

Examples of best practice: bid and report writing

This section is designed to help you write more persuasive funding bids. Many of the principles can also be applied to report writing in order to maintain a quality relationship where your funders hold you in high regard.

Age Concern Hertfordshire (ACH) recently attracted £50,000 of project funding from their local Primary Care Trust to deliver an Information and Advice (I&A) project for older people in three areas within their County.

Below you will see extracts from their bid, which show good practice.

“It is recognised that a single door entry into non-medical support services for older people is advantageous for both service providers, patients and their families and carers. This single door entry prevents patients from falling in between the gaps of service provision and allows for an integrated approach to health and well-being; achieving a positive outcome for both patient and practitioner through joined-up working.”

This extract is taken from their introduction. As you can see, it clearly states the need for the project. Making the case for what you are proposing is a powerful way to start your document.

It is vital in a bid that you state exactly what your proposed service will do. This extract states precisely that as well as re-capping the reason why. Repeating the need for your project is no bad thing.

“The proposed GP I&A Service will provide a confidential help and advice service which supports GP’s, Practice Nurses, District Nurses, and Practice Managers within the GP surgeries. This service will enable a patient to be referred directly to ACH to provide a holistic approach to ensure all patients’ needs are fully met.”

“ACH employs specialist, dedicated information and advice staff that work to the criteria set down by the Community Legal Service. ACH will refer clients to many of its existing services including: hospital discharge support, mental health hospital discharge support, volunteer visiting, carers support or the benefits outreach service to name but a few.”

Demonstrate how established you are in the area to justify why you are the best agency to carry out the proposed work.

“There are 332,017 people aged 50 plus in Hertfordshire, 32.11% of the total population. There are currently 175,600 people aged 50 to 64 in Hertfordshire, 16.98% of the total population. This number is expected to rise to 218,460 or 18.66% by 2020.”

Quantifying current and anticipated demand for your services in numbers can really help people to understand just how important those services are.

When writing a bid you should show that you have thought about the practicalities of how the service will be delivered if funding is secured.

“ACH proposes providing an accessible GP I&A service pilot in three areas of the County which will ensure non-medical support, vital to health and wellbeing, is available to people over the age of 50 at their time of most need and vulnerability.

The support will be available at 25 GP surgeries (within three areas in Hertfordshire) and quality services will be provided by highly trained staff that are accessible in relation to both time and location. Initially services will rotate between the surgeries as the project develops in accordance with need; service planning will be informed through trend analysis and forecasting to ensure services meet the required need; for example ensuring staff are available during busy time e.g. flu injection times etc.”

*“The complete GP I&A service package assists the older person to make **informed choices**, feel in control, **empowers** them to take **responsibility** for their **health and wellbeing** but with support to do so.”*

Always use key words that the funder will be looking for. The key words for the PCT in this example have been highlighted in bold.

“The service inputs will include 2 full-time members of staff (one of whom will be a Team Leader), sufficient volunteers to provide the service support required, ACH knowledge and experience and the support of a countywide infrastructure which will ensure quality of service.”

Illustrate your own commitment to the project by talking about how you will call on all the non-financial resources at your disposal. Mentioning your use of volunteers, in particular, will also show that your cause is strong enough to motivate people to give their time for free.

Setting yourself measurable targets demonstrates accountability and transparency. You could also set targets which relate to income maximisation or cost savings as they hold a lot of sway with stakeholders. They make it clear that the funding represents value for money.

“The outcomes of this project will ensure at least 3,000 older people receive support in the pilot year.”

*“Benefits to GPs will include:
* Reduced repeat visits to the GP as additional advice will be readily available at the time of most need*

*Project benefits for patients include:
* Awareness of benefit entitlement which will improve standards of living”*

Don't be afraid to spell out the benefits in no uncertain terms! They're not always as immediately obvious to others as they are to you.

“ACH is a member of the Age Concern federation and as such has access to different support services via Age Concern England. ACH is committed to a high standard of service for all our clients and holds both Quality Counts, works to the Community Legal Service standard for information and advice, and Investors in People. Age Concern Hertfordshire accesses a network of other voluntary organisations and also works closely with statutory authorities.”

Stating the codes of practice you adhere to will help to show stakeholders that you are a reputable agency.

End on a positive note. Demonstrate that you have a long-term vision and intend to build on the successes of the project.

“Following a review of Phase 1 Year 1 an evaluation will feed into service planning, design and implementation for Phase 2 Year 2 of the project. This evaluation will also determine the future resource requirements of the project.

It is anticipated that the GP I&A Phase 2 project will roll out to an increased number of health access points during year 2 including intermediate care facilities, falls prevention clinics, memory clinics, toe nail cutting clinics and more.”

Another really good way to communicate to your stakeholders in funding bids or reports is to bring the project to life with client case studies. They show the human element of your service.



We would like to thank Age Concern Hertfordshire for allowing us to use extracts from their successful PCT funding bid.

