**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

**REFERENCE NO: 712431450**

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

**START DATE:** 2nd August 2024

**DATE RESPONSE REQUIRED:** 30th August 2024

Dear Potential Provider,

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

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

* Specialist wheelchairs (and a mechanism to provide these)
* Wheelchair loan pool management
* Wheelchair seating service
* Wheelchair technical assessments
* Repair and maintenance of wheelchairs
* Reporting and prescription service for technical assessments
* Training in manual and power wheelchair maintenance competencies and assessment of patients for wheelchairs and specialist seating
* Clinical cleaning of wheelchairs
* Maintenance of a database of wheelchairs, accessories and cushions
* Handover service to the NHS for wheelchair services upon military discharge of patients.

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 must be borne by the Supplier. The Authority will not contribute in any way to meeting production 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 Supplier Questionnaire, it will not affect any further participation in any possible future procurement for this capability.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

The current provision of these services consists of a hybrid approach whereby the duties outlined are split between the Authority and a contractor. This involves:

1. Both the Authority and contractor (where appropriate) undertaking technical assessments of patients to determine a suitable wheelchair.
2. The Authority undertaking loan pool/inventory and stock management of wheelchairs
3. Both the Authority and contractor providing necessary servicing/maintenance/repairs in relation to this wheelchair loan pool stock
4. The Contractor undertaking ordering of specialist wheelchairs and loan pool wheelchairs from a call-off contract awarded under the NHS SBS Wheelchair services framework
5. The Previous contractor, current contractor and the Authority providing Repair/maintenance and servicing of existing customer issued wheelchairs

Est numbers of wheelchairs ordered

Where done/where delivered

Repairs/servicing and maintenance - figures

**OUR AIMS – WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE**

The Authority is looking to understand whether one or more suppliers can deliver the following:

* Wheelchair technical assessments for wheelchairs, seating and accessories to be provided at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Center, other locations (NHS Hospital sites), at the patient’s location as required (patients are based throughout the UK) or in some instances via remote delivery utilising a Video Teleconferencing (VTC) system (approximately 25 assessments per annum).
* Provision of a complete report and prescription form within 5 working days of completed assessment as required for wheelchairs and pressure cushions and/or accessories.
* Provision of training for DMRC rehab support workshop technicians in manual and power wheelchair maintenance competencies (2 training sessions (1x non-powered chairs training and 1x powered chairs) per annum for 5 staff)
* Provision of training to Occupational Therapists at DMRC on assessment for wheelchairs and specialist seating as and when required (approx. 2 per annum - an introductory level and advanced level course)
* Existing wheelchair short-term loan pool patient provision on request (approximately 18 per annum).
* Clinical cleaning of short-term loan pool upon return (approximately 25 per annum).
* Inventory and management of short-term loan stock (approximately 65 wheelchairs and associated accessories).
* Provision of servicing, maintenance and repairs for short term loan stock as required (approximately 65 per annum).
* Maintenance of a database of wheelchairs, accessories and cushions for the short-term loan stock.
* A mechanism for providing specialist wheelchairs and the management of this mechanism and any associated support (appendix listing specialist wheelchairs accessories and parts listed in Appendix 1)
* Prescription and ordering of wheelchairs, accessories, seating and associated parts from the mechanism as required (appendix listing specialist wheelchairs accessories and parts listed in Appendix 1).
* Annual repair, maintenance and servicing of existing permanent customer issued wheelchairs (approximately 20 per annum)
* Provision of a handover service to the NHS for wheelchair services upon military discharge of patients (approximately 20 handovers per annum).

**WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR**

The Authority is looking for feedback[[1]](#footnote-1) as to:

1. Whether it would be possible (or not) to fully outsource **all** the outlined requirements.
2. If it is not possible to fulfil all the requirements of this RFI, what requirements can be fulfilled?
3. Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) costs for a fully outsourced service or if this is not possible, ROM costs for what can be provided.
4. An understanding of potential alternative future service delivery models that could help facilitate this requirement.

**OUR TIMETABLE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DATE** | **ACTIVITY** |
| 2nd August 2024 | Publication of the Request for Information |
| 2nd August 2024 | Clarification period starts |
| 16th August 2024 | Clarification period closes |
| 23rd August 2024 | Deadline for the publication of responses to RFI Clarification questions |
| 30th August 2024 | RFI Response Period Closure |
| 2nd September Onwards | Analysis of RFI responses |

**POTENTIAL PROVIDER QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS**

* Suppliers 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 [katie.boorer100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:katie.boorer100@mod.gov.uk) .
* To ensure that all Potential Providers have equal access to information regarding this Procurement, responses to questions raised by Suppliers will be published in a questions and answers document, which will be available as an attachment on Contracts Finder on 14th August.
* 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 us (as per the above email address) 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.

**Appendix 1**

**WHEELCHAIR MODELS/ACCESSORIES**

A list and quantity of wheelchairs ordered by the Authority over the last 3 years.

(Please note figures are based during pandemic and patient numbers were reduced)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Description** | **Numbers ordered over the last 3 years** |
| **Wheelchairs** | Breezy Rubix 2 | 6 |
| Breezy Basix 2 | 1 |
| Quickie Life F folding | 3 |
| Quickie Life Rigid |  |
| Quickie Neon2 Folding | 1 |
| Argon 2 Rigid wheelchair | 1 |
| Argon 2 Folding wheelchair |  |
| Quickie Xenon 2 SA Folding Wheelchair |  |
| Quickie Helium Rigid Wheelchair |  |
| Invacare Action 3Ng | 6 |
| Kuschall K-Series | 1 |
| TiLite 2GX Folding Wheelchair | 2 |
| Tilite ZRA 2 Titanium Rigid Wheelchair | 2 |
| Rhea Azalea | 1 |
| Quickie Salsa - M2 |  |
| Quickie Q500 | 4 |
| **Mobility Kits for Wheelchairs Smart Drives** | Alber E-Motion |  |
| E-Fix |  |
| **Pressure Cushions** | Ion | 1 |
| Union | 1 |
| Extreme Active | 2 |
| Jay Balance | 2 |
| Community 1 | 2 |
| Flotech | 1 |
| Stimulite | 4 |
| Mercury | 1 |
| Jay 2 | 1 |
| Roho | 1 |
| Roho hybrid elite |  |
| Jay Fluid | 3 |
| Jay Basic | 2 |
| Jay Visco | 2 |
| Classic | 1 |
| Matrix Back most expensive |  |
| Vicair | 2 |
| **Other** | Wheelchair Cleaning of short-term loan and sports wheelchairs stock and associated costs but excluding VAT | 24 p.a. |
| **Parts orders/ Accessories** | For wheelchairs and systems highlighted above e.g. off-road tyres, drink cup holders variation in arm rests | 43 |
| **Postural seating systems** |  | 5 |

1. Answers should be limited to a maximum of one side of A4 per question using font Ariel size 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)