

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ)  
for Research Teams to Conduct  
California Health Care Financing, Delivery, and Policy Research**

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
UNIVERSITYWIDE AIDS RESEARCH PROGRAM

Qualifications Receipt Due Date: **Wednesday, January 18, 2006**  
Anticipated Award Period: **March 1, 2006 –August 31, 2006**

The Universitywide AIDS Research Program (UARP) is sponsoring an open Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select investigative teams with expertise and capacity to conduct independent research related to an analysis of ‘severity of need’ issues under the federal government’s Principles for Reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act; and an analysis of post-exposure antiretroviral prophylaxis after non-occupational exposures, in order to enhance understanding of the needs and possible alternatives for the effective delivery of health care services to uninsured, underinsured and low-income HIV-infected populations in California. It is anticipated that a total of \$200,000 in UARP funding will be allocated under this RFQ.

This RFQ describes the areas of expertise and the information required from the responding investigative teams to be considered for selection to provide needed time-sensitive research. The purposes of the research to be sponsored are:

**Part A: Analysis of Severity of Need under the Ryan White Care Act (RWCA)**

- To examine and model the impact of ‘severity of need’ indices on funding for and provision of health and social services for persons with HIV/AIDS in California under the federal Ryan White Care Act (RWCA).
- To assist in identifying areas of greatest need for HIV/AIDS services within California.

It is anticipated that up to two research teams may be funded under this Part of the RFQ, with a possible funding level of up to \$200,000 in the current fiscal year.

**Part B: Analysis of Non-Occupational Post-Exposure Antiretroviral Prophylaxis (PEP):**

- To examine potential funding mechanisms to provide universal access for persons meeting treatment criteria for preventive treatment.
- To examine potential models for a statewide program to evaluate and monitor outcomes from non-occupational PEP, including utilization, efficacy, and potential impact on risk behaviors.

It is anticipated that up to one research team may be funded under this Part of the RFQ, with a possible funding level of up to \$75,000 in the current fiscal year.

Completed responses to this RFQ are due by **January 18, 2006**. **UARP has allocated a total of \$200,000 under this RFQ and intends to select two to three investigative teams sufficient to meet its research objectives.** It is anticipated that the funds available will be allocated to one or two of the above topic areas. In the event that additional funding is secured for this RFQ from other sources, UARP may select additional teams in either of the listed topic areas and/or may provide additional funding to the team(s) selected, in one or both topic areas. The exact scope and budgets of research work to be conducted will be negotiated with selected investigators pursuant to the Task Order Award process described below.

Selection of investigators and institutions to participate in this California Health Care Financing, Delivery and Policy research program will be based on available funds and an assessment of the prospective team's experience, demonstrated capabilities, and capacity to complete the research within the anticipated six month project period.

## **I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **Part A: Analysis of Severity of Need under the Ryan White Care Act (RWCA)**

The federal Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Relief Emergency (CARE) Act (RWCA) was first enacted in 1990. The Act is required to be reauthorized, a process of reviewing and amending the law, every five years. The authorization of the CARE Act expired on September 30, 2005. However, its programs will continue under current legislation until the Act is reauthorized. RWCA is the largest source of federal funding for a range of HIV care and medical support services; the focus of the CARE Act is to provide primary care, treatment and essential support services to low-income people living with HIV/AIDS. These services are provided through various funding mechanisms, including grants to cities and states, direct grants to health care providers, and targeted funds to support HIV prescription drugs, dental services, and other activities.

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the federal government has released Principles for Reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act. A major component of these principles is that CARE Act funding should serve the neediest first and that funding should be prioritized based upon objective indicators for severe need, taking into account factors such as HIV incidence and/or prevalence, poverty, and other resources available from local, state, other federal and private sources. HRSA has begun a process to develop a Severe Need Core Services Index (SNCSI) to take these factors into account in setting service funding levels and formula allocation among states and eligible metropolitan areas. It has been estimated that the Index will take several years to develop but could be ready for use in FY 2008 allocations (Source: NASTAD, *Care Act Reauthorization Watch*, Vol. 4, October 2005).

Part A of this RFQ is intended to seek applications to examine and model the impact that severity of need indices would have upon RWCA funding in California, as well as to help identify areas of greatest need within the State.

### **Part B: Non-Occupational Post-Exposure Antiretroviral Prophylaxis:**

Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) was first developed as a means to prevent HIV infections following accidental occupational exposures by health care workers. The treatment usually involves a regime of antiretroviral drugs, beginning within hours of the HIV exposure. Increasingly, PEP is being used to reduce HIV infections following non-occupational exposures in the general population.

In 2003, California enacted AB 879 (Health and Safety Code 121348, et. seq., Chapter 746, Koretz, Statutes of 2003), which instructed the California Department of Health Services to develop recommendations for the use of PEP for the prevention of HIV infection in the general population. A task force was appointed and convened in November 2003 to develop recommendations; these recommendations are contained in the Report, *“Offering HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) Following Non-Occupational Exposures: Recommendations for Health Care Providers in the State of California”*, released in June 2004.

The report is designed to provide guidance to health care providers managing potential non-occupational HIV exposures, and focuses primarily on scientific evidence of the efficacy of PEP; clinical criteria for offering PEP; and decisions regarding specific drug regimens and ancillary (i.e. support and counseling) services recommended to be provided in conjunction with non-occupational PEP. The report notes that, in order to fully implement the guidelines it outlines, significant resources

would be required to provide information to individuals about available resources, to educate health care providers in the expertise needed to provide PEP services, and to provide rapid access to appropriate treatment.

Part B of this RFQ is intended to seek applications to examine potential funding mechanisms (mix of private, public, self-pay) to provide universal access for persons meeting treatment criteria for preventive treatment and to analyze potential models for a statewide program to evaluate and monitor outcomes from non-occupational PEP, including utilization, efficacy, and potential impact on risk behaviors.

## II. THE UNIVERSITYWIDE AIDS RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Universitywide AIDS Research Program (UARP) was created by the state legislature in 1983 in recognition of the need for California to take action in response to the AIDS crisis. The UARP provides state funding for the support of California-specific AIDS-related research to be conducted at nonprofit research institutions throughout California.

*The mission of the UARP is to support excellent, timely, and innovative basic, clinical, social/behavioral, policy and epidemiological research on HIV/AIDS that is attentive to the needs of California, particularly emphasizing the needs of the diverse communities affected by the epidemic, and to support research that will accelerate progress towards prevention and a cure for AIDS.*

The program is designed to provide a flexible and rapid mechanism for meeting newly arising research issues of particular relevance to California. It is within this context and role as the agency charged with meeting the HIV/AIDS research challenges of the state that the UARP is sponsoring this specific research initiative.

## III. ELIGIBILITY

### Part A:

- Qualifications may be submitted by non-profit organizations such as universities, colleges, hospitals, laboratories, state and local government units, and community-based organizations in the State of California with an established research capacity.
- Qualifications submitted in response to Part A must identify a principal investigator and at least one co-principal investigator, and they must represent at **least two different areas** of expertise relevant to the research to be sponsored under Part A of this initiative.
- The principal investigator must qualify, at the time of submission of qualifications, for that status under the research institution's policies. The principal investigator must be prepared to commit **at least 5%** of effort to the sponsored research.

### Part B:

- Qualifications may be submitted by non-profit organizations such as universities, colleges, hospitals, laboratories, state and local government units, and community-based organizations in the State of California with an established research capacity.
- The principal investigator must qualify, at the time of submission of qualifications, for that status under the research institution's policies. The principal investigator must be prepared to commit **at least 10%** of effort to the sponsored research.

Principal Investigators may submit qualifications under any or all Parts of this RFQ, and are eligible for consideration for award under any Part. A research team choosing to submit under more than one Part of this RFQ must submit a separate application for each Part, using the appropriate forms attached to this RFQ, and each application will be evaluated separately using the criteria below.

#### **IV. RFQ SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

##### **Part A: Severity of Need Analysis**

###### **Areas of Expertise:**

The areas of expertise sought are listed below. A Principal Investigator must demonstrate and submit qualifications covering *at least two areas of expertise*:

1. HIV/AIDS health policy – modeling and analyses of the impact of governmental and program policy approaches to the delivery of HIV/AIDS health care.
2. Health services – evaluation of systems of HIV/AIDS health care and provider and patient behavior.
3. Health care financing and economics – modeling and analyses of cost effectiveness of alternate systems of HIV/AIDS health care financing and delivery.
4. HIV/AIDS public and governmental affairs – community-based experience in the development and implementation of HIV/AIDS public policy initiatives.
5. HIV/AIDS Epidemiology – analyses of HIV/AIDS surveillance and reporting systems.

##### **Part B: Post-exposure Prophylaxis Analysis**

###### **Areas of Expertise:**

The areas of expertise sought are listed below. A Principal Investigator must demonstrate and submit qualifications covering *at least one area of expertise*:

1. HIV/AIDS health policy – modeling and analyses of the impact of governmental and program policy approaches to the delivery of HIV/AIDS health care.
2. Health services – evaluation of systems of HIV/AIDS health care and provider and patient behavior.
3. Health care financing and economics – modeling and analyses of cost effectiveness of alternate systems of HIV/AIDS health care financing and delivery.
4. HIV/AIDS public and governmental affairs – community-based experience in the development and implementation of HIV/AIDS public policy initiatives.
5. HIV/AIDS Prevention – analysis and evaluation of interventions, policies and programs and their impact on individual and group behavior and risk.
6. Quality of HIV/AIDS clinical care – analyses of the clinical criteria and outcomes related to HIV/AIDS health care program design and delivery.

##### **Parts A and B:**

**Demonstrated Experience relevant to HIV/AIDS:** For both Parts, the UARP seeks research teams with demonstrated experience in the listed areas relevant to HIV/AIDS. This experience can be achieved as a team of

investigators at an individual organization or through association among various institutions to comprise a research team.

**Capacity:** In addition to the specific areas of expertise being solicited, research teams must demonstrate the existing capacity to complete the research during the anticipated six month project period by the following:

1. Currently existing personnel and material resources available to be committed to this effort.
2. Access to relevant databases to conduct the work and/or necessary data collection capacity.
3. Demonstrated capacity and record of working in collaboration with the State Office of AIDS, California Department of Health Services, California Health and Human Services Agency, the US Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and/or other public agencies in research involving publicly funded HIV/AIDS programs.

**Description of Task Order Award:** The research to be conducted will be funded through a task order award that contains a general scope of work, maximum award amount, and award termination date. Specific research tasks to be executed under the award and allocation of personnel effort to the specific research task will be negotiated prior to actual execution. This type of award permits rapid response to critical issues and obviates the need for separate RFP and selection processes for each research study and task. It is anticipated that two to three task order awards will be executed by March 1, 2006 and that all work under each award must be completed within six months of the effective date of the award. Investigators will be expected to seek and obtain all appropriate IRB approvals and other assurances and/or exemptions before beginning the research under the Task Order Award.

Research Teams selected for funding under this RFQ will be required to attend a meeting with UARP staff and Program Advisors to discuss the scope of work of the Task Order Awards, This meeting is currently scheduled to be held on Thursday, February 23, 2006 in San Francisco or Oakland, California. Research Teams will also be required to attend quarterly meetings of the UARP Health Care Financing and Policy Advisory Group and to participate in UARP sponsored dissemination efforts.

### **Evaluation Criteria:**

The UARP will convene a peer review panel or panels to evaluate qualification proposals based on the following criteria:

1. Experience of the investigative team with research and project types under the areas of expertise identified in the application in response to the RFQ. Specific experience with analyses of and access to relevant databases.
2. Availability of team members and the ability to commit personnel, time, and other resources to the project(s).
3. Demonstrated understanding of the scope of the research to be provided, including a description of potential research questions, research design and appropriate methodologies to address those questions, and identification of which types of work are to be performed by a subcontractor, if any.
4. Demonstrated understanding of applicable rules, regulations, policies, and other requirements associated with the applicable Programs to be studied and other pertinent state and federal programs.
5. Ability to meet UARP scheduling requirements and to complete the research within the stated timelines.
6. Past performance of the investigators, specific staff, and sub-awardees that demonstrate capability to successfully complete similar projects.
7. The extent to which the proposal is responsive to the intent of the RFQ.

## V. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

### Application Format, Deadline and Contact Person

Application forms for this RFQ may be accessed and downloaded from the UARP website at <http://uarp.ucop.edu>

Institutions and investigative teams interested in being considered must provide the requested information on the Application form.

**Applications are due in the UARP office not later than 5 p.m. PT on Wednesday, January 18, 2006:**

- An electronic version must be sent via e-mail to [susan.carter@ucop.edu](mailto:susan.carter@ucop.edu), no later than Wednesday, January 18, 2006 at 5:00 p.m. (Pacific Time)
- The electronic version shall be in a format readable by commonly available software. Examples include Adobe Acrobat, Microsoft Word, and WordPerfect.
- A signed hard copy original and 10 copies shall also be submitted and are due in the UARP offices no later than 5:00 p.m. PT on January 18, 2006. An application received after the deadline will be acceptable only if it carries, or if the applicant can provide upon request, a legible proof-of-mailing date assigned by the carrier and the proof of mailing date is not later than two days prior to the deadline date. Private postage marks are not acceptable.
- **Applications submitted only by email or submitted by fax will not be considered.**
- The statement of qualifications must be prepared in accordance with the instructions in the RFQ.
- Late, incomplete or unsigned qualifications will not be reviewed.
- The original, signature copy of the application should not be bound or stapled.
- **Send signed completed application to:**

The Universitywide AIDS Research Program  
Health Care Financing and Policy RFQ  
Attn: Susan Carter  
300 Lakeside Drive, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, California 94612  
(510) 987-9855

The Program Officer for the RFQ is Susan Carter, UARP, [Susan.Carter@ucop.edu](mailto:Susan.Carter@ucop.edu), (510) 987-0720.

All applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the UARP program officer before submitting an application with any questions regarding this RFQ or their application.