



New York State Insurance Fund
Procurement Unit

October 24, 2019

The following Q&A will serve as Amendment #2 to NYSIF's Request for Proposals (RFP) for Utilization Review, bid number 2019-59-INS. Material in this Amendment supersedes any contradictory material in the RFP. In addition to the Q&A the following changes to the RFP have been made:

1. RFP Section 2.2.1. (Technical Requirements) is hereby modified as follows:
 - a. Provide a description of Bidder's business, including: ownership, history, client overview, organization, number of employees, including number of physicians available for the provision of review services, business headquarters, and satellite locations. Include any client service promotional material. All work must be performed in the United States;
2. RFP Section 2.2.2. (Technical Requirements) is hereby modified as follows:
 - a. Describe your organization's experience providing review services, including a description of the level of experience of the physician reviewers employed by your organization;
3. RFP Section 2.4.1. (Operational and Staffing Requirements) is hereby modified as follows:
 - a. Establish and provide sufficient administrative facilities and staff, organizational policies and procedures, necessary information technology capacity and capabilities, and available qualified reviewers including; physicians;
4. RFP Section 2.6.2.d. (Case Information) is hereby modified as follows:
 - a. Enable research into patterns of reviews and requests for review and review outcomes, including but not limited to diagnoses, proposed treatments, prescribing physicians, utilization review physicians and organizations, review requests, and medical treatment guidelines relied upon by physicians.

Please note that the due date for the submission of bids **remains unchanged**.

All bids are due 11/1/19, by 2:00 p.m.(eastern).

Sincerely,

Alexandria Romano
Contract Management Specialist 2

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Question #	RFP Page #	RFP Section and Sub-Section Reference #/Heading	Question	NYSIF Response
1			We have begun preparation of our response to your RFP #2019-26-INS, Utilization Review. In the spring of this year the WCB issued a very similar RFP #C140387 Utilization Review. I cannot find an award for that RFP. Is this the same scope of work? Does this replace the older one?	The WCB RFP is not material to this RFP.
2	8	Section 1 General information 1.4 Purpose of This RFP	This section indicates that NYSIF is seeking proposals from qualified Independent Review Organizations (ISO). Will NYSIF accept proposals from a URAC Independent Review Organization and a Workers' Compensation Utilization Management (WCUM) accredited organization?	URAC accreditation is a mandatory requirement. WCUM is not a mandatory requirement.
3	16	2.5 Review Services	How do you measure turnaround times for both expedited and standard reviews? Is the day of receipt of prior authorization request considered Day 0 or Day 1?	Standard review is due within 4 calendar days of receipt per Amendment 1 - per the RFP expedited review is due within 24 hours of receipt of the request.
4	17	2.6.1. Tracking System	Can you specify the required workflow of the tracking requirement? Is the expectation that the vendor will document solely in the State's tracking system? Or, will we be able to track in our system all activities related to the utilization review with only specific pieces of the workflow documented in the State's system? We want to avoid duplicity of effort.	Unknown at this time.

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Question #	RFP Page #	RFP Section and Sub-Section Reference #/Heading	Question	NYSIF Response
5	22	2.13 Cost/Invoicing	Can you provide pricing or a range of pricing with the current incumbent per expedited review and standard review?	Not material to this RFP.
6	22	2.13 Cost/Invoicing	Can you provide annual volume estimates for prior authorizations?	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume.
7	RFP Page 18 and Amendment #1	Section 2.7.1.d. Reviewers	We are in receipt of the 9/30/19 Amendment #1 and desire clarification about the credentials required. In Utilization Review processes, the RN is always the first level review and will approve based on the guidelines. If unable to approve per the guidelines, the nurse will refer to the Physician Reviewer. The new minimum credentials will obviously increase the cost of this program to the State. Is this truly the intent of the State to require physicians only as Level 1 reviewers?	NYSIF is procuring physician review services for Level 2 review only.
8	8; 13	1.4; 2.1.4	Section 1.4 references desire of NYSIF to contract Independent Review Organizations to provide Independent Review Services. Section 2.1 subsection 4 requests, as a mandatory requirement, no COIs in "the performance of its utilization review of the services" for the contract. Will entities contracted for this RFP be performing IRO services as an Internal IRO for NYSIS, or will they be performing Utilization Review services (including Nurse reviews) as a URO for NYSIS?	NYSIF is procuring physician review services for Level 2 review only.

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9	8	1,1.4; Purpose of this RFP	Please indicate whether there is a current contractor performing these services for the NYSIF. If so, please identify the contractor.	Not material to this RFP.
10	8	1,1.4; Purpose of this RFP	Please provide an estimate of the annual volume of reviews. This is very important for estimating the appropriate number of trained staff, and for meeting the timeliness requirements.	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume.
11	16	2,2.5; Review Services	Does the 24 hour review timeframe for Expedited Review include weekends and holidays?	Yes, also see question 3.
12	16	2,2.5; Review Services	The three-levels of review provided in the middle of the page indicate that the Contractor will conduct Level II reviews. The second to last paragraph on that page indicates that the request for review will be accompanied by . . . Level I and Level II responses. Please clarify. If the contractor is conducting the Level II review, how can the request include the Level II response? Likewise on page 17, it is indicated that the reviewer shall review the Level II response.	NYSIF is procuring physician review services for Level 2 review only.

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Question #	RFP Page #	RFP Section and Sub-Section Reference #/Heading	Question	NYSIF Response
13	13	2.2.2	<p>2.2 Technical Requirements, #2 States: physician, nurse practitioner, registered nurse and bill review specialist reviewers employed by your organization.</p> <p>Does this mean that the organization must employ all of the above in order to respond to the RFP</p>	No, only physician reviews will be required.
14	15	Section 1 General Information/2.4 Operational and Staffing Requirements	Given that the reviews are formulary exception reviews, under what circumstances does the NYSIF anticipate the need for bill review specialists?	NYSIF is procuring physician review services for Level 2 review only.
15	16	Section 1 General Information/2.5 Review Services	Given that expedited reviews are to be conducted within 24 hours, does the NYSIF anticipate that reviews will be initiated and returned outside of ordinary business hours or in accordance with Exhibit C, 9, during normal business hours?	24 hours means 24 hours from the receipt of the request, regardless of ordinary business hours.
16	16	Section 1 General Information/2.5 Review Services	The RFP indicates that the contractor will conduct Level II reviews, however it goes on to state that the documentation to be reviewed includes the Level I and Level II responses. Please clarify which level of review the contractor is expected to conduct.	NYSIF is procuring physician review services for Level 2 review only.

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17	17	Section 1 General Information/2.6 Case Information	At 2.6.2.d, the NYSIF requires documentation from the contractor that, "enable research into patterns of reviews..." Does the NYSIF anticipate that these will be fields in the WCB case workflow tracking system?	Unknown at this time.
18	13	2.1.3	<p>We are a non-URAC certified NYS Corporation that contracts with NYS Workers' Compensation Board Certified Physicians to conduct medical and pharmacy reviews for NYS workers' compensation carriers, and therefore, are relying on NYCRR Title 12 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; Chapter V. Workers' Compensation; Subchapter M – Pharmacy and Durable Medical Goods Fee Schedules and Appendices; Part 441 Formulary; Subsection 441.1 Definitions; Paragraph (g) "Carriers Physician", specifically Item 1. "employed or contracted by the insurance carrier or self-insured employer" that was recently adopted by the Chair of the NYSWCB in order to qualify as an acceptable bidder for this RFP. We are also not employed or contracted by the carrier or self-insured employers pharmacy benefit network. Being that this regulation (again adopted by the Chair of the NYSWCB) which is incorporated into your RFP by reference, differs from the specified Mandatory Requirement 2.1 (3) of the RFP, "Bidder must be accredited by the Utilization Review Accreditation Commission (URAC)", are we considered an acceptable bidder? If not, please cite the provision in the RFP that disqualifies us as an unacceptable bidder that is not in conflict with the State's recent adoption of Part 441 of 12 NYCRR (Drug Formulary).</p>	All bidders must be accredited by the Utilization Review Accreditation Commission (URAC). URAC accreditation is a mandatory requirement for this procurement. Please refer to NYCRR 441.1. Definitions.

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19	13	2.1	Will the bid only be awarded to a URAC certified company, or will NYCRR 441.1 (g) 1 that was adopted by the Board supersede the Mandatory Requirement specified in Section 2.1 (item 3) of the RFP?	The RFP will only be awarded to a URAC certified company as URAC accreditation is a mandatory requirement for this procurement.
20			Please clarify NYSIF's interpretation and all meanings, of the word "Contracted" that NYSIF incorporated into this RFP by referenced statute, as stated in Part 441 of 12 NYCRR (Drug Formulary), more specifically, 441.1 Definitions (g)1	Contracted, for NYSIF procurement purposes, is services retained under this procurement.
21	8	1.4	It mentions the uncertainty of the volume of requests, but is it possible to share historical data volume?	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume.
22	18	2.7	It mentions that the reviewer has minimum credentials of a registered nurse, so is NYSIF looking for a two level review like a normal UR process.	NYSIF is procuring physician review services for Level 2 review only.
23			Will NYSIF be able to access the contractors web portal to make assignments, track progress, view completed cases and create management information reports?	Unknown at this time, but work is being done in WCB portal.
24			What is the anticipated percentage breakdown between expedited and standard assignments?	Unknown at this time.
25			What is your best estimate of the number of assignments in a given period?	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume.

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26	13	Section 2 - Technical Specifications, 2.1 Mandatory Requirements	In statement #1, is the second mention of Appendix T a duplication or was it intended to be a different Appendix?	Bidder must complete the attached Appendix T, Vendor Security Survey. Appendix T, and any substantiating documents, even if included or referenced elsewhere in a bidder's response, must be submitted as one file and labeled separately in the electronic copy. Additional information regarding Appendix T can be found in Section 3.3.
27	14	2.3 Services to be provided	What is the anticipated volume of "requests for drug formulary prior authorization (Formulary PAs)?"	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume.
28	28	4.2 Bid Format, 4.2.4 Technical Experience/Description of Proposed Services	The RFP states: Submit as described in Section 2.2, Technical Specifications, of this RFP, yet Section 2.3 and Section 2.4 also have requirements to respond to. Can the bidder provide responses to Section 2.3 and Section 2.4 requirements right after responses to Section 2.2 and then "Also include the following:" (that is, a-d on pages 29-29 of the RFP)?	Yes.
29	PDF page 92	Appendix M Form 101 - Instructions #6	Please clarify the time period (e.g., monthly, yearly, full contract) in which we must identify the anticipated # of hours worked by individuals.	Per Appendix M, "The Contractor shall submit a staffing plan to document the composition of the proposed workforce to be utilized in the performance of the Contract by the specified categories listed, including ethnic background, gender, and Federal occupational categories." The Contract Term is 5-years.

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30	N/A	Appendices (All)	1) We appreciate NYSIF's efforts to automate/template ALL the appendices; however, we have several internal staff working on completing each appendix and we can't separate the file BY appendix. Can NYSIF post each appendix separately for ease of use/completion by the bidder? 2) Also, it appears Appendix F is the only appendix that is NOT automated/templated. Does NYSIF want the bidder to fill out this appendeix by hand and submit it separately? 3) Does NYSIF want the appendices submitted as one file or separate files (e.g., Appendix D its own file, Appendix E its own file, Appendix F its own file, etc.).	1) Vendors should extract pages from the PDF, as the RFP is not locked. 2) The Appendix F requires a signature and notary so vendors may print this out and complete. 3) All files can be sent together with the exception of the Appendix T which should be submitted as one file and labeled separately with it's own electronic copy and Appendix Z, which must be bound and placed in a sealed envelope separately and enclosed with the Bid.
31		General question	Can you provide your annual UR volume and spend?	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume.
32		General question	Does this RFP contemplate the new formulary in NY?	Yes.
33		General question	Do you expect winner to electronically transmit results of reviews or be able to electronically share with MRS provider?	Result of reviews are electronically transmitted through the WCB portal, but no sharing will be done with MRS providers.

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34		Form 101 - Staffing Plan	Can you verify that the correct form was included, as it does not appear to be relevant to this rfp. It refers to attorneys, legal aids, etc.	The Form 101 provided is the correct form. Per Appendix M, bidders should "Verify that job titles are provided under the column titled "SOC Job Title" for each employee whose anticipated work will be reflected on the Report. If a necessary job title is not included, please add the corresponding job category, title and corresponding job code to the "EEO 1 Job Categories" "SOC Job Title" and "SOC Job Code" columns from the list of job categories, SOC titles, and SOC codes reflected in the EEO-1 Job Classification Guide, 2014. A copy of this guide can be found on NYSIF's website at: www.nysif.com/procurement ."
35		Form 104 - M_WBE Waiver	If requesting a waiver, can we omit attaching the M-WBE Utilization forms, etc. until we are notified if the waiver has been accepted?	Per RFP Section 4.2.7, Appendix M requires Bidders to submit (i) form 101; (ii) form 103 or a copy of bidders current NYSED MWBE certification; and (iii) form 106 or a copy of bidders EEO policy
36		Appendix S, Form S-100 SDVOB Utilization Plan	As the form instructions state there is not sufficient opportunity to set goals, can you verify if this form is required? Would a waiver still be required if no SDVOB would be utilized?	Should vendors be utilizing SDVOB firms via a subcontractor, Appendix S, Form S-100 should be completed. A waiver is not required if no SDVOB firms are being utilized.
37		General question	Can you provide us with your UR volume in chart form?	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume.
38		General question	What is your current workflow today?	Not material to this RFP.
39		General question	Does NYSIF anticipate a panel of providers with this business? If so, would it be a primary and secondary award? Or a primary and secondary by business unit award?	As per section 1.7 of the RFP "A single award will be made for this procurement".
40		General question	We assume URAC accreditation in NY is a pre-requisite to bid on this business, correct?	Yes.

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41	6	RFP Calendar	NYSIF's responses to these RFP inquires may influence a vendor's decision to bid. The responses will also help bidders prepare a quality proposal that is responsive to every request within the RFP. However, the responses will not be made available until one week prior to the proposal due date. Will NYSIF consider an extension to help ensure it receives high quality bids that are aided by NYSIF's responses to these RFP questions?	No.
42	13	Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.1 Mandatory Requirements	The RFP requires the Contractor to be accredited by the Utilization Review Accreditation Commission (URAC). May a prime vendor who is lacking this accreditation, subcontract to an organization with this accreditation, or must the prime also be accredited by the URAC?	No, the bidding firm (prime) must be accredited by the Utilization Review Accreditation Commission (URAC).
43	13-23	Section 2 - Technical Specifications	Has any vendor helped to formulate the services described in this RFP? If yes, is that vendor then prohibited from bidding on this RFP?	No.
44	8	Section 1 - General Information 1.4 Purpose of this RFP	Is this RFP associated with the NYS Workers' Compensation Board Competitive Procurement For Utilization Review Services, C140387? If yes, how? And does the Contractor who won that contract, have an advantage over the vendors bidding on this RFP?	No.

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45	8 and 13-23	Section 1 - General Information 1.4 Purpose of this RFP and Section 2 - Technical Specifications	Per RFP Section 1.4, we understand that review services will be requested by the NYSIF upon implementation of the "Formulary." As such, we understand that such review services are not currently being provided. However, can the NYSIF confirm whether similar work is being performed by an existing Contractor for the NYSIF? If yes, what is the volume of requests on a weekly, monthly, and annual basis? And what is the number of reviewers and physicians who provide these similar review services?	No existing contractor. In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume
46	22	Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.12 Term & 2.13 Cost/Invoicing	We understand the request for a flat fee per review with recommendation for each of the review types, but what is the total dollar value budgeted for this project each contract year?	Estimating \$1 million per year.

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Question #	RFP Page #	RFP Section and Sub-Section Reference #/Heading	Question	NYSIF Response
47	8 16 18 15	Section 1 - General Information 1.4 Purpose of this RFP Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.5 Review Services 2.7 Reviewers 2.4 Operational and Staffing Requirements	The RFP acknowledges that the volume of requests is uncertain in Section 1.4; however the RFP also requires a 24-hour turnaround for Expedited Reviews. And the RFP states: "At all times, Contractor shall attempt to recruit and maintain a preponderance of New York-licensed practitioners" and "Ensure the availability of a sufficient number of reviewers." To be most responsive to this RFP and to meet the expectations of the NYSIF, please provide estimates regarding the volume, such as a range of expected requests, even if that range is large. Providing a range will help ensure that the successful Contractor can secure qualified resources to perform review services.	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review. There is no guarantee of future volume.
48	16	Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.5 Review Services	Will the NYSIF commit to a minimum of number of requests to be reviewed weekly, monthly, or annually? If yes, what minimum can be committed?	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume.
49	16	Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.5 Review Services	How many full-time reviewers will be assigned to reviewing Level I requests at the NYSIF? How many reviewers does NYSIF expect to hire to be able to complete reviews each contract year?	Not material to this RFP. NYSIF is procuring physician review services for Level 2 review only.
50	16	Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.5 Review Services	Approximately how much time does NYSIF anticipate a review to take to complete for each Level I, II, and III reviews?	NYSIF is procuring physician review services for Level 2 review only. Other reviews are not material to this RFP. Refer to Section 2.5 for review times.

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Question #	RFP Page #	RFP Section and Sub-Section Reference #/Heading	Question	NYSIF Response
51	15	Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.4 Operational and Staffing Requirements	Please clarify the training requirements of the Reed Group New York State Drug Formulary criteria.	NYSIF is seeking vendors to establish training protocols and provide appropriate training as outline in Section 2.4
52	15	Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.4 Operational and Staffing Requirements	Does any training currently exist for the Reed Group New York State Drug Formulary criteria that Bidders and Contractors may leverage?	Unknown
53	15	Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.4 Operational and Staffing Requirements	Please provide the Reed Group NYS Drug Formulary criteria and the Reed Group NYS MTGs recommendations.	NYSIF is only using the WCB formulary and MTG recommendations for the purposes of this procurement.
54	15 16	Section 2 - Technical Specifications 2.4 Operational and Staffing Requirements 2.5 Review Services	Item no. 10 in Section 2.4 states: "Establish training protocols and provide appropriate training to reviewers on how to review each type of request and make a recommendation for resolution of the particular request." Please clarify whether the "types of requests" referenced here, are in reference to the "Level I, II, and III reviews" described on the following page, 16, in Section 2.5 Review Services? If not, please list the "types of requests" requiring training as it relates to item no. 10 on page 15.	NYSIF is procuring physician review services for Level 2 review only

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55	17	Section 2.6: Case Information, part 2c	The RFP states that the contractor is to provide data to NYSIF to enable NYSIF to monitor quality assurance in the review process. What specific quality assurance metrics does NYSIF expect to use for monitoring purposes?	Including but not limited to - timeliness, appropriateness of responses based on documents, formulary, and MTG.
56	18	Section 2.6: Case Information, part 3	The RFP states that the contractor is to enter all case information into a database and to make the database accessible to select NYSIF staff in real time. Please define real time.	The actual time during which the process or event occurs.
57	18	Section 2.6: Case Information, part 3	Is NYSIF expecting direct, instant access to the database at all times, or is NYSIF expecting to submit requests for data to the contractor with a quick response from the contractor? If the latter, what is an acceptable turnaround time?	Expedited reviews must be completed within 24 hours, and standard reviews completed within 4 calendar days. Upon completion of reviews, NYSIF shall be able to access results of reviews in the WCB portal. This shall constitute the required access.
58	18	Section 2.6: Case Information, part 3	Is the information in the requested database expected to contain PHI/PII?	Yes.
59	18	Section 2.6: Case Information, part 4	Are the generation of the reports , charts and graphs expected to be predefined/static or interactive, allowing NYSIF to customize as needed?	We should have the ability to request ad hoc reports.
60	18	Section 2.6: Case Information, part 4	Is there a preliminary list of data elements?	Unknown at this time, please refer to the WCB website http://www.wcb.ny.gov/content/main/hcpp/DrugFormulary/overview.jsp

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61		Section 2.6: Case Information, part 18 4	The RFP states that the contractor is to enter all case information into a database and to make the database accessible to select NYSIF staff. The RFP also states that the data elements to be contained in the database must be mutually agreed upon after execution of the contract. Following contract execution, what is NYSIF's expected timeline for final agreement on the data elements, subsequent development of the database, and database access for NYSIF staff?	12/5/19 is the expected date of implementation of the WCB portal.
62		27 Section 4.2: Bid Format	Please clarify whether we are to include one CD/flash drive containing both the technical proposal and the fee schedule, or whether each file is to be on a separate CD/flash drive.	Per section 4.2 of the RFP " Submission must include one (1) hard copy of the proposal, organized as outlined below. Submission must also include one (1) exact electronic copy (CD/DVD-rom or USB flash drive) of the proposal. The exact electronic copy must include a copy of the Bidders Fee Schedule in a separate file from the Bidders proposal. The electronic copy of your proposal & fee schedule may not be password protected." The fee schedule can be on the same CD/DVD- rom or USB flash drive but must be in a separated folder.
63		28 Section 4.2: Bid Format	Are we permitted to number the major proposal sections as 1, 2, 3,... (instead of 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3,...), provided the section titles remain the same and are presented in the same order?	Each proposal response should cite the particular RFP section and paragraph number being addressed.
64		28 Section 4.2.3: Company Background, parts a and b	Are we required to list all current and previous contracts within the last five years or only contracts relevant to this work?	All current and previous contracts within the last five years.

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65		Section 4.2.7: Appendices, last paragraph; Tax Forms ST-220-CA and ST-220-TD in Appendix following Appendix M	Please confirm that Tax Forms ST-220-CA and ST-220-TD (found in the Appendix following Appendix M) are provided for informational purposes only and are not required in our proposal submission.	The ST-220-CA and ST-220-TD referenced in this RFP is not required at time of submission. The awarded contractor(s) will be required to complete these forms prior to contract execution.
66	N/A		Is this a new service offering?	Not material to this RFP.
67	9	1.7 Method of Award	Will NYSIF consider selecting more than one Vendor?	Per section 1.7 of the RFP a single award will be made for this procurement.
68	N/A		Who currently provides the services requested in this RFP?	Not material to this RFP.
69	16	2.5 Review Services	What is the current fee schedule for Standard Reviews?	Not material to this RFP.
70	16	2.5 Review Services	What is the current fee schedule for Expedited Reviews?	Not material to this RFP.
71	16	2.5 Review Services	Please confirm the selected Vendor will only conduct Level II reviews?	Confirmed.
72		General Question	Can you provide sample reports from past history	Not material to this RFP.
73		General Question	What is the monthly referral volume associated with this contract	In the prior year, there were in excess of 25,000 PARs denied at the nurse level which may require second level review - there is no guarantee of future volume.