Fact Sheet

Cooperative Agreement Award for New Department of Energy Health Care Provider in the Marshall Islands

Cooperative Agreement Number :	DE-FC03-98EH98035
Awardee:	Pacific Health Research Institute (PHRI) 846 S. Hotel Street Suite 303 Honolulu Hawaii 96813-2583
Point of Contact:	Wally M. Izumigawa, Business Officer, (808) 524-4411
Anticipated Award Date:	August 28, 1998
Cooperative Agreement Term:	5 Years (1 year budget periods, renewable annually)
Initial Obligation:	$250,000
Estimated Value:	$1.1M Annually

Key Program Goals and Work Requirements

The overall goals and requirements of the program are to (1) Execute a high quality medical program within DOE requirements and budget; (2) Provide continuity with the medical program conducted since 1956; (3) Operate in a highly visible international political environment and under rigorous oversight by the U.S. Congress; and (4) Conduct and implement a comprehensive medical screening, diagnostic, and treatment program for patients with radiation related illness or injury in a tropical and under-developed area of the world. (5) The program is to be community based with more year around care of the some 238 patients to be treated, and (6) The clinical program is to be implemented by primary care physician(s) augmented by physicians with current medical licensure in at least one of the 50 states or U.S. territories with specialties in oncology, diagnostic radiology, gynecology, internal medicine, and endocrinology.

Background

The Department of Energy has just completed a competitive selection process for the award of a Cooperative Agreement to the Pacific Health Research Institute (PHRI) located in Honolulu, Hawaii. The previous medical care provider was Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL). This new health care provider will be providing special medical care to a congressionally mandated

population at Rongelap and Utirik atolls in the Marshall Islands who were exposed to radiation resulting from the 1954 United States thermonuclear "Bravo" test. PHRI will draw upon the Honolulu based services of Straub Clinic and Hospital, the Department of Pacific Islands Medical Services, and the University of Hawaii John A Burns School of Medicine.

The objective of the competitive process was to explore other medical care options to change the medical care delivery process from a 2 one-month mission program/year to a community based, year-around, medically enhanced program for the Rongelap and Utirik exposed community that permits greater local atoll leadership input.

The RMI Government and the local atoll leaders assisted in the development and refinement of a draft Federal Register Notice that reflected current DOE objectives and included Marshallese enhancements requested.

A draft Request for Applications (RFA) was published in the Federal Register on May 29, 1997, (62 FR 29125) to begin the process of application development.

A public meeting was held in San Francisco, California, on July 8, 1997, to permit further input from prospective bidders and the Marshallese. A site visit to the Marshall Islands was arranged for prospective bidders in late September 1997.

A final RFA intended to lead to a cooperative agreement award was published in the Federal Register on September 12, 1997, (62 FR 48065).

Proposals were forwarded to the NIH independent expert review panel in late November 1997. The NIH independent expert review panel was convened on April 23, 1998. The NIH expert review panel canvassed the medical community and the Pacific Basin region, including the Marshall Islands for six medically/scientifically qualified individuals who had expertise in medicine, oncology, Pacific logistics, cultural sensitivities, budgeting, health sciences, genetics and radiobiology. Based on the recommendations of the NIH panel, the Department selected Pacific Health Research Institute.