

Letter of Intent (LOI): Place-Based Approaches to Addressing Diabetes

Response Period: opens July 3, 2024 and closes July 19, 2024

To Apply: qualified applicants are invited to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) through July 19, 2024. Applicants will be required to complete an eligibility quiz to determine if they meet the minimum criteria for CareFirst funding.

Timeline

July 3, 2024	LOI Process Opens
July 19, 2024	LOI Closes
August 2024	Select applicants invited to submit full proposal
October 2024	Funding Announcement

CareFirst Commitment: Addressing Upstream Determinants of Health Across the Region

To date, CareFirst has dispersed \$1.7 million to 26 local health improvement coalitions, health councils, and collaboratives, all working tirelessly to address the social drivers contributing to the severity or likelihood of developing diabetes. Successful programs have leveraged community partnerships and relationships with local community leaders to address upstream factors associated with diabetes. These efforts include initiatives focused on improving food access, providing nutrition education, promoting physical activity, and enhancing access to quality healthcare.

As a basic need, food intersects other drivers of health outcomes and is essential to maintaining health and overall wellness. To alleviate the burden of food insecurity, it is imperative to generate access to high-quality, nutritious food across the region. Therefore, building on CareFirst’s prior commitment and the recommendations outlined in the 2022 White House National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition and Health, this three-year funding initiative will further financial investment in Healthy Food Priority Areas¹ to address food and nutrition security and advance sustainable improvements in community health. The aim of this funding is to create sustainable, healthy food environments across the CareFirst region through community and health collaborations in regions.

Grant Program Goals

- Reduce the incidence and prevalence of diabetes and diet-related chronic conditions
- Create opportunities for increased access and availability of high-quality, healthy, affordable food options in Healthy Food Priority Areas
- Reduce prevalence of diet-related chronic conditions among residents who are food insecure
- Increase community engagement and leadership in decision-making to ensure equitable access to healthy and culturally relevant foods that support food policy and food systems

¹ Healthy Food Priority Area is defined as an area where the average Healthy Food Availability index is low, median household income is at or below federal poverty level and limited access to vehicle.

Request for Proposals Focus

Applicants may select **ONE** of the following areas as the primary focus of proposed intervention:

Focus Area 1: Supporting Local Food Systems to Increase Nutritional Security for Diet-Related Chronic Conditions

Goal: Transform the health of communities by increasing the availability of fresh and locally grown food in communities to promote health of all residents

Focus Area 2: Food is Medicine Interventions

Goal: Food is Medicine consists of a range of programs or initiatives that recognize and respond to the linkage between food and health. In alignment with the National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition and Health, CareFirst seeks to support collaborations for evidence-informed Food is Medicine interventions to reduce the incidence and prevalence of diet-related chronic conditions

Focus Area 3: Community Food Literacy and Nutrition Education

Goal: Implement interventions that equip and empower individuals with knowledge and agency to access local, nutritious food.

Letter of Intent Guidance

Please review the eligibility requirements provided below. All applicants will be required to complete the eligibility quiz in our online application. Once eligibility is determined, applicants will be directed to complete the online Letter of Intent application through our grants management system. Incomplete, emailed, or hard copy proposals will not be accepted. Applications that are incomplete or do not adhere to the program guidelines will not be reviewed or considered.

Eligibility

This funding opportunity is open to groups or organizations that qualify as tax exempt and maintain designation under section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code. Additionally, organizations must operate in our service area, which comprises Maryland, Washington DC and Northern Virginia (east and north of Route 123) and not actively be engaged in a request for proposal.

Geographic Priority Areas

The proposed project must designate a geographic area where the organization will target its community-driven interventions to prevent and manage diabetes. CareFirst has identified six jurisdictions to prioritize for consideration. Additional regions are eligible to apply but will have to describe the need and targeted region for impact by zip code or neighborhood level. Priority communities include:

- Baltimore City (zip codes 21215, 21216, 21217)
- Eastern Shore (Mid and Lower Shore)
- Prince George's County (zip codes 20743, 20745, 20746, 20747, 20748, 20785)
- Western Maryland (priority given to Garrett and Allegany Counties)
- District of Columbia (Wards 7 and 8)
- Northern Virginia (north and east of Route 123)

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Other Considerations

The following types of organizations are eligible and may apply as the lead or coordinating organization on behalf of the proposed geographic area:

- Nonprofit community-based organizations
- Nonprofit hospitals
- Institutions of higher education
- Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)
- Local Health Departments and Local Government Agencies

Funding is meant to increase access to healthy foods and improve food and nutrition security across the CareFirst region among residents disproportionately affected by prediabetes and diabetes. Approaches should address the root causes of diet-related chronic conditions and be responsive to community needs. Projects that focus on systems or environments that support healthy behaviors and lead with resident involvement, lived experience, and innovation will be prioritized.

Funding Process

- Submitted Letters of Intent will be reviewed by CareFirst
- Applicants will receive automated emails indicating the status of their LOI via the online grants management system. If invited to advance further in the process, applicants will receive an email request to submit a full application
- Applicants will have three weeks to complete the application and submit required documents
- Invited applicants will receive a funding decision in Fall 2024

Questions: For technical questions, please review the [“Need Support?”](#) link and submit a ticket if you still have a question. Please email community@carefirst.com with any programmatic questions.

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