

Project Service Area*

Above, you shared the service area(s) of your organization. Below, please indicate the borough(s) and/or census area(s) where your project will offer services. Check all that apply.

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 complex care needs
 Alaskans with or at risk of chronic disease
 Elders and older Alaskans
 Health care workforce
 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 (SPH) is owned by the Kenai Peninsula Borough and operated by South Peninsula Hospital, Inc., a locally governed 501(c)(3), and one of only three independent Critical Access Hospitals remaining in Alaska. SPH serves a population of 15,000 in 16 communities spread across hundreds of square miles. Our region's population is aging, which means that the demand for healthcare is growing. This includes the demand for long-term skilled nursing care so that our elders can age close to home. SPH offers the only skilled nursing facility in the region, a 28-bed nursing home within hospital walls that earned a Silver Award from the American Health Care Association and the National Center for Assisted Living in 2025.

The RHTP offers a generational opportunity SPH to invest in needed infrastructure to support rural elders. SPH's Long Term Care Department (LTC) is a home-like setting for aging individuals who require assistance with activities of daily living. LTC offerings include restorative aide services, dementia care, mental health services, and skilled nursing care. LTC maintains close connections with the community. Three-quarters of LTC residents are dual eligible Medicaid/Medicare. The bulk of the remainder qualify for VA benefits. Demand for LTC services has exploded: over the last three years, the LTC patient census has more than doubled.

This project will purchase and install a patient lift system for each of the 17 patient rooms in LTC to meet the following goals:

1. Improve access to long-term care: SPH must proactively invest in its LTC facilities in order to ensure it can continue to provide care to elders long into the future. This lift system will enable LTC to care for heavy-assist residents, so it won't have to turn them away for placement elsewhere far from home and family. This infrastructure upgrade supports the continuum of care across the lifespan in our rural communities.

2. Enhance quality of care: The new lift system will make care safer for residents, reducing the risks of falls and injury; improving dignity and standardization of care, and maintaining mobility for elders who are frail or have limited mobility.
3. Support workforce sustainability: Patient lift systems reduce work-related injuries for staff as well as lost work days, which are drivers of burnout and turnover for CNAs and nurses. These systems also help staff work at the top of their license and spend more time on resident care.

Project Overview

Project Concept Opportunity*

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

As in the state overall, the Kenai Peninsula population is rapidly aging. Between 2010 and 2020, the region's overall population grew by 6%, but the number of residents 65 years and older surged by a staggering 80%. The Kenai Peninsula now has a higher percentage of seniors than Alaska overall and the nation, and projections call for a continued growth in this population sector. By 2050, projections estimate that the state's population of 85-year-olds and older will increase 270%, and one-third of these individuals will suffer from Alzheimer's or related dementia.

Our aging population means that healthcare needs in our region are changing, growing, and becoming more complex. Long-term, skilled nursing care is essential to ensuring our elders can age safely close to home with dignity. SPH's Long Term Care Department is well-positioned to meet the expanding needs for skilled nursing care long into the future. A national-award-winning facility, LTC employs about 80 dedicated employees with a robust staffing mix of RNs, LPNs, and CNAs on every shift. LTC has worked hard to build a strong, sustainable workforce through in-house training, tuition assistance, cross-training and other opportunities, which keep LTC's nursing turnover rates consistently below state peers'. In addition, LTC's clinical outcomes (including for depression, falls, and skin disorders) are consistently higher than state and national averages. A strong leadership team is ready to make this project a success.

Project Concept Approach*

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

Our current lift system has reached the end of its life and has started to fail. On top of that, it does not adequately accommodate bariatric patients. Our goal is to position South Peninsula Hospital's Long Term Care facility to be able to serve our growing senior population long into the future. This goal demands proactive investment in infrastructure.

Many residents who enter LTC have limited or no mobility. LTC must be adaptable to increasing resident acuity and an aging population. And the facility must be able to serve bariatric patients who, without this lift system, would need to be referred out to other facilities far from home. This lift system will ensure that resident rooms remain functional over time and help LTC avoid costly retrofits long into the future. And it will reduce the risk of injury to staff.

SPH LTC is the only nursing home in the region. The 18,000 square foot facility has a day room, kitchen, library, therapy areas, and a private tub room. This facility ensures that elders can age close to home and supports residents in maintaining family and community ties. Family members are warmly welcomed into the facility—many stay for meals and come for frequent visits. In addition, the LTC van delivers residents to local events such as movies and parades. In addition, family, friends, and community groups are welcomed in

for special events (e.g., Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Valentine’s Day dinners), live music performances, Halloween trick-or-treating, and other formal and informal gatherings that help residents maintain important family and social ties.

This project is a strategy to directly address a key finding of SPH’s most recent Community Health Needs Assessment, a collaboration with MAPP, the regional health improvement coalition: to enhance services and support for seniors. SPH LTC will decommission the existing lift system and purchase and install a new, higher capacity patient lift system in every bedroom in the facility. The equipment will include ceiling tracks, lift motors, slings and transfer accessories. Installation will carry out structural reinforcements as needed, staff training, and development of standardized safe-handling protocols. SPH will launch an RFP process, procure the lift system, and work with the vendor to install it. SPH will ensure that there is no disruption to patient care.

Project Concept Preliminary Outcomes*

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

We anticipate that this project will take eight months to complete. Within 12 months of implementation, SPH expects:

1. Low to no staff musculoskeletal injuries related to resident transfers
2. Low to no lost-time incidents and workers’ compensation claims
3. Decrease in an already low fall or transfer-related resident injury rate
4. Improved staff satisfaction and reduced turnover
5. Increased ability to admit and retain higher-acuity residents

Within 2–3 years, anticipated outcomes include:

1. Stabilized workforce and reduced overtime expenses
2. Improved quality metrics tied to fall prevention and resident safety
3. Greater operational sustainability of the long-term care facility
4. No residents transferred out of the community due to mobility limitations

The Long Term Care and Quality Departments will track progress on these metrics through Epic and RLDatix occurrence reporting systems, analyze data quarterly and adjust workflows as necessary.

For Medicaid and VA beneficiaries—who represent most residents—this means improved safety, dignity, and continuity of care. For the broader community, it ensures that aging adults on the southern Kenai Peninsula have reliable long-term care access locally.

Project Concept Sustainability*

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

By having a new, functioning, high-capacity lift system in place, LTC will be better able to provide local access to bariatric patients and individuals with limited mobility. Increasing LTC census by even one resident per year increases the annual revenue by \$671,000. Outside of the increased revenue, having a lift system also helps prevent workers comp claims from staff musculoskeletal injuries and can also help prevent patient falls. Lift systems have been shown to provide a 30-70% reduction in lifting injuries which not only result in worker’s comp medical claims, but also lost time from work resulting in overtime from other nursing staff. Lift systems can also help prevent morale decline and staff burnout which can lead to recruitment challenges.

Project Concept Key Risks or Uncertainties*

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

Any project in rural Alaska is vulnerable to supply chain issues, delivery delays, weather or natural disaster interruptions, and other challenges related to getting materials and expertise to remote locations. SPH is cognizant of the need to secure early procurement of long-lead equipment and supplies. To help mitigate risks, we will conduct needed pre-installation structural assessments and we will phase installation to avoid disruption to patient care. LTC will carry out comprehensive staff training and competency validation to ensure workforce capability and will carry out ongoing monitoring of utilization and safety metrics, which are reported to CMS. This project is RFP-ready.

Mitigation strategies include:

1. Early procurement planning and contingency budgeting
2. Pre-installation structural assessments
3. Phased installation to avoid disruption of resident care
4. Comprehensive staff training and competency validation
5. Ongoing monitoring of utilization and safety metrics

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.

Health Care Access
Strengthen Workforce

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
Prevention and chronic disease
Workforce

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 estimate this project to take 12 months or less.

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?

\$50,000-\$250,000

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."

N/A

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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