



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 21-2165A, **Version:** 1

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### **Subject:**

Award of contract to Unite USA, Inc. d/b/a Unite Us for the Pinellas County Behavioral Health Coordinated Access Model.

### **Recommended Action:**

Approval of the Agreement with Unite USA, Inc. d/b/a Unite Us (Unite Us) for the Pinellas County Behavioral Health Coordinated Access Model (CAM).

- This Agreement provides for the implementation and operation of the Pinellas County CAM by the contractor, Unite Us. The CAM will serve as a centralized intake system that is intended to streamline access to care for persons experiencing behavioral health issues.
- Unite Us offers a proprietary software to coordinate electronic referrals and case management tasks between health and social service organizations on a common platform. Unite Us will provide six (6) communication channels for intake to the CAM: phone, website, e-referral form, online chat, text-based chat, and virtual contact through service providers.
- Unite Us is partnering with the University of South Florida to provide clinical support to the CAM to perform initial behavioral health assessments, triage and set appointments with service providers, integrate with crisis care, and provide telehealth psychiatry and prescription provider consultation, when appropriate.
- A competitive request for proposal was advertised on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Unite Us was the sole respondent submitting a proposal. The evaluation of the proposal established that Unite Us is highly qualified and capable of fulfilling the project requirements. Three public information sessions were held for vendors and stakeholders to solicit feedback for this competitive solicitation; other vendors were not able to provide comprehensive services.
- This project is anticipated to be fully or partially funded with federal funds from the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds made available under the American rescue Plan Act.

Contract No. 22-0101-P(DG) in the total not-to exceed amount of \$9,158,372.76 for a forty-eight-month term; Authorize the Chairman to sign and the Clerk of the Circuit Court to attest.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to ensure a safe and secure community

2.2 Be a facilitator, convener, and purchaser of services for those in need

## Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

- 5.1 Maximize partner relationships and public outreach
- 5.2 Be responsible stewards of the public's resources
- 5.3 Ensure effective and efficient delivery of county services and support

### **Summary:**

This Agreement provides funding for Unite Us to implement and operate the Pinellas County CAM. The CAM will serve as a centralized intake system that is intended to streamline access to care for persons experiencing behavioral health issues and other conditions through appropriate processes, skillsets, and technology.

The objectives of the CAM are to (1) improve access to care (2) improve management of demand, (3) improve transparency of information, (4) minimize service duplication of intake services allowing for one initial intake that all agencies can utilize, and (5) improve consistency in consumer experience. The CAM will provide for multi-channel client intake, initial assessment, triage, referral, and live scheduling, where appropriate. Unite Us will utilize the University of South Florida as a subcontractor to provide clinical-level services.

### **Background Information:**

In December of 2019, the County engaged KPMG to develop an actionable strategic plan that would enhance and elevate the Pinellas County Adult Behavioral Health System. The resulting strategic report outlined pathways towards an improved system of care with two key recommendations:

1. Establish a systemic performance management approach collectively with all funders and contractual optimal data set requirement for all providers
2. Establish a robust CAM with a 1-800 number, standardized screening, triage, and scheduling practices, and evaluation of current provider systems.

Following a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) Solicitation issued on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Unite Us, the sole proposer, was found to meet and/or exceed the minimum qualifications of the RFP.

A total of three public information sessions were held in the Fall of 2021 to provide detailed information about the Coordinated Access Model and to solicit feedback from community stakeholders and potential vendors regarding methods for improving project outcomes.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

Estimated Four (4) Year Expenditure Not-to-Exceed:                      \$9,158,372.76

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation for Pinellas County to support approximately \$1,000,000.00 (PID 006004A) per fiscal year for this project, with the remaining support (\$1,289,593.19) budgeted in the FY 23 Human Services General Fund allocation.

### **Staff Member Responsible:**

Karen Yatchum, Director, Human Services

Merry Celeste, Division Director, Purchasing & Risk Division, Administrative Services

Joe Lauro, Director, Administrative Services

**Partners:**

Pinellas County Behavioral Health Partners

**Attachments:**

Agreement