



COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO

Department of Health
Puerto Rico Medicaid Program

AWARD NOTIFICATION
MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON
NON-EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION GAP ANALYSIS
2024-PRMP-MFP-NEMT-003

Pursuant to Executive Order Num. 2021-029¹, Administrative Order Num. OA-581², as amended, Act. No. 38/2017³, as amended, and 45 CFR 74.327-329, the Puerto Rico Medicaid Program (PRMP) issued a Request for Proposal with the purpose of selecting a vendor to conduct a Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Gap Analysis.

In response to the request, PRMP received proposals from four (4) vendors: V2A Consulting, LLC, (V2A), Advantage Business Consulting, Inc., (ABC), Estudios Técnicos, Inc., (ETI), and Steer Davies and Gleave Limited (Steer). In accordance with section 3.8 of the RFP, proposals were evaluated by a Puerto Rico Department of Health appointed panel⁴ across four criteria: *Vendor Experience*, *Qualifications of Proposed Personnel*, *Project Approach* and *Cost Proposal*, using a weight/score formula.

Based on the committee's determinations and scores given to the proposals, the Evaluation Committee recommended to the PRMP Executive Director that the Buena Pro and subsequent contract be awarded to ETI, whose proposal scored a total of 82 out of a possible 100 points. For their part, V2A scored a total of 54.12 points, ABC a total of 50.36, and Steer a total of 62.04. ETI not only scored the highest points in the technical proposal analysis, but also provided the lowest cost proposal. Having agreed with the committee's recommendation, the Executive Director notifies this Award in favor of Estudios Técnicos, Inc.

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Prior to the formation of the contract, ETI must submit all appropriate documentation to the PRMP contract division, including a brief of its proposal detailing the scope of work and costs, and specific deliverables by phase. Furthermore, it is notified that no service should be provided by ETI until a copy of the contract is filed with the Puerto Rico Office of the Comptroller.

¹ Issued by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

² Issued by the Department of Health of Puerto Rico.

³ Known as the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act of the Government of Puerto Rico.

⁴ See administrative Order 2024-586, <https://www.salud.pr.gov/CMS/DOWNLOAD/8503>

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

On February 9, 2024, the PRMP published through the program and the Department of Health's websites a request for proposal with the purpose of selecting a vendor who could conduct a Gap Analysis for the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation community in support of the Money Follows the Person grant. According to the RFP vendors had until March 1 to submit questions. 3 questions were received; answers were posted to the websites.

In response to the RFP, PRMP received four proposals by the due date, March 25. The Department of Health's appointed Evaluation Committee proceeded with their analysis over a period of two weeks. Members of the committee evaluated each technical proposal at an individual level, followed by a group session where they discussed individual's scores and reached a group score consensus. Cost proposals remained sealed during this phase of the analysis. This process repeated itself for each proposal. Once all technical proposals were scored, the cost proposals were evaluated, and their scores added to the technical scores to determine the final value of each proposal.

Oral presentations were not held.

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

V2A Consulting, LLC, is a local management consulting firm based in San Juan, with years of experience in the Healthcare and Market & Business Analytics. For this project, V2A proposes partnering with Lateral Strategy, also a local market research firm.

For this project, V2A proposes a sample size of 1,000⁺ interviews with the elderly (60⁺) population, adults with disabilities (21⁺) to gather quantitative and qualitative data through surveys (by phone), interviews and focus groups. Additionally, V2A will conduct interviews and focus groups with stakeholders from government agencies, non-profit organizations, and NEMT service providers, as well as built on their Social Determinants of Health[®] dashboard and develop geospatial database of medical services and NEMT services across the 78 municipalities to understand the needs by region.

According to its proposal, their methodology consists of four phases, each with its own deliverables:

- Gap Analysis Plan – Includes the development of the initial project schedule plan and NEMT gap analysis strategy; background research; determining existing data to use or methods for collecting new data; initiation of geospace database development; stakeholder engagement, survey, and questionnaire design; and coordination of interviews.

Deliverables: Project Schedule/Management Plan; Research findings; Survey instruments.

- Identify Gaps – Includes interviews and focus groups; data quality control of results; develop geospatial database of NEMT and medical services across Puerto Rico; geographic adequacy metrics; and development of analysis plan. Deliverables: survey administration and analysis plan.
- Record, Review & Consolidate Data – Record quantitative data; perform statistical analysis; perform a geospacer analysis; generate Power BI dashboard; and extraction of key findings, insights, and recommendations. Deliverables: survey response analysis; geospatial analysis; and results dashboards.
- Findings & Recommendations – Document findings and provide recommendations; outline conclusions and potential NEMT implementation methods; outline potential next step; and share findings with stakeholders and prepare final report. Deliverable: NEMT Gap Analysis Final Report.

Proposed schedule: 12 months

Cost: \$953,000

Advantage Business Consulting, Inc., is a local economic, business, and urban-planning consulting firm. For this project, ABC proposes partnering with IPSOS, a global market research firm that originated in 1975.

According to its proposal, ABC proposes a methodology divided by two target groups: (1) demand side, composed of the elderly (60+), people with disabilities (21+) and caregivers; and (2) supply side, composed of the transportation providers and the Division of Medicaid. The gap analysis would cover three main themes: quantity of service, quality of service, and funding for the service.

The demand side includes:

- Quantitative phase – Survey with a sample of 1,200 household interviews in Puerto Rico for the elderly (across seven regions). Survey with a sample of 350 household interviews for caregivers and people with disabilities.
- Qualitative phase – Virtual (online) focus groups among the elderly, people with disabilities, and caregivers (6–7 participants); 3 per region for a total of 21 focus groups.

The supply side includes:

- Interviews with transportation companies from Medicaid MCOs and municipalities; analysis of their inter-phase.
- Discussions with stakeholders during Hurricane Maria to develop resiliency in NEMT.
- Development of GIS data as to the main routes covered by Medicaid MCOs.

Deliverables: census extraction; Survey Implementation Plan, Monitoring and Oversight Plan; pre-test report, weekly production reports; data file with collected raw data; final analysis with report; among others.

Proposed schedule: 18 months

Cost: \$900,000

Estudios Técnicos, Inc., is a local private consulting, research, and technical assistance firm established in 1985. Besides its interdisciplinary team of 38 professionals, it has its own fieldwork unit comprised of over 50 surveyors and fieldworkers who are certified for conducting research with human subjects (PHRP – Protecting Human Research Participants). It proposes a partnership with Klein Engineering, PSC and Truenorth.

According to its proposal, its methodology incorporates a participatory multi-method research approach, based on the Witkin and Altschuld (2000) model. Tasks will be organized into four main phases:

- Phase 1 – Project Organization, Background Research, Stakeholder Engagement Plan.
- Phase 2 – Gap Analysis, Stakeholder Engagement Activities.
- Phase 3 – Record, Review and Analysis of Data, Geospatial Analysis, Risk Analysis.
- Phase 4 – Findings and Recommendations. The recommendations will be classified into three different dimensions: (1) Related to the Operational definition of NEMT, (2) Management and Control of the NEMT and Policies, (3) Related to the NEMT Implementation Roadmap.

Deliverables: After Phase 1, the instrument used for the survey. After Phase 4, the final report with results of the gap analysis, recommendations, and action plan. Also, ETI will provide PRMP with access to all GIS geospatial analysis.

For information collection, ETI proposes conducting interviews with stakeholders, surveys to the elderly and adults with disabilities, focus groups with caregivers, and questionnaires to existing NEMT service providers. For elderly people (60+) and adults with disabilities, ETI proposes a sample size of 600 people (face-to-face survey); for service providers, ETI proposes a web survey (Question Pro and SPSS) with telephone follow-up (sample size based on size and characteristics of identified providers); for stakeholders, ETI proposes approximately 30 interviews.

Proposed schedule: 18 months

Cost: \$392,375

Steer Davies and Gleave Limited (Steer) is a global consulting firm which, according to its Companies Act 1985, was established to carry out business as planners, consultants, and advisers into all aspects of the transport industry, among other objectives. Steer proposes a partnership with INFOCUS, a market research service provider, to carry out the survey.

According to its proposal, their methodology consists of four phases, each with its own deliverables:

- Phase 1: NEMT Gap Analysis Plan – Includes the study coordination; background research; data evaluation; stakeholder engagement. Deliverable: Project Schedule and Project Management Plan.
- Phase 2: Identify Gaps (conduct gap analysis) – Includes the design and implementation of the survey (sample size for each segment will be ascertained based on the population dimensioning completed in phase one); Gap analysis design and logistics; data collection (survey administration); geospatial data collection. Deliverable: survey design plan.
- Phase 3: Record, Review, consolidate and analyze recollected data – Includes analysis of the data to identify gaps in the current situation and the geospatial analysis. Deliverable: Survey response findings.
- Phase 4: Findings and Recommendations (proposals for improvements) – Includes the Gap Analysis findings; conclusions; possible implementation methods; implementation roadmap; recommendations. Deliverable: A final report that will include the results obtained from the gap analysis as a compilation of all the tasks worked on during the project.

Proposed schedule: 18 months

Cost: \$650,000

PROPOSAL EVALUATION – METHOD AND ANALYSIS

Section 1.5 of the RFP instructed vendors to submit proposals in two distinct parts sealed in separate envelopes: technical proposal and cost proposal. As stated above, prior to the opening of the cost proposals, technical proposals were evaluated by each member of the committee at an individual level, followed by group sessions where members discussed their personal analysis and reached a consensus. Cost proposals were evaluated and scored on the final day of the evaluation process. A formula was used to allocate points to this category where the maximum total points were given to the proposal with the lowest cost. The methodology is later explained in this document.

To come up with the points allocated to each category of the technical proposals, a **weight/score formula** was implemented. Section 3.8 of the RFP indicated the maximum possible points for each category. Table 1 below displays the weight assigned to each category. Consensus scores given by the committee members had to be multiplied by the corresponding weight to get each vendor's final points.

The following table displays each technical category and its assigned weight and max points:

Table 1

Evaluation Category	Weight	Max Points
Experience • Proposers will be evaluated per their current and past experience and performance with comparable projects.	4	20
Qualifications of Proposed Personnel • The professional qualifications and accessibility of the firm's professional personnel to be assigned to manage and conduct the analysis.	6	30
Project Approach • The proposal will be evaluated based on compliance with the RFP requirements, technical approach in conducting analysis and public engagement, project schedule and strategy in completing tasks and providing deliverables.	8	40
Total Points Possible		90

Members of the committee were to assign a value from a scale of 1 through 5 to each category according to the following rubric:

5: Excellent – exceeds the requirements

- 4: Good – fully addresses the requirements
- 3: Acceptable – addresses the requirements, but has some minor deficiencies
- 2: Marginal – Partially addresses the requirements or is very limited
- 1: Unacceptable – Fails to address the requirements

The weights assigned to each category of the technical proposal multiplied by a score of 5 would give 90, the maximum available points for technical proposals. The following table portrays the Evaluation Committee consensus scores for each vendor's *technical* proposal and their respected allotted points:

Table 2

Criteria	Weight	V2A		ABC		ETI		Steer	
		Score	Points	Score	Points	Score	Points	Score	Points
Experience	4	2	8	3	12	4	16	4	16
Qualifications of Proposed Personnel	6	3	18	3	18	4	24	4	24
Project Approach	8	3	24	2	16	4	32	2	16
Total Points Possible			50		46		72		56

After the technical evaluation exercise ended, the committee proceeded to open and add the cost proposal criteria to the equation. The highest possible points, 10, were automatically given to the proposal with the lowest cost. Points provided to the other cost proposals were assigned using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{lowest cost}}{\text{the vendor's cost being scored}} \times \frac{10}{\text{(the maximum number of cost points available)}} = \text{cost proposal points assigned}$$

According to the vendors cost proposals, points were assigned as follows:

V2A: \$953,000

$$(392,375/953,000) \times 10 = 4.12$$

ABC: \$900,000

$$(392,375/900,000) \times 10 = 4.36$$

ETI: \$392,375

$$(392,375/392,375) \times 10 = 10$$

Steer: \$650,000

$$(392,375/650,000) \times 10 = 6.04$$

The following table portrays the final overall points given to each proposal:

Table 3

Evaluation Category	Max Points	V2A	ABC	ETI	Steer
Technical Proposal	90	50	46	72	56
Cost Proposal	10	4.12	4.36	10	6.04
Total Points	100	54.12	50.36	82	62.04

As shown in table 3, **ETI** ended up with the overall highest points, having ranked first in both technical and cost proposals. According to the committee, **ETI** presented the clearest and most complete proposal checking all the requirements of the RFP. Its proposal documented their ample experience doing similar studies, even bringing personnel to the team with experience in the transit field to do this task. It described in detail the methodology, and included feedback related to its approach to the diverse cultural landscape throughout the island, as well as the use and share of the geographical information systems which is a requirement of the RFP. As if it weren't enough, its cost provided the definitive advantage over its competitors.

V2A cumulative experience in the health community is not in question. Years providing services to the sector prove its commitment and continuous interest in the field. The proposal described their approach and methodology to the gap analysis with its corresponding deliverables, all to be done in a period of twelve months. But, in contrast to other proposals, the Evaluation Committee found it to be too general. Additionally, this request for proposal targets transportation necessities for a particular sector and in the transit area **V2A** seems to be the least experienced among all participants. The committee couldn't identify similar projects among those listed. Adding **V2A** cost to the equation, its proposal situates outside of consideration.

ABC's extensive lists of municipal transportation projects favorably caught the attention of the members of the committee. Its proposed methodology is described in detail, even providing a distribution of the sample size among regions, and their quality control process. Nevertheless, the RFP required vendors to provide special consideration to cultural competency, where proponents were expected to comment on their commitment to ensure a comprehensive and culturally sensitive approach to the gap analysis, and **ABC** failed to provide feedback related to this topic. Also, according to the RFP, vendors were required to provide PRMP with geospatial analysis as part of their solution, and again, **ABC** provided almost no information regarding its geographical information system and how it would be

related to and provided to PRMP. Last, but not least, as in the case of V2A, ABC ticket price situates its proposal on the downside of competition.

Steer presented a solid proposal regarding the “experience” and “qualifications of proposed personnel” criteria. They are a global firm with decades of worldwide experience in the transportation field. However, although its proposal explained the tasks of each of the four phases of its gap analysis, members of the committee commented that it lacked the specificity expected in relation to the sample size as its competitors did. Instead, the proposal stated, as an introduction to Phase II: “The sample necessary for each of the several relevant segments will be ascertained based on the population dimensioning that was completed in the phase one.”

Related to the geographical information system requirement, the RFP states: “The contractor must provide PRMP with geospatial analysis software such as ArcGIS including Survey 123. In addition, the contractor must provide the MFP staff with a user account in which the NEMT Specialist is able to create, develop, update, and manipulate data to ensure compliance with the project objectives.” Although the vendor’s proposal discussed in several instances the use of geographical data, members of the committee commented that the vendor did not address the issue of providing the software and a user account. Its proposal simply stated: “The analysis will be submitted to the client through maps with different findings and detailed description of the results by municipality.”

The committee also noticed that apparently for Phase I to succeed, the vendor needs to rely heavily on assistance from PRMP personnel. For task 1: Study Coordination, Steer stated: “During this meeting, we will discuss the best approach to obtain this information, considering the multiple potential sources (e.g., national, and regional organizations, private operators, etc.).” For Task 2: Background Research, the vendor stated: “To achieve this task to its maximum extent we seek for support of the PRDoH to assist us with the initial data collection”. Even though PRMP personnel will participate in many aspects of the project, other proponents appeared to have a better grasp or know-how (particularly where some or most background information is available), because none expressed this kind of dependency.

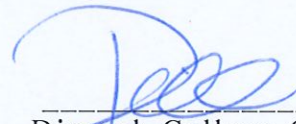
PRMP DETERMINATION

Hereby it is notified that the Puerto Rico Medicaid Program accepts the Evaluation Committee's recommendation to award the Buena Pro and subsequent contract to Estudios Técnicos, Inc. Having received the highest score in both, technical and cost proposals, PRMP feels confident that this award is being given to a responsible vendor whose proposal is the most advantageous to the program.⁵

As mentioned before, before any services can be provided by the selected vendor, the contract must be filed with the Puerto Rico Office of the Comptroller.

In accordance with section 3.19 of the Puerto Rico Administrative Procedures Act⁶, a copy of this Award Notification will be sent by **EMAIL** to all vendors to the addresses provided.

On April 19, 2024 in San Juan, Puerto Rico.



Dinorah Collazo-Ortiz, ESQ
Executive Director
Puerto Rico Medicaid Program

⁵ See 45 CFR 75.329 (d) (4).


⁶ 3 LPRA §9659.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVISION/JUDICIAL REVIEW – TERMS

Any person or party adversely affected or aggrieved by this award may, according to 3 LPRA §9659, file a motion for reconsideration with the Puerto Rico Department of Health (PRDoH) within a term of **ten (10) days** from the date of the notification of the award. The PRDoH must consider the motion for reconsideration within **ten (10) business days** of being filed. If any determination is made in its consideration, the term to request the appeal for judicial review will begin from the date on which a copy of the notification of the decision of the PRDoH is filed on record, according to the case, resolving the motion for consideration. If the filing date of the copy of the notification of the decision is different from that of the deposit in the ordinary mail or the sending by electronic means of said notification, the term will be calculated from the date of the deposit in the ordinary mail or sending by electronic means, as appropriate. If the PRDoH fails to take any action in relation to the motion for reconsideration within **ten (10) days** of its filing, it shall be understood that the motion was denied outright, and the time to request judicial review shall start to run from said date.

If the PRDoH Accepts the reconsideration request within the term provided, it must issue the reconsideration decision or resolution within **thirty (30) days** following the filing of the motion for reconsideration. If the PRDoH accepts the motion for reconsideration but fails to take any action in relation to the motion within **thirty (30) days** of its filing, it will lose its jurisdiction and the term to request the judicial review will begin from the expiration of said term of **thirty (30) days**. The PRDoH may extend said term only once, for an additional period of **fifteen (15) days**.

Any person or party adversely affected by a final reconsideration or decision may file a petition for review with the Puerto Rico Court of Appeals within a term of **twenty (20) business days** of such final decision or determination being filed.⁷

 The mere presentation of a motion for reconsideration does not have the effect of preventing the PRMP from continuing with the procurement process within this request for Proposal.

⁷ See 3 LPRA § 9672.

CERTIFICATION

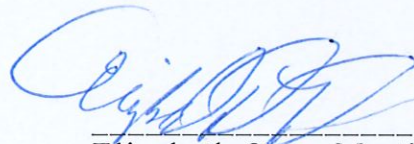
I hereby certify that on April 19, 2024, copy of this award Notification has been sent via email to all vendors to the addresses provided in the submitted proposals:

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