



MICHIGAN PUBLIC
HEALTH INSTITUTE

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August 19, 2008

Dear Health Care Provider:

Importance of this letter. This letter was written for organizations that are eligible to participate in Michigan's Rural Health Care Pilot Program (RHCPP) but are not eligible to receive RHCPP funding. Such organizations must pay 100 percent of the project costs attributable to their participation.

Benefit to you. In November 2007, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) awarded \$21 million to the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) to build a dedicated broadband network linking Michigan's public and non-profit rural health care facilities. In October 2008, MPHI plans to issue an RFP (request for proposal) to construct the network. The project will link the facilities to both the public Internet and the research-based Internet2 network. The project will also negotiate long-term rates to keep the monthly, ongoing cost of using the network as low as possible. Under FCC guidelines, the following types of health care facilities—although ineligible for RHCPP funding—may participate by paying 100 percent of the costs attributable to their participation:

- **For-profit** hospitals, teaching hospitals, and medical schools
- **For-profit** community health centers, including mental health centers
- **For-profit** rural health clinics, including mobile clinics
- **For-profit and nonprofit** nursing homes
- **For-profit and nonprofit** hospices and other long-term care facilities
- **For-profit and nonprofit** emergency medical service facilities (please note that dedicated emergency departments of rural, for-profit hospitals that participate in Medicare are eligible to participate in the project *and* receive RHCPP funding)

Smaller satellite sites operated by these types of organizations are also eligible, as long as they help provide health care. For example, several small nursing homes run by a long-term care organization would be eligible; a hardware store run by that same organization would not. The technical specifications of the network access available to you are provided on our website (referenced below).

Cost. Since the FCC's criteria make your type of organization ineligible for RHCPP funding, your organization must pay 100 percent of the costs attributable to its participation in the network. The benefits of participation include (1) lower network construction costs due to the scale of the project and (2) lower ongoing service costs because that is the most heavily weighted criterion that will be used to select a vendor.

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LOA requirement. To participate, each facility must sign a Letter of Agency (an LOA authorizes MPHI to negotiate on the facility's behalf) and submit the LOA to MPHI no later than September 17, 2008. The LOA enables MPHI to add a facility to the RFP so it can be included in the network construction phase of the project. However, a facility may opt out of participation before the contract is signed. In addition, once the network is constructed, a facility may terminate its participation at any time *after* the first year of network operation. This LOA process has been mandated by the FCC and its administrative arm. We think the benefits of the program are compelling, and signing an LOA does not irrevocably commit a facility to participation.

Summary. This project offers your facility the opportunity to link to a dedicated, statewide, high-speed health care network at a low cost and without a long-term commitment. It offers you the opportunity to complement your existing telecommunications infrastructure (or build one). If the network does not meet your needs, if technological advances offer better alternatives, or if for any reason you cannot afford to continue to participate, you may opt out any time after the twelfth month of network operation.

What we need from you, and the deadline. If you are interested in participating, we need two items from you no later than the close-of-business on September 17:

- A Letter of Agency enabling your facility and any subsidiary sites to participate in the network. For-profit and not-for-profit LOA templates and LOA Instructions are available at <http://fcc.mphi.org/sign-up.html> . If you do not have access to the Internet, please telephone me and I will mail a copy of all documents to you.
- A Site Survey for each geographically distinct site you wish to include in the network. The Survey asks you to specify primary and secondary preferences for the level of internet access for the site. After a vendor has been chosen, you will be given two internet-access-level quotes from which to choose. The quotes will be your share of network construction costs and ongoing, monthly service costs. A Site Survey template and a description of the four internet access levels (tiers) are available at <http://fcc.mphi.org/sign-up.html> . If you do not have access to the Internet, please telephone me and I will mail a copy of all documents to you.

Again, Microsoft Word templates for both the LOA and the Site Survey can be found at <http://fcc.mphi.org/sign-up.html> . Please remember that you may sign *one* LOA for *all* of your owned/subsidiary sites, but *each* site should be described in a *separate* Site Survey. (If you have already submitted an LOA and Site Survey[s] for this project, do not submit another copy.)

Please return your LOA and Site Survey(s) to: Michigan Public Health Institute
Attn: FCC RHCPP Team
2436 Woodlake Circle, Suite 300
Okemos, MI 48864

Michigan Public Health Institute
August 19, 2008

Questions? If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or the Assistant Project Manager, Harry Levins (517.324.6039, hlevins@mphi.org). MPHI's website, <http://fcc.mphi.org/>, and the FCC's website, <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/rural/rhcp.html>, contain additional information about the project.

Sincerely,

Jeff Shaw
Project Manager
517.324.6055
jshaw@mphi.org

Documents available at <http://fcc.mphi.org/sign-up.html> :

1. A letter for eligible public and non-profit health care providers
2. A copy of this letter for (a) for-profit and (b) otherwise ineligible non-profit health care providers
3. LOA Template – not-for-profit
4. LOA Template – for profit
5. LOA Instructions
6. Site Survey (complete one for each geographically distinct site)
7. Technical specifications for network access (describing four levels, or tiers, of service)