



For Questions: contact Terri Foley, Program Officer at LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation 651-815-8137 tfoley@LeadingAgeMN.org

**CONNECTED COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTHY AGING GRANT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
(Released on October 7, 2020)**

LeadingAge MN Foundation (LAMF) will provide grant funds for two Connected Communities for Healthy Aging pilots in rural Minnesota. Connected Community pilots will create community-specific, aligned partnerships of local healthcare systems, health plans, senior care providers, community resources and community stakeholders to sustainably integrate and coordinate a comprehensive fabric of health care and support services for community seniors.

The collective goal of this bold approach is to improve quality of life by supporting seniors in staying well, independent, and living in their homes for as long as possible. As designated by the grant funder, this RFP is only open to rural LeadingAge Minnesota members in communities outside of the seven-county* Twin Cities metropolitan area regardless of population. (*Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Washington)

Applications must be submitted via the online [grant system](#) prior to 5:00 pm on Wednesday, November 30, 2020.

A Responders' Call will be held on October 21 from 10:30 – 11:30. Click here to [register](#).

Project Aim and Desired Outcomes:

The overall aim of a Connected Community pilot is to create a collaborative and cross-sector system of care and support services that meets the physical, emotional, and social needs of seniors. A key feature of the pilot is to design a shared, comprehensive, community model of care and support services that effectively provides resources and supports at the earliest stage possible.

Each community model will be locally created and implemented through convening, collaboration, engagement, and commitment of cross-sector partners including local providers, older adult community members, home and community services, workforce partners and others. UCare will be working with LAMF and Connected Community pilots as the Medicare Advantage payer partner in this project.

Unlike other integrated care models, Connected Communities will be more community-centric—rather than health systems-centric— and recognize the key role of senior services in connecting resources and supporting aging in community. The grant applicant must be a rural LeadingAge Minnesota member with a continuum of services such as skilled nursing, assisted living, and home care.

Whole Person-Whole System Approach:

A successful Connected Community pilot will produce the following benefits:

- Assessment of local strengths and gaps in meeting seniors' health and wellness needs through healthcare, social services, and other community organizations.
- Meeting identified needs through a locally designed community-wide approach and model of healthcare and support services for seniors aging in community.
- Testing elements of the Connected Communities model through a cohort of seniors enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan with the goals of overall increase in quality, reduction of costs, alignment of a continuum of providers around seniors' needs, and a sustainable (value-based) funding stream for Medicare services/providers.
- Access to and navigation support for seniors across community-based resources and services related to healthy aging.
- Real-time exchange of health information between all participants in the Medicare Advantage program and, if possible, the broader community-wide model of care.
- Positive outcomes for seniors such as:
 - Greater awareness, access to, and use of community-based resources that support healthy aging.
 - Enhanced care and support for seniors that results in:
 - Increased use of preventive care services
 - Better controlled chronic diseases
 - Effective transitions from hospital to post-acute care to home
 - Increased referrals and use of home-based services to maintain independence.
 - Reduced hospital admissions and decreased emergency room use of seniors living in local assisted living, independent living, and skill nursing care sites.
- Greater alignment of financial incentives and shared responsibility for quality measures across the continuum of providers, including community-based, preventive, primary, acute, and long-term care services.
- Effective workforce development strategies to recruit and retain direct care and licensed staff in the pilot community.

Grant and Backbone Organization Responsibilities:

Grant awards will be up to \$800,000 over two years to fund a work plan that advances the project aims and desired outcomes such as coalition building, health information exchange, clinical pathways development, and direct care workforce development. Pilots will need to supplement this award amount if project needs exceed the grant amount. *As noted in the Letters of Intent for Project Partnership section of the grant application below, applicants should have key community partners recruited to participate in the project prior to application submission.*

Funding will be awarded to a Backbone Organization (applicant) that will serve in a convening, fiscal intermediary, project management, and grant reporting role in the Connected Community pilot. A Backbone Organization must be a LeadingAge Minnesota member and have experience in effective local partnerships with payers, health systems, and other community-based aging services providers. This project will require leadership team commitment, a dedicated project coordinator, and a sustainability plan for support beyond the grant period.

The principal responsibilities of the Backbone Organization include:

- Convene community partners;
- Manage the work plan to achieve all project outcomes;
- Serve as fiscal intermediary;
- Organize collaboration between local partners including model adoption; and
- Coordinate data gathering and outcomes reporting.

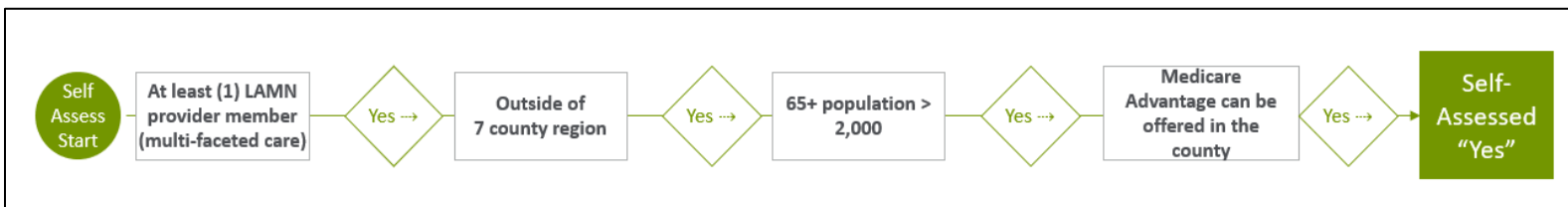
The first phase of the grant period will be to work with the LAMF Grant Team to develop a Connected Community work plan with the cross-sector partners. Specific use of the \$800,000 grant award will be locally defined after pilot selection; however, each grant should address and will ultimately need to develop a pilot project budget for the following elements:

- Project convening, coordination, facilitation, and reporting. Including training, education, travel, and meeting expenses
- Connected Community model design, network development, and adoption
- Participation and design of a Medicare Advantage risk plan offering in community (in partnership with a health plan partner and continuum providers)
- HIE/Data collection and analysis (Note: The LAMF Grant Team and two Community pilot teams will discuss technology platform options and potential shared services.)
- Community resource awareness and navigation expenses
- Expenses to support a workforce coalition to design and adopt workforce strategies to support the Connected Communities model

Community & Organizational Minimum Requirements

Using a team of Key Informants from healthcare, aging services, and related sectors, LAMF has determined that to be a successful pilot community, a Backbone Organization (applicant) must demonstrate that they meet the minimum requirements shown below. Please use this self-assessment tool to determine if you meet these criteria before you consider submitting a full application. Eligible pilot candidates will answer “Yes” to all of the questions below.

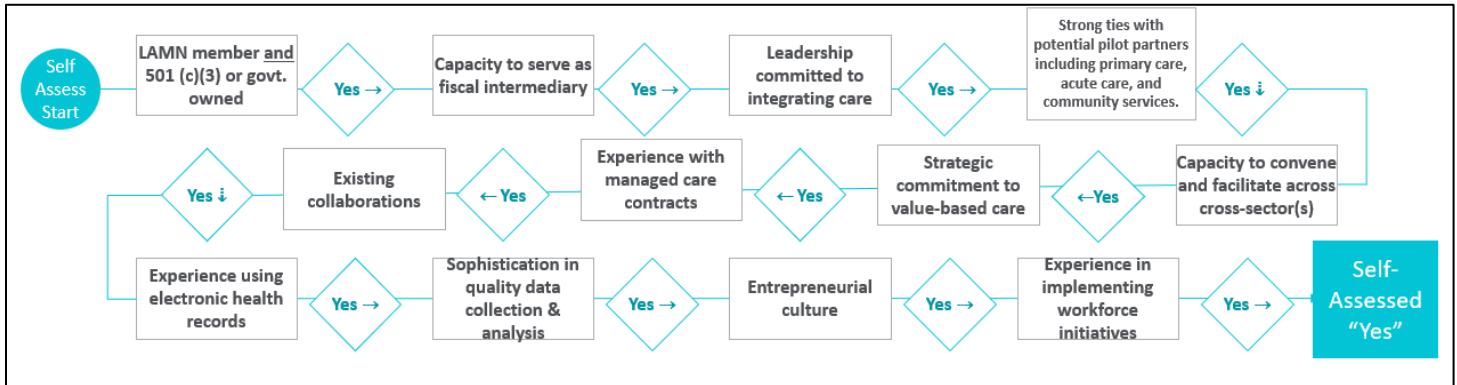
Requirements for applicant’s community or geographic pilot area



Here are two websites that may help you explore the Medicare Advantage penetration in your targeted geographic area:

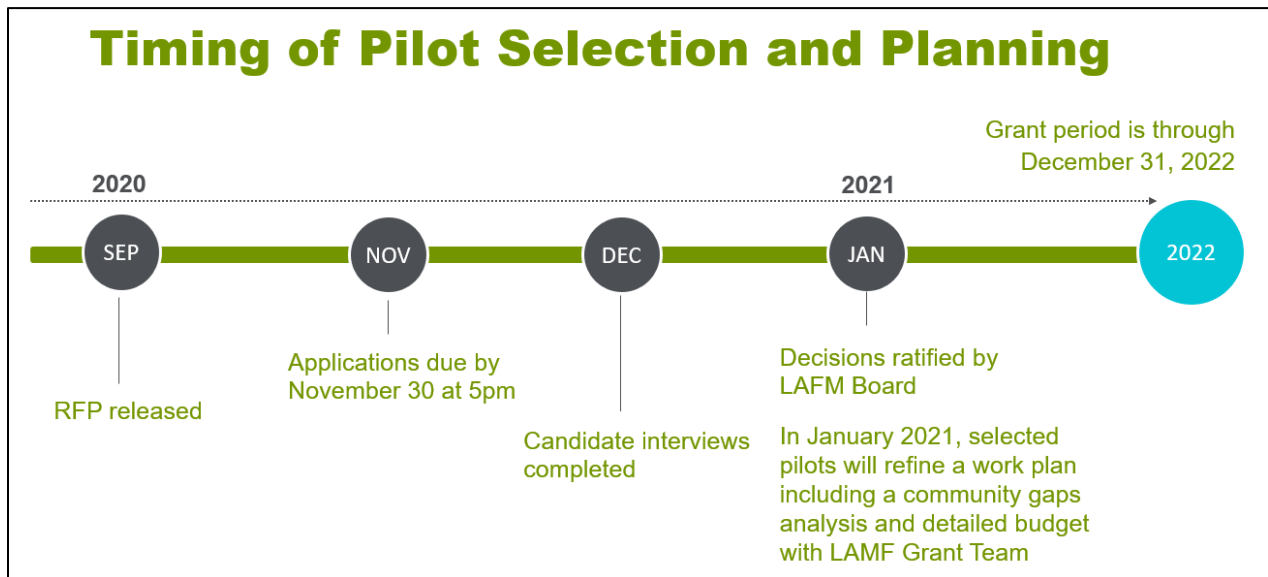
- [Medicare Advantage penetration by county from Kaiser Family Foundation](#): Go down to #3 and scroll to Minnesota. Then, hover over a county to get info
- [Medicare Advantage Enrollment by County by Plan](#): You can download the spreadsheet and scroll down the Minnesota counties.

Requirements for Backbone Organization



Pilot Application and Selection Process Details

The timeline below shows the components of the application and selection process. Unlike a typical grant application, consider your answers and proposal narrative like an organizational version of a cover letter and resume to make your case for your organization’s selection as one of the two pilots. Due to the complexity of the project planning phase, you will not be required to submit a detailed work plan in the application. If you are awarded, the Connected Communities grant team will work with you and your community coalition to develop a plan, detailed budget, and deliverables schedule.



Connected Communities Pilot Grant Application

The Connected Communities grant application contains the four sections described below. To preview the [questions, click here](#). Applications must be submitted through our online grant platform, [click here](#).

**Submission deadline via the online grant system is
5:00 pm on Wednesday, November 30, 2020.**

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