



Connections

Early Years Family Centre

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

The **Infant Hearing Program Essex/Kent** includes universal newborn hearing screening, high-risk monitoring, and services for children identified with permanent hearing loss for children ages birth to 6 years. Hearing screening services are currently provided by Windsor Regional Hospital, Connections Early Years Family Centre, and the Children's Treatment Centre of Chatham-Kent.

Connections Early Years Family Centre is currently seeking proposals from qualified practitioners to provide **IHP Assessment and Habilitation** services in Windsor/Essex County. Services are to begin June 1, 2023.

Terms and Conditions

RFP Requirement Details

Proposal Evaluation

Questions and Answers

Link to Infant Hearing Program Protocols:

https://www.uwo.ca/nca/research/labs/pediatric_audiology.html#clinicalprotocols

Terms and Conditions

Connections Early Years Family Centre (hereafter known as Connections)

Request for Proposal for the provision of

IHP Assessment and Habilitation Services

1. The successful proposal and all their authorized agents must abide by Connections' policies and procedures.
2. Connections reserves the right to refuse any or all of the proposals submitted. Only one proposal per company/organization will be accepted.
3. All agreements awarded pursuant to the RFP are not transferrable to any other service provider due to merger, acquisition, or sale of business without written consent of Connections.
4. In the event that the successful bidder neglects or refuses to abide by the terms of the contract or fails to observe it faithfully and completely, Connections reserves the right to cancel the contract. The successful service provider shall be required to reimburse Connections any additional expenses they have incurred.
5. In the event of such termination, Connections shall have no further obligations to the service provider other than the obligation to pay for services rendered up to the termination date.
6. Connections reserves the right to cancel the contract awarded to the successful applicant by giving 15 days' notice.
7. Final proposal must be received by Connections on or before the due date and time specified in the RFP documentation. Late proposals will be rejected.
8. For the purposes of the confidential RFP process, all proposals submitted by the deadline date will be considered the property of Connections.
9. All proposals must be in Canadian dollars (applicable to RFQ).
10. Connections shall not accept fee increases for the period the awarded contract is in effect.
11. Proposals must be submitted as per submission details and must adhere to requirements as outlined.
12. The service provider shall set out its qualifications and all IHP training to provide and or perform the services for the IHP program (assessment & habilitation services). Connections reserves the right to further negotiations with the successful service provider.

13. All information supplied by Connections or obtained in connection with the preparation and the submission of a proposal hereunder is confidential and proprietary to Connections and shall not be disclosed by the service provider without the express written consent of Connections.
14. Connections reserves the right to issue addendums, supplements, and amendments to the RFP at any time. The service provider acknowledges receipt of the RFP and agrees to acknowledge all addendums, supplements, and amendments received from Connections Early Years Family Centre.
15. The service provider shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Connections and its officers and Employees from any and all liabilities, loss, cost damages, and expenses including legal fee and court costs resulting from, arising out of, or incurred by reason of claims, actions or suits based upon or alleging bodily injury including death or property damage arising out of or resulting from the service provider's operation under this contract. The service provider is not and shall not be deemed to be an agent or employee of Connections.
16. No verbal communication will take place.

Full proposal submission date: **May 15, 2023 @ noon.**

Proposals must be emailed to info@connectwithus.ca
A confirmation of receipt email will be sent.

Hard copies can be mailed to:
Connections Early Years Family Centre
795 Giles Blvd East
Windsor ON
N9A 4E5

RFP Requirement Details

Mandatory Requirements

In order to be considered for the evaluation (Stage II), each proposal must be submitted in the following manner:

- a) Applicant to ensure written receipt of proposal submission within the identified timeline.
- b) Proposals to be submitted in English.
- c) Proposals should be marked "CONFIDENTIAL"
- d) Insurance Certificate from the applicant with minimum liability coverage of \$2,000,000.
- e) Evidence of WSIB coverage.
- f) CV to include all of the requirements for the IHP service provider as outlined in the RFP.
- g) All other documents and information as listed in the RFP IHP requirements as well as a business plan of how you would provide IHP services without interruption throughout the year.

Cost Requirement-IHP Assessment and Habilitation Services (IHP Services)

Organizations are asked to include a fee structure for assessment, habilitation and associated meeting attendance. Fees may be listed as an hourly rate or by service provided.

All funds to provide IHP services require approval by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services on an annual basis and are therefore subject to change or cancellation.

RFP/IHP Requirement Details

The successful applicant must:

- Provide details and proof of: relevant audiology qualifications, any relevant IHP training, and demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to deliver IHP services and fulfil the terms and conditions of the contract.
- Provide details of recent or similar work experiences.
- Fully trained IHP Audiologists are required to have the following qualifications, regardless of the services they provide:
 - CASLPO-registered and in good standing;
 - aptitude to conduct audiology services with infants and young children and their families;
 - adhere to IHP protocols and policies in a moderate to highly competent manner;
 - have the capacity within their clinical context to work with infants and young children and their families; and
 - execute the IHP protocols and policies competently and completely.
- Due to the complexities around working with infants and young children, the following qualifications are preferred for IHP Audiologist trainees:
 - prior clinical experience working with infants and young children; or
 - a work place with direct support from another IHP audiologist in good standing; and
 - an objective to provide IHP services in the trained protocol(s) for at least 1 consecutive year.
- Have the resources, equipment, and personnel needed to complete the contract including, but not necessarily limited to, Assessment and Habilitation services and administration duties. The proposal should also include details of equipment and equipment maintenance program.

- Be willing to complete additional and on-going IHP training. Attend training held within the province of Ontario as provided by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and to attend IHP meetings both locally and provincially from time to time.
- Be willing to develop and implement policy and procedures as required by legislation.
- Submit proof of insurance with a minimum liability coverage of \$2,000,000 and submit evidence of WSIB coverage
- Provide proof and details of your current office/clinic space where you would provide IHP services.
- Have a business plan of how you would provide IHP services without interruption throughout the year.

Proposal Evaluation

(Two/Three Stages)

Proposal Confidentiality:

All proposals received must be marked confidential and the information within the individual proposals will be retained until September 1, 2023 in a secure, confidential manner. All unsuccessful applicants' proposals will be shredded on September 1, 2023.

Stage 1 - Confidential Review of Mandatory Requirements – May 16, 2023

Will consist of a review to determine which proposals comply with all the mandatory proposal requirements as listed.

Proposals which do not comply with all the mandatory requirements will be disqualified and not evaluated further.

Stage II – Confidential Rating of Requirements – May 17, 2023

Will involve rating each remaining proposal(s) by a three member committee based on the RFP requirements. See Appendix B for details. Consultation with an experienced audiologist if required.

The members of the selection committee will include one member who is **not** involved in the management or delivery of the Infant Hearing Program.

Stage III – Confidential Interviews – May 18 – 25, 2023

If required by the selection committee, interviews will be held with final applicant(s) before a decision is made.

Members of the interview panel will have expertise in the Infant Hearing Program.

Final Decision – May 26, 2023

The successful applicant is informed in writing via email as per RFP submission details. All other applicants will receive a letter via registered postal mail regarding the decision. Unsuccessful applicants can request by July 16, 2023 via email to info@connectwithus.ca feedback on their submission. Written feedback will be provided within 3 weeks from receipt of their request. All other information will remain confidential.

Questions and Answers Section

1. Are you seeking a single clinic to provide both assessment and habilitation?

Both assessment and habilitation; please refer to the RFP details.

2. You ask for proof that we have “up to date appropriate equipment to provide all of the required IHP services to the target population”. What services are you talking about?

Both assessment (ABR, VRA, etc.) and habilitation; please refer to the RFP details.

3. What equipment is needed?

Please refer to Appendix A that is attached and IHP protocols for further details.

4. What equipment is provided by IHP?

Vivosonic Integrity, Titan DPOAE, Skull Simulator, and the TymstarPro are available for loan from IHP – Windsor-Essex.

5. You require a “plan on how you would provide IHP services without interruption throughout the year”. What is your definition of interruption? A day, a week, a month?

Publically funded services must be provided without any interruptions. Please include details of your plan in your proposal to ensure services are provided without interruption.

6. You ask for a “statement of willingness to comply with the IHP protocols” What are the IHP Protocols.

Information about the IHP protocols can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/nca/research/labs/pediatric_audiology.html#clinicalprotocols

7. What are the policies and procedures of Connections Early Years Family Centre?

Please refer to the attachment RFP Terms and Conditions. Other policies are reviewed with the successful applicant during contract discussions.

8. When will the IHP training take place?

See RFP requirements; applicants should provide proof of any IHP training. Successful applicants are required to attend additional training if needed. IHP training is not the jurisdiction of Connections; availability and delivery is provided by the provincial IHP.

9. What is the point system being used to evaluate the RFPs? Where is it located?

Please refer to the Proposal Evaluation Stages and Appendix B contained within this document.

10. Is the travel required for testing/habilitation? For meetings? For training? What is the frequency and distance that is typical?

Travel both locally and provincially may be required to attend meetings and training. As previously mentioned, IHP training is not the responsibility of Connections. Where possible virtual meetings are utilized.

11. Will the applicants be able to request a copy of the winning proposal?

Please refer to the RFP Terms and Conditions and Proposal evaluation in regards to confidentiality. A public statement will be made in regards to the successful applicant.

12. What is the length of the IHP contract?

A contract will be completed with the successful candidate with a termination clause for both parties (normally 60 days).

13. Under what terms/conditions can the contract be terminated/dissolved by either side?

As above.

14. How many children are tested a week? A month? A year?

For fiscal 2022-2023 127 children (approximate based on available stats).

15. How many children require a full diagnostic assessment a week? A month? A year?

For fiscal year 2022-2023, 75 children (based on number of Stage 2 refers and outside referrals from physicians, high risk, etc).

16. How many children require a full audiological rehabilitation a week? A month? A year?

For fiscal year 2022-2023, 39 children (approximate based on available stats)

17. Is this a fee per service contract? If not, what is the monetary allotment to provide the services?

This is a fee for service contract.

18. How will reimbursement per service provided be negotiated (i.e. ABR Fee, VRA Testing fee, Hearing aid evaluation fee, conference fee etc.)?

Organizations are asked to include a fee structure for assessment, habilitation and associated meeting attendance.

Costs for IHP travel and applicable conferences etc, will be reimbursed, but is dependent upon Ministry guidelines and regulations.

19. Can proposals for the Diagnostic component and Habilitation component be submitted separately for consideration?

Your proposal should outline your plan to deliver both the required services.

APPENDIX A

IHP COMPONENT	EQUIPMENT	NOTES
Audiology Assessment (ABR or Behavioural)	<p>Sound treated room: acoustic environment that satisfies ANSI standards for maximum permissible noise levels, is large enough to accommodate the necessary equipment for assessment and has a one-way window with two-way communication</p> <p>Include comfortable chair, and high chair in booth.</p>	ABRA and behavioural hearing assessment conducted in this environment
ABR Assessment	Vivosonic Integrity	- See ABRA 2018.02 protocol for details
Behavioural Assessment	<p>Clinical diagnostic audiometer with 1.5 or 2 channels</p> <p>ER-3A insert earphones</p> <p>TDH-39 supra-aural headphones</p> <p>Bone conduction oscillator with standard and cloth headband</p> <p>Calibrated soundfield</p> <p>Pediatric- and regular-sized eartips</p> <p>Age appropriate distraction and play items</p>	- Insert earphones are required for the protocol but some clinical scenarios involve other transducers
Middle Ear Assessment	Middle ear analyzer with multiple frequency tympanometry and acoustic reflexes	<p>Capability of 226 and 1000 Hz probe tones</p> <p>Broadband noise for reflexes</p>
Distortion product otoacoustic emissions	<p>F2/F1 ratio 1.22</p> <p>L1 65dB, L2 55 dB</p> <p>F2 at descending nominal frequencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4, 3, 2, 1.5 kHz or - 5, 4, 3, 2 kHz 	To cross-check behavioural assessment and help establish site of lesion
Outer ear inspection	High resolution otoscope with pediatric-sized specula	
Ear impressions	Quick-setting material and pediatric-sized otoblocks	
Provision of Amplification	Real-ear and hearing aid test system with probe microphones	See Amplification 2019.01 protocol for details
Audiology Outcome Measurement	LittEARS, PEACH, Speech Intelligibility index, IHP Amplification Benefit Questionnaire	See Amplification 2019.01 protocol for details

APPENDIX B

CANDIDATE SCORING BY IHP SELECTION COMMITTEE

FOR PROPONENT: _____

Score	Characteristics		
0	Submission is unacceptable; demonstrates little understanding of the requirements; criterion is absent from submission		
Below Mid-point	Submission is not adequate; misses key requirements		
Mid-Point	Submission meets basic expectations and requirements		
Above Mid-point	Submission substantially meets expectations and requirements		
Full Marks	Submission meets and exceeds expectations and requirements; clearly demonstrates an understanding of program requirements and details how services will be provided to meet stated standards/expectations/service levels		
Scoring Values	Each proponent must provide the following	Score	Strengths/Weaknesses on Respondent's Answer (with page numbers):
25	Details and proof of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant audiology qualifications • relevant IHP training • demonstrate the knowledge & skills required to deliver IHP services and fulfil the terms and conditions of the contract • Proof of similar work experience with infants/young children and their families • Proof of Registration with CASLPO 		
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business plan of how you would provide IHP services without interruption throughout the year • Written statement regarding the scope of knowledge of the IHP from each audiologist proposing to provide services • Written statement regarding the capacity within your clinical context to work with infants/young children and their families 		
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of accessible, located office/clinic space within Windsor Essex-County on a long term basis • Available for July 1, 2023 		
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of up to date appropriate equipment to provide all IHP services and equipment maintenance program • Have details of resources, equipment and personnel needed to complete the contract 		

Candidate Scoring Continuation for Proponent: _____

Scoring Values	Each proponent must provide the following	Score	Strengths/Weaknesses on Respondent's Answer (with page numbers):
10	Statement of willingness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To follow IHP protocols • To complete additional and on-going IHP training locally/provincially 		
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of insurance with minimum liability coverage of \$2,000,000 • Evidence of WSIB coverage • Other professional associations 		
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names and contact information of 3 individuals who have direct knowledge of your current work and your capacity to provide IHP services to the pediatric/target population 		
100			

Date of Evaluation:	
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Selection Committee Member #1	
Selection Committee Member #2	
Selection Committee Member #3	
Selection Committee Member #4	