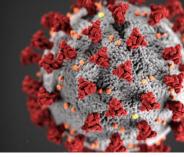# ADRC/No Wrong Door System Funding Opportunity: Critical Relief Funds for COVID-19 Pandemic Response

COVID-19 ADRC Emergency Funding Opportunity

Informational Webinar Transcript

Webinar Date: April 9, 2020

Ami Patel: Hello everyone. My name is Ami Patel with the Administration for Community Living (ACL) and you have joined an informational webinar on a new funding opportunity to provide critical relief for COVID-19 Pandemic Responses for the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) across the states and territories. Again, thank you all for joining us and we can move forward to a few housekeeping items.

Apologies as we try to move the slides along here. Okay, so just a few housekeeping items. All of the lines are muted and they will remain muted throughout the webinar. So, we ask that you use the chat feature to submit any questions you have. This webinar will be recorded and the recording and the slides will be posted to the https://acl.gov/COVID-19 website.

Quick overview of the agenda. We will walk through various sections of the FOA and review important pieces on the use of funds, the application process and at the end we will have plenty of time for question and answer. So, again, keep in mind that you can submit your questions via the chat feature at any time.

Okay, to start with a little background on this funding opportunity. This emergency funding is the result of the CARES Act that was passed by Congress a few weeks ago to provide critical relief to states and territories with designated ADRCs who are working at an unprecedented pace to combat and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is in specific response to the urgent need that you all have now to support the capacity of the aging and disability network and to increase all efforts to coordinate services and overcome these new challenges.

As we know, ADRCs are well positioned to provide essential services and supports at the time of any emergency. Providing information assistance, person-centered counseling, and care coordination to the most vulnerable populations is important during these times. A state's No Wrong Door (NWD) System provides the infrastructure to coordinate these efforts statewide and support streamlined access for older adults, persons with disabilities and their caregivers.

So, moving on to the funding opportunity. The purpose and goals, as noted earlier, are to specifically to support states and territories with designated ADRCs to immediately respond to COVID-19 needs. More specifically, this funding

opportunity will help to address things like a virtual workforce and any challenges related to that. Supporting adverse effects of this pandemic, such as social isolation and any unique challenges with accessing critical social and health needs at this time.

Eligibility information is on the next slide. Again, all states and territories are eligible to apply. But ACL will only review one application per state and per territory. It is important that you coordinate across key stakeholders and key partners at the state level to submit one application. The key requirements include identifying a lead at the state level and providing a list of all of the designated ADRC organizations at the local level.

Additional requirements, on the next slide, include that the applicants will be required to conduct a rapid assessment of the existing landscape of the workforce needs at the state and local level. The purpose of this is to be able to quickly identify the most critical needs and to best understand how to use these funds in a rapid fashion. So whether it is preparing for a peak in the number of COVID-19 cases in your state or understanding what happens next and how to support people in the recovery process once things hopefully slow down.

So, again, ACL will only review one application and fund only one agency per state or per territory.

So next is the use of grant funds. Okay, so on the screen now, you should see the eligibility information and key requirements. So, I will just repeat myself one more time here. Again, all states and territories are eligible to receive funding but we will only review one application per state. The requirements are that there should be a designated lead agency at the state level and applicants are encouraged to, of course, work with key stakeholders. Again, applicants are required to do a rapid assessment of the workforce to best identify how to quickly use these funds during this critical time.

Now, back to where we had paused for a second, back to the potential use of funds. So, on pages 2 through 4 of the FOA document, we have outlined a list of potential uses of funds. Applicants are encouraged, of course, to align their activities with the state's overall emergency response efforts. But of the activities that we have listed, again, the first activity is a requirement. Again, we are asking states to complete a rapid assessment of their ADRCs. ACL will provide technical assistance to grantees and share some examples of how to do these types of assessments. But other potential activities or use of funds include enhancing virtual workforce capabilities; supporting increased needs of care transitions from hospitals or nursing homes, or any other setting, back to the community and all of the unique challenges with that; mitigating social isolation by increasing capacity to provide follow-up with individuals. Again, these are just a few examples but more details can be found on pages 2 or 3 of the FOA.

Now the application submission requirements. What we are stressing here is that the intent for this is to make the application as simple as possible. So, we are only requiring a one-page project narrative that describes the geographic coverage area of the designated ADRCs across the state or territory and a brief description of how funds will be used. Again, we want to emphasize that this is just a one-page submission process. We don't expect a lot of detail here. We fully understand that how you ultimately use the funds may change as we move along in the next couple of months. So part of our ongoing technical assistance plan is to be in touch with grantees throughout the process and to keep track of the activities and how you are spending those funds. As far as the application process, just describe how you plan to use them as best as you can in just one page.

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Then, in addition to the project narrative, there are three other documents required for the application. The SF-424 and SF-424B. Those are normal forms that are required for all grant submissions. And then a budget narrative with justification. An important note here about the budget narrative, the funding amount per state and territory has been determined by formula, which was based on population estimates of individuals 60 and over and individuals of all ages with disabilities. So for a breakout of these funding amounts, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions document, which has been uploaded to https://acl.gov/COVID-19 page. We can provide the exact link to that here in the chat.

Next, the important due dates are here. The applications are due next Wednesday, April 15th by 11:59 pm ET. The submission process is through grants.gov, which is how you submit grants through normal processes. So, further instructions for that process can be found on pages 5 and 6 of the FOA. We fully understand the quick turnaround time here. But again, why we did this is to make the submission process as simple as possible. Again, you have just one-page narrative to submit and ultimately, we know that states have a critical need for these funds now. So the sooner we receive your applications, we faster we can process it and the faster we can get the funds to the state. Our review process is going to be expedited as well. If we receive your applications by April 15th, we hope that we can notify you of the award by the end of the month. However, if states cannot make this deadline, we are willing to work with you. It is just important that you reach out to us directly as soon as possible so that we are aware and can provide you additional support if you cannot apply by April 15th. Again, the ultimate goal is to make sure that all states and territories take advantage of this opportunity so please reach out if you cannot submit your application by April 15th. There is contact information provided here on the slide and my contact information is throughout the FOA document.

Next we wanted to provide a link to the https://acl.gov/COVID-19 website where you can find all information related to COVID-19. If you scroll halfway down to where it says Information for Aging and Disability Networks, you will also see an area that says Older American Act Programs. If you click on that you will see a section specific to this FOA where you can download the FAQ and this is also where we will post the recording of this webinar. We kept today's information as simple as possible because we know your time is valuable and we appreciate you being on today's call.

We wanted to go ahead and open it up for question and answer. We have plenty of time here, so please do continue to submit your questions through the chat. I will pause for a second while we go through the chat and continue with questions.

Kristen Vangeloff: Thanks so much, Ami! Huge apologies to everyone for the technical difficulties. We actually lost power, two of us that were hosting. So thank you so much for picking up the slack, Ami. We are going through the chat questions right now and we have a lot that are coming in. We can start off with a question we have asking "Is this slide show available for download?"

Ami Patel: Yes, thank you. We will post these slides on that same webpage, https://acl.gov/COVID-19. We will post the slides, the Frequently Asked Questions and a recording of today's session.

Kristen Vangeloff: Alright, we have another question here. Can funds be used for technology to facilitate remote operations?

Ami Patel: Yes, that is a great question. Funds can definitely be used to support remote and virtual working. We know that ADRCs are doing things very differently, everyone is working remotely, and there may be some needs to enhance those technology capabilities, so absolutely.

Kristen Vangeloff: We have another question. We are working with our state AT program to provide iPads on loan to ADRC consumers as a way to help address isolation and loneliness. However, the iPads require internet. Can these funds and/or other COVID-19 relief funds be used to purchase internet for consumers?

Ami Patel: That is a great example of how states might be using these funds in unique ways. We actually do mention that partnering with the Assistive Technology Act program is a key opportunity with this funding. The answer to your question is yes, I think that is absolutely appropriate. In these times when everything is remote, internet access and using things like iPads is very important, so I do think that is an appropriate way to use funds.

Kristen Vangeloff: We have another question here. Can you provide a worksheet/guide for ADRCs to complete for their rapid assessment?

Ami Patel: Yes, absolutely. We do hope to provide some direct technical assistance with resources and tools for different types of assessment. We have also outlined some of that detail in the Frequently Asked Questions that we will post after this. Right now, our priority is to get these applications in and get the funding out to you all. Soon after, we will be sure to share some more information to all of the grantees about how to complete those assessments.

Kristen Vangeloff: Alright we have a question if the webinar is being live captioned. I will say that it is not being live captioned, but it is being recorded. We will have to double check that our loss of power and connection at the beginning didn't impact this. We will work on a transcript to share. Ami, would you agree with that?

Ami Patel: Yeah, absolutely. If the recording did not work, we can be sure to upload notes so that everyone has it.

Kristen Vangeloff: Okay, we have another question. Must the description of geographic areas to be served and the list of ADRCs be included in the one-page limit?

Ami Patel: That is a good question. We did intend that that would be the case, however, if you need additional space beyond one page, that is completely understandable. Again, we want the project narrative to be as simple as possible. So, if you have a long list of ADRCs, of course, you may need some more space to then explain the use of funds. But it is all meant to be a one-page submission, if it works out.

Kristen Vangeloff: Related to that, we had a question come in asking is the one-page single or double space?

Joseph Lugo: Ami?

Ami Patel: Yes, Joseph, go ahead.

Joseph Lugo: Sorry to interrupt. Just regarding the question about the list of ADRCs. It was a good question. The applicant has the ability to do any attachments that they want. So the list of ADRCs could be an attachment if it is taking too much space.

Ami Patel: Yes, thank you. And as far as the question about single spaced or double spaced – we don't have any formatting requirements. Again, just really trying to make this as simple as possible so any format you want to submit is just fine.

Kristen Vangeloff: We had another question. Could you talk more about the rapid assessment requirement? For example, would we need to be collecting and reporting data to ACL as part of this process? Is this likely to be kind of information that we already have as part of our work with the state level emergency response planning or will it require additional surveying and collecting of new data.

Ami Patel: That is a great question. We definitely know that some states have already done a lot of rapid assessments to understand the needs, both for the workforce and for the populations in need. That can certainly be what you use to determine how to use funds. However, if you want to complete additional assessments, we do have a few other ideas. Part of it can be completing a survey of your local staff for trying to understand their workloads and what their specific challenges are related to working remotely. You may also do an assessment of the population needs and services, such as evaluating waitlists and if anything has changed or if there are certain services that did not have waitlists before but now have waitlists as a result of COVID-19 and keeping track of that. You may also assess populations at risk for social isolation. Part of these assessments is to provide some technical assistance. We will share some examples. I think, shortly after all the funds have been sent to all of the states, we will coordinate to have additional webinars or group calls to share this information. But as far as submitting data to ACL, we don't have that requirement now. But we will be sure to inform all of the grantees soon after the funds have been sent out.

Joseph Lugo: Ami, can I add one additional point?

Ami Patel: Absolutely, go ahead Joseph.

Joseph Lugo: Imbedded in that question was a really good insight. What if part of the state's overall strategy with FEMA or their emergency response, they are doing additional assessments, so can that be used? The answer would be definitely yes. In fact, in the FOA there is language that hopefully the applicant would make sure that they reach out or identify those efforts so we aren't duplicating. I just wanted to mention that because that was really good insight in that question.

Kristen Vangeloff: We have had a couple questions come in about the timing. Could you provide information about the start and end date of the project period? There was also a question – this is a 12-month grant, is there consideration of a no-cost extension? This is very fast.

Ami Patel: Yeah, great question. The project period will begin from the moment you receive funds. Our ultimate goal is to send Notices of Award by the end of this month. So the project period might begin May 1st and be 12 months from then. There will be an opportunity for no-cost extensions as will normal grants. However, we expect states to expend all of these funds fairly quickly. But that option is open.

Kristen Vangeloff: We have another question. May we propose/set aside funding in our budget to do a post-pandemic SWOT analysis?

Ami Patel: That, I think, is absolutely appropriate. That is a great point to bring up. There will be plenty of needs even after things slow down or once the number of cases goes down. So that is absolutely appropriate given that this is a 12-month timeframe and there might be some time to do some post-assessments. That is a great idea.

Kristen Vangeloff: What if a state does not have an ADRC system and operates I&R at the state level? Can they apply and receive funds anyway?

Ami Patel: That is interesting. Joseph, may I ask you to answer?

Joseph Lugo: Yes. When we mention that information and referral done at the state, it is at the state in broad terms. The I&R doesn't have to be performed by the state agency. It refers to information and referral being provided anywhere in the state. It is possible that a state agency may not have a 1-800 number, may not provide I&R in house, but yes, they would definitely be eligible to apply. The assumption was that there is information and referral happening in every state. So, hopefully that helps answer that question.

Kristen Vangeloff: So, a related question that came in. What is meant by "states with established ADRCs"?

Joseph Lugo: Do you want me to take that one Ami?

Ami Patel: ADRCs are defined in statute in the Older Americans Act, so you can refer to that definition. But as Joseph said, we are looking for anyone providing those access functions, such as information and assistance. But the designation of ADRCs is really up to how the state designates them. We are not saying they have to be designated by statute. It could be that all AAA's are designated as ADRCs, that is up to the state. But again, that is why we are asking for a list of those ADRCs and their geographic are that states know.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can the ADRC partner with local nonprofits or must services be administered by the ADRC itself?

Ami Patel: Yes, we are encouraging partnerships outside of AAAs or ADRCs. The nonprofits that might be providing access services to older adults and people with disabilities are absolutely appropriate to sub-grant with.

Kristen Vangeloff: We have had a couple questions come in related to the state's NWD lead. I will read a couple off that I think we can answer together. So one is how can we find the state's NWD leads? Another one – would a statewide independent living council be an appropriate NWD System lead agency?

Ami Patel: Those are great questions. So we expect that the NWD System lead agency would be a state agency. So typically, that is the State Unit on Aging or the Medicaid Agency at the state level. It would be important, if you are a local level organization, to reach out to someone at the state level that can help you identify who that is.

Kristen Vangeloff: We have a question about the budget year. When does the year budget begin? May 1st? Is this considered to be a new grant or a continuation?

Ami Patel: So this will be a new grant. Applicants, once awarded, will receive a notice of the grant award through the grant solutions system. That will indicate the start date. Again, we anticipate May 1st but that is not a hard date. We are going to work as fast as possible to process applications as we receive them. Again, that application due date is so important because we ultimately want to send funds out to states as soon as possible. So hopefully, on or around May 1st will be the start date.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can the funds be used for activities or expenses that started prior to the grant or funding distribution? For example, March expenses to get ADRCs set up virtually.

Ami Patel: So, unfortunately, funds can only be expended for the specific project period and the budget period that will be detailed on that notice of award. You won't be able to back-pay for any funding prior to that start date. However, if there are additional enhancements that need to be made to the virtual workforce, then that is certainly allowable.

Kristen Vangeloff: What would the uses be when there are no local ADRCs? Would the state then be able to use the funds for these purposes?

Ami Patel: Sorry. As Joseph was mentioning, there are other agencies providing critical access functions, such as information and referral. So if it's the AAA or the Center for Independent Living, the state agency applying for those funds can certainly consider sub-granting those funds to those agencies.

Kristen Vangeloff: Two related questions to how funding can be used. Can funds be used to purchase tablets and other equipment for older adults and persons with disabilities? Then, second question, can funds be allocated to individuals below the age of 60?

Ami Patel: Great questions. I think with iPads and any other technical pieces like that, it will be important that you provide that justification with your budget narrative just so we are aware of how those iPads or other technical devices would be used. But it is appropriate, as in the example provide earlier, if it is related to assistive technology needs. Again, we will require a bit of justification to approve that. What was the second part of that question, Kristen?

Kristen Vangeloff: The second question was about funds going to individuals below the age of 60?

Ami Patel: Yes, for people with disabilities, we are looking at all ages so that would be appropriate.

Kristen Vangeloff: Another question. Do all AAAs across the state need to do the same activities or can the state application outline that each AAA may utilize the funds based on their specific needs?

Ami Patel: Yeah, it can be based on specific needs. The state can choose how they sub-grant to local AAAs or other organizations. It does not have to all be used the same way.

Kristen Vangeloff: We have had a question – a two-part question. One, are administrative funds available? Then, how detailed does the budget narrative need to be at this time?

Ami Patel: Yes, as with other grant opportunities, your budget can include things like personnel or salaries as needed. But I think we are emphasizing that these funds should be sub-granted out to local agencies that are providing the direct critical services to the population at need. For the budget narrative, given the short time frame, we don't expect too much detail and we fully understand that the use of funds may change as we move along in the next couple of months or as things continue to change from state to state, so that is completely understandable. Again, through the TA we will provide ongoing, we hope to stay in touch with what those changes are to your budget.

Kristen Vangeloff: Another question. Can ADRCs distribute these funds to disability service providers to help with workforce issues?

Ami Patel: Yes, absolutely. They are definitely critical partners in this situation and again, we encourage you to partner with any organization within the state.

Kristen Vangeloff: Another question. Is coordination with state assistive technology programs required or encouraged?

Ami Patel: That is strongly encouraged. We definitely know that states are looking to partner more with the assistive technology programs within their state. It is listed there as a potential activity for you to fund.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can funds be used to support initiatives that would benefit both individuals enrolled in HCBS waivers and individuals not on HCBS waivers?

Ami Patel: Yes, the use of funds is not dependent on whether a person is receiving Medicaid funding or whether or not they are on a waiver. This would be available to all populations.

Kristen Vangeloff: How does one find out who is the main applicant within one's state?

Ami Patel: That is a great question. Again, technically the applicants we receive that are designated as NWD System agencies are the State Unit on Aging, or the Department on Aging in your state, or the Medicaid Agency. However, if you are having trouble tracking down who that agency might be in your state, feel free to reach out to us directly and we can help you with that.

Kristen Vangeloff: If the state asks for more funding than available, how will the funds be distributed? We have also had another question requesting information about how the funds are allocated. I believe someone tried to find it through the FAQ link, but perhaps we can find the correct link to put in the chat, Helen or Falyn. The first question - If the state asks for more funding than available, how will the funds be distributed?

Ami Patel: At this time, we have just a total pot of $50 million. So, we will be granting states the amount that they have been allocated based on the 6-tier approach, which was done by a formula based on population of individuals who are 60 years and older and individuals of all ages with disabilities. States were broken out that way into 6 tiers. At this time, we are not sure about being able to supplement any additional amount beyond that. But we will certainly inform states if there is additional funding available.

Kristen Vangeloff: Does the entire state need to be served?

Joseph Lugo: Kristen, if I can interrupt really quick.

Kristen Vangeloff: Yes, go ahead.

Joseph Lugo: If a state wants to apply for more than what their tier amount is, they won't be penalized, it is allowed. But we will only fund to the amount that we have allocated, unless extra funds become available. States are allowed to, if they want to, they will not be penalized if they do go over the amount. I just wanted to share that.

Kristen Vangeloff: Thank you, Joseph. The next question coming up was does the entire state need to be served?

Ami Patel: I think that we certainly encourage statewide coverage. But we understand that there are greater needs in certain areas than others related to the number of COVID-19 cases and where the peak is at the time, so we certainly leave that discretion up to the state.

Kristen Vangeloff: The next question is - is there a list of state ADRC state contacts in order to facilitate the "partnerships with state Assistive Technology Act programs" stipulated in the FOA? We can provide the list of AT Act contacts upon request and they can be found at a URL link that was shared for www.at3center.net.

Joseph Lugo: We can also add this to the FAQ so that people can just go there and find them, as well.

Ami Patel: Yes, there is a technical assistance website, which provides statewide information on AT programs and we will be sure to provide that widely.

Kristen Vangeloff: What kind of data tracking will be required for allowable activities performed with these funds?

Ami Patel: Yes, that is a great question. There are reporting requirements specific to this type of emergency funding. That can be found on page 12 of the FOA. This type of reporting is specific to financial details of how the funds are being used, including how much is being sub-contracted or sub-granted out. ACL is working agency-wide to figure out the format of how this reporting will occur. We will be sure to communicate with that to all of the grantees, as soon as possible. But any additional programmatic reporting, we are working on the format of that. Ultimately, given the nature of these emergency funds, we want to ensure that any type of reporting that we require is the least burdensome for the state. As soon as these funds are awarded, we will communicate that with all grantees as soon as possible?

Kristen Vangeloff: Can local AAAs expect the funding to passed through to the local AAAs or will the funding remain at the state level?

Ami Patel: Again, as a part of the requirements, our hope and our intention is that states will sub-grant or sub-contract with ADRCs and local organizations that have a need in responding to COVID-19. Hopefully the local ADRCs will receive that as a pass-through.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can funds be used to educate populations about nutrition and prevention of chronic diseases?

Ami Patel: Yes, absolutely. Given that certain chronic disease self-management programs have been temporarily ended since there is no in-person interaction, it is important to still educate folks about those critical needs. These funds can certainly do that and allow for virtual video calls or anything like that.

Kristen Vangeloff: The next question is from some who joined a bit late, so if this was covered earlier it might benefit other people who also joined late. We thought we saw that it was only one application per state. Is this the case? If so, is it something that our SHIP will be able to apply for to provide a trickle-down effect to our agencies?

Ami Patel: Yes, it is one application per state. As far as the SHIP specific funding, I am not 100% sure on that. Joseph, do you have input here?

Joseph Lugo: No, it would be at the discretion of the state about what part of their access system they feel they need to support immediately. That might be some SHIP counselors that are doing those access functions. But that is going to be at the discretion of the state, not dictated by ACL.

Kristen Vangeloff: Another clarifying question. Are funds only available to designated ADRCs? How about emerging ADRCs?

Ami Patel: That is a great question and again, we will leave that up to the discretion of the state to decide. But these funds can certainly support the vamping up of ADRC sites or if there is an agency that needs support at the organizational level. That is certainly appropriate.

Kristen Vangeloff: We have a comment here. We have begun our narrative. Regarding pages 7 and 8, we listed all of the required items. However, some of the services in the additional items are not provided by our ADRCs and some of the items may not be feasible (i.e., skill time technology to complete) could you address the additional items, assuming they are not required, only encouraged?

Ami Patel: Yes, so again, the list of use of funds are just some potential ideas and some encouraging ways to use these funds. You are not required to list everything listed there on page 8. We just encourage you to be as specific as possible. But again, not requiring too much detail on what is possible and how you might you the funds. As we move forward and as we touch base again through technical assistance, we can certainly stay in touch about how things might have changed.

Joseph Lugo: Ami, if I might add, kudos to the state for already working on the application. Not trying to make your other peers feel bad, it is great and it is great to hear. But also, a more important point. We are going to respond to the applications, as Ami said, as soon as they come in. The sooner you are in, the quicker the funds will go out. Typically, in an FOA, they all come in, we review them at the same time, and then we award at the same time. But really there is an incentive, if you are in need of these funds, as we feel that you are, as soon as you submit, you will be further up in the queue.

Kristen Vangeloff: Speaking of the application. We have had a couple of questions coming in about the budget narrative. I will read two off. Is there a specific budget narrative justification template that we should be using? They couldn't find one in the original document. And then secondly, where do we find the form SF-424B and directions? Is 424B really section B in the back of the documentation? This person also asked about a specific budget narrative justification template.

Ami Patel: Apologies for any confusion on that language related to the budget narrative. There is no specific template. You are to use any normal budget narrative char that you have used before. There is a format outlined later on in the document. I believe it is pages 24 and onward. You can use that, but again, it doesn't have to be a complicated budget submission. We just want to understand how you might use the funds, generally, based on cost category. To the other question about SF-424B, there is a page on http://acl.gov related to how to apply to grants. There is a specific link there that links to both SF-424 and SF-424B forms. We can be sure to include a link to that in the FAQ document.

Kristen Vangeloff: If two or more ADRCs apply, (i.e. State Unit on Aging and AAA) will you notify back to try to get them to coordinate?

Ami Patel: Yes, we will make every effort to communicate back with any agencies that we may have received multiple applications from. But if it becomes overwhelming, honestly I think, the way to do this is to go with the applicant that we received first. But we will do our best to communicate back if we have received more than one per state.

Kristen Vangeloff: Do we need to submit separate budgets for the two federal fiscal years?

Ami Patel: No, you do not. We just need one budget and one budget narrative for the entirety of the funds.

Kristen Vangeloff: Are we allowed to submit attachments to serve as references (i.e., an ADRC coverage map)?

Ami Patel: Yes, that would be great and attachments are encouraged. We say one-page submission, but if you need more or want to include attachments, that is okay.

Kristen Vangeloff: Are state AT programs also receiving relief funds?

Ami Patel: I believe there may have been something submitted, but Joseph?

Joseph Lugo: Not through this effort. Not through this. These specific funds were designated for ADRCs. It is a fair question, but not through this effort.

Kristen Vangeloff: Is ADRC and NWD the same system? Are both eligible to apply?

Ami Patel: Yes, that is a great question. I guess a little history lesson. ADRCs was the initial initiative of one of the first grant opportunities back in 2003. As the model and the vision grew, it turned into a NWD System vision. That really promotes having a single access point across the state with coordination across multiple state and local agencies. So, there is more information about that on our actual NWD website, but they are both used interchangeably. In general, we are still looking for one lead agency at the state level, whether that is the SUA or the Medicaid Agency. As far as sub-grants, those can go o ADRCs or other organizations as the state may decide.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can the funds be utilized for staff to manage the virtual outreach or phone calls to people in the community?

Ami Patel: Yes, absolutely. We know that everyone is working in a different environment now with being remote. Those capabilities are very important, doing follow-up calls and so on. That is an appropriate use of funds.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can funds be used to do outreach to customers to know that we are here during the crisis (i.e., marketing, advertising, etc.)?

Ami Patel: Yes, absolutely. It is even more important to make sure that folks are aware of where to go and who to call. Your marketing strategy may be very different and have a different message, so that is a good use of funds.

Kristen Vangeloff: Could funding be used to enhance food access?

Ami Patel: Yes, and I think we have an example in the FOA where we talk about using things like Peapod or Instacart or DoorDash or GrubHub. There are many different food and delivery service options out there. That is an opportunity for using these funds as well.

Kristen Vangeloff: Would it be allowable to use funds for rent assistance for people with disabilities who cannot work at this time due to COVID-19?

Ami Patel: I think the service specific dollars will be up to the state and ultimately the sub-grantee to make that decision. But, certainly, if it is related to COVID-19 needs and the immediate needs that folks might have at this time. Again, that is up to the state and the sub-grant or sub-contract processes.

Kristen Vangeloff: Will you provide examples of how ADRCs will assess people most at risk of COVID-19 in care facilities and hospitals?

Ami Patel: That is a great question. There has been a lot of attention at the agency around what states are doing to handle care transitions and, especially, as things calm down and more people are leaving the hospital after recovering from COVID-19. We certainly can look into that as a specific technical assistance topic that we can share with grantees.

Kristen Vangeloff: May funds be used for direct services that are not typical of ADRCs, such as purchasing of food, delivery of meals, delivery of grocers, etc.?

Ami Patel: Again we did provide that example in the FOA on page 8. But food delivery and going to the grocery store is very different for everyone now. States and ADRCs could consider collaborating with local food delivery services or local restaurants to ensure that meals are more widely available. We know that typical home delivered meals programs are definitely a little bit different now. That is a great opportunity.

Kristen Vangeloff: In a similar vein, can the funds be used to provide meals for younger people with disabilities in addition to using them to arrange for meal deliveries through GrubHub, etc.?

Ami Patel: Yes, absolutely. We are definitely aware that ADRCs do serve all populations and all disabilities of all ages, so that is appropriate.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can the narrative be a list of activities only? Or should an additional description be provided?

Ami Patel: A list of activities is appropriate, as long as it is enough information that we know it is being used for the purposes of this emergency. We don't need any additional details in the one-page project narrative submission.

Kristen Vangeloff: Are we supposed to detail the geographic coverage of each individual ADRC organization or just indicate the overall coverage of ADRC across the state?

Ami Patel: I think we want to know if it is statewide coverage and then if it is not statewide, we would like to understand which counties the ADRCs serve.

Kristen Vangeloff: In order to apply, would the ADRCs themselves apply? Or would the AAA apply?

Ami Patel: Local organizations such as the AAA or the ADRC are not eligible to apply directly for funds. However, they can partner and work with their state agency to potentially receive sub-grants through this funding.

Kristen Vangeloff: Does the applicant need to be a specific state governmental unit or any other lead for the grant?

Ami Patel: We are asking the state to identify that lead agency. It is not any specific type. It could be the SUA, it could be the Medicaid agency, it could be a disability specific agency – as long as it is a state level agency and there is just one applicant per state.

Kristen Vangeloff: Our ADRCs are 100% state funded and we are restricted by the legislation to only directly sub-grant those funds to the AAAs. Does ACL have similar restrictions? For example, could an SUA directly sub-grant these federal ADRC funds directly to the ADRC partner organizations or providers?

Ami Patel: Again, the sub-grant process or the contracting process is up to the states and we know every state has a different process. The designation of your ADRCs does not affect how these funds are used. How that works is up to the state.

Kristen Vangeloff: Are matching funds required?

Ami Patel: No, matching funds are not required.

Kristen Vangeloff: Food and meals are identified as a critical need. Can these funds cover ADRC staff delivering groceries, meals, or providing grocery shopping assistance?

Ami Patel: Yes, we think that would be appropriate. Again, the sub-contract and sub-granting details would have to be worked out with the state agency that is providing the funds. But support staff is appropriate.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can a state focus on one population only, such as people with disabilities?

Ami Patel: Yes, this is the purpose of doing a rapid assessment. If the state realizes that the greatest need is for individuals with disabilities, then all of the funds can be used for one population or another.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can the lead state agency use all funds in contracts for the ADRC? I am not sure if I am saying that correctly.

Ami Patel: I think the question is can they sub-grant or contract out all of the funds, and the answer is yes. The state is not required to keep any funds at the state level.

Kristen Vangeloff: How much detail is needed in the budget justification? For instance, categories, local allocations, etc.?

Ami Patel: It would be helpful to have as much detail as possible, but again we are not asking for too much. As long as the budget is broken out into different cost categories so we can understand if it is going towards staffing versus being contracted out that would be helpful. We ask for as much detail as you can provide, given the time frame for submission.

Kristen Vangeloff: Is it possible for ACL to provide a contact list for ADRCs that provide the direct contact name and phone number?

Ami Patel: Again, I think that we don't have contact information for all local ADRCs. That would be something you would have to get from a state agency. But, feel free to ask your question directly and reach out to us if there is something specific you are looking for.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can funds be used for salaries of current options counselors?

Ami Patel: Yes, funds can be used for salary.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can funds be used for statewide data collection/sharing systems?

Ami Patel: Yes, that is an appropriate use of funds. Some states are having to revamp their data collection systems or make enhancements to be able to track data specific to COVID-19 related inquiries. That type of use is appropriate.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can you share the role that state Assistive Technology programs can play to provide assistive technology and also proper assessment to determine the use of this?

Ami Patel: Sure, we do provide a description of that on page 8. But states are encouraged to partner with their state Assistive Technology Act programs to provide access to loans and devices, provide training to older adults and people with disabilities. There are various ways that the AT Act program can support telehealth technologies and so on. Again, please refer to page 8 for more detail on that.

Kristen Vangeloff: Can State Units on Aging use funds for state level initiatives revolving around COVID-19?

Ami Patel: Yes, absolutely.

Kristen Vangeloff: We have two questions related to caregivers. Can we assist rural caregivers and persons with dementia? Also asking, can caregivers be considered a population under this grant opportunity?

Ami Patel: Yes, caregivers are certainly a population that is important and that ADRCs serve. So that is appropriate.

Kristen Vangeloff: In sub-granting out other providers, do they need to be only non-profits or can they be private local businesses (ideally)?

Ami Patel: They can be private local businesses. Again, the sub-contracting is up to the state agency. We probably would ask for a justification on who those agencies are that you plan to contract with, just so we know that they are providing similar services and the use of funds is going to be related to COVID-19 needs.

Kristen Vangeloff: I have one final question. Go ahead Joseph, we are right at time.

Joseph Lugo: Okay go ahead last one. But just to remind the group, we will have everyone's questions. The ones that we aren't able to address will be part of the FAQ and we will address them in writing.

Kristen Vangeloff: The final question I am going to pose is - will a collection of these questions be posted online or shared with participants. Joseph was just covering that. We do have all of these questions, so the ones we haven't been able to get to we will.

Ami Patel: Yes, we will update the Frequently Asked Questions. We appreciate you guys being patient with us through the rapid Q&A here. Please keep a look out on https://acl.gov/COVID-19 webpage. Again we appreciate everything you guys are doing at the state and local level to combat this pandemic. We're in this together and we know you are dealing with a lot of new challenges. As we close, we hope that everyone continues to stay safe and stay healthy. Of course, you know how to reach out to us if you have any questions. Thank you, everyone and thank you to Kristen and the Lewin team for working through the technical difficulties. Again, thank you everyone.