
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Rural Nebraska Healthcare Network

**FCC Rural Health Care Pilot Program
Administered under Universal Service Administrative Company guidelines**

Requested by: The Rural Nebraska Healthcare Network

RFP #04 Network Gear

Prepared by:



Fiberutilities Group
Armstrong Centre
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Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
(319) 364-3200

OVERVIEW OF RFP PACKAGE

This RFP vendor package was designed to be as inclusive as possible, providing vendors sufficient information needed to submit a bid.

Included in this RFP are the following Sections and Attachments.

1. **Introduction and Background** provides information on two fiber networks: a Medical Network and a Commercial Network., The RFP also outlines FCC/USAC involvement, introduces the management company selected for network planning, operations and maintenance, and includes user and access point mapping.
2. **Contact Information** identifies contact individuals related to this RFP with phone, fax, and email information.
3. **Timing and Milestones Dates** outlines bid opening and closing dates as well as acceptable response formats.
4. **Question / Clarification Process** outlines Q & A procedures for maintaining a fair, open and transparent bidding process for all vendor RFP inquiries.
5. **Bid Submission Process** confirms the specific logistical requirements necessary to respond to this RFP.
6. **Bid Evaluation Process** outlines the criteria to be used in the selection of winning bids.
7. **RFP Bid Overview** outlines the various standards and specifications needed to respond to this RFP.
8. **Alternatives** discusses the ability to offer cost saving or efficiency alternatives in the bid response.
9. **Payment Process** outlines the sequential steps and associated vendor expectations regarding the timely processing of vendor invoicing / payment.
10. **Attachments** provide additional detail and specifications pertaining to the various sections of this RFP.
11. **Description of RFP #04** provides a description of this particular RFP. Please see Section 7: "RFP Bid Overview"

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Rural Nebraska Healthcare Network (RNHN) is a not-for-profit corporation whose members are the nine not-for-profit and public hospitals in the Panhandle of Nebraska.¹ A board of directors, which is comprised of the Chief Executive Officer of each member hospital, governs the RNHN.

Since 1996, RNHN members have collaborated on projects in order to coordinate a unified healthcare response in the face of the geographic isolation of its patients. RNHN is an integrated healthcare system that serves nearly all patients in the Nebraska Panhandle.²

RNHN has recently completed a 700 mile fiber optic, privately owned, multi-gigabit Ethernet network connecting approximately 40 hospitals and clinics in the Panhandle. The primary purpose of this RFP is to clearly define the scope and requirements needed to augment the existing fiber network with additional hardware elements to improve the reliability and stability of the overall network consistent with the program guidelines of the Rural Healthcare Pilot Program (RHCPP) by soliciting bids from qualified vendors as specified in this RFP.

RNHN project planning and project management will be facilitated by Fiberutilities Group LLC, 222 3rd Avenue, SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401 www.fiberutilities.com. Fiberutilities currently manages over 8,000 route miles of fiber, including other medical networks and other RHCPP applicant networks.

¹The member hospitals are: Box Butte General Hospital, Alliance; Chadron Community Hospital, Chadron; Garden County Health Services, Oshkosh; Gordon Memorial Health Services, Gordon; Kimball Health Services, Kimball; Memorial Health Center, Sidney; Morrill County Community Hospital, Bridgeport; Perkins County Health Services, Grant; and Regional West Medical Center, Scottsbluff.

²The Panhandle covers 11 counties spread out over 14,000 square miles with an average population density of 6.5 people per square mile.

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2. CONTACT INFORMATION

All questions or requests for clarification related to the requirements specified in this RFP should be directed to:

Kent Van Metre
Rural Nebraska Health Network Contract Project Manager
Fiberutilities Group LLC
222 3rd Avenue SE
Suite 500
Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 52401
Phone: 319- 297-6906
Fax: 319-364-8100
E mail: kvanmetre@fiberutilities.com

USAC vendor information:
Phone: 1-800-229-5476
Web address: www.usac.org/rhc
Access the "Vendors" tab or the "Contact" tab

3. TIMING AND MILESTONE DATES

All information and documents related to this RFP may be accessed at the <http://www.usac.org/rhc-pilot-program/> website under the "Search Posted Services" tab.

The bidding process will begin upon the posting of this RFP by USAC on the official USAC web site and will remain for a period of no fewer than 30 days and will fully comply with all USAC required bid posting requirements and timelines.

Estimated RFP Posting on USAC website February 1st, 2011
Bid Response Deadline Posting Date +30 days
Bid Award Announcements (approx) Posting Date +60 days

4. QUESTION / CLARIFICATION PROCESS

RNH is committed to a fair, open, and transparent bidding process. All questions or requests for clarification should be presented to contact person identified above.

Any vendor desiring to be included in this distribution list should send an email with contact information to: kvanmetre@fiberutilities.com with the words VENDOR EMAIL DISTRO NETWORK GEAR in the subject line.

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5. BID SUBMISSION PROCESS

All vendors responding to this RFP must have a valid Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) issued by USAC.

The vendor SPIN number must be provided at the time of the RFP response or the bid may be disqualified.

Vendors must make certain that their SPIN includes the checked box qualifying them for participation in the RHCPP.

Any questions by vendors related to SPIN's or USAC's requirements should be directed to USAC by email (RHCPILLOT@usac.com) or by telephone (1-800-229-5476).

All RFP responses should contain complete contact information for the responding vendor (name, company, mailing address, phone number, fax number and email address).

All RFP responses should include background information on the vendors' company, including, at a minimum, a brief resume of financial, technical and managerial qualifications, areas of expertise, number of years in business, website URL if applicable, and any other information the vendor feels is important related to its ability to respond to this RFP.

All responses to this RFP must be submitted electronically in MS Word or PDF format by the due date and time and should be submitted to:

kvanmetre@fiberutilities.com

with **"RNHN RFP NETWORK GEAR RESPONSE"** listed on the subject line of the e mail **NOT LATER THAN 5:00 pm CST of the 30th day from USAC posting.**

If the RFP response information fails to arrive within the specified timeline, the response may be disqualified from consideration for this RFP.

6. BID EVALUATION PROCESS

Bids not meeting the specifications as outlined in this RFP will be disqualified from consideration in this phase of the project.

Bids will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a) Overall cost.
- b) Service Level Agreements, contract terms and contractual service commitments
- c) Quality/ clarity/compliance of RFP response,
- d) Ability to provision and deliver service to specified locations.
- e) Qualifications of vendor and vendor experience with past projects consistent with the size and scope outlined in this RFP.

Lowest price considerations, while important and weighted appropriately, will not be the sole determinant in a successful bid award.

RNHN reserves the right to contact a vendor after submission of bid proposals for the purpose of clarifying a bid proposal to ensure mutual understanding. This contact may include written questions, interviews, site visits, and a review of past performance. This information may be used to evaluate the vendor's bid proposal. However, the information received from the vendor shall not be considered in the evaluation of a vendor's bid proposal if the information materially alters the content of the bid proposal.

RNHN reserves the right to waive deficiencies in a bid proposal. The decision as to whether a deficiency will be waived or will require the rejection of a bid proposal will be at the sole discretion of RNHN. This reserved right does not diminish the RNHN's right to reject a bid proposal if vendor fails to comply or respond to any part of this RFP.

Upon award of a contract, the vendor will provide certification per USAC requirements and will assist RNHN in the preparation of the Network Cost Worksheet (NCW). These are required for the Funding Commitment Letter (FCL) to be issued by USAC.

The successful vendor must, within sixty days, enter into a contract with RNHN to implement the service contemplated by this RFP. Failure of a successful vendor to agree to the terms of a contract within such sixty day period may be grounds for RNHN to award the project to another bidder. All contracts are contingent upon final USAC approval and funding.

Vendors are required to maintain transaction documentation and records for a period of five years after payment in compliance with FCC rules and USAC document retention requirements.

This is a Request for Proposal. Submission of a response is an offer but does not constitute acceptance. RNHN reserves the right to not award a bid for all or any portion of the RFP.

Should no bids be deemed acceptable, RNHN reserves the right to re-bid specific items or the entire project.

All bid response information is considered confidential. RFP responses will not be shared with other bidders unless specifically required to do so by USAC.

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All bids submitted will receive a closure response via mail consisting of either a) the awarding of the bid to enter into a contract or b) a non-award notification letter. Closure responses will be sent to the contact name and address indicated on the bid . Vendors should anticipate a minimum of three weeks to complete the analysis of bids and provide the appropriate vendor response.

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7. RFP BID OVERVIEW

- I. Purpose & Project Scope / RFP Overview
- II. Required Contract Terms
- III. Network Gear Service Specifications
- IV. Required Bid Format

I. Purpose & Project Scope / RFP Overview

RNHN is looking to improve overall network functionality by procuring SNMP cards to monitor the power elements of the fiber network (as specified in section III).

All costs and expenses, for the preparation of a bid will be solely the responsibility of the bidder. Only the winning bid will be awarded a contract. It is the sole discretion of RNHN to award any or all bids with no financial or legal obligation to non winning bidders and a financial or legal obligation to winning bidders only upon funding by USAC under the RHCPP. The RNHN project will only be completed in its entirety. Bidders seeking to respond with partial solutions are encouraged to partner with other potential bidders to provide an entire solution. Such collaborative responses should be clearly indicated as such.

II. Required Contract Terms

The final contract submitted by the vendor must comply with all USAC rules and requirements consistent with the Rural Healthcare Pilot Program.

III. Network Gear Specifications

Installation of these network components shall occur at the locations specified in **Section 10: Attachments**. Vendors should clearly identify the cost of the equipment and the cost of installation as two separate costs in the response, including a “total equipment costs” identifier and a “total installation costs” identifier..

- 1. SNMP Cards. RNHN is requesting bids on SNMP cards as specified:
 - Extreem Power Conversion NXRT 1000VA & 1500VA SNMP Card

Model #: SNMP-1PMINI

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Vendor should provide a quote for forty (40) of the above units

- Extreem Power Conversion XPRT 6000VA SNMP Card

Model #: XPRT-SNMP1

Vendor should provide a quote for two (2) of the above units

RNHN reserves the right to award the equipment component of any response with or without the associated installation costs.

IV. Required Bid Format

All RFP responses should contain complete contact information for the responding vendor (name, company, mailing address, phone number, fax number and email address).

All RFP responses should include background information on the vendors' company, including, at a minimum, a brief resume of financial, technical and managerial qualifications, areas of expertise, number of years in business, website URL if applicable, and any other information the vendor feels is important related to its ability to respond to this RFP.

All responses to this RFP must be submitted electronically in MS Word or PDF format by the due date and time and should be submitted to:

kvanmetre@fiberutilities.com

with **"RNHN RFPNETWORK GEAR RESPONSE"** listed on the subject line of the e mail.

Vendors who cannot meet a specific provision or stipulation in the RFP must clearly identify any non-conforming provision in their response.

Vendors should clearly indicate pricing, term and capacity on the response.

8. ALTERNATIVES

RNHN anticipates that some responses may include potential cost saving alternatives from the items, routes or methods specified in this RFP. The RNHN will consider all such alternatives provided that such alternatives are clearly marked "ALTERNATE SOLUTION." However, these responses must, at a minimum, meet the specification requirements outlined herein.

The RNHN is also open to any *relevant* recommendations, suggestions or proposals that would result in lower costs for the network gear specified.. All such recommendations or alternatives

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must be within the span and scope of control of the RNHN specifically ***and comply with all appropriate USAC rules and regulations pertaining to the RHCPP program.***

9. PAYMENT PROCESS

Payment is based on 15% funding by RNHN and 85% by FCC funds administered by USAC.

RNHN intends to pay the vendor(s) upon receipt of funding after successful testing and acceptance of the services.

RNHN expects the selected vendor to provide services as specified. RNHN does not guarantee any minimum compensation to the vendor or any minimum usage or purchase of the vendor's services or products.

Payments are expected to be administered as follows:

- Successful vendor will assist in the completion of a Network Cost Worksheet required by USAC to issue a Funding Commitment Letter (FCL)
- RNHN will be issued a FCL from USAC for services awarded.
- RNHN will place an order with the winning vendor upon receipt of the FCL.
- Vendor will complete installation of any segment(s) or phases per specifications and notify RNHN that the network segment(s) is ready for testing and acceptance.
- RNHN will work with the vendor within ten working days of written notice by the vendor of readiness to complete the testing and acceptance process as outlined in the contract between the vendor and RNHN.
- Upon acceptance,, vendor may invoice RNHN for products or services.
- RNHN will be responsible for directly paying 15% of the invoice upon satisfactory completion of testing and acceptance. At that time, RNHN will also provide the vendor with the necessary documentation required for the vendor to process its 85% payment request directly with USAC.
- Vendor will then countersign each invoice acknowledging receipt of the 15% co-payment and directly submit each invoice to USAC for processing of the 85% balance.
- Contact information for USAC invoice submission will be provided with the acceptance document.
- USAC payment is expected to be monthly. USAC has informed RNHN that payment directly from USAC to the vendor should be within 30 days of the receipt of a properly processed and submitted invoice.
- Vendor will agree to maintain transaction documentation and records for a period of five years after payment in compliance with FCC rules and USAC document retention requirements.

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10. ATTACHMENTS

Box Butte General Hospital	2101 Box Butte Ave	Box Butte	Alliance	NE	69301
GNMSS - Hemingford Clinic	812 Laramie Ave.	Box Butte	Hemingfor	NE	69348
GNMSS - Hyannis Clinic	111 South Main St	Grant	Hyannis	NE	69350
GNMSS - Family Meicine	2091 Box Butte Ave.	Box Butte	Alliance	NE	69301
Western Community Health Resources Clinic & Family Planning	821 Morehead Street	Dawes	Chadron	NE	69337
Legend Buttes Health Services	11 Paddock Street	Dawes	Crawford	NE	69339
Hay Springs Medical Clinic	232 North Main Street	Sheridan	Hay Spring	NE	69347
Western Community Health Resources - Alliance	619 Box Butte Ave.	Box Butte	Alliance	NE	69301
Western Community Health Resources	11 Paddock Street	Dawes	Crawford	NE	69339
Western Community Health Resources	207 Main Street	Sheridan	Rushville	NE	69360
Western Community Health Resources - Gordon	106 North Main	Sheridan	Gordon	NE	60343
Garden County Hospital & Rural Health Clinic	1100 West 2nd	Garden	Oshkosh	NE	69154
Gordon Memorial Hospital	300 E 8th Street	Sheridan	Gordon	NE	69343
Gordon Clinic	807 North Ash St.	Sheridan	Gordon	NE	69343
Rushville Clinic	308 West 3rd St.	Sheridan	Rushville	NE	69360
Kimball Health Services - Hospital & Medical Clinic	505 S. Burg St.	Kimball	Kimball	NE	69154
Memorial Health Center	645 Osage St.	Cheyenne	Sidney	NE	69162
Memorial Health Center/Sidney Medical Associates	1625 Dorwart Dr.	Cheyenne	Sidney	NE	69162
Memorial Health Center	645 Osage St.	Cheyenne	Sidney	NE	69162
Chappell Medical Clinic	562 Vincent Ave.	Cheyenne	Chappell	NE	69129
Morrill County Community Hospital	1313 S Street	Morrill	Bridgeport	NE	69336
Morrill County Hospital Clinic	1320 S St.	Morrill	Bridgeport	NE	69336
Chimney Rock Medical Center	320 Main St.	Morrill	Bayard	NE	69334
Morrill County Family Resource Center	1309 R Street	Morrill	Bridgeport	NE	69336
Perkins County Health Services	900 Lincoln Ave	Perkins	Grant	NE	69140
Grant Medical Clinic	912 Central Avenue	Perkins	Grant	NE	69140
Regional West Medical Center	4021 Ave B	Scotts Bluff	Scottsbluff	NE	69361
Regional West Physicians Clinic (North Plaza)	2 West 42nd Street	Scotts Bluff	Scottsbluff	NE	69361
Regional West Physicians Clinic (Mitchell)	1456 Center Ave	Scotts Bluff	Mitchell	NE	69357
Regional West Physicians Clinic (Morrill)	302 Center Ave	Scotts Bluff	Morrill	NE	69358
Regional West Physicians Clinic (Gering)	1275 Sage Street	Scotts Bluff	Gering	NE	69341
Regional West Physicians Clinic (South Plaza)	3911 Ave B	Scotts Bluff	Scottsbluff	NE	69361
Regional West Physicians Clinic (Urgent Care)	3011 Avenue B	Scotts Bluff	Scottsbluff	NE	69361
Regional West Medical Center (South Unit)	3700 Avenue D	Scotts Bluff	Scottsbluff	NE	69361
Chadron Community Hospital & Physician's Clinic	825 Centennial Drive	Dawes	Chadron	NE	69337
Dorwart Cancer Care Center	830 Pine Street	Cheyenne	Sidney	NE	69162
Scottsbluff Surgical Center	4022 Avenue B	Scotts Bluff	Scottsbluff	NE	69361

11. DESCRIPTION OF RFP #04

Please see Section 7: RFP Overview