

## Care Coordination Fund

### Requests for Proposals to Assist New Yorkers Experiencing Homelessness and Serious Mental Illness (Invitation Only)

#### **Background**

More than 92,000 people experiencing homelessness live in New York City.<sup>1</sup> Most long-term single adults and families who are homeless are housed, albeit erratically, in City shelters. But, over 4,000 New Yorkers call the subways, sidewalks, or other public locations their home.<sup>2</sup> The large majority of people experiencing street homelessness struggle with chronic and serious mental illness and receive care through a fragmented system that includes homeless agencies, shelters, clinics, and public hospitals.<sup>3</sup> As a result, many of the City's people experiencing street homelessness cycle through expensive and ineffective stays in hospitals, jails, or shelters, never resolving or stabilizing their housing or mental health challenges.

To better serve New Yorkers experiencing homelessness and serious mental illness (SMI), experts agree that the need for better care coordination between homeless service providers and hospital-based care providers, particularly at intake and discharge, is critical. But this is easier said than done. Current government funding structures, limits in information technology to share data in real-time, a disconnect between in-patient support and community services, and inadequate staff training to offer rapid care management all hamper provision of coordinated care. Better care coordination has also been recognized as a crucial need by both New York City<sup>4</sup> and the State.

Press reports and academic research documenting the challenges in serving individuals experiencing homelessness and SMI note that addressing fragmentation in the continuum of care offers the most critical and effective intervention. An independent review by the *New York Times* from November 2023 found a “disjointed patchwork of homeless shelters, hospitals and specialized teams” and “a widespread failure by the agencies to share information, even though the state created a detailed database expressly for that purpose.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [“Basic Facts About Homelessness: New York City.”](#) Coalition for the Homeless. November 2023.

<sup>2</sup> [“Homeless Outreach Population Estimate \(HOPE\) 2023 Results.”](#) New York City Department of Social Services. January 2023. Note: New York Department of Social Services publishes HOPE count estimates annually. The 2024 numbers have not yet been released.

<sup>3</sup> A. Levitt, D. Culhane, J. DeGenova, P. O’Quinn and J. Bainbridge, “Health and Social Characteristics of Homeless Adults in Manhattan Who Were Chronically or Not Chronically Unsheltered,” *Psychiatric Services*, vol. 60, no. 7, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> [“Care, Community, Action: A Mental Health Plan for New York City.”](#) March 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Amy Julia Harris and Jan Ransom. [“Behind 94 Acts of Shocking Violence, Years of Glaring Mistakes.”](#) *New York Times*, updated November 22, 2023. See also: S. Ryan Greysen, MD, MHS, MA, et al. Understanding transitions in care from hospital to homeless shelter: a mixed-methods, community-based participatory approach. *J Gen Intern Med*. 2012 Nov;27(11):1484-91. doi: 10.1007/s11606-012-2117-2. Epub 2012 Jun 16.

### **Summary of Request for Proposals**

This philanthropic initiative aims to advance an effective model to coordinate care for New Yorkers experiencing homelessness and SMI. It will embed care coordinators in high-need public hospital emergency departments to work with street outreach teams to offer targeted clinical support, housing assistance and connections to ongoing support post-discharge. A care coordination program was piloted in the Bronx between 2018-2020, and other partners have piloted similar programs. Though modest in scale, other programs have shown promising results that this initiative will build from.

Specifically, over the next three years, a consortium of foundations and donors committed to addressing this challenging issue will support care coordination partnerships among the City's public hospital system and homeless outreach providers who have been engaged in the planning and discussion of these needs, to engage, stabilize, and work to house New Yorkers experiencing homelessness and SMI. In joining this initiative, funders will support a partnership between the New York City Health + Hospitals and non-profits to improve services for seriously mentally ill homeless that includes:

- Staffing capacity to coordinate care across both hospital and community locations;
- Robust, up-to-date information sharing by leveraging existing databases and tracking systems across institutions;
- Create accountability and oversight structures within each hospital facility and for the program overall;
- Training for staff on best care coordination practices and documentation; and
- Connections to housing and other services for patients leaving the hospital setting.

Specifically, participants in this initiative will:

- Serve individuals who are homeless and experiencing serious mental illness, identified by:
  - Referrals from homeless service providers, street outreach and medicine teams, either on a pre-identified list or referred through care coordinators;
  - New York City's "Top 50" lists of homeless New Yorkers in high need;
  - Patients utilizing acute care (inpatient or ED) who have SMI diagnosis/or are flagged within EMR records as high-risk;
  - Referrals from frontline hospital care teams.
- Track pre-agreed upon indicators of care coordination, including:
  - Referrals between homeless service providers and hospitals;
  - Additional care provided, including additional evaluations, referrals to additional care, in-patient admissions;
  - Coordination on social services provided, including housing applications begun and completed.

Additionally, this initiative will:

- Convene grantees on a regular basis, no less than monthly to start and on a timeframe to be determined as the initiative progresses, to share progress, discuss and collectively resolve challenges, and set goals;
- Engage New York University's Health x Housing Lab as independent evaluators of the program; and
- Share progress with city and state government partners, and if results warrant, encourage funding through government sources.

**This is an Invitation Only Request for Proposals (RFP) from the following organizations for this initiative:**

1. New York City Health + Hospitals
2. Breaking Ground
3. BRC
4. BronxWorks
5. Center for Urban Community Services
6. New York University's Health x Housing Lab

This RFP is for the first year of a project planned to extend over three years. Given the collaborative nature of the project, we are asking groups to add individual organizational information to a common application, as detailed below, and to submit separate submissions in the portal. We encourage proposals to be between 5 to 10 pages and covering the following information:

1. A brief description of your agency's background
2. The backgrounds of any partners on the project (included in common application);
3. A brief summary of progress made during the project planning period (included in common application);
4. Expected activities during the project period and expected outcomes and milestones (included in common application);
5. A brief cover letter on the organization's letterhead signed by the paid staff head or designee confirming the organizational commitment to the project (*not included in the page limit*);
6. An itemized project budget that reflects the full costs of carrying out the project and lists any other sources, including in-kind support (*not included in the page limit*);
7. Your organization's current operating budget (*not included in the-page limit*) and
8. A list of your board of directors, including affiliations (*not included in the-page limit*).

**Submission Directions**

1. Assemble and merge items **1 to 8** above into a single PDF file no more than 25 MB in size, name it in the following format: "*Applicant Organization Name.pdf*".
2. Complete a New York City: *Care Coordination Fund RFP (Invitation Only)* Cover Sheet

3. Because you need to submit the proposal and the Cover Sheet together, we recommend items 1 to 8 are in a single PDF prior to starting the Cover Sheet. You will know you have been successful in submitting both when after uploading the document you see “You have successfully uploaded your PDF” on your screen.
4. Once uploaded, check the certification box at the end and click submit. You will get an email confirming the proposal has been received. This email will include—as a PDF attachment—the Cover Sheet you just completed. The email will be sent to the email address entered in the “Information about Person Completing this Form” field on the Proposal Cover Sheet.
5. Please note The Trust's communications about the result of your submission will be by email, whether notification of a decline or grant. Please add [noreply@thenytrust.org](mailto:noreply@thenytrust.org) to your address book so important communications do not get caught in spam filters.

Proposals are due by October 15, 2024

Grant awards will be issued by October 30, 2024.