REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (Revised):
HB2691 NEW GRADUATE REGISTERED NURSE TRANSITION TO PRACTICE PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

Arizona is experiencing a severe nursing shortage that was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. While it is important to increase the numbers of new nurses in the pipeline, it is also important to retain new nurses in their roles. New graduate nurse turnover was high before the pandemic and only increased throughout the pandemic. A formal New Graduate Registered Nurse Transition to Practice Program (TTPP) provides another level of support for new nurses and has been shown to increase retention.

There are currently 550 nurse residency programs in the United States, including single-site programs—a few of which occur within singular health systems in Arizona. But there is nothing that promotes the overall retention of RNs statewide in Arizona.

In states such as Pennsylvania and Maryland, the support has consistently, and significantly improved retention rates compared to the national average. This program is intended to not only improve one-year retention, but also to effect changes in competence and confidence levels among recent nurse graduates by promoting independent practice and clarity in their role.

The Arizona New Graduate RN TTP program will focus on rural and underserved communities, particularly critical access, sole community, and safety net hospitals to ensure that the state’s most vulnerable populations receive access to high quality healthcare.

As of April 2023, and designated in A.R.S. § 36-1804, AHCCCS contracted with the Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA) as a consultant to assist with the administration and implementation of a licensed registered nurse transition to practice pilot program to support and develop new nurses, provide evidence-based professional development, and accelerate the novice nurse to a competent nurse more rapidly.

The Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA) is the association giving Arizona hospitals a voice to collectively build better healthcare and health for Arizonans. As the champion for healthcare leadership in Arizona, AzHHA and its member hospitals explore ideas and take collaborative action at the state capitol, in hospitals and at home to attain the best healthcare outcomes for our community. Above all else, we put people and patients first through Better Care, Better Health and Lower Costs. For more information about AzHHA please visit Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association (azhha.org).

The Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA) is seeking a national vendor for an evidence-based program curriculum that includes content to promote clinical decision-making, leadership, and professionalism in the novice nurse. The curriculum shall include or be augmented to contain emergency preparedness, quality of care, and health equity principles. The program must also have the ability for individual goal setting and will provide support that accelerates and improves the transition to practice for novice nurses over approximately a year.

The performance period begins upon contract execution (on or about July 1, 2023) and will terminate on June 30, 2025. The maximum budgeted funding for this project is $300,000 a year for two years. The projected budget is based on 100 new graduate RNs from facilities throughout Arizona, 100 preceptors, and 20 mentors per year.
PROJECT GOAL/SCOPE OF SERVICE

Contract with vendor must include:
1. Standardized educational design process
2. Recommended pathways and timeframes
3. Content integrity
4. Initial AzHHA staff training for use of software/platform, etc.
5. Technical Assistance as needed throughout the length of the program
6. Capability to monitor, track, evaluate and remediate mentors, preceptors, and newly licensed nurses
7. Preceptor/mentor resources and training
8. Adaptability and flexibility to integrate new process, structure and/or products (e.g., survey instruments) as deemed necessary by Program Director
9. Access to resources such as the American Nurses Association Scope and Standards of Practice
10. General and practice-setting specific curriculum (ICU, ED, LTC, Behavioral Health, etc.)
11. Compliance with Federal, State, and local laws pertaining to HIPPA and FERPA laws
12. Completion reports upon request (attendance, time of engagement in individual or group activities, evaluations, individualized feedback)
13. Virtual meeting capability
14. Discussion forum capability
15. Curriculum must include or have the ability to include topics such as:
   a) **Assessment**: Collects pertinent data and information relative to the healthcare consumer’s health or situation.
   b) **Diagnosis**: Analyzes assessment data to determine actual or potential diagnoses, problems, and issues.
   c) **Outcomes Identification**: Identifies expected outcomes for a plan individualized to the healthcare consumer or the situation.
   d) **Planning**: Develops a collaborative plan encompassing strategies to achieve expected outcomes.
   e) **Coordination of Care**: Coordinates care delivery.
   f) **Health Teaching and Promotion**: Employs strategies to teach and promote health and wellness.
   g) **Evaluation**: Evaluates progress toward attainment of goals and outcomes.
   h) **Ethics**: Integrates ethics in all aspects of practice.
   i) **Advocacy**: Demonstrates advocacy in all roles and settings.
   j) **Respectful and Equitable Practice**: Practices with cultural humility and inclusiveness.
   k) **Communication**: Communicates effectively in all areas of professional practice.
   l) **Collaboration**: Collaborates with the healthcare consumer and other key stakeholders.
   m) **Leadership**: Leads within the profession and practice setting.
   n) **Education**: Seeks knowledge and competence that reflects current nursing practice and promotes futuristic thinking.
   o) **Scholarly Inquiry**: Integrates scholarship, evidence and research findings into practice.
   p) **Quality of Practice**: Contributes to quality nursing practice.
   q) **Professional Practice Evaluation**: Evaluates one’s own and other’s nursing practice.
   r) **Resource Stewardship**: Utilizes appropriate resources to plan, provide, and sustain evidence-based nursing services that are safe, effective, financially responsible, and used judiciously.
   s) **Environmental Health**: Advances environmental health and safety.
   t) **Emergency Preparedness**: A continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action in an effort to ensure effective coordination during incident response.
u) **Quality of Care:** The degree to which health services for individuals and populations increase the likelihood of desired health outcomes.

v) **Health Equity Principles:** Focused and ongoing societal efforts to address historical and contemporary injustices; overcome economic, social, and other obstacles to best health and healthcare; and eliminate preventable health disparities.

w) **Professionalism:** A set of behaviors a learner exhibits that includes but is not limited to accountability, respect, integrity, ethics, and advocacy within the practice setting.

x) **Well-being:** Efforts that ultimately contribute to enhancing the ability of learners to remain engaged and healthy in the workplace, with their families, and in their communities.

y) **Time Management:** The process of organizing and planning work activities.

z) **Communication:** The verbal and non-verbal exchange of information between individuals that reflects cultural humility, professionalism, and respect and conveys caring, respect, active listening, authenticity, and trust.

aa) **Critical Thinking:** The skill of logic and reasoning applied to clinical or practice problems.

bb) **Ethics:** The provisions that address the nurse’s fundamental values and commitments, accountability and duties to self and others, and aspects of obligations at the professional and societal levels.

c) **Interdisciplinary Teamwork and Collaboration:** The concept of teaming recognizes the dynamic and fluid nature of the many individuals on the clinical care team that come together while providing patient care to achieve a common vision and goals. Teaming recognizes the benefits of purposeful interactions in which team members quickly identify and capitalize on their various professional strengths—coordinating care that is both safe and efficient. The team members collaborate and share accountability to achieve outstanding results.

d) **Social Determinants of Health:** The conditions of the environments in which “people live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.” These conditions include education, employment, health systems and services, housing, income and wealth, the physical environment, public safety, the social environment (including structures, institutions, and policies), and transportation at the population level. Social determinants of health (SDOH) are sometimes called social influences or social factors.

e) **Universal Relationship Skills:** Skills for collegiality, empathy, and moderating power distance and authority gradient that allow for better relationships and teamwork among caregivers and with patients/families.

ff) **Universal Reliability Skills:** Skills that reduce the incidence of human errors and mistakes and at least include (1) attention to detail, (2) clear communications, (3) questioning attitude, (4) peer checking and peer coaching, and (5) awareness and escalating when there is a safety concern.

### ESTIMATED SCHEDULE/ TIMELINE

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Re-release RFP</td>
<td>July 25, 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposals Due</td>
<td>August 2, 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vendor Selected</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
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<td>First Meeting with TTP Program Staff</td>
<td>TBD after vendor selected</td>
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<td>Contract to Begin</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td>Contract good through</td>
<td>Through June 30, 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Invoice Submitted</td>
<td>No Later than July 15, 2025</td>
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ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL and EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals should include and will be evaluated on:
1. The program curriculum’s educational design meets all criteria set forth in the project scope.
2. End user platform design; software ease of use.
3. Comprehensiveness of initial training and technical assistance plan for hospital and AzHHA staff
4. Platform or system capability to comprehensively monitor, track, evaluate, and remediate mentors, preceptors, and newly licensed nurses.
5. Available resources and training for:
   a. New graduate RNs
   b. Preceptors
   c. Mentors
6. Platform adaptability and flexibility to integrate new processes, structure, topics and/or products (e.g., survey instruments)
7. Availability of completion reports (attendance, time of engagement in individual or group activities, evaluations, individualized feedback)
8. Virtual meeting capability
9. Discussion forum capability
10. General and practice-setting specific topics included in the curriculum
11. Cost per year: (is proposal within or under budget)
12. Whether vendor’s business is certified as woman-owned and/or a socially or economically disadvantaged small business and/or represents a labor surplus area

Scoring shall occur on a scale of one (1) to five (5) with the following ascribed connotations.

1 = Does not meet criterion at all.
2 = Somewhat meets criterion.
3 = Satisfactorily meets criterion.
4 = More than satisfactorily meets criterion.
5 = Exceeds expectations in meeting criterion.

The highest-scoring proposal shall be awarded the contract unless the bidder has been excluded from conducting business with federal funds, as referenced in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

POINT OF CONTACT
Please submit your proposal to Vicki Buchda, Vice President of Care Improvement, at Careimprovement@azhha.org no later than 5 p.m. on Aug. 2, 2023. Questions may be directed to Vicki Buchda via email at vbuchda@azhha.org.