Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: INSTITUTE FOR FAMILY HEALTH, THE

Project Title: The Mid-Hudson Valley Rural Broadband Alliance - Sustainable Broadband Adoption application

Project Type: Sustainable Broadband Adoption

_______________________ Executive Summary ______________________

MID-HUDSON VALLEY RURAL BROADBAND ALLIANCE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

a) A statement of the problem or need your project addresses with regard to improving broadband service adoption rates. The project addresses the twin problems of inadequate broadband speeds to the Institute's six upstate community health centers and throughout the rural regions of Ulster and Dutchess Counties, and the absence of an integrated electronic health record and practice management system at the Ellenville Regional Hospital. This shovel-ready project seeks to expand and enhance broadband access and capability in Ulster and Dutchess Counties in New York State. The proposed project will provide 100 Mbps broadband capability to six federally funded community health centers operated by the Institute for Family Health in Ellenville, New Paltz, Kingston and Hyde Park. The provision of this service in these areas will permit residents, businesses, and service providers in these upstate communities to access greater broadband capability, and thereby access Internet information and services not currently available to them. Increased broadband service will also enable approximately 35,000 Institute patients to access a web-based patient portal to review their medical records and communicate directly with their physicians; support the development and implementation of an electronic health record system (EHR) at the Ellenville Regional Hospital, a designated rural critical access hospital; and provide the Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center (CH-AHEC) increased capacity to offer webinars and other Internet-based continuing education programs to health care providers throughout the area. While the service area benefits from the Institute's current broadband capacity at its New York City offices, the proposed broadband expansion will lay the foundation for future Smart Grid implementation. It will improve patient care throughout the Institute's network by improving its electronic health record capability, and enhancing its practice management capability. It will also permit the Institute to offer community-based training for its patient portal 'MyChart' and to teach residents to effectively use the Internet to obtain reliable health information, including providing a direct link to the National Library of Medicine's MedLine Plus.

b) Your overall approach to addressing the need, and (for sustainable adoption projects) how your approach is innovative. The project will provide greatly improved access through 100Mbps broadband service to residents, businesses and public services located in an underserved service area, and will allow EHR and practice management systems to achieve full functionality. In addition, all Institute patients will be able to access vital health information through a customized, Internet-based patient portal linked with the National Library of Medicine's MedLine Plus. Finally, with a rural family medicine residency program as part of the applicant's core business model, and a partnership with the Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center (CH-AHEC), health profession
students and health practitioners throughout the Hudson Valley will benefit from greatly enhanced internet-based teaching and continuing education opportunities. Moreover, because the Institute's health care centers provide preventive and primary care for all, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay, individuals who are low-income, unemployed, aged, or representative of other disadvantaged sectors will be among those gaining access to broadband and the benefits described above. c) Area(s) to be served, population of the target area(s), including demographic information; and (for Public Computer Centers) the estimated number of potential users of your public computer center(s) or (for Sustainable Adoption projects) the estimated number of potential broadband subscribers your project will reach. The service area lies within the 19th, 20th and 22nd Congressional Districts for the State of New York, including Ulster and Dutchess Counties, where the health care facilities are located in the communities of Ellenville, New Paltz, Kingston and Hyde Park. This service area includes approximately eighty-eight (88) cities, towns and villages. The total population is 454,548, unemployment is 7.7%, the median household income is $61,570 and 10.4% are below poverty level. Funding for this project will provide the enhancement necessary to greatly increase the number of community residents, businesses and service providers who have access to high speed broadband service. The system will be used by 35,000 patients making 150,000 health care visits per year, 50 health care providers, and 20 family practice residents. At the Ellenville Regional Hospital, it will serve 12,000 emergency room visits, and at the Catskill-Hudson AHEC it will serve 40 students and 180 health practitioners per year. d) Qualifications of the applicant that demonstrate the ability to implement the project and achieve its intended results. The Institute already has broadband infrastructure and has achieved sustainability for the current level of broadband. However, the enhanced broadband capability will permit improved services to be provided within the framework of the applicant's business model. The implementation will be accomplished with the Institute's in-house information technology department. Weston Willett, Chief Information Officer, provides leadership to all of the Institute's information technology initiatives in order to improve cost effectiveness and health care service quality. He manages the Institute's electronic health records and information management system, overseeing distributed and centralized clinical and business operations. Prior to joining the Institute, Mr. Willett worked with Kaiser Permanente, APMC, and MedPartners in the management of the Epic system. The Senior Applications Engineer, Jonah Piascik, is responsible for strategic and tactical planning management of the Epic systems environment since the Institute implemented its electronic health record system. He has over 10 years' experience as a programmer and systems engineer. See Project Management team uploaded pdf. e) Jobs to be saved or created. The proposed project will create ten (10) new jobs in the service area. In addition, twenty-two (22) jobs would be preserved in the Institute's IT/EHR department. The largest component of the proposed budget, the EHR implementation for the Ellenville Regional Hospital, is projected to support a number of employees during the project installation. Once fully implemented, the project will add a minimum of ten (10) new full-time employees in a remote part of Ulster County, plus 6 indirect and 3 induced jobs. f) Overall cost of the proposed project. The overall projected cost of the enhancement to the existing broadband system is approximately $10.3 million ($10,386,611.00).