



CCI  
CENTER FOR CARE  
INNOVATIONS

# Innovation Center for the Safety Net

Request for Proposals  
May 2013



## IMPORTANT DATES

Eligibility Review Calls:  
by May 17, 2013

Application Deadline:  
5:00pm, June 21, 2013

Site Visits by CCI:  
July 1 - 19, 2013

Award Announcement:  
August 2, 2013

Innovation Catalyst  
Training (Oakland):  
September 9-11, 2013

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Submissions:

This opportunity is invitation only. Invited organizations must submit the following materials online (the link for submitting will be sent to invited applicants by CCI staff) by 5 PM on Friday, June 21, 2013:

1. Innovation Center for the Safety Net Application Form
2. Innovation Center for the Safety Net Narrative
3. Letters of Support from Payer and Regional Partner
4. Innovation Center for the Safety Net Budget

### Eligibility Criteria:

**This opportunity is invitation only.** Organizations must be members of the Safety Net Innovation Network to apply. Interested organizations should contact CCI before May 17, 2013 to discuss eligibility for this program and to receive the proposal submission link:

Veenu Aulakh, [veenu@careinnovations.org](mailto:veenu@careinnovations.org)

Sarah Frankfurth, [sarah@careinnovations.org](mailto:sarah@careinnovations.org)

### Contact Information:

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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

# Innovation Center for the Safety Net

a joint effort of CCI and the California HealthCare Foundation

## Background

As safety net organizations continue to serve vulnerable populations within a new healthcare environment, their ability to adapt and find creative solutions will be critical for improving the experience of care, cost of care delivery, and clinical outcomes for their patients. Safety net organizations are well-versed in the challenges and opportunities unique to patients with complex physical, psychosocial, and socioeconomic needs. These organizations can leverage this experience as the nation's health care delivery system moves to improve the cost curve for its most complicated patients. However, a transformation is needed to move the safety net towards an agile and creative system that prioritizes collaboration, successfully manages innovation, and disseminates effective solutions.

Safety net providers could likely solve many problems by adopting innovations from the entrepreneurial community, other health care organizations, universities, and other industries. However, due to the small, if not negative, margins in the safety net, the uptake and investment in these potentially risky solutions has been limited and infrequent without some external incentives (i.e., meaningful use, grants, PCMH requirements). The complexities in funding and politics can also make it challenging for organizations to effectively plan for the long term and think about the role of innovation to solve critical problems. While a few safety net providers have engaged with entrepreneurs effectively, there is little documentation of their models and the best approaches to avoid potential pitfalls and challenges with these partnerships. This has resulted in limited transferability of solutions, implementation processes, and adoption in the larger safety net. In addition, the providers engaged in these partnerships need more bandwidth to continue implementing innovations and often are limited in their ability to move things quickly through their organizations.

An innovation center can support this transformation by offering organizations the time, resources and flexibility to generate and test new ideas and products that meet the needs of the patients they serve and move the ideas from pilot to implementation. It creates a safe environment for organizations to test a concept and collect data before further dissemination. Organizations like Kaiser Permanente (KP), Cleveland Clinic, University of California, San Francisco, and University of California, Los Angeles have built innovation centers within their organizations. While the safety net is too fragmented and diverse to build a single physical innovation center, our goal is to create a decentralized innovation center by supporting a few smaller innovation hubs across the state. These innovation hubs will act as engines to test new ideas, particularly in partnership with commercial companies and products. This also

provides the broader safety net an opportunity to learn from the innovation center and accelerate the adoption of innovations into practice, which is necessary given the impending changes under health care reform.

## Program Summary

The Center for Care Innovations (CCI), in partnership with the California HealthCare Foundation and with additional funding from The California Endowment will support the development of an innovation center for the safety net to drive the testing and implementation of new solutions and products. This program will allow participating organizations to collectively develop systems and approaches to identify, test, implement and evaluate innovations to help transform their organizations. The experience of organizations participating in this program will offer other safety net organizations an understanding of how best to support the implementation of successful innovations in their organizations.

CCI is looking to support the development of up to three organizations to collectively act as an innovation center for the safety net with the following objectives:

- Test and refine innovations to lower costs, improve health and improve patient experience.
- Develop innovation methodology and tools applicable to the unique needs of the safety net.
- Disseminate successful innovations broadly across regional and statewide safety net networks.
- Partner with payer organizations to better understand the factors necessary to effectively collaborate in projects, disseminate successful solutions, and develop models for sustainability.
- Support entrepreneurs and safety net organizations in creating solid partnerships.
- Develop models for other safety net organizations that demonstrate the processes and systems needed to build a culture of innovation.

Successful applicants will receive a grant of \$100,000 and in-depth training, coaching and mentoring on innovation and project management. Grantees will also receive evaluation support to help scale and disseminate innovations over a two year period. Grantees will work closely with CCI, CHCF, advisors and other selected innovation hubs to co-develop resources, tools, and methods that can be shared with the broader safety net community. An important goal of this effort is to ensure the hubs are sustainable beyond the two years of funding by helping to transform the cultures of the organizations and create new connections to a larger ecosystem of companies, mentors and innovations.

## Program Details

### IMPLEMENT INNOVATIONS

Innovation hubs will each **implement 4 – 8 new innovations** during the two-year process. They will work with an advisory group to identify and focus on implementing innovations aligned with their organizational strategies and relevant to the larger safety net as it prepares for health reform. These innovations may be developed by start-up companies or established companies with solutions that could be tailored to a safety net setting. In some instances, these innovations may be developed (or adapted) by the innovation hub. In these instances, the hubs will apply and manage the innovation cycle, including framing, ideation, prototyping, and leadership engagement. New innovations will be implemented and spread across their organization as appropriate.

### SPREAD INNOVATIONS

Hubs will **spread each new innovation to at least one other organization** in their regional network. A regional network is defined as a local network of safety net providers (community health centers, public hospitals, and other Medi-Cal providers) who are connected to this hub in some manner. In some regions, this network may be a local clinic consortium, an ongoing regional community initiative, or link to other providers through a local health plan. To support spread of the projects, hubs will need to document innovation processes, lessons learned, metrics for success (including costs and workflows), and any materials for training or marketing. The hubs will also participate in dissemination activities, including hosting site visits, leading calls with new sites interested in an innovation, co-creating videos, and participating in in-person meetings and presentations.

### COORDINATE WITH PARTNERS

Hubs will **collaborate with a local payer** to determine how to pre-define measures of success needed to sustain new innovations. They will also collaborate with **external partners** (Innovation Catalysts, advisors and mentors, innovation and design firms, start-up companies, etc.) as needed. Staff from the hubs will participate in learning opportunities offered by CCI and design firms to strengthen innovation skills to infuse new thinking into the organization. Hubs will work closely with CCI and an external **evaluator** to co-develop an effective program to support shifting an organization's culture to develop and sustain innovations.

## What We're Looking For

### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

- Executive leadership and board are committed to strengthening a culture of innovation and aligning with the strategic mission to successfully sustain innovations.
- Organization is committed to developing a plan for innovation management, including a plan to define business models for sustaining new solutions.
- Staff understands and has experience in the process of innovation – initiating, understanding and framing, ideation, and prototyping.
- Organization has previously partnered with start-up companies and entrepreneurs to pilot and evaluate effectiveness of innovations in the safety net setting.
- Organization has a history of successful innovation projects with full scale dissemination.
- Core team is dedicated to leading innovations. This team includes a clinical lead, project management support, and others who can contribute to innovation efforts.
- Organizational leaders are willing to participate in strategic discussions with health plans and advisors to determine long-term sustainability of innovations.
- Organization is interested in developing innovation processes and potential solutions for long-term sustainability in partnership with other hubs, CCI, and advisors.
- Organization (and core staff) is interested in sharing their lessons with peers.

### COMMITTED PARTNERS

- Regional coalitions or other care delivery collaboratives are committed to participate in early adoption and dissemination of refined innovation projects.
- Local health plans or other payers are committed to explore business models for sustaining new innovations. Payers may participate in developing metrics of success, providing data to analyze impact and participate in discussions to help sustain projects through capital investment, incentive programs, or other funding as appropriate.

## Support for the Innovation Hubs

In addition to the grant funds of \$100,000 over two years, this program will offer:

### TRAINING, COACHING AND MENTORING

Hubs will receive training from innovation design firms and existing innovation centers on innovation management, project management, scale and dissemination. Hubs will receive ongoing coaching and mentoring support for innovation culture development, innovation selection and assessment, and internal and external dissemination and spread. CCI will help to foster a network of mentors and advisors to support hubs with specific aspects of their programs as needed. The hubs will also participate in a learning collaborative to support successful implementation, share experiences, and trouble shoot any problems or challenges.

Core team members from the hubs will receive in-depth training through the **Innovation Catalyst program**. The Catalyst program is being conducted in partnership with Kaiser Permanente's Innovation Consultancy program and Gravity Tank to build and strengthen innovation skills. Applicants to the hub program should identify two team members to attend the Catalyst training and hold the dates of September 9-11, 2013 for the mandatory three day in-person training in the Bay Area.

### INNOVATION SELECTION

Hubs will receive support from CCI and an advisory group in selecting projects and vetting potential product solutions. The Advisory Group will include health plans, entrepreneurs, innovation and design firms, safety net providers, and innovation experts from KP, CHCF, and the private sector. The project selection process will be based on the needs and capacity of the hubs, as well as the needs of the larger safety net in California. CCI will help vet product solutions and organize pitch calls or matchmaking events in partnership with incubators, venture funds, and other organizations who support the entrepreneurial ecosystem. CCI will also foster a network of entrepreneurs who are committed to developing solutions applicable to safety net populations.

### SPREAD OF INNOVATIONS

Successful projects will initially be spread to partner organizations within the hub's regional network and then to the broader safety net field in California. The Safety Net Innovation Network (SNIN) will be utilized to spread innovations to others in the network through the bi-annual meetings, ongoing calls, and online platforms. With assistance from CCI and the Advisory Group, hubs will develop videos, resource guides, or business model templates, and will host site visits and other approaches to facilitate spread of their projects. CCI and other partners will support the hubs in these activities and help disseminate findings and tools from the program to other innovators in the safety net.

### **PROJECT MANAGEMENT SUPPORT**

CCI will work closely with the hubs to ensure that projects progress appropriately and to help initiate work plans to ensure accountability and success. In addition, hubs will have access to an online innovation project management platform to stimulate ongoing sharing, discussions, and workgroups to support scale and spread of successful projects. This online tool will allow them to manage, document, and share information with other Hubs and CCI about the progress of their projects.

### **INNOVATION HUB ADVISORY GROUP**

The Advisory Group will consist of safety net providers, health plans, entrepreneurs, innovation firms, and representatives from KP, CHCF, and the private sector. The Advisory Group will provide direction and support for the hubs and be actively involved with the vetting and selection of innovations. The Advisory Group and hubs will work together to set the direction for ongoing development of the program, provide feedback on needs and opportunities for companies and innovations, and help assess whether potential projects are relevant to the broader safety net.

### **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

CCI will work with an external evaluator to provide real-time feedback to strengthen the hubs and make any necessary adjustments throughout the program. In addition to assessing the impact of the hub program, the evaluator will also provide technical assistance to the hubs and their payer partners to ensure that the relevant data is collected. This will help ensure that hubs are able to measure the impact of innovations in relationship to leadership, payers and other safety net providers. The evaluator will also capture and share lessons on the impact of the internal culture of the hubs and on their ability to adopt and spread innovations.



## Eligibility Criteria

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## How to Apply

### STEP 1 | ELIGIBILITY DISCUSSION WITH CCI

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### STEP 2 | INVITED ORGANIZATIONS APPLY ONLINE

Invited organizations will receive the application link after their Eligibility Discussion call with CCI. Invited organizations must submit their application online to CCI by 5:00 pm on Friday June 21, 2013.

Applications should include the following:

1. Innovation Center for the Safety Net Application Form
2. Innovation Center for the Safety Net Narrative
3. Letters of Support from Payer and Regional Partner
4. Innovation Center for the Safety Net Budget

### STEP 3 | SITE VISIT

CCI will conduct site visits from July 1 - 19, 2013 to applicant organizations to discuss their proposal and potential participation in this program.

Innovation Center for the Safety Net awards will be announced on August 2, 2013.

## Proposal Questions

Each organization applying for the Innovation Hub program must answer the following questions in five pages or less using at least 11-point non-narrow font.

1. Why is your organization interested in the Innovation Hub program? Please describe how this program would leverage and strengthen existing efforts at your organization to support the testing, implementation, and evaluation of innovations.
2. What has your organization done to build a culture of innovation? What other resources and experiences could be useful to help your organization strengthen its culture of innovation?
3. Please describe previous experiences working with start-up companies, entrepreneurs or established companies to implement innovative solutions. Please describe both successes and challenges in working with outside vendors. How could the Innovation Hub program help you in these partnerships?
4. Please describe the core team that would be primarily responsible for participating in the innovation hub activities and would take the lead in helping to test and implement innovations at your organization. Be sure to include a clinical, administrative, and project management lead.
5. What have been your biggest challenges in implementing a culture of innovation and building an infrastructure to test, implement, and evaluate innovations in your organization? What resources could this program provide to help address these challenges?
6. Please describe who will participate in your local regional network. This must include a local payer and at least one other safety net provider who is a frequent collaboration partner and is open to adopting innovations that are tested within your organization.
7. Please include your ideas for other resources, mentors, or relationships that you think would be important to strengthen your ability to succeed in this program.

A joint effort of



Center for Care Innovations (CCI) is a vital source of ideas, best practices and funding for California's health care safety net. By bringing people and resources together, we accelerate innovations for healthy people and healthy communities.  
[www.careinnovations.org](http://www.careinnovations.org)



The California HealthCare Foundation works as a catalyst to fulfill the promise of better health care for all Californians. We support ideas and innovations that improve quality, increase efficiency, and lower the costs of care.  
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