# REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

# Crown Commercial Service

# 6

# [INSERT REFERENCE NUMBER]

# 

# FOR

# [dEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE]

# (THE AUTHORITY)

# 

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### **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) SCOPE**

* 1. The Authority requires information on the intention to commission an Adult Social Care (ASC) workforce reform support package. The proposal involves appointing a national delivery partner to establish, or utilise an existing, network of regional partners to facilitate implementation of the workforce reforms across the country and report on progress in relation to this. The focus of the work is Small and Medium (SME) ASC social care providers.
  2. Suppliers are asked to advise if they would be interested in bidding for this opportunity as part of their response to the RFI. If Suppliers are not interested, it is requested that they inform the Authority and provide a reason why.
  3. Stakeholders who are not interested in bidding for the work but may have an interest in shaping the project are also invited to respond – we are interested in hearing from a wide range of organisations, including potential recipients of support, to understand how we can shape this proposal to make it as effective as possible.

### **BACKGROUND TO THE AUTHORITY**

### The Department of Health and Social Care (‘The Authority’) is one of His Majesty’s Government departments and is responsible for policy on health and social care matters in England, and in some cases Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

### **BACKGROUND TO THE REQUIREMENT**

* 1. Social Care reform is a Ministerial priority. In December 2021 the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) published “[People at the Heart of Care](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/people-at-the-heart-of-care-adult-social-care-reform-white-paper)” which set out the Government’s 10-year vision for adult social care. The Government re-committed to this vision in “[Next steps to put People at the Heart of Care](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-social-care-system-reform-next-steps-to-put-people-at-the-heart-of-care)” published April 2023. This set out the Government’s plans to address longstanding challenges in recruitment and retention of the workforce by improving recognition of the skills and experience of people working in care and supporting career development.

## Adult Social care providers currently have to replace almost a third of their care workers each year due to staff leaving their jobs (Skills for Care, 2023-24). High turnover worsens the quality of care, and individuals who want to progress in their careers have not always found an easy way of doing so, beyond moving away from frontline care into more senior management roles. This will continue to be important as future demand for care grows and changes, particularly in light of an increasing aging population with more complex co-morbidities and therefore care needs.

## We announced the first tranche of our workforce reforms on 10 January 2024, backed by £75m of funding during 2024/25 – these are:

## • the **Care Workforce Pathway**, the first national career structure for adult

## social care

• a new **Level 2 Care Certificate qualification**

## • investment in **social work and nursing apprenticeships**

## • **subsidised training places**

• a new **digital leadership qualification**  
(On 8 April, the scheme guidance was launched for the new **Adult Social**

**Care Training and Development Fund** to provide funding for targeted,

subsidised training places for the adult social care workforce in England. The

fund will be administered through a new digital online claim service. This will

go live in the summer of 2024, fulfilling a key commitment set out in the

People at the Heart of Care white paper.)

* 1. Our overall objective is to promote and embed the workforce reforms in the sector. We already have plans in place to support the sector including (1) communications to promote awareness of the reform package and (2) a programme to test elements of the reforms with a cohort of up to 30 adult social care providers (early adopters).
  2. However, we believe that because there is no obligation for providers to implement the workforce reforms and internal barriers to adoption (e.g. capacity) that the sector, and smaller providers in particular, could benefit from additional support and hands-on practical help to access and take full advantage of the reform offers.
  3. We are considering appointing a national delivery partner to have responsibility for working within 9 regions to deliver a workforce reform support package tailored to the needs of providers in each region. Regions: London, North East, North West, Yorkshire, East Midlands, West Midlands, South East, East of England and South West.
  4. The aim of this arrangement is to help drive awareness and take up of our reforms, building on our sector readiness campaign and informed by learning from the early adopters.
  5. To run the programme, we hope to contract with a national delivery partner who could stand up a delivery team that would work with regional networks. We envisage the regional delivery networks to act as a core delivery function to engage with employers and stakeholders, including (and drawing from) local authorities DASSs, workforce development representatives, commissioners, ICB/ICP representatives and people with lived experience of care.
  6. Early work and comparisons with similar activity suggests that a model based on the following could be appropriate although we would like to test this further:  
     1. A central delivery team comprising of 1 FTE x Programme Co-ordinator post and 1 FTE x Administrative Support post, responsible for identifying the networks and organisations to partner within each region. It is also envisaged that ‘advisors / co-ordinators’ will be required in each region.
  7. Activity that this team might engage in could include: explaining the detail of reforms to individual care providers and helping them to access / understand them, co-ordinating joint activity between care providers, support to access the Workforce Data Set, information about training providers in the region who can provide different training and other supportive activities that will help providers access the reforms.
  8. The key deliverables for the programme will vary according to the specific needs of each region. However, we would need to see measurable progress against a number of the workforce reforms objectives over the contract period. This could include the level of contact with care providers and training providers to explain the reforms, an increase in take up of the Care Workforce Pathway, the Training Funds Reimbursement Scheme (TFRS) and the Skills Record.
  9. We anticipate having a contract for an 18-month period, with a start date to be confirmed.
  10. Additionally, to note, we are also considering commissioning an independent evaluation to assess the impact of this funding.

### **INFORMATION REQUIRED**

* 1. The Authority would like to test the following areas for delivery of a workforce reform support package
     1. What do you envisage a delivery team will need to do in order to identify the organisations to partner with in each of the 9 regions in England (3.6) and what would be the best way to manage this?
     2. How many FTE co-ordinators/advisors per region do you think would be needed to support care providers. How did you determine this number?
     3. Please list any key performance indicators you think could be used to demonstrate impact and value for money for this programme?
     4. What do you consider an appropriate pay rate to be for the roles (outlined in 3.8.1)?
     5. Are there any other costs, separate to staffing, that should be taken into account?

* + 1. What do you consider to be an appropriate implementation timeline for a delivery team to be in place?
    2. How achievable is 18 months to promote and embed the workforce reforms in the sector?
    3. What do you think is good about the proposed model and any changes you would suggest?
    4. Is working regionally the best way to encourage take up of the workforce reforms and do you have any other thoughts?

### **TIMETABLE**

* 1. Please see the RFI timetable below:

### **RFI publication date: [**insert date**]**

### **EOI return date: [**insert date and time**]**

### **Next steps date: [**insert date and time**]**

**Please add any other key dates as necessary**

### **COSTS**

* 1. The Authority will not reimburse any costs incurred in connection with the preparation and / or submission of the supplier RFI response.

### **NOTICE TO SUPPLIERS**

* 1. This RFI and any related documents referred to have been prepared by the Authority for the pre-market test to gather information.
  2. Whilst prepared in good faith, the RFI documents are intended only as a preliminary background explanation of the Authority’s activities and plans. Therefore, it isn’t intended to form the basis of any decision on whether to enter into any contractual relationship with the Authority.
  3. The RFI documents do not purport to be all inclusive or to contain all of the information that a supplier may require.
  4. Nothing in the RFI documents is, or should be, relied upon as a promise or a representation as to the Authority's ultimate decisions in relation to the RFI.
  5. The publication of the RFI documents in no way commits the Authority to award any contract.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

* 1. Subject to the exceptions referred to in paragraph 8.2, the contents of the RFI are being made available by the authority on the conditions that the supplier:
     1. Treats the RFI as confidential at all times, unless the information is already in the public domain;
     2. Does not disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute or pass any of the Information to any other person at any time or allow any of these things to happen, except where, and to the extent that, the Information has been publicised in accordance with paragraph 9 Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA);
     3. Only uses the Information for the purposes of preparing a response (or deciding whether to respond); and
     4. Does not undertake any promotional or similar activity related to this RFI within any section of the media.
  2. The supplier may disclose, distribute or pass any of the Information to its members of its Group of Economic Operators (if acting as a Lead Contact), Sub-Contractors, advisers or to any other person provided that:
     1. This is done for the sole purpose of enabling the supplier to submit its response and the person receiving the information undertakes in writing (such written undertaking to be made available to the Authority on the Authority’s request) to keep the information confidential.
     2. It obtains the Authority’s prior written consent in relation to such disclosure, distribution or passing of Information; or
     3. The disclosure is made for the sole purpose of obtaining legal advice from external lawyers in relation to this RFI;
     4. The supplier is legally required to make such a disclosure; or
     5. The information has been published in accordance with paragraph 9 Freedom of Information (FOIA).
  3. The Authority may disclose information submitted by suppliers during this RFI to it’s officers, employees, agents or advisers or other government departments who are stakeholders in this RFI.

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 (FOIA)**

* 1. In accordance with the obligations and duties placed upon public authorities by the FOIA and the EIR (Environmental Information Regulations 2004) and in accordance with any Government Code of Practice on the discharge of public authorities’ functions under the FOIA all information submitted to the Authority may be disclosed under a request for information made pursuant to the FOIA and the EIR.
  2. Suppliers should note that the information disclosed pursuant to a FOI or EIR request may include, but is not limited to, the disclosure of its RFI response (including any attachments or embedded documents).
  3. If the supplier considers any part of its response or any other information it submits to be confidential or commercially sensitive, the supplier should:
     1. Clearly identify such information as confidential or commercially sensitive;
     2. Explain the potential implications of disclosure of such information taking into account and specifically addressing the public interest test as set out in the FOIA; and
     3. Provide an estimate of the period of time during which it believes that such information will remain confidential or commercially sensitive.
  4. If the supplier identifies that part of its response or other information it submits is confidential or commercially sensitive, the Authority in its sole discretion will consider whether or not to withhold such information from publication. Suppliers should note that, even where information is identified as confidential or commercially sensitive, the Authority may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FOIA or the EIR.
  5. The Authority is required to form an independent judgement of whether the supplier information referred to in paragraph 9.4 is exempt from disclosure under the FOIA or the EIR and whether the public interest favours disclosure or not. The Authority cannot guarantee that any information indicated as being confidential or commercially sensitive by the supplier will be withheld from publication.
  6. If the supplier receives a request for information under the FOIA or the EIR during and in relation to this RFI, it should be immediately referred to the Authority.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Procurement Lead: [**insert name**]**:

**[**insert telephone number**]**

**[**insert email address**]**

**e-Sourcing Helpdesk: [**insert telephone number**]**

**[**insert email address**]**

**If using the CCS e-Sourcing portal use the details below – if not please delete**

Telephone: 0345 010 3503

Email Address: eEnablement@crowncommercial.gov.uk

### **APPENDIX 1**

**[**Insert Appendix Title**]**

*[Additional Appendices can be added as required and should be detailed on the contents page. Delete if not applicable]*