

**Pierce County Human Services
Aging and Disability Resources
LETTER OF INTENT ANNOUNCEMENT
LOI-23-003-ADR**

- **Older Adult Counseling & Caregiver Counseling/Support Groups**
 - **Evidence-Based Alzheimer's/Dementia Intervention**
- Issued March 23rd, 2023**
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Any qualified agency, corporation, organization, or individual wishing to provide one or more of the services listed below must respond to this Letter of Intent announcement in order to be eligible for, and compete in, a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The Letter of Intent for Older Adult Counseling & Caregiver Counseling/Support Groups and Evidence-Based Alzheimer's/Dementia Intervention, also referred to as the "Acknowledgment of Intent to Participate in a Competitive Bid Process" is the first step required of service providers to inform Pierce County Human Services (PCHS) of their interest in providing the described services.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Pierce County Human Services Aging and Disability Resources (PCHS/ADR) is accepting Letters of Intent from prospective applicants to determine whether one or more organizations are interested in, and qualified to submit a proposal in a competitive bid process. After review of the Letters of Intent submitted to PCHS, a formal RFP may be issued.

This Letter of Intent is not to be construed as a guarantee or promise that the services or goods referred to herein will be purchased by Pierce County. PCHS/ADR retains full discretion to abandon the Letter of Intent process at any time, for any reason, without liability to offerors for any damages including, but not limited to, application preparation costs. By submitting a response to this Letter of Intent, the applicant acknowledges agreement with this process, including the fact that PCHS may abandon the process at any time without liability for damages caused by such termination.

Information contained in this announcement will serve as the basis for the more detailed specifications and requirements of a competitive RFP process.

SECTION II: ISSUING AGENCY/AUTHORITY

Pierce County Human Services Aging and Disability Resources (PCHS/ADR) is the designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Pierce County, and one of thirteen AAAs statewide.

PCHS/ADR receives federal and state funds from the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to plan, develop, coordinate, and advocate for a comprehensive service delivery system for persons sixty years of age or older, and for persons with long-term care needs in Pierce County.

Primary responsibilities of PCHS/ADR include the determination of service needs in the local community, allocation of available funding to meet those needs, and contracting for delivery of

services. Contracting for services includes procuring a service provider; entering a contractual relationship; receiving payment requests and reimbursing for services delivered; monitoring contract compliance, including fiscal management; and evaluating quality of the services provided.

SECTION III: ANTICIPATED TIMELINES

The following timetable will be utilized for the Letter of Intent process:

March 23, 2023:	Letter of Intent Release
April 5, 2023:	Letter of Intent (LOI) Due by 12:00 PM
April 19, 2023:	Notification of Procurement Decision

SECTION IV: DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES SPECIFIC TO LETTER OF INTENT

1. Older Adult Counseling & Caregiver Counseling/Support Groups:

Pierce County Human Services, Aging & Disability Resources (PCHS/ADR) is seeking expressions of interest from eligible and qualified organizations to provide the Older Adult Counseling & Caregiver Counseling/Support Group services outlined below.

PCHS shall contract with **one (1) or more providers** to administer all of the following services:

- Older Adult Counseling
- Family Caregiver Support Counseling/Family Caregiver Support Group

A. Older Adult Counseling

Federal Older American's Act (OAA) Title 3B Funds and OAA Title 3D Funds are allocated to support Older Adult Counseling (OAC) and evidence-based behavioral health treatment. OAC services include the provision of mental health assessment, individual therapy, evidence-based mental health services for older adults, and related advocacy and brokering support to eligible persons aged sixty (60) or over throughout Pierce County.

Services must be provided in a location of the client's choosing, which may include the client's home, the clinician's office, or via HIPAA-compliant telehealth platforms, and include:

- **Assessment:** The process of formally developing a treatment plan through identification of problems, needs, and psychosocial evaluation/assessment of the client's behavioral and social functioning. Interviews of family or extended family members and a home visit may be included as a part of the intake assessment process.
- **Individual therapy:** Defined as a person-to-person interaction between a client and one (1) or more clinical staff. The session provides counseling aimed at addressing the client's presenting problem(s), purpose, or diagnosis, and improving the client's behavioral and social functioning.
- **Evidence-based treatment for older adults:** Provision of one (1) or more of the evidence-based behavioral health programs listed on the National Council on Aging website at: [The National Council on Aging EBP Search Tool \(ncoa.org\)](https://www.ncoa.org/ebp-search-tool). The evidence-

based approach utilized by the clinician must be relevant to the treatment needs identified through the assessment process.

- **Advocacy/Brokering:** Activities directly related to the client's treatment plan, which may include coordination with the client's primary care physician or other health care providers, and family education regarding treatment, symptom recognition, problem solving, or family support.

OAC services are targeted towards serving individuals sixty (60) years of age and older who reside in their own homes or independent retirement communities in Pierce County. Services may be provided to older adults who are eligible for Medicaid but are not currently authorized to receive fee-for-service mental health services through a Behavioral Health Organization. The Federal Older Americans Act requires that preference be given to older individuals living in the community who have the greatest economic need, with particular attention to low-income minorities, and older individuals living in rural areas. Greatest economic need is defined as being at or below the Federal Poverty Level. Residents of nursing homes, adult family homes, and assisted living facilities are not eligible for services under this proposal. The provider is responsible for determining client eligibility.

B. Family Caregiver Support Program Counseling and Support Group Services

Federal Older American's Act (OAA) Title 3E Funds and/or Washington State Family Caregiver Support Funds are allocated for implementing Family Caregiver Support Program Counseling and Support Group services for family and other unpaid caregivers caring for an aging parent, spouse, or related adult with a cognitive or functional disability. These services are intended to provide emotional support, mental health intervention, and improved coping skills for the unpaid family caregiver.

Unpaid caregivers receiving counseling services under this program may need assistance with issues such as depression, stress, loss and grief, guilt, difficult family dynamics, anger management, and/or caregiver coping skills. Counseling services will be short-term, solution-focused, and will include identifying the caregiver's personal strengths and abilities and affirming their efforts.

Aging and Disability Resources (ADR) Case Managers will screen, authorize, and refer eligible family caregivers to the contracted agency for Family Caregiver Support Counseling Services through the Community Living Connections-GetCare database. Family or other unpaid caregivers seeking support group services may self-refer. Support group services are to be offered once per month.

Family Caregiver Support Counseling Services shall be provided in a location of the caregiver's choosing and may include the caregiver's home, the clinician's office, or via HIPAA-compliant telehealth platforms as specified by the ADR Case Manager. Agencies that provide Family Caregiver Support Counseling Services will be held to all Federal and State rules and regulations regarding confidentiality, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH). Details of individual counseling sessions will not be shared with ADR staff without an appropriately executed release of information.

a. Funding:

PCHS/ADR has made available **\$150,000** annually from Federal OAA 3B funding and **\$9,000** annually from OAA 3D funding to support Older Adult Counseling services. OAA 3B funded programs require the subcontractor to provide a minimum

of fifteen (15) percent of the total grant award from non-federal sources (cash or in-kind). OAA 3D funding may only be used to support provision of evidence-based mental health services to eligible older adults.

PCHS/ADR has made available **\$12,400** annually from Washington State Family Caregiver Support Program and OAA 3E funding to support Family Caregiver Support Counseling and Family Caregiver Support Group services.

b. Eligible Applicants:

Currently contracted providers wishing to be considered are required to respond.

Applicants that meet the following requirements are eligible to respond to the Letter of Intent:

- i. Services are to be provided by persons licensed in the State of Washington as a mental health counselor, independent clinical social worker, or marriage and family therapist according to WAC 246-809 and Chapter 18.225 RCW et seq. Employees must maintain a current license in good standing throughout the contract period of performance. Individuals licensed as Agency Affiliated Counselors, Certified Counselors, Certified Advisers, and Hypnotherapists under WAC 246-810 are not eligible to provide services under this LOI.
- ii. The applicant must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience successfully delivering the proposed counseling services to unpaid family caregivers and older adults and delivering support group services to unpaid family caregivers.

2. Family Caregiver Support Program Evidence-Based Alzheimer's/Dementia Interventions:

PCHS/ADR shall contract with **one (1) provider** to administer all funds allocated for the delivery of the service described below.

PCHS/ADR is seeking interest from eligible and qualified organizations to provide Evidence-Based Alzheimer's/Dementia Interventions to support family and other unpaid caregivers caring for an aging parent, ailing spouse, or related adult with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia. Federal Older American's Act (OAA) 3E Funds and/or Washington State Family Caregiver Support Funds are allocated for implementing Family Caregiver Support Program Evidence-Based Alzheimer's/Dementia Interventions. Aging and Disability Resources (ADR) Case Managers will screen, authorize, and refer eligible family caregivers to contracted agencies for evidence-based Alzheimer's/Dementia interventions through the CLC-GetCare database.

"Evidence-based programs" must meet the Administration for Community Living (ACL) definition as follows:

- Demonstrated through evaluation to be effective for improving the health and well-being or reducing disease, disability and/or injury among older adults; *and*
- Proven effective with older adult population, using Experimental or Quasi-Experimental Design; *and*
- Research results published in a peer-review journal; *and*
- Fully translated in one or more community site(s); *and*
- Includes developed dissemination products that are available to the public, OR

- Is considered to be evidence-based by any of the eleven operating divisions of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); *and*
- A division of HHS has included the program on a registry of evidence-based programs or has reviewed it and deemed it to be evidence-based.

Examples of evidence-based Alzheimer's/dementia interventions that meet the ACL criteria include Skills2Care® and Resources for Enhancing Alzheimer's Caregiver Health II (REACH II). More information about programs that meet the criteria for highest tier evidence-based Alzheimer's/dementia interventions can be found at the following website:

[The National Council on Aging EBP Search Tool \(ncoa.org\)](http://ncoa.org)

Please note that not all of the programs mentioned on the above-listed websites have a focus on Alzheimer's disease and dementia in a family caregiver context. Only applications for evidence-based interventions for people with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia and/or their informal family caregivers will be considered.

A. Funding:

PCHS/ADR has made available **\$2,100** annually from Federal Older Americans Act (OAA) 3E funding, and **\$20,720** annually from State Family Caregiver Support Program funding to implement the Evidence-Based Alzheimer's/Dementia Intervention program described above.

B. Eligible Applicants:

Currently contracted providers wishing to be considered are required to respond.

Applicants that meet the following requirements are eligible to respond to the Letter of Intent. Applicants must meet all of the following minimum qualifications:

- a. The applicant must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience successfully delivering the proposed evidence-based Alzheimer's/dementia intervention.
- b. The applicant must meet the minimum requirements of the specific proposed evidence-based Alzheimer's/dementia intervention, including any training or licensure requirements.
- c. The applicant must be able to accept referrals and provide services throughout the defined service area. The service area is defined by PCHS ADR as being within the geographical boundaries of Pierce County. Services shall be provided in the caregiver's home, or via HIPAA-compliant telehealth platforms as specified by the ADR Case Manager.

SECTION V: LETTER OF INTENT SUBMITTAL

PCHS/ADR will provide reasonable accommodations to allow for equal participation in the LOI process. To request a reasonable accommodation, please contact Shannon McKinney at (253) 442-5796, or 711 (Telecommunications Relay Service - TRS), or via e-mail at Shannon.McKinney@piercecountywa.gov.

The Acknowledgment of Intent to Participate in a Competitive Bid Process for Older Adult Counseling & Caregiver Counseling/Support Groups and/or Evidence-Based Alzheimer's/Dementia Interventions must be signed by an entity who has legal authority to commit the organization to a contractual agreement.

The completed Letter of Intent must be received by ADR no later than **12:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 5, 2023, at this address:**

Pierce County Human Services
Aging and Disability Resources
Attention: Shannon McKinney
4301 S. Pine Street, Suite 446
Tacoma, WA 98409

The Letter of Intent may also be e-mailed to HSADRADMINPLAN@piercecounitywa.gov.

A Letter of Intent received after the date and time specified above, regardless of the postmarked date, will not be considered.

SECTION VI: ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A COMPETITIVE BID PROCESS FOR OLDER ADULT COUNSELING & CAREGIVER COUNSELING/SUPPORT GROUPS AND/OR EVIDENCE-BASED ALZHEIMER’S/DEMENTIA INTERVENTIONS

This page must be completed, signed, and submitted to PCHS/ADR no later than **12:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 5, 2023. I acknowledge by signature below the following.**

- The purpose of the Letter of Intent is to determine eligible prospective applicants interested in providing Older Adult Counseling, Family Caregiver Support Group and Family Caregiver Support Counseling, and/or Evidence-Based Alzheimer’s/Dementia Interventions.
- I/my organization meets all eligibility criteria as described in the Letter of Intent.
- My response to the Letter of Intent may lead to Pierce County issuing a Request for Proposal for Older Adult Counseling, Family Caregiver Support Group and Family Caregiver Support Counseling, and/or Evidence-Based Alzheimer’s/Dementia Interventions.
- I/my organization intend to participate in a competitive bid process should Pierce County elect to issue an Older Adult Counseling, Family Caregiver Support Group and Family Caregiver Support Counseling, and/or Evidence-Based Alzheimer’s/Dementia Interventions Request for Proposal
- Meeting the minimum qualifications to participate in a competitive bid process does not infer that a contract shall be awarded.

Check service(s) applying for:

- Older Adult Counseling & Caregiver Counseling/Support Groups -- Includes:
 - Older Adult Counseling
List Evidence-Based Behavioral Health Intervention(s): _____

- Family Caregiver Support Counseling and Support Group
- Evidence-Based Alzheimer’s/Dementia Interventions
List Intervention(s): _____

Organization

Contact Name

Address

Phone

E-mail Address

Printed Name and Title of Person Authorized to Sign Contracts

Signature

Date