

# Pharmacy Quality Alliance (PQA)

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**Call for Proposals: Continuing Education Provider and Plan for  
Dissemination/Marketing of a Quality Improvement Program for PQA**

**Deadline**

**Proposal: Monday, August 18, 2008 (5 PM EDT)**

*Additional information is available at [www.pqaalliance.org](http://www.pqaalliance.org)*

## **Background**

PQA, Inc, a pharmacy quality alliance, is a self-sustaining, membership-based alliance that was established in April 2006. Members of PQA include government agencies (e.g., AHRQ, CMS), national pharmacy associations, healthcare provider and practitioner organizations, consumer groups, patient advocacy organizations, chain pharmacy corporations, health plans, pharmacy benefit managers, quality improvement organizations, pharmaceutical corporations, generic manufacturers, biotechnology corporations and other interested stakeholders.

The PQA mission as adopted in May 2006 is to:

*Improve health care quality and patient safety through a collaborative process in which the key stakeholders agree on a strategy for measuring performance at the pharmacy and pharmacist-levels; collecting data in the least burdensome way; and reporting meaningful information to consumers, pharmacists, employers, payers, and other healthcare decision-makers to help make informed choices, improve outcomes and stimulate the development of new payment models.*

During 2007, PQA contracted with several organizations to facilitate the development and testing of performance measures for pharmacies. The American Institutes of Research (AIR) worked with PQA to develop and pilot-test a questionnaire to gather consumer feedback on the quality of pharmacy services. Pilot-testing of the questionnaire was completed in November 2007, and was submitted to AHRQ as the CAHPS-Pharmacy measure within the CAHPS family of surveys. If adopted, the questionnaire and technical manual will be available through AHRQ.

PQA worked with NCQA and Advanced Pharmacy Concepts (APC) to develop and pilot-test performance measures derived from prescription drug claims data. The goal was to develop measure specifications that could be used by a health plan, drug plan, or other payer, to assess performance of individual pharmacies. The measures could also be used for internal quality improvement by a pharmacy or network of pharmacies. The measures fall into one of 4 categories: medication adherence/persistence; medication safety; medication appropriateness; and efficiency. Demonstration projects using these measures will commence Summer 2008 and continue for one year.

In April 2008, PQA awarded a grant to the University of Arizona for development of the content for a turn-key Quality Improvement (QI) educational program for student pharmacists and pharmacists. The materials will be developed in modules and will be made available to U.S. Colleges of Pharmacy in the Spring of 2009. PQA is now seeking to partner with a provider of continuing pharmacy education (CPE) to obtain ACPE-accreditation for the educational program and develop a delivery system and marketing plan for widespread dissemination of the the educational content to the primary target audience of practicing pharmacists and front-line pharmacists. This RFP is not looking for a marketing plan for dissemination of this program to pharmacy students, as PQA will be coordinating that work on its own.

## **Program Details**

The overarching goal of this Request for Proposal is to provide the continuing pharmacy education delivery of an extensive program to practicing pharmacists and pharmacy technicians as a continuing education program and also to provide the program plan for the broad dissemination of this program for the period of 2009 through 2010, that can include, but does not have to be limited to web-based programs and webinars for the modules with the intent that each module could be taken individually for 1 or 2 hours of CPE credit

Note: while at some later point in time, PQA may utilize the content and wish to develop a certificate program that meets the ACPE criteria, it is not our intention to have this program initially developed into a certificate program through this RFP. However, if you wish to include your experience in the offering of certificate programs for pharmacists, as background this would be helpful to us as we look ahead to future projects in 2009.

The content for this program is contractually expected to be completed by the University of Arizona no later than November 30, 2008, however some modules will be completed sooner. PQA would like to “turn-over” completed modules to the grantee who secures this contract, so that the contractee can pace the work that needs to be re-purposed for web-based delivery. The work of this RFP should be completed by January 30, 2009.

PQA wants to ensure that educational materials are available in multiple delivery methods and that they can be adapted to internet-based delivery. The content being developed by the University of Arizona should enable PowerPoint<sup>®</sup> presentations (with voice-over or video), exercises, case scenarios, handouts, readings, synchronous or asynchronous discussions and sample projects. A Coordinator’s Guide to explain how the content/methods should be used is required by the University of Arizona and will be shared with the awardee of this RFP, so there needs to be close collaboration between content experts developing the materials, and the dissemination experts who are charged with the plans for dissemination of this proposal. We anticipate the Guide will provide information about how the materials may be used in “modules” or groups so that different levels of knowledge and skill may be achieved.

The awardee of the grant for this RFP should be focused primarily on the continuing pharmacy education of practicing pharmacists and technicians. For continuing pharmacy education, the Coordinator’s Guide should contain information about how the content and methods are linked to knowledge-based, application-based and practice-based continuing pharmacy education (CPE) activities. Information about assessment and evaluation should also be included. (Refer to [http://www.acpe-accredit.org/pdf/CPE\\_Standards\\_Final\\_092107.pdf](http://www.acpe-accredit.org/pdf/CPE_Standards_Final_092107.pdf) for clarification on practice-based CPE activity). The program should be ready for submission for ACPE accreditation.

If the respondent to this RFP is not an ACPE-accredited provider, two options exist to be explored by the applicant:

1. The applicant may suggest within their RFP whom they would like to work with that is an ACPE-approved provider.
2. The applicant may contact the primary contact at the University of Arizona (Dr. Terri Warholak at [warholak@pharmacy.arizona.edu](mailto:warholak@pharmacy.arizona.edu)) to discuss a partnership with the University of Arizona as an accredited CE provider.

PQA staff and the chairs of the PQA Education and Communication Workgroup will meet at least monthly via conference call with the awardees for progress reports.

PQA will own any materials, tangible and intangible, draft or final, generated by or contributed to by the contractor in connection with this project (including those materials prepared for or to be incorporated into materials for release to third parties). If necessary, the contractor will assign all intellectual property rights (including copyright rights) to PQA.

PQA will retain all rights of ownership of any materials prepared by the contractor in connection with this project, except that PQA will grant a non-exclusive perpetual license to the contractor to use such materials for its own non-commercial purposes. PQA may enter into commercial arrangements with providers of continuing education for distribution of educational materials derived in whole or in part from contractor's work; in such an event, contractor will not receive any revenues related to such arrangements. PQA shall, however, when distributing any materials derived from the contractor's work (on its own or through a third party) acknowledge the developer's role in connection with such materials.

### **Submission Instructions**

Proposals are due to PQA before August 18, at 5pm EDT. Proposals should be submitted as an attachment to email. The email should be directed to Laura Cranston at [info@pqaalliance.org](mailto:info@pqaalliance.org)

Proposals should use 1 inch margins with a font size of at least 11-point. The proposal should be no more than 8 single-spaced pages, and should address the following:

- Contact information (telephone number and email address) for the project director
- Description of the deliverables, including the marketing plan for the broad dissemination of this program to the target audience
- Background on the Continuing Pharmacy Education provider, if different from the submitting entity, or if the entities are two distinct companies collaborating on this proposal.
- Detailed budget (1 page) and justification, including an estimate of the personnel, equipment, travel, supplies and other costs for the project (indirect costs should be limited to 10% percent). The total amount of funding that is being requested from PQA should be clearly stated.

- 2-page biosketch (NOT included in page total) of each individual in the project team as well as one paragraph descriptions of organizations where the work will be completed
- References (NOT included in page total)

### **Timeline**

- Thurs., July 10, 2008 Proposal is released
- Mon., July 21, 2008 Conference call for interested individuals (1pm EDT)  
*Dial-in: 866-462-0164 passcode: \*7514024\**
- Monday, August 18 Proposals due to PQA by 5 PM EDT to [laura@cranstonassoc.com](mailto:laura@cranstonassoc.com)
- Wed, September 10 Announce award recipient
- Mon, September 22 Awardee initiates work
- Sept. – Dec. 2008 Conference calls with PQA staff, chairs of the PQA Education and Communication Workgroup, the University of Arizona and the grantee of this award will have teleconference calls every 3-4 weeks
- Dec. 19, 2008 Work to be completed and submitted to PQA

### **Review Criteria**

Proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of PQA Co-Chairs and members of the PQA Education & Communication Workgroup. PQA does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted. The following factors will be considered in reviewing the proposals:

- Compatibility of the proposed project with the mission of PQA and the objectives of this Request for Proposals
- Clarity of methods and deliverables described in the proposal
- Clarity and creativity of the marketing plan for outreach to the primary audience
- Experience and expertise of the project team, including demonstrated record of successfully completing projects
- Budget is commensurate with work and deliverables

*The aforementioned criteria will be weighted equally.*

### **Questions?**

Questions should be directed to Laura Cranston at [laura@cranstonassoc.com](mailto:laura@cranstonassoc.com)