

Kenai Peninsula Borough

Project Reach*

How many Alaskans will be served by the project?

10,000-24,999

Populations Served*

What populations will be served by your project? Select all that apply.

Alaska Native peoples
 Alaskans with behavioral health and substance use disorders
 Alaskans with complex care needs
 Alaskans with or at risk of chronic disease
 Children and youth
 Elders and older Alaskans
 Pregnant and postpartum women
 Rural Alaskans

Serving Rural Alaskans*

Please describe how your project will improve access, quality, or sustainability of health care for rural, remote or frontier communities.

South Peninsula Hospital is changing at a lightening pace to keep up with the evolving needs of the community. Our service area is the fastest growing and oldest in the state, which means South Peninsula Hospital is constantly growing and changing to meet that need. In one short period of time we added an orthopedic surgeon and dermatologist, opened a walk in clinic and welcomed two new hospitalists. We always are changing to meet the community's needs, but that means patients have to keep learning what we have available, and where and when it is available. The more information a patient has about the type and levels of care offered locally, the higher the chances that they, or someone they love, will seek care. Having real time information in front of people while they are interacting with South Peninsula Hospital is the most valuable source of truth. In a small town where "gossip", "social media" and "urban legends" tend to drive one's knowledge about local resources, it would be refreshing to offer these reliable resources. A useful, reliable resource would help connect and build trust, and social media is not trustworthy.

Project Overview

Project Concept Opportunity*

Briefly describe the problem or opportunity you want to address with this project.

Since Covid, communication channels are unpredictable and chaotic. Once-reliable local media cannot now be trusted for content, reliability or even availability. Staffing shortages cause local radio to replay news programs that are weeks old; and the local newspaper is so short staffed it closed its Homer office and the remaining reporter works from home.

Additionally, the clinical experience changed. Waiting rooms removed paper and magazines, patients get roomed faster to avoid crowded waiting rooms, shifting long waits to sitting alone in an exam room. Patients are sent to the “patient portal” to do business, which eliminates conversation.

SPH runs an active social media page, and publishes a monthly e-newsletter, but engagement with these tools is spotty. Printed materials are expensive and quickly outdate.

The hospital’s growth has expanded our services into 13 buildings spread across the entire town. A patient might “interact” with SPH only at the functional medicine clinic, a small converted home approximately four blocks from the hospital, or at the outpatient rehab center, two miles from the hospital. The digital displays are critical in keeping patients and staff connected with the entire healthcare system, no matter what door they walk through or what waiting room they’re in.

Whether waiting for a loved one, to be called in, or for results – the wait time is when we can both help a patient pass the time, and inform them about information related to their care.

Project Concept Approach*

Please describe your proposed approach to the above problem or opportunity.

Hospitals have always known the power of the screen – thus every hospital inpatient room has a television in it. The screen is just as powerful beyond the inpatient room.

South Peninsula Hospital will purchase digital displays and mount on walls in waiting rooms and even in exam rooms that tend to have longer sit and wait times. We will use these monitors to display information about local providers and services, health tips, pertinent helpful information related to one’s care, engagement with the hospital “owner” (non profit entity), encourage patient satisfaction surveys to be completed and more. SPH supports a very robust health education program for the community which could easily be replicate on the screen.

The majority of our outpatient clinic waiting rooms have recently been remodeled; so all waiting rooms have electrical power, wireless connection and a fresh coat of paint. The IT Department has already verified that our wireless network is robust enough to support this program.

Monitors of varying sizes would have to be purchased and installed. Larger for bigger waiting rooms, smaller for key exam rooms. The hospital’s IT and maintenance departments are prepared to support the decision making, purchasing and installation.

Numerous subscription software programs are available for this type of digital healthcare communication that come with canned programming, however none of them are Alaska lifestyle-friendly. SPH would purchase a bare bones version and handle content development on our own from the marketing department and health & wellness department. From board meeting announcements and even job recruitment, to welcoming a new specialist or explaining how to use the new patient portal, these digital screens will carry the power to connect, educate and inform.

Project Concept Preliminary Outcomes*

What change would you expect to see if this project is successful and on what timescale?

The change could be significant. Patients could learn to rely and look for the information during their visits. If only one person was able to learn of a local specialist that a family member needed, it could make the difference on getting care or not. People on the southern peninsula will choose to delay care if they think they have to drive 220 miles to Anchorage for a procedure. The digital display might inform them of the procedure being offered locally, which could mean improved health for them. We still have homesteaders here who picture the hospital as it was 20 or 30 years ago. There have been many new services and technologies added, but it’s hard to wipe away old assumptions.

Patients could learn about the free health and wellness offerings, and maybe attend. We learned during covid pandemic that loneliness was at epidemic proportions; the hospitals wellness programs are not just physical

but social wellness offerings. From free indoor walking to Wellness Wednesdays soup & yoga, a patient might find a new friend and improve their overall mental well being.

Project Concept Sustainability*

How will the change initiated by this project persist after the project ends?

Today's digital monitors have ten year lives, so the equipment itself is quite sustainable. As far as the offering, the more you learn from the displays the more you will trust it, and share the information. And the more it will become part of the visit experience. Re capacity - The marketing department already gathers this information and these messages for website, Facebook, board meetings, monthly newsletter, etc; so this is not more labor, just an additional outlet to display established messages.

Project Concept Key Risks or Uncertainties*

What potential risks do you anticipate, and what is your plan to mitigate them?

The only risk would be related to technology or installation; the IT and Maintenance Departments have already agreed to manage display purchasing and installation. Content relevance and source of truth will be managed by Marketing Department.

Project Partnerships*

Do you have key partners identified for this project?

No, partners are not needed for this project.

Readiness & Scope Snapshot

Stage of Development*

Please assess the current stage of your proposed project. Your answer does not commit your LOI to a specific funding pathway but rather informs understanding of the project's development stage.

RHTP funding is available for all pathways.

Concept Formation: The project is taking shape, but key elements are still being developed. Scope, partners, budget and workplan details have not yet been established. Funding at this stage would support refining the project concept, early coordination, and building administrative readiness to prepare for a full project application.

Defined Approach: The project has a defined approach that aligns with RHTP goals. The scope and deliverables are partially defined, there is a general sense of the budget, partners have been identified, and roles are generally understood. Some administrative, staffing, and evaluation infrastructure capacity is in place. Early thought has been given to long-term sustainability and scalability. Funding at this stage supports critical planning efforts to strengthen and refine a detailed project workplan to prepare for implementation.

Ready to Launch: The project has a complete plan aligned with RHTP goals, with clear scope, objectives, budget, milestones, and deliverables. Partners are committed, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and staffing, resources, and infrastructure are in place. The approach is supported by data collection, evaluation, and

monitoring systems. Project sustainability is built into the design. Funding at this stage supports immediate execution of projects that advance rural health transformation goals.

Ready to Launch

RHTP Initiative Areas*

RHTP funding supports projects aligned with Alaska's six RHTP initiatives. Funded projects may work across more than one initiative. Based on your current project approach, select all that apply.

Healthy Beginnings
Health Care Access
Healthy Communities
Spark Technology & Innovation

RHTP Allowable Uses*

RHTP projects must align with and advance Alaska's goals and six RHTP initiatives and strengthen access, quality, coordination, and sustainability of health care, particularly in rural and remote communities. Federal law allows RHTP funds to be used for the activities listed below in support of these initiatives. Based on your current project concept, select all that may apply. (Note: for more information on the RHTP allowable uses, see the Alaska Department of Health RHTP webpage).

Appropriate care availability
Capital expenditures and infrastructure
IT advances
Prevention and chronic disease

Estimated Project Duration*

Based on your project concept, how long do you anticipate needing to complete the proposed work?

12 months

Project Duration*

Please explain if your project has multiple phases, dependencies, or other nuances to the project duration.

We anticipate that RFP, purchase, installation, and programming will take less than 12 months.

Estimated Funding Range for First Year of Funding*

While RHTP is a five-year initiative, funding will be awarded annually. For the project scope you outlined, what resources do you anticipate needing for this funding round's project period?

Under \$50,000

Future Funding Needs*

Please describe future funding needs for this project (beyond this project period). If you are unsure of future funding needs, please indicate that below. If you do not have funding needs beyond this project period, please write "N/A."

None

Potential Support Needs*

In addition to grant awards, RHTP will include opportunities for grantee learning and support. To gauge potential offerings, what potential support might you be interested in?

None at this time

Acknowledgements & Certifications

Acknowledgements & Certifications*

I understand that submission of this Registration & LOI does not guarantee funding and may result in an invitation to submit a Full Proposal, a request for refinement, or deferral to a future cycle.

I certify that:

- No funds received under this award will be used for lobbying activities.
- I will not attempt to influence government officials on decisions related to this award or other legislative or administrative matters using awarded funds.
- Awarded funds will not be used for religious proselytizing or activities intended to promote or discourage adherence to a particular religious faith.

Yes

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