UK Health Security Agency

Questionnaire to suppliers for Medical / Science Writing Services (sleeper contract) - REF: C330051 / W160994

1. About UK Health Security Agency

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) prepares for and responds to infectious diseases, and environmental hazards, to keep all our communities safe, save lives and protect livelihoods. UKHSA's mission is to prepare for, prevent and respond to health threats, save lives and protect livelihoods. To achieve this, UKHSA has three overarching goals:

Prepare: UKHSA aims to ensure that the country is fully prepared for – and wherever possible can prevent – future health security hazards. We establish which threats are on the horizon; develop the right evidence, insight and tools to best protect against them; and have the right tested response plans in place to protect the population.

Respond: UKHSA protects people from health threats every day. We deliver agile, rapid, evidence-based responses at a local, national and international level. We respond to infectious disease outbreaks, health security incidents, and ongoing health security threats.

Build: We continue to build and invest in the scientific, public health and operational capabilities needed to protect the country's health now and in the future. We are modernising our approaches and technology, ensuring we are a high-performing and efficient agency.

2. Purpose of the request

As part of pandemic preparedness activities, UKHSA seeks an excellent medical writing service to help rapidly prepare publications and reports during public health emergencies. The supplier should be able to competently produce reports for academic publications and for publishing on www.gov.uk.

Medical writing service supplier will be appointed to support urgent requirements, such as rapidly developing reports, manuscripts, or communication materials during public health emergencies. This is a no-cost award, and the delivery will be on a case-by-case basis to meet defined deadlines. Supplier may be called on to support business-as-usual operations by producing high-quality, consistent content such as manuscripts, and annual reports, allowing the organisation to maintain continuity in both everyday functions and during critical periods without compromising quality or compliance.

3. Aims

3.1. **To enhance knowledge dissemination**: The primary aim is to facilitate the effective dissemination of critical public health information and research findings to both academic communities and the general public during critical periods.

3.2. **To ensure quality and accuracy**: Ensure that all publications meet the highest standards of quality, accuracy, and adherence to ethical guidelines.

3.3. **To support evidence-based decision-making**: Provide comprehensive medical writing services to support evidence-based decision-making.

3.4. **To promote transparency**: To foster transparency and open access by publishing relevant reports on www.gov.uk, making crucial information readily available to the public.

4. Objectives:

During Public health emergencies, professional medical services will support the creation of key publications, reports, and strategies, aligning with our ongoing efforts, commitments, and goals to maximise our impact. Key objectives will be:

4.1. Timely Delivery: Ensure that drafts and final versions of publications are delivered within specified timeframes to facilitate timely decision-making and information dissemination.

4.2. Public Website Publication: Facilitate the seamless publication of reports on www.gov.uk, making them accessible to the public and government stakeholders.

4.3. Engage Diverse Audiences: Tailor publications to effectively engage both academic communities and the general public, making health information accessible to a wide audience.

4.4. Ensure Compliance: Ensure that all publications meet ethical guidelines, regulatory standards, and legal requirements regarding patient confidentiality and data protection.

4.5. Monitor and Improve Quality: Continuously monitor the quality of published materials and seek ways to improve the clarity, accuracy, and impact of the content.

5. Scope of work:

The selected bidder(s) will be expected to:

5.1. Work to synthesise analysis outputs into concise, accurate evaluation reports allowing findings of the analysis to be communicated. The supplier must also be able to take existing reports and analysis along with new research and evaluation activity and help to develop an appropriate narrative for those findings for those academic outputs, define the structure and flow of reports, as well as maintaining consistency of approach.

5.2. Understand and synthesise complex medical information and data.

5.3. Write, edit and revise medical manuscripts in line with journal standards.

5.4. Possess excellent MS Office skills. Skilled at proofreading documents for grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

5.5. Ensure all content meets ethical guidelines, regulatory standards, and is compliant with laws around patient confidentiality and data protection.

5.6. Work collaboratively with our team of researchers, clinicians, and other stakeholders.

5.7. Provide guidance on submission process to relevant journals.

5.8. Supporting appropriate approvals and sign off processes for analysis and results.

5.9. Understand and comply with UKHSA's format for submitting publications to www.gov.uk.

5.10. Stakeholder collaboration: The successful bidder must collaborate seamlessly with both internal and external stakeholders to achieve the project's objectives effectively.

5.11. Data handling: Datasets will be available in certain instances, while in others, data may require review. Handling and analysing complex medical information and data will be a crucial aspect of this project.

5.12. Target audience: The target audience encompasses the general public, academic communities, and other government departments. The winning bidder must align their work to cater to these diverse audiences.

5.13. Publication process: The selected bidder is expected to actively participate in all publication activities, from inception to submission. This includes addressing reviewer comments and making necessary revisions for successful publication.

6. Deliverables and Timelines

Medical writing services will be appointed to support urgent requirements. The delivery will be on a case-by-case basis to meet defined deadlines.

The project outputs for the request for medical writing services for UKHSA include:

6.1. Publication Reports: The primary output would be well-crafted publication reports. These reports should be tailored for academic publications and for publication on www.gov.uk. Each report should be comprehensive, well-researched, and adhere to the highest quality standards.

6.2. Draft Manuscripts: The supplier should provide initial drafts of each assigned manuscript within the specified timeframe. These drafts serve as the foundation for the final publications.

6.3. Final Manuscripts: The final output would be polished, fully revised manuscripts ready for submission to academic journals or for publication on www.gov.uk. These manuscripts should meet all formatting, ethical, and regulatory requirements.

6.4. Publication Schedules: The project may also include publication schedules outlining when each report or manuscript is expected to be completed and submitted. These schedules are essential for project management and coordination.

6.5. Progress Reports: Regular progress reports on a bi-weekly or monthly basis should be provided by the supplier. These reports keep stakeholders informed about the status of each publication and any challenges or revisions needed.

6.6. Evidence of Compliance: Documentation demonstrating that all content meets ethical guidelines, regulatory standards, and legal requirements regarding patient confidentiality and data protection is another critical output.

6.7. Reviewer Comments and Revisions: The supplier should provide documentation of how they address reviewer comments and incorporate revisions into the manuscripts. This demonstrates the iterative process of refining publications.

6.8. Stakeholder Engagement Reports: Reports or summaries of stakeholder engagement activities, including interactions with UKHSA team members, researchers, clinicians, and other stakeholders, should be part of the project outputs.

6.9. Publication Process Guidance: Documentation or guidance on the submission process for relevant journals, including any approvals and sign-off processes, should be provided to support the UKHSA team in getting publications accepted.

6.10. Archived Records: A well-organized archive of all project-related documents, including drafts, revisions, feedback, and correspondence, should be maintained for reference and record-keeping.

These project outputs are designed to ensure the successful preparation and dissemination of high-quality publications that align with the objectives and purpose of the request. They also help in project management, quality assurance, and accountability throughout the process.

The successful bidder will be expected to deliver within the following specified timelines:

- An initial draft of each assigned manuscript within [6] weeks of receiving the assignment.
- Final drafts ready for submission within [12] weeks of receiving feedback on the initial draft.
- Complete medical manuscripts in line with journal standards.
- Regular progress reports on a [fortnightly] basis.

7. The successful bidder(s) will be expected to:

7.1. Work to synthesise analysis outputs into concise, accurate evaluation reports allowing findings of the analysis to be communicated. The supplier must also be able to take existing reports and analysis along with

new research activity and help to develop an appropriate narrative for those findings for those academic outputs, define the structure and flow of reports, as well as maintaining consistency of approach.

7.2. Understand and synthesise complex medical information and data.

7.3. Write, edit and revise medical manuscripts in line with journal standards and reports for relevant websites on gov.uk.

7.4. Have excellent MS Office skills and skilled at Proofreading documents for grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

7.5. Ensure all content meets ethical guidelines, regulatory standards, and is compliant with laws around patient confidentiality and data protection.

7.6. Work collaboratively with our team of researchers, clinicians, and other stakeholders.

7.7. Provide guidance on submission process to relevant journals.

7.8. Support appropriate approvals and sign off processes for analysis and results.

7.9. Understand and comply with UKHSA's format for submitting publications to www.gov.uk

7.10 The successful bidder will be expected to deliver within specified timelines.

8. Our responsibilities

UKHSA staff will assist in all phases of project management, from defining scope, producing project plans and project delivery to time and quality standards, this will include but is not limited to:

- Building effective working relationships with suppliers
- Monitoring progress and offering guidance and support where needed
- Interacting with authors, senior stakeholders both within the relevant UKHSA team and the broader UKHSA organisation as well as NHS and other external organisations where necessary
- Supporting appropriate approvals and sign off processes for analysis and results

9. Evaluation Criteria:

PART ONE: TECHNICAL QUESTIONS (60%)

Q2.1 (12%) What experience and qualifications of the bidders and your team, can be evidenced in order to demonstrate how the requirements can be delivered?

Q2.2 (12%) Please provide evidence on the quality and relevance of prior published works.

Q2.3 (12%) How do you achieve cost-effectiveness of the proposed solution?

Q2.4 (12%) Please demonstrate your understanding of the project requirements and provide an example of previous work, similar to the themes mentioned in section 5.

Q2.5 (12%) Please confirm capacity and the maximum number of reports that can be conducted in a 3 month period.

PART TWO: PRICE (30%)

Overall cost for the delivery of the user requirements and your responses to the questions in your proposal and costings should include the following option:

Q3.1 Cost per report or day rate- if preferred

PART THREE: Social Value (10%)

Q4.1 (5%) Please describe what measures are in place to work towards a real living wage for your staff and supply chain.

Q4.2 (5%) Please describe the Social Value initiative that you propose to implement during the contract life cycle and how are these going to be measured and reported.

10. Tender Evaluation Methodology

Descriptor	Score
Completely fails to meet the standard. Response significantly deficient/ no response.	0 – not eligible for consideration
Significantly fails to meet the standard. Inadequate detail provided/ questions not answered/ answers not directly relevant to the question.	20 - Inadequate
Fails the standard in most aspects but meets some. Limited information. Inadequate/ only partially addresses the question	40 - Limited
Meets the standard in most aspects but fails in some areas. Acceptable level of detail, accuracy and relevance.	60 - Acceptable
Meets the standard required Comprehensive response in terms of detail and relevance to the question.	80 - Good
Exceeds the required standard. Response answers the question with precision and relevance. Includes improvement through innovation and/or added value	100 - Excellent

Timelines for the Competition

Launch of procurement - **13 January 2025**

Clarification period starts -13 January 2025

Clarification questions submission deadline – 23 January 2025

Deadline for publication of responses to Clarification questions – 24 January 2025

Bid Submission Deadline – 07 February 2025

Commencement of Evaluation Process – 10 February 2025

Proposed Award Date of Contract – by 24 February 2025

Expected execution (signature) date for Contract(s) – 03 March 2025

Expected commencement date for Contract – 10 March 2025