

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

THE (Tele Health Emotional) SUPPORT COALITION OF CALIFORNIA/  
California Warm Line Federation Membership

July 2024

## I. SUMMARY

The Mental Health Association of San Francisco (MHASF) is seeking applications from Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and nonprofit entities that are actively engaged in low-threshold mental health peer support services and the promotion of mental well-being within their communities. With the goal of helping to form a Warm Line Federation, Tele Health Emotional (THE) Support Coalition of California will provide support and development to establish and strengthen peer-run warm line programs across the State of California.

Initial members are not necessarily peer-run warm lines by definition—they are partners with services that should be in coalition because of where they fall on the continuum of care: upstream crisis prevention and emotional support services. This Request for Applications (RFA) ultimately aims to develop and expand low-threshold mental health peer support through funding a collaborative of telephonic, web chat, and text-based services throughout California. Allocation of initial and project-contingent funds with an average range of \$20,000- \$300,000 for staffing, operations, training, outreach and engagement, evaluation, and reporting will support the participation of each member organization as outlined in Project Scope (Section VIII C below).

## II. APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

### A. Guidelines

- i. All Applications must be submitted via this form. Submissions will be considered on a rolling basis; however, coalition work will begin August 2024.
- ii. Authority: The Application must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the Application.
- iii. Eligibility: Eligible organizations invited to submit Applications must meet the following criteria:
  1. Must be a registered non-profit or community-based organization in good standing in the State of California.
  2. Demonstrate experience providing mental health/emotional support services or demonstrated experience providing community-based peer-delivered services and a detailed plan for expanding to include mental health support services.

### B. Requirements (Applications must include):

- i. A [completed application form](#)
- ii. Completed [Member Self Assessment Part 1](#)
- iii. Proof of non-profit status.
- iv. Letters of support or partnership (optional).

## III. CONTRACT TERMS

MHASF will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by Executive Management of MHASF, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

#### **IV. PURPOSE, DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

**A. Goal:** To develop the largest and most inclusive phone, chat, and text-based mental health peer-support network in California's history.

#### **B. Purpose**

MHASF received funding from the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to extend our support to initiatives that are either looking to establish a mental health support phone line, expand current phone operations, seek training and technical assistance, or wish to join a coalition dedicated to sharing and implementing best practices in phone based mental health support services.

#### **C. Objectives**

To provide grant funding for initiatives in the following categories:

- i. California Warm Line Federation: Facilitating membership for organizations in a collaborative council aimed at sharing, developing, and implementing best practices in mental health support across the service network.
- ii. Training and Technical Assistance: Funding programs focused on professional development and training for staff and volunteers to ensure that they are equipped to provide peer-delivered mental health support and crisis intervention.

#### **V. RFA TIMELINE**

- A. RFA Release Date:** This RFA is released through the MHASF website, network, and through current partner relationships as of July 2, 2024.
- B. Informational Webinar:** MHASF will hold a webinar on Zoom on July 16<sup>th</sup> at 2pm PST to provide more information and background on the RFA and to answer any questions. Please RSVP via email [raina@mentalhealthsf.org](mailto:raina@mentalhealthsf.org)
- C. Questions for clarification or more information** must be submitted to [[raina@mentalhealthsf.org](mailto:raina@mentalhealthsf.org)] on or before July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
- D. Application Submission Deadline:** All Applications must be submitted via this form. Submissions will be considered on a rolling basis; however, coalition work will begin August 2024.
- E. Review Period:** Applications will be evaluated on a rolling basis. During this time, we may require interviews with MHASF's evaluation team. Applicants will be notified if this is requested.
- F. Notification of Award:** The first cohort of grant recipients will be selected by September 30, 2023 and all other candidates will be notified once selections have been made with further opportunities.

- G. Project Start Date: Deliverable date to be determined during consultations after the contract is awarded.

## VI. BUDGET

### A. Overview

This project is dedicated to the strategic funding of effective and impactful programs within the realm of mental health support services. This RFA ultimately aims to develop and expand low-threshold mental health peer support through funding a collaborative of telephonic, web chat, and text-based services throughout California. Allocation of initial and project-contingent funds with an average range of \$20,000-\$300,000 for staffing, operations, training, outreach and engagement, evaluation, and reporting will support the participation of each member organization.

### B. Use of Funds

Funds may be used for any costs associated with participation as a member organization, and may include the following:

- i. **Staffing:** Salaries and wages for personnel directly involved in the establishment and operation of the mental health support phone line or the delivery of training and technical assistance.
- ii. **Operations:** Costs associated with the day-to-day functioning of the phone line services, including telecommunications, technology, office supplies, and facility expenses.
- iii. **Training:** Expenses related to the development and implementation of training programs for staff and volunteers.
- iv. **Outreach and Engagement:** Materials and activities designed to promote the service to the community and engage potential users.
- v. **Evaluation and Reporting:** Costs associated with the monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of the program's effectiveness and outcomes.

### C. Acceptance Criteria

The following criteria will be used to determine acceptance:

- i. **Nonprofit Status:** Applicant must be a registered non-profit or community-based organization in good standing in the State of California.
- ii. **Demonstrated experience** or a detailed plan for providing phone or chat based mental health support services.
- iii. **Scope of Impact:** Applications that demonstrate a potential for a broad or significant impact may be favored.
- iv. **Organizational Capacity:** Organizations that display strong capacity and a history of successful program management may be eligible for larger awards to support ambitious projects.

- v. **Sustainability Plan:** Applications with a clear and viable plan for sustaining the program beyond the grant period may be favored.
- vi. **Collaboration:** Initiatives that involve collaboration with other agencies or that can leverage additional resources may receive additional consideration in the award determination.

#### **D. Funding Restrictions**

Grant funds may not be used for:

- i. Indirect costs exceeding 15% of the total award.
- ii. Lobbying activities or advocacy efforts not directly related to the proposed program.
- iii. Activities or services rendered before the grant award period begins.

#### **E. Reporting and Accountability**

Upon acceptance, reporting is outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

#### **F. Application Review and Award Notification**

Successful applicants will be provided with a MOU for review and signature and funds will be distributed according to a mutually agreed-upon schedule.

### **VII. BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION**

#### **A. Our Mission**

The mission of MHSF is to cultivate peer leadership, build community, and advance social justice in mental health.

#### **B. Our Work**

MHSF is one of the largest and most established consumer-run organizations in California. MHSF has provided leadership in mental health education, advocacy, research, and supports for the diverse communities of San Francisco and the Bay Area for 75 years. As an agency, MHSF promotes recovery and wellness while challenging the stigma associated with mental health conditions.

MHSF believes that all people are deserving of equity, safety, and dignity in their journey toward mental wellness and strives to support all participants, allies, members, and colleagues through individualized, strengths based, voluntary support.

- i. **EDUCATION:** Education is among the most effective ways to eliminate stigma. MHSF provides a variety of evidence-based training, technical assistance, and consulting services that promote wellness and recovery to the Bay Area and beyond.

- ii. **ADVOCACY:** Through public anti-stigma campaigns and advocacy efforts, MHASF seeks to give a voice to those struggling with mental health, facilitate open dialogues, and increase community knowledge about mental health, wellness, and recovery.
- iii. **RESEARCH:** MHASF explores new and effective ways to support people with mental health challenges that make a difference in their recovery.
- iv. **SUPPORTS:** MHASF offers a broad spectrum of peer support, including group, individual, phone, web and community-based interventions.

### **C. Peer-Run Organization**

MHASF is a peer-run community organization providing education, advocacy, research and supports focused on the recovery model. MHASF has focused intensively on peer support service over the last decade. MHASF provides individual peer support in person, via phone and internet, and in group settings with more than 111,000 peer interventions annually. Additionally, MHASF provides professional development training and support for peers in the mental health workforce and are dedicated to being a model workplace for peer staff at all levels of the organization. MHASF has invested heavily in cultural responsiveness, providing services in a variety of modes and languages, recruiting for a diverse and community-reflective staff, targeting outreach to underserved communities, providing ongoing cultural humility training, and conducting research and training on cultural communication and support for mental health distress in a variety of unique communities.

MHASF also engages the broader community through peer presentations from our Sharing Our Lives, Voices, and Experiences (SOLVE) Speakers Bureau and our Peer Support Services for Hoarding Disorder. Our Do Send A Card Program brings messages of hope and recovery to in-patients recovering from mental health crisis on Ward 7C at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital (ZSFGH). Cards are written by community members who have their own lived experience of mental health challenges and delivered to patients by SOLVE staff and Peer Educators, who engage with patients around stigma.

### **D. The California Peer Run Warm Line and CalHOPE Warm Line**

Launched in 2014, the California Peer-Run Warm Line (CAPRWL) is a free, accessible emotional support service. Available 24/7/365, CAPRWL offers support in English, Spanish, and over 240 other languages through translation. The service is operated by trained peer counselors who have experienced mental health challenges themselves, providing a unique level of understanding

and hope to those who reach out. Available to all Californians, CAPRWL offers culturally responsive and nonjudgmental support.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in 2020, MHASF collaborated with DHCS to establish and manage the CalHOPE Warm Line. Similar to CAPRWL, this peer-operated service provided SAMHSA/FEMA's Crisis Counseling Programming remotely 24/7/365, a first of its kind. After operating the CalHOPE Warm Line and California Peer Run Warm Line as two branches of MHASF's Warm Line program from 2020 to 2022, the services merged internally at the beginning of the 2022-23 fiscal year (July 2022 – June 2023).

Accessing support and human connection through the California Peer-Run Warm Line can help people avoid reaching a crisis point in the future. The Warm Line is a crucial resource for many Californians, helping them maintain wellness while facing the challenges of daily life.

## **VIII. PROJECT SCOPE**

- A.** Expansion of Phone Operations for existing peer run warmline: Supporting existing operations that require additional resources to enhance their reach and impact, including extended hours, multilingual services, and increased call capacity, rollover of calls.
- B.** Training and Technical Assistance: Funding programs focused on professional development and training for staff and volunteers to ensure that they are equipped to support the best practices in peer-based mental health support and voluntary crisis intervention.
- C.** THE Support Network Membership: Participating in a collaborative coalition aimed at sharing, developing, and implementing best practices in mental health support across the service network:
  - i. Participate in monthly Member Meetings.
  - ii. Participate in surveys regarding policies, procedures, staffing and values.
  - iii. Provide MHASF with aggregate consumer or caller/text/chat data including demographic information when available.
  - iv. Assist in Warm Line Federation grant applicant recruitment, partnership support, and grant review if applicable.

## **IX. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Forms will be reviewed on a rolling basis. This is a noncompetitive application process based on eligibility and agreement.