Questions and Responses for
Vermont Health Care Uniform Reporting and Evaluation System (VHCURES) 3.0
Request for Proposals

1. What is the estimated cost of the VHCURES project?
   The current annual operating budget is $850,000.

2. Has the Department allocated funding for the VHCURES yet? If so, through which source (budget, CIP, state/federal grant, etc.)? If no funding is secured, which sources will be sought and when? If utilizing a grant, would you be able to specify which one?
   Yes, funding is allocated approximately as follows: 40% billback to insurers, 40% global commitment fund, and 20% general fund.

3. If a subsequent RFP is released, has a time frame been established in which it may be issued?
   We do not anticipate a subsequent RFP to be released.

4. When does the Department want this solution to be implemented by?
   We anticipate implementation to begin mid-March 2019 with a go-live date of November 2019.

5. Which other systems will have to integrate or interface with the VHCURES system, and will the Department(s) provide incumbent vendors for each system?
   Currently there are no known systems with which to integrate.

6. Does the Department need to replace or upgrade any of the integrated systems in the next 5 years?
   Not applicable.

7. What system does the Department currently use for its VHCURES system?
   The VHCURES is a proprietary solution developed by the current vendor.

8. Who is the technical contact and/or project manager for the VHCURES system?
   For the RFP there is a single point of contact, Stephen Fazekas. The Green Mountain Care Board staff directory provides a list of staff.

9. Does the Department anticipate any professional or consulting services may be needed through separate procurements to accomplish this effort? (i.e. project planning/oversight, PM, QA, IV&V, staff augmentation, implementation services etc.)?
   No.

10. Functional requirements, Row #48: Can the GMCB confirm that the proposal should include a budget for monthly extracts?
    Yes, confirmed.

11. Functional requirements, Row #48: Can the GMCB confirm which value-adds (e.g., as listed in Row #64 and its sub-rows) that the GMCB wishes to be included in the monthly extracts?
    GMCB is interested in how value-adds will be addressed in the solution, which may or may not be included in a monthly extract.

12. Functional requirements, Row #53 (three parts):
    a. Can the GMCB provide more detail regarding requirements and examples of use cases? Is the GMCB looking for a self-service Business Intelligence tool, implying that its authorized users can build reports from scratch from a data source made available to them and/or is the GMCB looking for pre-built reports with filters to refine results by end users?
    b. Can the GMCB provide an estimate of the number of expected users for each type of BI access and/or extract?
    c. Can the GMCB articulate the different types of users that may use the BI platform?
    a. GMCB is flexible and is interested in the potential solutions proposed by bidders.
    b. The number of users will vary depending on the sophistication of the tool. A highly accessible tool may have as many as 150 users.
    c. This will depend on the tool. Potential users range from the general public to technically-skilled analysts.

13. Functional requirements, Row #54 (three parts):
    a. Can the GMCB expand on this requirement to clarify to whom the described datasets/datamarts should be made available?
    b. Are they potentially distributed outside of the computing environment?
    c. Do they need to be made available to the solution mentioned in row #53?
    a. Datasets/datamarts will need to be made available to users with an approved Data Use Agreements.
    b. Yes.
    c. Not necessarily.

14. Functional requirements, Rows #59-#60: Can the GMCB confirm that it requires access to the submitted, raw data? If yes, does the GMCB envision a particular method of access?
    Submitted data should be available upon request but does not necessarily need to be distributed within the solution. GMCB appreciates the ability to reference submitted values. GMCB does not envision a particular method of access.

15. Functional requirements, Row #63: Can the GMCB clarify what tools are considered to be "mid-level" tools?
    An example of a "mid-level" tool might be a BI tool.

16. Functional requirements, Row #64 (and sub-rows): Can the GMCB clarify if these are qualifications and credentials or solution requirements? If requirements, please provide more specificity regarding scope.
    GMCB is interested in how potential solutions propose to address these use cases. GMCB is evaluating the ability of the solution to meet the Functional and Non-Functional Requirements.

17. Functional requirements, Row #67 (two parts):
    a. Can the GMCB clarify if you want the derived fields and grouping fields to be materialized/saved in a custom table in the database or calculated on the fly in memory (or both)?
    b. Could the GMCB provide examples of how you foresee this functioning?
    a. GMCB is interested hearing potential solutions that address either or both circumstances. GMCB is evaluating the ability of the solution to meet the Functional and Non-Functional Requirements.
    b. GMCB would like the flexibility to create customized grouping when necessary.

18. Functional requirements, Row #68: Can the GMCB please provide an example of a longitudinal analysis by subpopulation?
An example might be expenditures among populations living with chronic conditions.

19. Functional requirements, Row #69: Can the GMCB please provide more detail on what specifically is envisioned as "price transparency information"?
An example might be comparing the cost of services within and across provider/service locations.

20. Functional requirements, Row #70: Can the GMCB clarify if there are specific groupers of interest for analyzing episodes of care?
GMCB is interested in recommendations for groupers in the proposed solution.

21. Functional requirements, Row #73 (two parts):
    a. Can the GMCB provide clarifying detail regarding which HEDIS measures are desired?
    b. If not yet decided, could the GMCB provide a ballpark number of anticipated HEDIS measures to help with accurate budgeting?
    a. GMCB is interested in recommendations for HEDIS measures to include in proposed solution.
    b. There is no required, minimum, or maximum number of measures.

22. Functional requirements, Row #77: Can the GMCB clarify what level of mapping/GIS coding the State is looking for (e.g., does the GMCB simply want latitude/longitude for a submitted ZIP code or something more granular)?
GMCB is interested in recommendations for the appropriate level of coding in the proposed solution.

23. Functional requirements, Row #78: Can the GMCB provide more specifics on the types of reports that the State anticipates being generated as well as the anticipated number of reports and the frequency of refreshing the reports?
Please include an overview of your reporting capabilities in your proposal.

24. Functional requirements, Row #79 (two parts):
    a. Can the GMCB provide more specifics on the types and volume of data visualizations that the State is looking for?
    b. Who is the anticipated creator of these data visualizations -- the GMCB, the vendor, or both in collaboration?
    a. Please include an overview of your data visualization capabilities in your proposal. The volume of data visualizations will vary depending on the solution.
    b. This is intended to mean GMCB and other approved users.

25. Functional requirements, Row #83: Can the GMCB provide clarifying detail regarding the goal of creating an "enterprise-wide master person index" (e.g., is the goal of this task to enable the intake of the enterprise identifier and return or use it as the source of truth)?
The enterprise-wide master person index solution has not yet been implemented, however GMCB does not anticipate VHCURES being the source of truth.

26. General / Response Requirements: Are there any formatting requirements for the vendor response (e.g., font size, margin distances, etc.)?
If not specified in the RFP, there is no requirement.

27. "IT RFP VHCURES 3.pdf" question (p.5) (two parts):
    a. The stated submission requirements include one digitally searchable PDF file containing all components of the bid. Should a PDF version of the PowerPoint executive summary be included in the searchable PDF or should the PowerPoint remain a separate file and be excluded from the PDF? This same question applies to the required submission of an Excel file for the response to "RFP Attachment #1 Functional and Non-Functional Requirements.xlsx"; should this file be converted to PDF format and included in the single, searchable PDF file.
    b. Does the GMCB have a preference for the medium used to deliver the searchable PDF file (e.g., thumb drive, CD-ROM, etc.)?

    a. The body of the RFP response should be a searchable PDF.
    b. Supplemental submissions are to be in their native format.

28. "IT RFP VHCURES 3.pdf" question (p.7): Section 4.4.3 discusses the public opening of submitted bids. Can the GMCB confirm whether or not the public opening of bids will be made accessible to the public via conference call or webinar?
    There will be no webinars or conference calls set up for the bid opening.

29. "IT RFP VHCURES 3.pdf" question (p.20): Exhibit C includes a copy of the State of Vermont Bidder Response Form. This response form is separately supplied on the procurement site as a Word document titled "bidder response form 090718". The version in the PDF has a footer date of March 2017, while the Word document contains no footer. Can the GMCB confirm that the Word document is the authoritative version for supplying a response. Also, if any changes are made to the Response Form, will these changes be tracked and supplied as an update in either/both the PDF and/or Word versions of the Response Form?
    Yes, the Word document Bidder Response Form Exhibit C is the authoritative version for providing a response, and we do not anticipate any changes to this Form.

30. "IT RFP VHCURES 3.pdf" question (p.24): The Bidder Response Form, Part 2 ("Vendor Proposal/Solution," Question 1, states "Provide a description of the technology solution you are proposing." And Question 2 states, "Provide a description of the capabilities of the technology solution you are proposing." How much detail is GMCB anticipating in vendor responses? Are there particular topics that GMCB would like vendors to cover?
    GMCB expects the bidder to provide an overview, and to provide sufficient detail in supporting materials.

31. What is the expected transition period to move from existing vendor to new vendor and will existing vendor transfer historical data and reports
    We anticipate implementation to begin mid-March 2019 with a go-live date of November 2019. We anticipate that the existing vendor will transfer historical data to the new solution.

32. It seems historical data goes to 2007, will the current vendor transfer this historical data to the new vendor or would it be received from the original sources?
    We anticipate that the data will be transferred by the current vendor and not the original sources.

33. Your document refers to eligibility data, do you want eligibility data or enrollment data or both? There are distinct difference between the two.
    Both.

34. Can you provide names of commercial insurers and estimated annual enrollment for each? This will help to estimate the size of the data.
The GMCB website has a current enrollment trend report posted here.

35. If possible, would you like to include claims data for Medicare Parts A and B from a certified QE?
GMCB currently has a DUA agreement that allows us to receive Medicare data directly from CMS.

36. What frequency must the vendor submit extracts to GMCB, and must these extracts be in X12 format?
The vendor must submit extracts to GMCB quarterly at a minimum, and the format will depend on the vendor solution.

37. The 3.0 Requirements for Functional Requirements states that extracts are a minimum of monthly basis, but the pdf document states quarterly, please clarify.
Extracts should be delivered quarterly. GMCB is interested in functionality that allows monthly extracts, but this is not a requirement at this time.

38. Who approves users and manages their continued access, is it the data repository or the GMCB?
GMCB approves users. Access is managed between the authorized user and the vendor.

39. The RFP states that the combined data must be available for analysis by approved user. Do users access the data through our servers using our data analytics software or do we send extracts to approved users?
GMCB is interested in the affordability and utility of the solution for approved users.

40. If used at our servers, then do we monitor data security compliance, ie: cannot download or copy data.
Any solution would have to comply with state and federal data protection requirements.

41. The RFP states that the vendor must provide software support. Please clarify this statement as to specific software needs and support functions.
This requirement is limited to the software provided by the vendor solution.

42. What is the current software stack that would be taken over?
The current solution is proprietary.

43. What data enhancement services do you want/require: i.e.: episode grouping, code to text, admission event groups, risk assessment, condition flags, procedure flags?
Please reference the functional requirements in Attachment 1.

44. I do not see any requirements for reporting or analysis of data, such as needed for transparency reporting or quality and performance analysis, is this performed by others?
Please reference the functional requirements to illustrate how your solution would address reporting. Analysis of data is not a functional requirement under this RFP.

45. The RFP refers to "an annual and ongoing registration process with Vermont residents on their enrollment: What is the registration process with VT residents? What does this functional requirement mean? What is the purpose of this process? How is this currently done? Please provide much more information on this requirement.
All health insurers, third-party administrators, and pharmacy benefits managers with customers who are Vermont residents must register annually with the State of Vermont. If the agency serves fewer than 200 Vermont resident members registration is still required but reporting to VHCURES is not required. The current vendor uses a web-based portal to manage this function today.

46. A Master Person Index is critical. Will the current vendor be required to transfer the current MPI?
GMCB anticipates including a unique identifier in the existing data set that is transferred.

47. The RFP refers to a data masking requirement. Please identify the various data sets available to users, including those with full PHI and those with masked data, and define the different uses and users for each type of database.
State of Vermont Regulation H-2008-01 details the data sets available to users.

48. The RFP requires that PII is "de-identified", does this mean that PII is de-identified in all extracts, etc. At what point or location is de-identification required.
State of Vermont Regulation H-2008-01 details PII requirements.

49. What are the primary pain points with the current solution?
Please refer to the To Be Workflow diagram for an overview of what GMCB is interested in addressing with VHCURES 3.0.

50. What is the size (rows, storage) of the current database? How many data cubes in the analytic environment?
The current database is approximately two terabytes. The data are not stored in data cubes.

51. What is the current Hosting Service Provider? Is the current provider Cloud based, and will this be allowed for services and/or back up or are local servers required?
The current analytic environment is hosted through Amazon web services. The State does not allow processing, transmittal, storage, or transfer of State data outside the Continental United States.

52. Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this?
    (like, from India or Canada)
Yes, companies from outside USA can apply. We expect to receive bids in US Dollars. Please see section 12 of *Attachment C: Standard State Provisions For Contracts and Grants*, related to expectations for the hosting location of State data for limitations.

53. Whether we need to come over there for meetings?
In-person meetings are helpful, but not necessarily required.

54. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA?
 (like, from India or Canada)
Please see section 12 of *Attachment C: Standard State Provisions For Contracts and Grants*, related to expectations for the hosting location of State data for limitations.

55. Can we submit the proposals via email?
    Please refer to section 3.4 in the RFP for submission requirements, and section 4.5.5 for electronic bid acceptance information.

56. How much funding is available for VHCURES 3.0?
    The current annual operating budget is $850,000.

57. Will there be a transition period with the current vendor if a new one is selected?
    We anticipate implementation to begin mid-March 2019 with a go-live date of November 2019.

58. In attachment 1, Row 48, how many monthly, ad hoc and quarterly extracts are anticipated? Are these in standard or custom formats?
    Please include an overview of your reporting capabilities in your proposal.

59. How many users of each type are anticipated to make use of the solution in total and concurrently as outlined on row 53 of attachment 1?
    There are currently approximately 100 users of the VHCURES data set. We anticipate less than 30 concurrent users at this time, but this is subject to change.

60. How many users are anticipated to require access to the raw data in the secure database in total and concurrently as outlined on row 61 of attachment 1?
    There are currently approximately 100 users of the VHCURES data set. We anticipate less than 30 concurrent users at this time, but this is subject to change.

61. For the reports/analyses referenced in rows 64-79 of attachment 1, should the response describe how state and state-approved users would make use of the solution to produce these products or should it describe how the vendor will produce them? If it is anticipated that the vendor will produce products such as price transparency reports or websites, should this be included in the price information provided in the bidder response form?
    This is intended to reference user-created reports.

62. What is the state's policy for requesting resubmission of historical data?
    GMCB does not currently have a policy.

63. Are there any plans to archive historical data?
    GMCB would like to have historical data from 2007 in the new solution.

64. What role do state staff serve in the enforcement of submission requirements and compliance follow-up?
    Currently this function is managed by GMCB staff.

65. Is the purpose of the PowerPoint for Attachment 3 to use during final demonstrations?
    The PowerPoint is expected to serve as an executive summary overview and may be used during the demonstrations.

66. Are there page limits on any of the required responses?
    No. Please refer to section 3.4 in the RFP for submission requirements.

67. If a Function Cost, marked as C, is added to the Pricing Table, is there a specific Costing Type the line/row should be added to?
A bidder can add lines and/or costing type to any of the cost type sections.

68. The RFP states that the Original Proposal should be submitted, unbound. Can the original proposal be stapled, or is the state requesting a loose-leaf copy?
Binder clip or paper clip is preferred.

69. On page 3 of the RFP, it states: "Approved users also contract with vendors to provide additional analytical services." Can you provide more information about what these services are, and the potential impact of a change in vendors to the services being provided?
The new solution should provide data to existing vendors. GMCB is interested in how data will be made available and how the bidder plans to approach the transition.

70. Would it be possible to find out if there is an incumbent vendor?
Click here for information about the VHCURES history, including current vendor information.

71. What is the estimated budget for this project?
The current annual operating budget is $850,000.

72. Are there any sample data dictionaries or data sets available? We would like to see examples to see if our solution fits the needs of this proposal.
The current data dictionary can be found here: VHCURES Data Dictionary V4.17

73. Functional requirements, Row #50: Would the GMCB be open to other standards such as HITRUST?
The Vendor must contract with a third party to perform a SSAE 16 Type II security assessment to verify that all data is maintained in a secure environment.

74. In attachment 1, Row #90, the following text appears: "Data center facilities will be located in the continental United States. If the solution contains FTI or other sensitive data, FedRamp is required." Are the APCD data considered "sensitive data," triggering the FedRamp requirement?
Not applicable. VHCURES data is not classified as FTI.

75. Non-Functional: Hosting & General Security Services requirements, Row #99: Can the GMCB confirm whether HITRUST is acceptable to meet this requirement?
Hosting Service Provider will acknowledge that the State will be subject to audits by entities other than regulators. If the information required for such an audit is not contained in a SSAE 16 or ISAE 3402 report, the Hosting Service Provider will make reasonable efforts to provide the required information to the auditor.

76. Non-Functional: Hosting & General Security Services requirements, Row #103: Can the GMCB confirm whether HITRUST is acceptable to meet this requirement?
Hosting Service Provider(s) will regularly undergo third party auditor reviews of production deployments using the standards in the SSAE 16 and ISAE 3402. Effective June 15, 2011, the auditing standard for services organizations changed from the "SAS No. 70, Service Organizations" to (a) the International Standard on Assurance Engagements (ISAE) No. 3402, Assurance Reports on Controls at a Service Organization, which was issued in December 2009 by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board (IAASB), which is part of the International Federation of

Accountants (IFAC); and (b) the Statement on Standards for Attestation Engagements (SSAE) No. 16, Reporting on Controls at a Service Organization, which was issued by the Auditing Standards Board of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) in April 2010. ISAE 3402 and SSAE 16 require the completion of detailed testing of controls over a minimum of six months by an independent auditing body.

77. Non-Functional: Hosting & General Security Services requirements, Row #113: Can the GMCB confirm whether using VeriSign certificates is a requirement as opposed to other Certification Authorities (CAs)?
Other certificate issuing authorities can be used.

78. Non-Functional: Hosting & General Security Services requirements, Row #143: Can the GMCB confirm whether HITRUST is acceptable to meet this requirement?
Hosting Service Provider will provide to the State the SSAE 16 and ISAE 3402 reports.

79. Non-Functional: Hosting & General Security Services requirements, Row #170: Could the GMCB please describe why LDAP is a requirement?
The state has adopted this standard for an application protocol used for accessing and maintaining distributed directory information services.

80. Non-Functional: Hosting & General Security Services requirements, Row #176: Could the GMCB please further articulate this requirement?
Fraud detection functionality should be implemented inside the firewall of the hosting provider.

81. Non-Functional: Hosting & General Security Services requirements, Row #181: Could the GMCB please further articulate this requirement?
This requirement should read "federated" instead of "federal". If the state implements an identity and access management (IAM) system, the solution should be able to integrate with that IAM.

82. Non-Functional: Security General, Row #191: Could the GMCB please further articulate this requirement?
This requirement is not applicable.

83. Non-Functional: Security General, Row #192: Could the GMCB please further articulate this requirement?
If the solution includes web services, data must be encrypted in transit.

84. Non-Functional: Security General, Row #194: Could the GMCB please further articulate how it envisions using SSO?
The sign on solution to the VHCURES 3.0 system should include the ability to accept login credentials from other software applications to be defined.

85. Per the RFP, page 3, there would be approximately 70 data sources from commercial insurers, 1 data source representing Vermont Medicaid and 1 data source from Medicare. **QUESTION**: How many total lives are currently represented in VHCURES and should be expected by the selected vendor?
    A distinct count of unique member IDs as of December 2017: 510,258.

86. Under Section 3.3 of the RFP, bidders must submit any exceptions to any RFP requirements by the Q&A deadline of September 26, 2018. However, Part 9 of Exhibit C provides for bidders to detail any "objections or concerns". **QUESTION**: Please clarify the deadline by which bidders can submit exceptions, objections or concerns relative to any of the requirements, terms or conditions.
    The State will take into consideration the bidder's willingness to meet the State's terms and conditions, including any objections or concerns, as indicated on *Exhibit C: State of Vermont Bidder Response Form, Part 9: Terms and Conditions,* which is to be submitted in response to this RFP, due by October 24, 2018 – 2:00 PM (EST).

87. Section 3.4.1 requires (1) unbound original and (3) paper copies. The downloaded Excel document is unformatted. Once formatted, the Excel document requires legal sized paper to ensure reasonable readability for State evaluation of responses within this document. **QUESTION**: Does the State require that all printed documents be in the same letter size format? Or, if not, does the State have a preference on how the printed, letter sized documents should be presented with the printed, legal sized document.
    If not specified in the RFP, there is no requirement.

88. Exhibit C, Part 2, question 14.C - **QUESTION**: Please clarify/define "Master Data Management".
    Master Data Management is the entire process of data governance, processes, policies and standards applied to the data under stewardship in the proposed solution.

89. Exhibit C, Part 2, question 14.D - **QUESTION**: Please clarify/define "Enterprise Content Management software".
    Enterprise Content Management Software solutions assist in capturing, managing, storing and accessing vital information.

90. Exhibit C, Part 2, question 14.E - **QUESTION**: Please clarify/define "Case Management software".
    Case Management software allows collection, organization and tracking of all client or case information in one place.

91. Excel, row 14 - **QUESTION**: Please clarify the requirement "ongoing registration process with Vermont residents on their enrollment." The next sentence suggests the registration process is for payers in Vermont.
    All health insurers, third-party administrators, and pharmacy benefits managers with customers who are Vermont residents must register annually with the State of Vermont. If the agency serves fewer than 200 Vermont resident members registration is still required but reporting to VHCURES is not required. The current vendor uses a web-based portal to manage this function today.

92. Excel, row 69 - **QUESTION**: Please define "Price transparency information".
    An example might be comparing the cost of services within and across provider/service locations.

93. Excel, row 90 - **QUESTION**: Please define "other sensitive data", in addition to FTI, that would require FedRamp.
Not applicable. VHCURES data is not classified as FTI.

94. In the "Part 8: Pricing" of the Bidder Response Form, Item 4 states "Provide pricing for any Functional Requirements marked as 'C' (feature not available in the core solution, but can be provided with customization)." It is unclear if custom features marked as 'C' are included or not in the Item 1 Cost Table.
    a. Are custom features considered part of the vendor's proposed solution & price or are they considered optional add-on services?
    Yes, custom features should be considered part of the solution.
    b. Likewise, how will custom feature pricing be used in the RFP "Requirements Pricing" Evaluation Factor?
    The State will compare the total cost of bids.
    c. Will custom features be included or excluded from the price that goes into this scoring?
    Custom features will be included.
    d. Also, how will custom features play into the "Vendor Proposal/Solution" Evaluation Factor?
    The State will evaluate how the bidder's response will meet the State's needs. The method by which a requirement is fulfilled, or if the solution doesn't fulfill a particular requirement, will not necessarily disqualify bidders.
    e. Will custom features be included or excluded from the solution that is evaluated?
    GMCB is interested hearing potential solutions that include custom features.