



Newton-Wellesley Hospital
Pathways to Graduation Collaborative
Request for Proposals
Release date: May 3, 2019
Grant Applications Due: July 2, 2019 before 5:00 pm

INTRODUCTION

Background

Newton-Wellesley Hospital (NWH) is seeking proposals from a Collaborative of community-based organizations to implement interventions that address disparities in high school graduation rates among Waltham students. The focus on high school graduation rates was identified through a comprehensive review of critical needs in Waltham undertaken by NWH in collaboration with an Advisory Committee comprised of Waltham-based key stakeholders.

This grant-making initiative is made possible by the approval of two Determination of Need (DoN) – Community Health Initiative (CHI) processes:

1. Partners HealthCare System, Inc. – Massachusetts General Waltham (DoN# PHS-18022210-HE), which received approval on June 13, 2018; and
2. Partners HealthCare System, Inc. – Massachusetts General Physician’s Organization Waltham (DoN# PHS-18090711-HS), which received approval on January 8, 2019.

NWH is carrying out this CHI on behalf of Massachusetts General Hospital for its licensed satellite located at 40 Second Avenue, Waltham, MA 02451 and the Massachusetts General Physician’s Organization Waltham.

Over the next four years, NWH will invest \$1.5 million in programming designed to address disparities in educational attainment in Waltham. Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), NWH anticipates awarding one grant to a Collaborative of community-based organizations in late summer 2019. Funding will be disbursed over four years with annual disbursements to the Collaborative of \$300,000 per year. An additional award of \$78,000 per year will be given to Waltham Public Schools over four years to support their work with the selected Collaborative.

Pathways to Graduation Overview

While notable advances have taken place in medical care, significant health inequities persist. Much of the inequity in health outcomes is attributable to the social and economic conditions in which people live. Often referred to as Social Determinants of Health, factors including education, employment, financial stability, transportation access, affordable housing, systemic racism and

exposure to violence all have a significant impact on the health of individuals and communities. NWH is seeking proposals for programs utilizing **evidence-informed**¹ approaches to address significant disparities in educational attainment in Waltham, with a particular focus on **recent immigrants and refugees primarily from Central and South America who are English Language Learners**.

The correlation between educational attainment and health status is well-documented.ⁱ Data suggest that at age 25, U.S. adults without a high school diploma can expect to die nine years sooner than college graduates.ⁱⁱ Of the social determinants of health associated with disparities, the literature prominently points to the role of education as a significant predictor of health outcomes. However, the role of education in health outcomes is multi-faceted. Educational attainment may contribute to skills necessary to negotiate health systems, improve health literacy, increase awareness of the role of personal health behaviors, while also contributing to economic and social resources that increase access to quality stable housing, healthcare, and social support systems.ⁱⁱⁱ

Data gathered as part of NWH's most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (<https://www.nwh.org/about-us/community-health-assessment>) demonstrated that high school graduation rates among Waltham students are lower than that of other communities in the hospital's catchment area and of Massachusetts overall. While the four-year graduation rate for the other communities (Natick, Newton, Wellesley, and Weston) ranges from 95.5 percent to 98.9 percent, the 2016-17 four-year graduation rate in Waltham is 83.5 percent and the dropout rate in Waltham (3%) is nearly twice that of Massachusetts. Furthermore, graduation rates and dropout rates among Hispanic/Latino students and English Language Learners (ELL) are far worse.

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2017 cohort data reports a 4-year unadjusted graduation rate of 84.1 percent and a dropout rate of 7.7 percent for Waltham Senior High. However, the graduation rate among Hispanic/Latino students is 69.7 percent with a dropout rate of 16.0 percent. Fewer than half of Waltham's English Language Learners graduated in four years (47.7%) and one-fourth of this student group dropped out (25.5%). Given that the comparable 4-year graduation rate among white students in Waltham is 93.3 percent, there is a clear and significant disparity in educational attainment outcomes along ethnic and cultural lines.

The National Dropout Prevention Center released a white paper in October 2017 entitled, *Strategies for Supporting Immigrant Students and Families: Guidelines for School Personnel*. In it, they provided a list of common issues facing immigrant elementary and secondary students. The complete list includes:^{iv}

- acculturation challenges and exposure to racism and discrimination contributing to identity confusion, especially for adolescents
- accessibility and transportation to the public schools and school resources
- social pressures to fit in and assimilate into the school culture
- stress related to undocumented parents and the fear of deportation

¹ Evidence-informed means there is some existing evidence that the proposed approach(es) will be effective at achieving the stated goals and objectives. This is not the same as evidence-based, which requires rigorous, published research demonstrating effectiveness of the proposed approach(es).

- part-time employment to provide income to the family due to family economic distress or a parent being deported
- serving multiple roles related to parents, siblings, and as a student in the schools
- restricted social interaction within the school environment due to family responsibilities or parents' restrictions
- increased absenteeism due to family responsibilities or stress-related illnesses
- drops in grades and ability to keep up with homework and school expectations
- symptoms of depression, anxiety, and other psychological and stress-related health issues
- varying levels of English language proficiency for the student and parents
- diverse economic backgrounds and resources

Information gathered from members of the NWH Advisory Committee confirmed the findings presented in *Strategies for Supporting Immigrant Students and Families: Guidelines for School Personnel*. Specifically, members of the Advisory Committee identified barriers to educational attainment associated with housing stability and the lack of other basic needs, cultural and economic pressures to work and earn income, challenges in the social environment, mental health issues and the lack of social emotional skills, and access to health information and resources.

Pathways to Graduation Goal and Objectives

Goal: *Reduce ethnic and cultural disparities in graduation and dropout rates in Waltham.*

Primary Objectives:

- *Decrease barriers to high school persistence associated with lacking basic needs, such as stable housing, reliable transportation, and food security.*
- *Decrease barriers to high school persistence associated with economic and/or cultural pressures to work.*

Secondary Objectives:

- *Reduce students' linguistic and cultural isolation.*
- *Increase students' sense of belonging and engagement in school.*
- *Increase students' skills to adapt to new environments and form relationships both in and outside of school.*
- *Increase access to and utilization of mental health services for students struggling with trauma, extreme stress, anxiety, or depression.*
- *Increase access to culturally competent health education and/or health services.*

Target Population:

Waltham students who are recent immigrants or refugees, and primarily are English Language Learners.

GRANT REQUIREMENTS

Geographic focus:

This grant initiative is focused on reducing disparities in high school graduation rates among Waltham students, particularly recent immigrants and refugees who are English Language Learners. Proposed interventions targeting students outside of Waltham will not be considered.

Goals and Objectives:

Proposed interventions must demonstrate that they are designed to meet the overall goal, achieve both primary objectives, and achieve at least two of the secondary objectives.

Pathways to Graduation Collaborative:

NWH will provide four years of grant funding to a Collaborative of community-based organizations working together to achieve the initiative's goal and objectives. While NWH is not stipulating the number of organizations in a proposed Collaborative, the Pathways to Graduation Collaborative must include one Lead Agency and a sufficient number of collaborating organizations with the capacity to meet both primary objectives and achieve at least two of the secondary objectives.

Requirements of the Collaborative include:

1. The proposal must be submitted by one Lead Agency.
2. The Lead Agency must be based in Waltham and have demonstrated experience working with immigrant and refugee populations.
3. The Lead Agency must commit to working directly with Waltham Public Schools to identify at-risk students and coordinate services for identified students.
4. The proposal must identify all organizations in the Collaborative, the specific roles of each organization, and the amount of grant funds allocated to each organization. MOUs for each organization in the Collaborative must be submitted with the proposal and should include a summary of their roles and responsibilities and amount of grant funds allocated to support their work.
5. The Lead Agency must be based in Waltham. Other organizations involved in the Collaborative are not required to be based in Waltham but must have demonstrated experience working with the target population.

Waltham Public Schools:

NWH recognizes that a successful initiative to address disparities in high school graduation requires a strong working relationship between the Collaborative and Waltham Public Schools (WPS). Therefore, this CHI has set aside 20% of the total available funding to support efforts by WPS. Upon selection of the successful Collaborative, NWH will facilitate meetings with the WPS and the Lead Agency to develop a scope of services to be provided by the WPS in support of the Collaborative's work. Once an agreed upon scope of services is developed, WPS will receive their funding directly from NWH. **An MOU with WPS is not required for this proposal. This will be developed in collaboration with NWH after the successful Collaborative is selected.**

Community Engagement:

The CHI process highly values community engagement and input in the development of targeted approaches. As part of the proposal development process, applicants are required to engage members of the target population in the development and planning of the proposed approach. The target population includes Waltham students who are immigrants or refugees and their family members or caregivers. This does not include school personnel or service providers, as their input has already been solicited for the development of this RFP.

Eligible Interventions:

- Programs or Services
 - Applicants may propose new Programs or Services. If proposing something new, the applicant must demonstrate that the programs or services are evidence-informed, meaning there is some evidence that the proposed interventions can reasonably be viewed as promising approaches.
 - Applicants may propose utilizing existing Programs or Services. If proposing something that already exists, the applicant must provide evidence of the success of the approach or explain how it will be adapted, enhanced, or improved to meet the needs of the target population.
- Policy or Systems Change
 - Applicants may propose Policy or Systems Change approaches to addressing barriers experienced by the target population. If proposing Policy or Systems Change approaches, the applicant must demonstrate how the proposed approach will impact the goal and objectives of this CHI.

Participation in Evaluation:

NWH has contracted with the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (UMDI) to provide assistance with evaluating the Pathways to Graduation CHI. Evaluation of this effort will be designed to:

- Inform future practice and innovation by monitoring and documenting the process of grant implementation
- Assess impact on educational disparities and outcomes at key points in the grant process

All members of the Collaborative must commit to working with UMDI to develop an evaluation plan, collect process and outcome data, submit data to UMDI, and participate in regular evaluation meetings to review grant progress.

FUNDING

NWH will fund one grant for four years at \$300,000 per year, contingent upon successful project progress.

Eligible Organizations

- Organizations that have a 501(c)(3) designation or those with a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor

Eligible budget items

NWH **can** fund:

- Stipends for community residents with an active role in the proposed project
- Staffing costs, where the staff time reflected in the proposed project budget is exclusively dedicated to the project proposed

NWH **will not** fund:

- The costs of existing programs already fully financially supported by the organization or another funder
- Interstate or international travel
- Indirect costs that exceed 25%

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

All applicants must submit the following:

- Cover Page
- Proposal Narrative
- Attachment A: Budget Template and Budget Narrative for each organization in the Collaborative
- Attachment B: MOUs between the Lead Agency and each organization in in the Collaborative
- Attachment C: Most recent financial statement for each organization involved in the Collaborative
- Attachment D: Resumes (please limit to 2 pages per person) for each of the key staff listed in the narrative

Cover Page: Not included in 20 page limit

The Cover Page must include:

- Contact information for the Lead Agency, including
 - Lead Agency Name
 - Address
 - Contact Person Name and Title
 - Phone number
 - Email
- List of all organizations participating the Pathways to Graduation Collaborative
- Brief description of the proposed Pathways to Graduation Collaborative, including how the organizations will work together, objectives that will be addressed, proposed approach, and anticipated outcomes.

Narrative: Maximum 20 pages, single-spaced, 12 pt font

The Narrative must include the following sections:

1. **Collaborative Description:** Identify the Lead Agency and all organizations involved in the Pathways to Graduation Collaborative. Provide descriptions of each organization involved in the Collaborative and what capabilities they bring in relation to the meeting the overall goal of reducing ethnic and cultural disparities in graduation and dropout rates in Waltham.
2. **Objectives:** Identify the objectives that will be met through this grant. For the secondary objectives being addressed, provide a rationale for selecting those.
3. **Proposed Approach:** For each of the identified objectives, describe the approach that will be taken to meet the objective, how many students will be reached, and which of the Collaborative organizations will be responsible for implementing the approach.
4. **Engagement:** Describe the process by which the Collaborative solicited input from the target population. Describe what was learned from the target population and how the information was used to develop the proposed approach.
5. **Waltham Public Schools:** Describe the role you envision for Waltham Public Schools. Describe how the Lead Agency envisions working with the schools to ensure success.
6. **Evaluation:** Describe how you plan to assess grant progress and impact of proposed approach. Provide information about the specific data you will gather to demonstrate progress and impact. Describe who will be responsible for data gathering and reporting. State your commitment to work with UMDI to finalize an evaluation plan, collect and submit data, and participate in evaluation meetings.
7. **Key staff:** List key staff from each of the Collaborative organizations and describe their role in implementing the proposed approach.
8. **Budget:** Provide an overview of the total amount of grants funds allocated to the Lead Agency and each of the Collaborative organizations for each of the four years of funding.

Attachments: Attachments are not included in the 20-page Narrative limit. The items listed below must be submitted as attachments for each organization involved in the Collaborative.²

- Attachment A: Budget Template and Budget Narrative for each organization in the Collaborative
 - a. All organizations involved in the Collaborative must have grant funds allocated to support their work.
 - b. The combined budgets of the Collaborative organizations must not exceed \$300,000 per year.
 - c. Indirect rates may not exceed 25%.
- Attachment B: MOUs between the Lead Agency and each organization involved in the Collaborative
- Attachment C: Most recent financial statement for each member of the Collaborative
- Attachment D: Resumes (please limit to 2 pages per person) for each of the key staff listed in the narrative

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Applications Due on July 2, 2019 by 5:00 pm.

All grant applications must include a cover page, narrative, and all attachments. Applications submitted after the due date or missing any of the required sections will not be considered.

The cover page and narrative must be submitted as one document. Attachments may be submitted as separate documents.

Applications must be sent as email attachments to NWHgrants@partners.org by the deadline with the subject line: *Pathways to Graduation Proposal*. Please request a return receipt when submitting your application by email.

The proposal narrative must not exceed 20 single-spaced pages, with a minimum 12 pt font. All sections of the narrative must be completed.

Proposals that do not meet these specifications above or are not received by the due date will not be considered.

Questions: If you have questions about this grant opportunity, please submit them in writing to NWHgrants@partners.org. Questions received, and answers provided will be posted to the Newton-Wellesley Hospital website www.nwh.org/grants.

² For example, 1 Lead Agency working with 2 additional organizations should submit: 3 budget templates and budget narratives, 2 MOUs, 3 financial statements (one from each organization), and resumes for key staff from each of the 3 organizations in the Collaborative.

Timeline

May 3, 2019	RFP Released
May 29, 2019	<p>Bidders Conference</p> <p>One Bidders Conference will be held at: Waltham High School, 617 Lexington Street, Waltham, MA Time: 3 pm - 5 pm Registration required at: www.nwh.org/grants.</p> <p>Parking will be free of charge. Family-friendly environment offered. Spanish interpreter services will be available.</p> <p>If transportation is an issue, and you would like assistance, please email NWHgrants@partners.org to coordinate accommodations.</p>
June 18, 2019	<p>Deadline for Questions</p> <p>All questions must be submitted to NWHgrants@partners.org by 5:00 pm. Questions and answers will be posted on the website - www.nwh.org/grants.</p>
July 2, 2019	<p>Proposals Due</p> <p>Proposals due to NWH by 5:00 pm on July 2, 2019.</p> <p>Proposals must be submitted by email attachment to NWHgrants@partners.org. Please request a return receipt on your email and state <i>Pathways to Graduation Proposal</i> in the subject line.</p>
July 2019	<p>Proposal Review</p> <p>Site visits to or follow-up interviews with applicants may be requested by the DoN Allocations Committee.</p>
August 2019	Successful Applicant Notified
August 2019	Grant Commences

NOTE: Dates above are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Consistent with the Determination of Need (DoN) approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the guidance provided in this RFP, proposals will be evaluated against the extent to which they:

- Identify a collaborative group of organizations that will work together to achieve the overall goal of the Pathways to Graduation initiative
- Propose evidence-informed approaches that are likely to achieve both primary objectives and at least two secondary objectives
- Demonstrate that the Lead Agency is based in Waltham, has direct experience working with the target population, and has the capacity to implement the proposed approaches
- Demonstrate that the collaborative organizations have experience working with the target population and the capacity to implement the proposed approaches
- Have a clear vision for working with the Waltham Public Schools to implement the proposed approaches
- Have allocated sufficient funds to each of the organizations included in the collaborative

And the extent to which the Lead Agency can demonstrate that they:

- Work closely and effectively with community residents
- Have engaged the target population in the development of proposed approaches
- Have the capacity, expertise and accountability structures in place to successfully oversee this initiative and report on progress
- Are committed to gathering data to demonstrate effectiveness

ⁱ Freudenberg, N., & Ruglis, J. (2007). Reframing school dropout as a public health issue. *Preventing chronic disease*, 4(4), A107.

ⁱⁱ Health, United States, 2011: with special feature on socioeconomic status and health. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics; 2012

ⁱⁱⁱ Zimmerman, E., and S. H. Woolf. 2014. Understanding the relationship between education and health. Discussion Paper, Institute of Medicine, Washington, DC. <http://nam.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06//understandingtherelationship>.

^{iv} Stegelin, D. A. (2017). Strategies for supporting immigrant students and families: Guidelines for school personnel [White paper]. Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network. Retrieved from www.dropoutprevention.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/10/supporting-immigrant-students-and-families2017-10.pdf