

**Cover Sheet**

Lead Applicant: Hospice of the Pines, LLC: Yavapai County, AZ

Co-Applicants: Dr. N. Sankar

Contact Information for Person Completing the Application:

Lori Hutchings, MS

4225 W Glendale Ave, Suite A200

Phoenix, AZ 85051

(623) 847-2323

[lhutchings@primecarehospice.com](mailto:lhutchings@primecarehospice.com)

Executive Sponsors: Owner: Satwana Bhowra; Administrator: Beth Funk, RN

Date Applying to ASET: November 16, 2012

Total Dollar Amount Requested: \$100,000.00 with a match  
by Hospice of the Pines, LLC of \$50,000.00

## Cover Letter

Arizona Strategic Enterprise Technology  
Unconnected Healthcare Providers Health Information Exchange Grant Program  
100 N 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 400  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Ms. Patel;

Enclosed please find a proposal for the Unconnected Healthcare Providers Health Information Exchange Grant from Hospice of the Pines, LLC. Hospice of the Pines and partner Dr. N Sankar are requesting \$100,000 to purchase software and hardware, train staff members, and implement electronic health exchange. The \$50,000 match will be provided by Hospice of the Pines, LLC. Hospice of the Pines will be implementing electronic health exchange with primary care physicians, skilled nursing and assisted living homes, and hospitals that refer patients to Hospice of the Pines. The ONC health information exchange priority addressed will be #3. Facilitating transitions of care by sharing patient care summaries across unaffiliated organizations.

Hospice of the Pines is a Medical Specialty Organization providing home hospice services. Home is defined as wherever the patient resides.

Hospice of the Pines' patient population is made up almost exclusively (90%) of Elderly Medicare patients. This underserved population often falls through the medical cracks. According to a 2006 article from the Journal for Healthcare Quality, "Home healthcare is a component of the healthcare industry uniquely positioned to improve transitional care and outcomes for the growing population of older adults with continuous complex needs." (Naylor, 2006). Funding from the Unconnected Providers HIE Grant would allow Hospice of the Pines to become one of the electronic liaisons that elderly patients need so badly.

3% of patients served in the past 12 months by Hospice of the Pines were uninsured (pro-bono). Hospice of the Pines is located in a Department of Health and Human Services designated Health Providers Shortage Area.

Hospice of the Pines served a total of 570 patients in the previous 12 months. 14% of these were transitioned from Primary Care Physicians or Nurse Practitioners, 2% were transitioned from hospitals, and 5% were from skilled nursing and assisted living homes. With the addition of

Hospice of the Pines

electronic health information exchange, patient care summaries between Hospice of the Pines and these sources can be facilitated to ensure ease of patient transitions.

The use of certified EHR technology for the electronic exchange of health information to improve the quality of health care is a focus of the Affordable Care Act, as is the implementation of evidence-based practices. Home medical care, such as that provided by Hospice of the Pines, is an integral part of the medical infrastructure. There are currently communication gaps between home medical care providers, such as Hospice of the Pines, and primary care physicians, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and other medical providers. According to the National Quality Forum, "The U.S. healthcare system is fragmented, with patients, families, and caregivers forced to navigate an increasingly complex system filled with inefficiencies. Lack of care coordination leads to serious complications, including medication errors, preventable hospital readmissions, and unnecessary pain and suffering for patients." This is especially true with the Elderly and Limited English Proficiency populations, which are precisely the populations Hospice of the Pines would like to target with the grant funding.

Also from the National Quality Forum, "The National Quality Strategy aims to promote effective communication and coordination of care across the healthcare system by focusing on three goals:

1. Improve the quality of care transitions and communications across care settings.
2. Improve the quality of life for patients with chronic illness and disability by following a current care plan that anticipates and addresses pain and symptom management, psychosocial needs, and functional status.
3. Establish shared accountability and integration of communities and healthcare systems to improve quality of care and reduce health disparities."

Hospice of the Pines is planning to address the 1st goal of the National Quality Strategy aims by utilizing the funds received through the Unconnected Healthcare Providers Health Information Exchange Grant for the purposes of connecting electronically to primary care physicians, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living communities, and hospitals.

Hospice of the Pines is a leader in the hospice community in Yavapai County. Hospice of the Pines concentrates on delivering the highest quality patient care. In 80% of patient and family satisfaction surveys returned in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2012, the person filling out the survey marked that he/she would "definitely" recommend Hospice of the Pines.

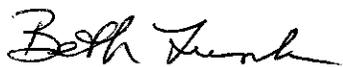
With the current driving force for quality improvement in the overall healthcare system initiated by the Affordable Care Act, we at Hospice of the Pines feel we are lacking in one area: electronic health care information exchange. Hospice of the Pines is still utilizing paper documentation. If we are able to procure funding to aid in implementing the hardware and software necessary to communicate electronically with our partners in the health care industry, we can improve the quality of our medical care. We can be certain we are providing evidence-based practices by tracking and trending data electronically. We can work with our healthcare provider partners to provide seamless transitions for our underserved Elderly patients.

Hospice of the Pines

Additionally, with the implementation of the necessary hardware and software, Hospice of the Pines will have an enhanced ability to contribute meaningfully to supporting the Quality Measures and evidence-based practices initiatives required by other healthcare providers via the Affordable Care Act. Hospice of the Pines intends to partner with primary care physicians, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and hospital systems to create better transitions across the medical care continuum.

Thank You for Your Consideration.

Sincerely,



Beth Funk, Administrator  
Hospice of the Pines, LLC

References Cited:

Mor, Vincent, Ph.D. (2012). Testimony for Senate Special Committee on Aging at [www.aging.senate.gov](http://www.aging.senate.gov)

Naylor, Mary (2006); *Transitional Care: A critical dimension of the home healthcare quality agenda*. Journal for Healthcare Quality. 28(1): 20-28.

National Quality Forum at [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)

Wilson, Elisabeth, M.D., M.P.H., et al (2005); *Effects of limited English proficiency and physician language on health care comprehension*. Journal of General Internal Medicine. 20: 800-806

**1. The Project Description and Partner Relationship/Collaborative Structure:**

- *Brief Organizational Descriptions:* Hospice of the Pines is a privately owned, Medicare licensed, CHAP accredited hospice agency operating in Yavapai County Arizona.

Organizational structure is:

- Governing Board
- Medical Director (1), and Associate Medical Director (1)
- Nurse Practitioners (2)
- Administrator and Director of Clinical Services (1) reports to Governing Board
- Leadership Team comprised of: Patient Care Coordinator (1) and Human Resources/Quality Assurance Nurse (1) report to Administrator and Director of Clinical Services
- Volunteer Coordinator (1), Administrative Assistant (1), Community Relations Coordinator (1), Intake Coordinator (1), and Medical Records/Clinical Administrative Assistant (1) report to Director of Clinical Services
- Nursing staff (6), Certified Nursing Assistants (4), Spiritual/Bereavement staff (2), and Social Work staff (3) report to Patient Care Manager
- Hospice of the Pines currently utilizes paper reports, faxes, and phone calls to communicate with other healthcare providers.
- *Geographic Area and Demographics:* Hospice of the Pines serves Maricopa County.
  - Demographics of the population served in the last 12 months:
    - 90% Elderly Medicare patients, 10% non-elderly patients
    - 14% of patients served by Hospice of the Pines in the past 12 months came from Primary Care Physicians and Nurse Practitioners, 2% of patients served by Hospice of the Pines in the past 12 months came from Hospitals, and 5% of patients served by Hospice of the Pines in the past 12 months came from Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living Homes
- *The business processes that the health information exchange will assist with improving include:*
  - Expedient and improved communication with primary care physicians concerning their patients who are receiving hospice services. Improved communication will aid in smooth transitions between care providers
  - Expedient and improved communication with skilled nursing facilities, hospitals, and other healthcare providers concerning hospice patients. Improved communication will aid in smooth transitions between care providers
  - Improved quality of care for patients receiving hospice services due to improved ability for collaboration between Hospice of the Pines, discharge planners, primary care physicians, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and other involved parties
  - Improved ability to collect and analyze data pertaining to Quality Measures, and improved ability to implement evidence-based practices
  - Improved quality assurance performance improvement activities for Hospice of the Pines

- improved communication is essential to quality assurance and performance improvement
  - the ability to analyze data and track trends electronically lends itself to improved patient care and quality assurance performance improvement activities
- *HIE funds will allow Hospice of the Pines to meet business objectives by:* allowing the purchase of appropriate equipment and software for the implementation of health information exchange between Hospice of the Pines and primary care physicians, skilled nursing facilities, as well as medical and discharge personnel from hospitals, clinics, etc.
  - Equipment purchase to include: Hardware for field staff to utilize for record entry into EHR, and connectivity to the physician portal and ability to implement the skilled nursing facility portal
  - Software purchase to include: Sun Coast Solutions Software, Implementation, and Training. This includes the physician portal that allows Hospice of the Pines staff to utilize electronic exchange of health information to improve the quality of health care. It also includes the QAPI console set up and training fees.
- *How the project will serve the needs of the underserved and low income populations:* The project will help Hospice of the Pines to better serve the needs of the Elderly and Limited English Proficiency populations by allowing increased communication between Hospice of the Pines, the primary care physicians who know their patients well, skilled nursing facilities, and other healthcare providers. HIE will also allow for communication between Hospice of the Pines and hospital (and other medical) discharge planners. Due to the improved communication, HIE will allow Hospice of the Pines to improve the quality of patient care by providing patient care summaries across unaffiliated organizations, improving medication reconciliation, ensuring patients meet with primary care physicians post-hospital discharge, and ensuring patients take medications as prescribed. This is particularly important in the care of the Elderly, Low Income, and Limited English Proficiency populations because they are the ones who tend to fall through the medical cracks.
  - In reference to the Elderly population, Vincent Mor, Ph.D. in his testimony for the Senate Special Committee on Aging stated, “High rates of transition from one medical setting to another result in medical errors, problematic care coordination, duplication of services, and relocation stress for these frail older persons.”
  - In reference to the Limited English Proficiency population, Wilson, et al (2006) had this to say, “Limited English proficiency is a barrier to medical comprehension and increases the risk of adverse medication reactions.”
- *Hospice of the Pines, LLC will serve as the fiscal agent on this project*
- *Project Lead: Tammy Lobstein: See Attached Resume’*
- *Co-Applicant: Dr. N Sankar*

## 2. **Project Work Plan:**

- *Milestones and expectations with time-specific objectives for the project include:*
  - Purchase of field staff hardware
    - To be completed by February 15, 2013
  - Purchase of software to enable HIE via physician portal
    - To be completed by February 15, 2013
  - Training on use of field staff hardware
    - To be completed by March 31, 2013
  - Training on use of software to enable HIE via physician portal
    - To be completed by March 31, 2012
  - Implementation of field staff hardware
    - To be completed by April 30, 2013
  - Implementation of software
    - To be completed by April 30, 2013
  - Collection of data and electronic exchange of information
    - To be completely implemented and functioning by June 30, 2012
- *Communications Plan to ensure all stakeholders are kept informed of goals and progress*
  - Monthly reports written by Project Lead will be issued to all stakeholders detailing measureable goals and progress towards those goals
- *Plans for staff training for implementation*
  - Suncoast Solutions to provide implementation, continuous evaluation, system operation and maintenance, and technical support resources
- *Names, Titles, and organizations of the primary project team members*
  - Tammy Lobstein: Project Lead Hospice of the Pines (Project Coordination, and Oversight)
  - Beth Funk, RN: Administrator/Director of Clinical Services Hospice of the Pines (Project Oversight)
  - Sam DeLeon: IT Specialist Hospice of the Pines (Project Implementation)
  - Dr. N Sankar (Partner in HIE with Primary Care Physicians)

**3. Line Item Budget:**

<i>Description</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Total</i>
Hardware for Field Clinical Staff	\$27,856.88	
Software Suncoast Solutions	\$28,000.00	
Licenses Suncoast Solutions	\$23,040.00	
Implementation and Training Suncoast Solutions	\$30,950.00	
Software Support and Maintenance	\$9442.40	
CellTrak Patient Specific Care Data Plan	\$5000.00	
Hospice of the Pines Cash Match (covering extra \$24,289.28 over \$100,000.00 funding request)	\$24,289.28	
Hospice of the Pines In-Kind Match (Salary for Project Coordination)	\$25,710.72	\$150,000.00

**4. Budget Narrative:**

*Salary and Fringe:* Portion of IT Specialist's Salary to be paid by Hospice of the Pines as in-kind match for Project Coordination. 80% of IT Specialist's time will be devoted to the project for the time period of the grant.

*Equipment:* Dell Latitude E5420 hardware for field staff, Intel Core i3-2330M, 2.20GHz, 3MB Cache, Dell Latitude E5X20

*Software:* Suncoast Solutions developed software, training, and implantation  
CellTrak Patient Specific Care Data Plan

*In-Kind Match:* Cash Match \$24,289.28, Salary for Project Coordination \$25,710.72

**Tammy Lobstein**

9695 E. Shirley Lane

Prescott Valley, AZ 86314

Cell/MSG 928-713-8809

Email: tj1lobstein@gmail.com

**OBJECTIVE**

Seeking a full time permanent employment opportunity to utilize years of training, knowledge, skills and abilities. To enhance both employer productivity, and my professional growth.

**SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

Continually provide outstanding customer service. Able to effectively utilize all office equipment to complete tasks.

**EXPERIENCE**

**Current:** Hospice of the Pines Dewey, AZ 6/28/2009 - Current

Position: Clinical Administrative Assistant, Medical Records

Duties: Responsible for all Medical Records, from creating to closing. Data entry, tracking of all patient information, maintaining End of Month & Year End reports for Corp. Creating forms and documents on computer using Word, Excel, & Publisher. Ordering of medical equipment & supply, assisting all staff where and as needed.

**Prescott Fence Co.** Prescott, AZ 8/27/2007 - 4/2008

Position: Office Manager

Duties: Answer heavy phone traffic, schedule all outside sales appointments for sales force, accounts payable and receivable, Quick Books accounting, inventory control. All aspects of running an office.

**C. Marshall & Associates, LTD** Prescott Valley, AZ 06/26/2003 – 07/27/2007

Position: Licensed Property Manager

Duties: Responsible for management of department employees as well as over seeing management of portfolio of approximately 500 individual rental units throughout the Tri City Area. Increased portfolio by approximately 100 units per year. Named Property Manager for the year 2005.

**Hoop-It-All** Prescott Valley, AZ 10/2002 – 02/2003

Position: Assembly line Duties: Cut, roll & package embroidery backing materials.

**Water Station** Flagstaff, AZ 11/1996 – 04/2002 Position: Manager/Owner Operator

Duties: Operation & Maintenance of a Transient water filling station

**EDUCATION** High School Graduate Prescott Valley School of Real Estate

**REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

November 15, 2012

Dr. N. Sankar: Prescott, AZ

Re: Hospice of the Pines application for the ASET Unconnected Healthcare Providers Health Information Exchange Grant

Dear Grant Committee Members;

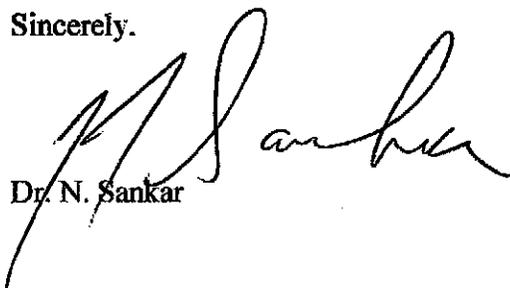
As a physician who shares patients with Hospice of the Pines, I agree to support them and participate in their endeavor to implement and utilize electronic health information exchange. I also support their efforts to receive the ASET Unconnected Healthcare Providers Health Information Exchange Grant.

I am confident about Hospice of the Pines services, and I have been impressed with their quality of care. Because of their dedicated and compassionate staff members, Hospice of the Pines has a positive effect on the patients and the families they serve.

When Hospice of the Pines achieves the ability to utilize electronic health information exchange, I, and other primary care physicians who work with Hospice of the Pines, will have the ability to communicate more effectively and efficiently concerning the patients we share. This will allow for improved quality of patient care, particularly in the areas of medication reconciliation and continuity of care. Additionally, Hospice of the Pines will be poised to participate in Accountable Care Organizations. They will also be able to help other healthcare providers meet their requirements for reporting CMS Quality Measures by contributing to data collection and analysis.

Please consider Hospice of the Pines the best choice for the receipt of the ASET Unconnected Healthcare Providers Health Information Exchange Grant in Yavapai County.

Thank You  
Sincerely,



Dr. N. Sankar