



Mental Health America of Greater Houston

Behavioral Health Navigation Services

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:

Empathetic AI-Powered Portal & Search Engine

RFP Timeline

RFP Issue Date: August 2, 2024

Questions Due Date: August 12, 2024

Proposal Due Date: August 30, 2024

Award Notification Date: End of September, 2024

Mental Health America of Greater Houston, Inc. is requesting proposals from qualified vendors to develop an Empathetic (emotion-recognition) AI-powered portal and search engine for its Behavioral Health Navigation Services program.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND ON MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA OF GREATER HOUSTON AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NAVIGATION SERVICES

Mental Health America (MHA) of Greater Houston is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1954 by philanthropist Ima Hogg. Our mission is to empower the community through mental health education, advocacy, and connection to care, and we envision a future where mental health is prioritized and every person lives a life of dignity, resilience, and hope. Our work provides education and training for the community; removes barriers to mental health care; advocates for legislative solutions; and links people to mental health services.

MHA of Greater Houston is working to implement Behavioral Health Navigation Services (BHNS), a multi-tiered service model that will promote early access, engagement, coordination, and optimization of treatment for individuals experiencing symptoms of mental health conditions. The program will target individuals in Harris and Fort Bend Counties and connect them to a full spectrum of services, ranging from preventive to crisis care. The ultimate goal is to increase individuals' and families' access to behavioral health services and supports to improve their overall health and wellbeing. Brief details on the four tiers are included below:

Tier 1 (Wellness Resources): An online repository of nutrition, exercise, stress management, etc. tips and resources that can help individuals progress in their wellness journey.

Tier 2 (Virtual Navigation): An intuitive, interactive, online portal that will harness the power of AI to virtually navigate people to services customized to meet their specific needs.

Tier 3 (Tele-navigation & Referral Helpline): A service to which people can connect via phone, text, or chat with a culturally and linguistically responsive specialist who can make community referrals and provide tips on how people can advocate for themselves and/or loved ones.

Tier 4 (Personal Navigation): A service that matches individuals with a trained, culturally and linguistically responsive navigator with lived experience who works with them to develop a goals-based care plan, connect them to needed resources, and remove barriers to care.

SECTION 2: SERVICE REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES

The goal of this Request for Proposal is to select a qualified vendor who will work with MHA of Greater Houston to develop and implement the Tier 2 Virtual Navigation component. The key deliverable is the design and development of an MHA-branded landing page and portal with a search engine that will help residents in Greater Houston find needed mental health and substance use services.

Specific deliverables for the portal include:

1. Warm, streamlined, and aesthetically pleasing landing page with search engine that incorporates Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) to ensure accessibility for people with a variety of sensory disabilities.
2. Integration of an Empathetic AI-powered virtual navigator/chatbot with visual (avatar), voice, and/or text-based capabilities that will guide help-seekers through a series of questions to determine the best provider matches. A real time response of 1 – 3 seconds is desired.
3. Real time translation of all content into help-seekers' language of choice.
4. Integration of the portal with an enterprise-level, customizable CRM/database with open API connectivity that will store client interactions with the virtual navigator/chatbot (including any client actions taken and any referrals made) plus information on 1,000+ mental health providers that will be matched with clients based upon their preferences.
5. Development of a profile page that will populate 50+ data points for each of the 1,000+ providers in the CRM/database.
6. Capability for help-seekers to call or send an e-mail directly from the page to their provider of choice, as well as the ability for help seekers to e-mail or text provider listings to themselves.
7. Option for clients to save their searches by creating a login account.

Furthermore, all technologies used for this project should:

- Be thoroughly tested and vetted for AI “hallucinations” and how they affect output to end users;
- Have multiple channels to programmers for creation and alteration of the project for ongoing needs;
- Have open APIs to interact with other applications via secure protocols;
- Be HIPAA-compliant; and
- Be Web-based.

With the rollout of this portal, MHA of Greater Houston is seeking to provide help-seekers with an online experience like no other. However, there may be some similarities between this project and sites like Psychology Today, BetterHelp, and Find Help.

SECTION 3: CONTENT OF PROPOSALS

The following items should be included in submitted proposals:

I. Table of Contents

II. Company Overview

Please describe your company, its history, an overview of your company's development of similar projects, and any relevant experience working with nonprofit organizations, developing sites that adhere to WCAG 2.2, and/or interfacing with empathetic AI solutions.

Please also include brief bios/resumes of the staff who are expected to work on this project and their relevant experience.

III. Project Plan

Please describe in detail the project plan for developing the portal and search engine, including but not limited to:

- A. How the company will develop the portal and search engine, including the design and development process for the seven portal deliverable requirements and incorporation of the five technology requirements.
- B. Ensuring the security of personal health information and the general privacy of individuals who share information through voice and/or chat.
- C. How the solution will be developed to integrate with other software and features that may be incorporated at a later date.
- D. The company's plan to conduct user research, if applicable, including whether it will be conducted utilizing in-house resources or via subcontract.
- E. A full project timeline, including design, development, user research, and "go live" date.
- F. A detailed cost proposal, including line-item details.

IV. References

Please provide contact information for a minimum of three external references that are familiar with the vendor's ability to provide the services as described in this RFP.

SECTION 4: ADMINISTRATIVE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

I. RFP Coordinator

Please submit responses via e-mail only to:

Andrea Usanga
Chief Strategy & Innovation Officer
Mental Health America of Greater Houston
ausanga@mhahouston.org

II. Response Format

Please submit responses in Microsoft or Adobe formats only (zipped or compressed files allowed).

III. Questions

All questions about the RFP should be submitted to Andrea Usanga at ausanga@mhahouston.org no later than Monday, August 12, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. CST.

IV. RFP Schedule

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Please note that MHA of Greater Houston may request additional information or schedule demos with vendors prior to the decision date.

V. Response Property of MHA of Greater Houston

All materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of Mental Health America of Greater Houston. MHA of Greater Houston reserves the right to use any of the ideas presented in any response to the RFP.

VI. Confidential Information

Any information contained in the response that is confidential must be clearly designated as such.