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Alberta SCI Action Strategy Request for Proposals release date: October 29, 2010

Project Title: An evaluation of supportive housing models for people with SCI and similar physical disabilities

The Alberta Spinal Cord Injury Solutions Alliance (AB SCI SA) is seeking a consultant to identify and evaluate supportive housing models that could serve the needs of Albertans with SCI and similar physical disabilities and identify one model for which a high level business case could be developed in future.

Deadline for submissions: November 19, 2010, 4:30 p.m.

Background

The Alberta SCI Solutions Alliance (AB SCI SA) is a provincial network of individuals and organizations passionate about making a positive difference for Albertans living with spinal cord injury (SCI). Comprised of people with SCI, service providers, researchers, health care practitioners and others, the AB SCI SA works at local, regional and provincial levels to identify needs and facilitate the delivery of customized solutions, from point of injury to full community participation.

The formation of the AB SCI SA is but one step in the creation and implementation of the Alberta SCI Initiative to enhance the wellbeing of persons living with SCI and to initiate a collaborative and systemic improvement of SCI services and research in the Province of Alberta. In furtherance of the Alberta SCI Initiative, the Province of Alberta made a 5 year \$12 million dollar commitment to fund the Alberta SCI Initiative and out of this, the Alberta SCI Action Strategy (Strategy) was launched.

The purpose of the Strategy is:

- To provide a conceptual and planning framework for collaborative effort in the SCI Community
- To identify priorities, develop action plans and launch related initiatives, all intended to significantly improve health and quality of life outcomes for Albertans with SCI
- To position this work on the agendas of the communities and government that must ultimately support implementation
- To give the SCI community one voice and a shared purpose.

The Strategy was developed through a process of extensive consultation with stakeholders, including consumers (i.e. people with SCI and similar physical disabilities). Out of this consultation, three priority areas for action were identified: affordable accessible housing; home care/attendant care; and adaptive equipment/devices. Task Teams were assigned to each priority area. They developed a total of eight action plans designed to bring about improvements in these areas. The action plans have been approved for funding through the AB SCI SA. The timeframe for implementation and evaluation is November 1, 2010 through March 31, 2012.

This request for proposals pertains to one of three action plans developed by the Task Team on Affordable Accessible Housing.

Need

In Alberta, there is a chronic shortage of affordable, accessible housing for individuals with SCI and similar physical disabilities who are able to live independently with supports*. Housing registries and service providers report long waiting lists for housing throughout the province, and a complete lack of housing in many smaller communities. In the absence of suitable housing, individuals may be placed into long-term care facilities built for high-needs seniors. This environment is costly and separates them from their families and social networks. Available programming does not meet their needs and fosters a further loss of independence.

Members of the Task Team on Affordable Accessible Housing have indicated a need for descriptive and evaluative data on current models of supportive housing to support their efforts to develop a broader range of supportive housing options in communities throughout the province.

*Supports are defined broadly in this strategy. They vary according to residents' needs and could include housekeeping, meal preparation, laundry, social and recreational opportunities, and up to 24 hour care with waking, dressing, bathing, transfers etc. It also takes into consideration the need for accessible, accepting communities where a large variety of accessible services are available.

Project Team

Neil Pierce (Lead), MS Society of Canada – Alberta Division
Larry Pempeit, Canadian Paraplegic Association (Alberta)
Ralph Hubele, Alberta Seniors and Community Supports
Soraya Saliba, Accessible Housing – Calgary
Dale Williams, consumer – Grande Prairie
Others TBD
Project Coordinator – Kristie Coulombe

The consultant will work with the project team and project coordinator. The project lead, will be responsible for directing the work of the consultant and project team so that decisions are made in a timely fashion, and that deliverables are achieved on time and on budget. The coordinator will assist the project lead in this role and will also perform tasks that contribute to the optimal use of the consultant's time and expertise (e.g. gathering information, soliciting feedback from the project team, scheduling meetings, etc.).

About the Project

This study will look at the literature on best practices in supportive housing and identify successful and promising models that could be implemented locally. It will describe the need for supportive housing for people with SCI and similar physical disabilities in Alberta. It will investigate the effectiveness of various models of supportive housing both in Alberta and elsewhere. Effectiveness will be evaluated in economic terms (e.g. affordability, financial stability) and in terms of residents' quality of life. The findings will help stakeholders in Alberta communities develop supportive housing by providing them with comparative information on how various forms of supportive housing operate and their effectiveness. It will also provide them with a consistent set of messages regarding the need for supportive housing and the best way to meet that need.

The Affordable Accessible Housing Task Team intends to seek funding from other sources to complete a business case for one of the models identified through this evaluation. The business case would be high level (see definition below) – allowing for communities to tailor it to their own unique needs and circumstances. The development of the business case is not a part of this request.

A high-level business case contains general alternatives, potential costs and benefits (usually a range), high-level impacts and risks, and an environmental analysis. It is based on “ball-park” estimates and initial judgments and is used to gain initial support for a project. Once support for the high-level business case is obtained from key players, a feasibility study can be carried out and the business case will be revised based on the results. Once the business case is developed, it can be presented to various community-based stakeholders to generate interest. They can then use the business case to generate the needed interest in their community. They would then initiate their own process to carry out the feasibility study and revise the business case to suit their own circumstances.

Deliverables

1. Describe the need for and current availability of a range of supportive housing options for individuals with SCI and other physical disabilities in Alberta.
2. Prepare a descriptive summary of various models of supportive housing. The parameters of the search and elements to be described will be determined in conjunction with the project team.
3. In cooperation with project team members, select a subset of supportive housing models that hold promise for application in the Alberta context and evaluate them. The researcher will work with the project team to determine the evaluation criteria; financial sustainability and residents' quality of life will be of particular interest.
4. Prepare an information package and presentation tools that stakeholders may use to communicate the findings and generate interest among community stakeholders and potential funders.
5. Help the project team identify one housing model from the evaluation for which a high level business case can be created in future.

Timelines

Deliverables are due on or before May, 2011

Requirements for submission

Proposals in response to this RFP should include:

- executive summary identifying the main features and benefits of the proposed work
- description of how the work will be carried out, including the number of individuals who will be involved and their qualifications to do the work described
- a detailed workplan that lists tasks and timelines
- a detailed, itemized budget (identifying hourly fee and itemizing expenses)
- company overview
- two references for recently completed projects
- key contact name, title, address, telephone numbers, fax number and e-mail address

Criteria for review

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- capacity and creditability of the consulting firm
- demonstrated expertise and experience of the consultant and his/her team
- the vendor's understanding of the project requirements
- commitment to project deadlines
- detailed workplan
- overall cost
- references

Submit one electronic copy of your proposal to:

Attention: Heather Lissel
Coordinator, AB SCI Action Strategy
hlissel@telus.net

Applicants short-listed for interviews will be contacted by Dec. 3, 2010
The successful applicant will be contacted by Dec. 10, 2010

For further information, contact:

Heather Lissel
Coordinator, AB SCI Action Strategy
780-467-4418
or go to: www.alberta-sci-initiative.blogspot.com

About The Alberta Paraplegic Foundation

The Alberta Paraplegic Foundation (The APF) was established in 1987 and its purpose is to fund worthwhile SCI scientific research and community development projects or otherwise providing assistance for persons with SCI. The APF is responsible for the oversight, monitoring and distribution funds related to the Alberta SCI Action Strategy.