**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

**REFERENCE NO: 712345451**

**CUSTOMER:**  Defence Medical Services, , Ministry of Defence (The Authority)

**START DATE:** 27th July

**DATE RESPONSE REQUIRED:** 23rd August

Dear Potential Provider,

We would like to notify you of a potential future upcoming requirement, and by doing so we are keen to understand where the market stands in terms of the requirement outlined below.

This Request for Information (RFI) seeks input relating to the following:

Provision of Mental Health Services to MoD from 2026 specifically around:

* a Supplier provided In-Patient Mental Health Service;
* a Supplier provided Outpatient Psychotherapy Service (OPS), and;
* a Supplier provided Cognitive Behavioral Therapy licenses.

Please note the following general conditions:

• This RFI will help us to refine the requirements.

• We reserve the right not to proceed with this procurement. Nothing shall constitute a commitment to instigating a formal procurement process.

• Any and all costs associated with the production of such a response either to an RFI or any resultant competition shall be borne by the Supplier. The Authority will not contribute in any way to meeting costs of any response.

• Information contained within this document is confidential and must not be revealed to any third party without prior written consent from us.

• No down-selection of Potential Providers will take place as a consequence of any responses or interactions relating to this RFI.

• We expect that all responses to this RFI will be provided by Potential Providers in good faith to the best of their ability in the light of information available at the time of their response.

• No information provided by a Potential Provider in response to this RFI will be carried forward, used or acknowledged in any way for the purpose of evaluating the Potential Provider, in any subsequent formal procurement process that may take place.

• Should a Potential Provider fail to respond to this RFI, it will not affect any further participation in any possible future procurement for this capability.

**BRIEF OUTLINE OF REQUIREMENT**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Defence Medical Services (DMS) has overall responsibility for military healthcare provision. Community mental healthcare is the responsibility of Defence Primary Healthcare (DPHC), covering UK, overseas and Northern Ireland. Military mental health (MH) is occupationally focused and primarily involves the promotion of positive psychological health and wellbeing as well as the treatment of mental illness.

1. This contract will form part of the Defence occupational mental healthcare pathway, supporting Defence Community Mental Health (DCMH) in providing psychotherapy, and in providing appropriate inpatient provision, when required, and online CBT access.  It will reflect the different thresholds and tolerances for treatment used within Defence which will reflect the different risks to the NHS.

**BACKGROUND**

1. There are 4 mental health Networks in the UK and Cyprus providing community based multi-disciplinary mental health care to our Armed Forces (AF) personnel and entitled others. Delivery sites are geographically dispersed and co-located in centres of military population.
2. To optimise the care pathway and build on the local provision of care, appropriate provision must be made to meet the inpatient mental healthcare and Outpatient Psychotherapy Service (OPS) requirement for Service Personnel (SP) and entitled civilians from overseas bases, at a location that is in close proximity to the patient’s Unit or home address.

**Inpatient service**

1. The Authority has a requirement for the provision of high quality occupationally focused care for SP and entitled civilians deemed to require inpatient assessment, stabilisation and treatment.  The Contractor will provide a nominated bed within 4 hours of a request as close as possible to the patient’s Department of Community Mental Health or where clinically indicated their home. Refer Annex A of attached draft Statement of Requirement for delivery locations.
2. An initial admission would be for up to 10 days, with further bed days being requested as clinically appropriate. The 10 day stay/admission is for stabilisation and treatment of personnel and management of risk with the individual then being discharged back to the care of the General Practitioner (GP), Medical Officer (MO) and DCMH. For eligible civilians, the admission would be for 10 days only, and any care required after the initial 10 days will be the responsibility of the NHS, arranged by the provider.

**Outpatient service**

1. To support community mental healthcare, Defence also contracts an Outpatient Psychotherapy Service (OPS) delivered via remote video consultation of a rolling 120 psychotherapy referral sessions per annum.
2. OPS will comprise of evidence based psychologically informed interventions for a range of presentations (as listed in SOR), which will be up to and including stepped care levels 3/4a in complexity.

**Online CBT**

* 1. Access to digital CBT for common mental disorders for a 12-month period for up to 5,000 users per annum (UK and overseas).
  2. The CBT package must be procured in accordance with [NICE guidance](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/hte8/chapter/2-The-technology)

**CURRENT SITUATION**

* 1. The current provision of these services is outsourced to a Contractor with the Contract due to expire in May 2026.
  2. A more detailed, draft Statement of Requirement is attached but to note this is still a work in progress and is subject to change at any time.

**OUR AIMS – WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE FROM THIS RFI**

The Authority is looking to understand the shape of the current market and whether one or more Potential Providers can deliver the outline requirement as attached to this RFI. To that end the Contracting Authority has a number of questions it would like a Potential Provider to respond to the Authority as follows:

* + 1. Does the Potential Provider have the required capability / capacity to deliver all three elements of the requirement (IPS / OPS / CBT)?

1.1. If so, please give a brief description of how you can meet them.

1.2 If not, please outline the services you can deliver.

2. The Authority would like to understand the different charging mechanisms that the Potential Provider could utilise for the outlined requirement.

3. This requirement meets the gap between the standard MOD MH delivery and the threshold for NHS treatment. What mechanisms could the Potential Provider put in place to ensure a seamless transition for the patient from this Contract to NHS funded care?

4. If the Potential Provider is looking to deliver one element of the requirement, how would they communicate with both the Authority and potential other delivery partners to ensure best care for the patient?

5. With a likely reducing requirement for the OPS over time, how would a Potential Provider manage the reduction in this service?

6. Are there potential alternative future service delivery models that could help facilitate this requirement.

7. Is the Potential Provider willing to meet the Authority for a virtual Teams session (no more than 1hr) to discuss their responses to the RFI in more detail?

**OUR TIMETABLE**

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| **DATE** | **ACTIVITY** |
| 26th July 2024 | Publication of the Request for Information |
| 26th July 2024 | Clarification period starts |
| 17:00hrs: 2nd August 2024 | Clarification period closes |
| 17:00hrs 9th August 2024 | Deadline for the publication of responses to RFI Clarification questions |
| 17:00hrs: 23rd August 2024 | RFI Response Period Closure |
| W/C 26th August 2024 | Analysis of RFI responses and invites issued to Teams sessions |
| PM of 5th September 2024 and 6th September 2024 | Teams sessions with Potential Providers |

**POTENTIAL PROVIDER QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS**

* Potential Providers may raise questions or seek clarification regarding any aspect of this RFI document at any time prior to the Clarification Period Closure, as detailed in 'our timeline'. Questions must be submitted to [Kelvin.Edwards109@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Kelvin.Edwards109@mod.gov.uk).
* To ensure that all Potential Providers have equal access to information regarding this potential procurement, responses to questions raised by Potential Providers will be provided to all that responded to this RFI.
* Responses to questions will not identify the originator of the question.
* If a Potential Provider wishes to ask a question or seek clarification without the question and answer being published in this way, then the Potential Provider must notify the Authority and provide its justification for withholding the question and any response. If the Authority does not consider that there is sufficient justification for withholding the question and the corresponding response, the Potential Provider will be invited to decide whether:
  + the question/clarification and the response should in fact be published; or
  + It wishes to withdraw the question/clarification.