly configured. The software source code is solely owned by Vecna and no other contractor is authorized use of the data. Based on the proprietary nature of the VetLink software, no other source is capable of providing the technical support for the VetLink software which encompasses troubleshooting and resolving VetLink software issues. Failure to keep the VetLink kiosk systems operational will result in Veterans inability to check in to appointments, review and update their PPI, co-pay balances, VA prescriptions and allergy information, and view and print upcoming appointments. The accessibility of Veteran self-service kiosk system capabilities would be non-existent. Additionally, the potential loss of patient data would exist without O&M services. In the event that a production server experiencing a Hard Drive Disk (HDD) failure requires warranty support without O&M the act of provisioning the new HDD would not occur. In addition, in the event that nightly database scripts and cleanup activities are not executed properly or manual intervention is required, those data actions would not be able to be performed. This would result in data corruption and could cause overwriting of data (i.e. a loss of data) to occur. Database cleanup is necessary to keep the HDD from reaching full disk space. When that event occurs, the system would become inoperable and there's potential for data loss or overwriting of data to occur.

Based on the above, the VPS program requires the O&M services being provided by Vecna to be extended for six months to avoid any lapse in O&M service for the presently fielded hardware and software, while the hardware refresh requirements are redefined, competed, and awarded. The additional two 6-month options are required by the VPS program for transition. Any other source would require at least a six month transition in order to stand up service desk, repair, replace and exchange, and warranty services at the required 24/7 current support level with no interruptions. Any other source would need to provide the current O&M services for the VetLink hardware and software while the hardware refresh is being deployed to all 160 VAMCs. Any other source would require a robust effort of onboarding, recruitment, knowledge transfer, training, background investigations and for establishing a service desk center that can provide the 24/7 level of support as well as manage any extended warranty offering. This six month transitioning effort is based on similar efforts conducted to stand up a solution that can meet similar O&M services. Since VHA anticipates that robust transition efforts would take at least six months or more in order to develop and staff a tiered service desk that could provide the current required 24/7 level of support without interruption to all VHA VetLink facilities, the two, 6-month option periods may be required to provide the continuity of services if any delays occur. A tiered service desk approach must be able to handle, prioritize, and escalate tickets within a timely manner to ensure VHA business operation support to Veterans continues without interruptions. The requirement for a service desk that specializes in VA Healthcare, for over 50,000 VA staff end users and services over 1-Million Veterans is multifaceted. Therefore, historically, the development of a central technical service desk to support users to gain assistance in technical hardware and software troubleshooting, get answers to questions, and solve known problems has been complex. Even more specifically, a service desk that manages its requests through the use of software adds complexity as the software often needs to be configured to provide the capability for tracking and sorting user requests with the help of a unique number, and classifying problems by user, computer program, or similar categories. Providing the software and configuring it can often take several months to complete. Additionally, the development of any kiosk service desk needs to work in conjunction with the VA enterprise level service desk due to the unique nature of VA's infrastructure. In summary, based on the unique nature of VA's infrastructure and complexity of developing a service desk that can provide maintain the required 24/7 uninterrupted support to the Veterans' self-service kiosks, that is currently provided, the VPS program requires the flexibility to exercise options to mitigate any risk associated with delays that could prevent continuity of the current O&M operations.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in the market research section of this document. This effort did not yield any additional sources that can meet the Government's requirements. There is no competition anticipated for this acquisition. Additionally, In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 8.405-6(a)(2), this action will be synopsisized at award on the Federal Business Opportunities Page and the justification will be made publicly available.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: VHA is in the process of redefining its competitive hardware refresh contract in FY 2018, which is anticipated to encompass O&M requirements for the new hardware as well as maintain the VetLink system until decommissioned. Currently, this aligns with the VPS program office's strategy for competing a hardware refresh of the current VA VetLink kiosk system in FY 2018, anticipated to include kiosk hardware items as well as O&M support encompassing a service desk and any warranty services required. Although a competitive kiosk hardware refresh is anticipated, the requirement will need to include O&M services for the VetLink software on the newly procured kiosk hardware items. The hardware refresh requirement shall clearly articulate that the VPS kiosk software solution remains the VetLink software, which provides the current self-service access to patient care capabilities to its Veterans throughout the VAMCs. Once the competitive hardware refresh contract is in place, anticipated within FY 2018, the current scope of O&M services for the current VetLink system, made up of VetLink both hardware and software, will decrease as the VetLink hardware is decommissioned throughout the VAMCs. However, until the hardware refresh competitive action is awarded and transition is completed, an extension of the current contract for six months through September 30, 2018, with two, 6-month options is anticipated to be required. If the anticipated two (2), six (6) month options are not required for the anticipated complex transition required, VA will not exercise them.

8. Market Research: A Request for Information (RFI) was posted on Federal Business Opportunities website on January 17, 2018 with a closing date of January 22, 2018. The purpose of the RFI was to ascertain if sources could bridge the gap in service between the existing Contract Number GS-35F-0363L, Task Order VA118-15-F-0047, which ends on March 29, 2018 and when the anticipated competitive contract(s) are awarded in fourth quarter of FY 2018 in the aforementioned timeframe specified. On January 22, 2018, one response was received from Vecna. The response was an electronic communication stating that Vecna is uniquely qualified and prepared to continue carrying out the critical work as Prime contractor of VPS O&M during the anticipated extension period. Vecna has the software, hardware, personnel, and processes already in place to execute this work beginning on day one of the anticipated extension period. The Government technical experts reviewed the communication and concurred. In addition, in accordance with VA Acquisition Regulation 910.001, the Vendor Information Pages (VIP) database was screened for a list of Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB) and Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSB) using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code 541511 and the keyword search "VetLink." The keyword "VetLink" was used as VetLink hardware and software are used extensively for this procurement. The outcome of the search found zero SDVOSBs and VOSBs under the NAICS code and keyword search that could be potential sources. As a result, further market research was conducted as described below and only the incumbent Vecna responded. Upon technical review, Vecna was found technically

capable of providing the continued services. This market research further confirmed that no other source could meet the requirements in the aforementioned timeframe required. Based on the results of the market research, the Government's intent to solicit as a sole source to Vecna was verified.

9. Other Facts: None