News and Announcements

News Release
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Contact information

MDH awards COVID-19 emergency health care grants to about 350 organizations statewide

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) announced today that it has awarded $50 million in emergency health care grants to nearly 350 provider organizations across the state for preparing for and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MDH awarded grants to a variety of providers including ambulance services, health care clinics, tribal health organizations, pharmacies, hospitals, assisted living facilities and health systems. MDH received more than 1,600 grant requests for the available $50 million, requesting a total of more than $300 million.

Providers most commonly applied for funding to cover staffing costs, equipment and supplies, including personal protective equipment.

“With these grants, providers can start using these funds as quickly as possible to prepare for delivering care to COVID-19 patients and be ready for the many challenges this pandemic places on Minnesota’s health care system,” said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm.

MDH reviewed grant applications and considered multiple factors in ranking requests by highest priority, including the urgency of need and ability to spend these resources swiftly. Reviewers also considered whether other funding sources were becoming available to meet certain needs; for example, nursing home applicants were encouraged to apply for expedited reimbursement through the Minnesota Department of Human Services, but will be able to apply for funds in future rounds to meet needs that cannot be met through that source. MDH also considered and tried to balance the total needs of the health care sector across the state. The grant amounts ranged in size from a few hundred dollars to $5 million. A list of grantee organizations is available on MDH’s website at COVID–19 Response Grant for Short Term Emergency Funding (/facilities/ruralhealth/funding/grants/covidshort.html).

In March, the Minnesota Legislature passed an emergency health care law authorizing a $200 million investment in the health care system to respond to COVID-19. The funding for this initial $50 million round of emergency grants was added to an existing public heath response contingency account, with instructions from the legislature to focus on helping relieve costs that are necessary on an emergency basis for addressing the COVID-19 outbreak.

MDH will soon be taking applications for the additional $150 million the legislature approved as a new health care response fund to help providers prepare for and respond to the outbreak. Providers can use the money to fund staffing costs, to establish temporary sites to provide testing or treatment services, to expand the number of beds available for COVID-19 treatment, for isolating affected patients or staff, and to support emergency transportation. Grants can also fund temporary information technology systems to support triage, screening and telemedicine. In addition, providers can use the funds for personal protective equipment, testing and other supplies and ICU equipment, among other things. A full list of eligible expenses will be included in the application, which will open within the next week.

-MDH-

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