



Request for Proposals Drivers of Health

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), the Physicians Foundation is seeking five medical associations to develop capacity, resources, and data collection to support physicians in their understanding of Drivers of Health (DOH) and their integration of DOH into their medical practices, as part of their regular patient care. Proposals are expected to be implemented over a period of two years, with a funding limit of \$150,000.

Background/Overview

Physicians have long experienced the impact of DOH. They recognize that the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age have a major influence on patient healthⁱ and the cost of health care in America. DOH includes factors like food insecurity, housing instability, transportation problems, utilities difficulties, and interpersonal safety.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, these factors, such as access to healthy food, safe housing, and other DOH, [drove 80% of health outcomes](#).ⁱⁱ Now, patients, who are returning to physicians' offices and hospitals for routine visits, deferred elective procedures, prescription refills and more, are presenting with conditions made worse by lost jobs and the struggle to afford food, transportation, or rent.

Physicians know that improving health, reducing the total cost of care, and achieving health equity are only achievable by addressing DOH. Despite the well-documented impact of DOH on health outcomes and costs of care, our current health care system does not operate in a way that includes addressing them.

Therefore, to assess how DOH affect physicians and their patients, The Physicians Foundation determined to conduct the first part of its *2022 Survey of America's Physicians* on this topic.

Eight in 10 physicians (80%) believe that the United States cannot improve health outcomes or reduce health care costs without addressing DOH.ⁱⁱⁱ

The top five strategies physicians reported important to support them, and other physicians in addressing patients' DOH are:^{iv}

- Investing in community capacity to address patients' DOH
- Investing in the technological and human capacity to connect patients with community resources they need to be healthy
- Screening patients to identify social needs
- Significantly reducing existing payer reporting requirements and other administrative burdens to provide the necessary time to address DOH
- Creating financial incentives for physician-directed efforts to address DOH

That is why the Physicians Foundation launched [Let's Take 5 to Address Drivers of Health](#), a campaign to support physicians in addressing their patients' DOH, such as food security and transportation access. The Physicians Foundation also started a DOH grant program to support physicians to integrate DOH screening into their practices and build the capacity to improve patients' lives.

Purpose

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The overall purpose of this grant program is to spread awareness and knowledge around best strategies for physicians who care for patients with DOH. Medical associations have a keen sense of what is going on with physicians and their patients in their geographies and bring important knowledge that can customize DOH screening and resource navigation implementation with medical practices, including meeting the unique needs of small practices. Medical associations will also be asked to identify existing lists of community resources for physicians to use for referring their patients with DOH needs.

This RFP is meant to identify and provide financial support to medical associations: • who have the interest in and capacity to engage in activities of this grant program for two years, • whose state's/region's landscape is primed for or at a critical point related to addressing DOH, • who could recruit a group of willing and eager physicians to integrate or enhance DOH screenings and DOH-related resource navigation into their medical practices and provide feedback and data related to that DOH integration process.

In addition to recruiting a cohort of medical practices, grantees (non-profit medical association and/or foundations) will be asked to identify and compile a guide of existing resource lists of social service organizations whose work addresses one or more of the above listed factors, such as food insecurity (*See Background/ Overview section above*). As many communities and national organizations may already have clearinghouses for community resources - sometimes available through municipal offices or a nonprofit collaborative – associations should compile a list of existing databases of community resources. One such resource database has been developed by the [American Academy of Family Physicians](#).^v Also, The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology has recently released a report, entitled [Social Determinants of Health Information Tool Kit](#). Associations should feel free to use these tools or any other similar databases as the resource list it provides to practices to then share with patients who screen positive for one or more DOH.

Activities and Outcomes

The broad expectation is that the RFP will support on-the-ground initiatives that empower physicians to optimize integration of DOH into their practices in a way that enhances patient health and increases value. No standard DOH screening tool is required for participation in this grant program. The focus is on enhanced education for associations to help physicians with screening and resource connection -- addressing two of the above top five strategies physicians reported important to support them and other physicians in addressing patients' DOH. The expectation is that information gathered and learned over the course of the grant program can bolster each association's future policy efforts related to the other top strategies identified, including community capacity, administrative burden, and creating financial incentives.

Offered over the course of two years, grantees will have the opportunity to participate in Physician Foundation-sponsored virtual grantee cohort check-ins as well as educational sessions. Subject matter experts will provide an initial DOH-related educational session, open to all participants, followed by several grantee cohort gatherings. These subsequent gatherings will be an opportunity for facilitated check-ins among the medical societies' staff to provide peer support, share updates, and discuss successes and challenges. In addition, grantees will be encouraged to participate in a virtual community platform where DOH grantees, past and present, can share information and best practices on DOH implementation strategies.

Participating medical associations will also be asked to collect insights and monitor practices' progress throughout the grant period to help inform state and national policy efforts. Participating organizations

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will be provided support with the above-described activities through regular meetings with other grantees in the cohort to discuss challenges and share strategies and lessons learned.

Proposal Review and Timetable

A proposal should include a description of how your project addresses the purpose described in this RFP, a proposed plan and activities, a budget, and a brief bio-sketch of the key staff members. Requests should be for up to \$150,000 for a project period of two years.

RFP Release Date: Thursday, August 15, 2024

Proposals Due: Wednesday, September 18, 2024 Funding Decisions: Thursday, October 31, 2024

Project Start Date: Thursday, January 2, 2025

The Foundation will select five organizations to receive grant support under this RFP. Proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- **Field focused:** The organization is rooted in physician needs with a clear potential to advance the field and address key challenges around DOH screening and resource navigation.
- **Urgency:** The Foundation will favor projects that are timely given the practice environment in their geographies, and that will likely serve as a catalyst for future advances around supporting physicians with SDOH integration, including meeting the unique needs of small practices.
- **Strategic impact:** The Foundation will consider the state/region's current landscape as well as the medical association's commitment to further this work to ensure the grant support will provide the most significant impact from the practice level to the policy level.

The proposal should include details on some or all of the following factors if/when applicable:

- Past experience supporting physicians with implementing practice-level changes
- The association's current research, resources, and tools related to DOH
- The state's current environment around DOH on both the practice and policy level
- Organizational capacity to commit time and staff to support both a cohort of at least five practices (with a focus on the smaller practice community) and resource list compilation.

Payment and Reporting Schedule

Awarded grants will be provided a clear reporting and payment schedule, which will be as follows:

Timeframe	Event
Execution of grant agreement	40% of grant agreement disbursed
Six months into grant	First interim report due
One year into grant	Second interim report due. The second payment of 40% will be disbursed upon submitting a satisfactory interim narrative and financial report, and if the financial report shows that at least 75% of the initial

	funding has been spent.
Eighteen months into grant	Third interim report due
End of grant	Final report due. The final 20% of funds will be disbursed upon submitting a satisfactory final narrative and financial report. The financial report must indicate that all funds were spent on grant approved activities. Any funds not spent

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	according to the approved budget will not be disbursed and will need to be returned if spent from the first 80% of payments disbursed.
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Eligibility and How to Apply

To apply for a grant, register, and login to the Foundation’s [online application system](#). Proposals must be completed and submitted with all required responses and attachments to be considered for funding in this grant cycle. Please use the access code “DOH24” to access the application.

For this RFP, the Foundation is waiving its policy that limits an organization from having only one grant at a time. As such, organizations that have a current active grant with the Foundation are eligible to apply.

If you have questions regarding the application, please contact the Foundation’s Senior Program Officer, Rachel Rifkin, at 617-391-3076or rifkin@gmafoundations.com.

About The Physicians Foundation

The Physicians Foundation is a nonprofit seeking to advance the work of practicing physicians and help them facilitate the delivery of high-quality health care to patients. As the health care system in America continues to evolve, The Physicians Foundation is steadfast in its determination to strengthen the physician-patient relationship and assist physicians in sustaining their medical practices in today’s practice environment. It pursues its mission through a variety of activities, including grant-making, research, white papers, and policy studies. Since 2005, the Foundation has awarded numerous multi year grants totaling more than \$50 million. In addition, the Foundation focuses on the following core areas: physician leadership, physician wellness, physician practice trends, drivers of health, and the impact of health care reform on physicians and patients. For more information, visit www.physiciansfoundation.org.

ⁱ“Healthy People 2020: Social Determinants of Health,” Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>.

ⁱⁱVinita Magoon, DO, JD, MBA, MPH, CMQ, “Screening for Social Determinants of Health in Daily Practice,” *Family Practice*

Management (Mar/Apr 2022).

ⁱⁱⁱ The Physicians Foundation, *2022 Survey of America's Physicians, Part One of Three: Examining How the Social Drivers of Health Affect the Nation's Physicians and their Patients*, March 2022. <https://physiciansfoundation.org/physician-and-patient-surveys/the-physicians-foundation-2022-physician-survey-part-1/>

^{iv} The Physicians Foundation, *2022 Survey of America's Physicians, Part One of Three*, March 2022. "The EveryONE Project: Neighborhood Navigator," American Academy of Family Physicians, <https://www.aafp.org/family-physician/patient-care/the-everyone-project/neighborhood-navigator.html>

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