

## **Attachment #3 – Statement of Work March 18, 2011**

### **Title: Health Communications Support Contract**

#### **I. Introduction**

**Since its creation as an independent Center in 1998, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) has developed a broad research agenda focused on a variety of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) practices.**

#### **II. Background**

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) consists of medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not generally considered part of conventional medicine. Public interest in, and use of CAM are widespread. According to the 2007 National Health Interview Survey, 38 percent of Americans used some form of CAM during the preceding year, and \$33.9 billion is spent each year on CAM practices. Evidence-based research is beginning to offer answers into which modalities work or don't work, whether they are safe, and how they work. However, many forms of CAM have not been sufficiently studied to answer these important questions.

The mission of the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) is to define, through rigorous scientific investigation, the usefulness and safety of complementary and alternative medicine interventions and their roles in improving health and health care. In 2010, NCCAM marked its tenth anniversary with a renewed focus on symptom management, enhancing health and well being, and advancing the science of natural products and mind and body therapies.

Effective health communications play a vital role in furthering each aspect of NCCAM's mission. NCCAM meets this challenge primarily through its Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL).

#### **III. Statement of Work**

The contractor shall be responsible for providing a range of health communications activities that include: strategic health communications program planning; formative communications research and program evaluation; promotion of NCCAM and its programs to the public, "conventional" and CAM health care practitioners, and researchers; media relations; materials development; stakeholder outreach; partnership development; event planning; and rapid response communications.

#### **IV. *Specific activities:***

##### **1. Strategic health communications program planning**

Based on discussions and information gathered from OCPL, the contractor shall identify no less than five (5) strategic communications priorities and develop an annual detailed program and evaluation plan. The plan shall be based on social marketing and health communications theory and practices. The contractor shall attend an annual day-long planning retreat (held either at NCCAM offices or at a local hotel or conference center) with OCPL and its other NCCAM contractors.

The contractor shall attend Annual retreats and monthly meetings to plan and provide updates on project work. These retreats/meetings allow the contractor an opportunity to understand the big picture of what OCPL is doing, what the priorities for the office are, and how work in each contract is synergistic.

## 2. Formative communications research and program evaluation

The contractor shall conduct formative research, which may include such tasks as: conducting literature reviews, telephone or in-person focus groups, interviews, and surveys; identifying and characterizing key audiences, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and information needs; and testing messages and materials.

NCCAM currently has a generic clearance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to conduct formative and evaluative research. The contractor shall prepare instruments (for example, focus group moderator's guides, interview guides, and survey questions), research methodology, and other documentation for submission to OMB to conduct specific research activities under the generic clearance. These items shall be submitted first to the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) for review and approval. The COTR shall provide comments and return the documents to the contractor for revision. Typical turnaround time will be 2-3 weeks for each instrument. The contractor may be expected to conduct approximately two (2) literature reviews, eight (8) telephone focus groups, five (5) telephone in-depth interviews, and one (1) omnibus surveys (approximately five (5) questions added to a larger omnibus survey). The contractor shall not proceed with any surveys/interviews until OMB clearance has been obtained and approval to proceed is provided by the Contracting Officer.

For selected projects, the contractor shall evaluate the impact of communications activities using the consumer research detailed above and data provided by NCCAM on calls to the NCCAM clearinghouse and visits to the NCCAM Web site. As directed by the COTR, the contractor shall provide research reports that include these data and implications and recommendations for programmatic changes and future initiatives (approximately one evaluation project per year).

## 3. Promotion of NCCAM and its programs

NCCAM provides numerous public information services, including an information clearinghouse accessible through a toll-free number, a Web site rich with fact sheets and other information products, monthly eBulletin, a Distinguished Lecture Series, an online continuing medical education series, exhibits at professional meetings, etc. NCCAM also has a social media presence on Facebook and Twitter. NCCAM's education campaign, "Time To Talk" focuses on the dialogue between health care providers and patients about the use of CAM. As requested for a variety of these activities, the contractor shall prepare a detailed plan to promote NCCAM and specific products and services through the media, third-party organizations, and online venues. OCPL shall review the plan and decide which tactics to pursue. The contractor shall support OCPL in the implementation of the plan and include new media strategies as well.

## 4. Media relations

The contractor shall have the capability to perform several media relations tasks, including, but not limited to drafting press kits (press releases and backgrounders), pitching stories, coordinating media telebriefings and satellite media tours to disseminate emerging research findings, and tracking and reporting on media response to press releases. Up to three (3) media events per year that disseminate research results, including press kits, pitches, telebriefings, and tracking reports shall be required.

In addition, the contractor shall review editorial calendars for key outlets and suggest proactive opportunities to disseminate NCCAM's evidence-based information.

The contractor shall provide professionals with the expertise to conduct group and individual media training of NCCAM spokespeople and/or grantees. Up to two (2) full-day group trainings will be held each year, each consisting of approximately five (5) participants. Two half-day individual trainings for up to ten (10) participants will be held each year. Trainings shall be held in the NCCAM offices, in Bethesda, MD. Travel and/or lodging costs for these training sessions will not be reimbursed under this project/contract.

#### 5. Message development

Using formative research, the contractor shall develop salient messages targeted to our key audiences (CAM consumers, researchers, and health care practitioners). The contractor shall utilize the principles of social marketing to develop messages, which shall be incorporated into NCCAM's communications materials and outreach and promotion activities. The contractor shall prepare for and participate in three (3) messaging meetings per year with NCCAM senior leadership. These meetings shall be held in the NCCAM offices, in Bethesda, MD.

#### 6. Product development

For specific education or outreach programs or for NCCAM as a whole, the contractor shall develop communications products. These products shall incorporate key messages and may include such items as: fact sheets, brochures, print public service announcements, "bites and b-roll" packages, slide presentations, booklets, brochures, videos, etc. The contractor shall provide ideas for new products and the contractor's approach to developing materials. For examples of NCCAM products, visit <http://nccam.nih.gov>. The COTR will ensure that all required clearances are obtained before tasking the contractor with product development work.

#### 7. Stakeholder outreach and partnership development

The contractor shall identify strategies to proactively involve stakeholder groups in NCCAM communications activities. The contractor shall identify key stakeholder groups and opportunities for communications partnerships based on identified goals and objectives. With approval from the COTR, the contractor shall initiate contact with possible outreach partners to establish and maintain partnerships. The contractor shall set up and prepare for meetings and plan joint activities. Note: emphasis of this task is on building substantive relationships not logistical meeting support.

#### 8. Event and meeting planning

The contractor shall assist OCPL in planning its annual Stephen E. Straus Distinguished Lecture. Activities shall include space identification, speaker coordination and travel, Continuing Medical Education materials preparation, event promotion (i.e., calendar listings in local news outlets, media advisory, mailings to professional societies, and NIH campus promotion including posters, flyers, and tent cards placed around NIH facilities and announcement in campus publications), event logistics, event materials, and onsite support. Lectures are held on the NIH campus and typically include a 1-hour presentation followed by a poster session and reception.

Up to two (2) additional similar events may be planned per year.

Use of appropriated funds to cover meals/light refreshments and use of non-NIH space for these meetings require approved Forms NIH 827-1 and NIH 2408-1 and prior written Contracting Officer approval before a hotel/caterer/meeting space agreement is signed. Travel costs must be in accordance with and cannot exceed the rates established in the Federal Travel Regulations.

#### 9. Rapid response communications

The contractor shall assist OCPL in quickly responding (within one (1) day to one (1) week depending on the project) to emerging information or situations in the research field. NCCAM has a rapid response communications plan that involves all levels of NCCAM leadership and various communications elements. NCCAM shall alert the contractor should this need arise and provide all relevant background information. The contractor shall quickly assemble lists of stakeholders and/or the media regarding new developments. The contractor shall draft talking points or a statement for the media if needed.

#### 10. Project management and administration

The contractor shall deliver monthly invoices accompanied by monthly reports to the COTR and Contracting Officer. Reports shall detail activities completed during the preceding month, as well as activities planned for the following month.

In staffing this contract, the contractor shall provide a Project Director and Project Manager with the below qualifications who will be designated as Key Personnel. Changes to Key Personnel require advance written Contracting Officer approval.

- A Project Director with extensive health communications and public relations experience (at least 10 years experience) who shall serve as senior public affairs counsel to NCCAM and oversee staffing, reporting, and all communications activities. The Project Director shall have a Bachelor's degree in a field related to the duties required.
- A Project Manager with at least 5 years of health communications experience to oversee day-to-day operations. The Project Manager shall have a Bachelor's degree in a field related to the duties required.

Other staff shall include individuals with skills, training and expertise to respond to the specific health communications requirements of this SOW as outlined in the tasks above, including media relations, media training, evaluation research, creative services, and crisis communications.

#### 11. Phase-In Transition Plan

In the event of a new contract, the Contractor shall ensure the orderly, efficient and safe transition of all contract activities and materials three (3) months prior to the new contract effective date. This shall include the following Initial Transition activities and plans:

- a. Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the contract effective date, develop and submit, for COTR review and approval, a Draft Initial Transition Plan to ensure full assumption of all contract responsibilities and functions no later than three (3) months following the contract effective date. The Draft Initial Transition Plan shall delineate the transition activities to be undertaken, timelines for the completion of each transition activity, and the staff to be assigned. Revise the Draft Initial Transition Plan to accommodate COTR comments, and submit the Final Initial Transition Plan no later than six (6) weeks after receipt of the COTR comments.

- b. Develop materials for and conduct orientation briefings for contract, technical and administrative staff within six (6) weeks of the contract effective date. Work with the COTR to incorporate into these orientation briefings information on NCCAM policies and procedures.
- c. Participate in a series of joint meetings with the incumbent contractor, the COTR and his/her designees to review the status of existing assignments to be completed.
- d. Contract materials and plans currently in use by the incumbent contractor shall be provided to the Contractor within fourteen (14) calendar days of the effective date of the contract. This includes: SOPs, project management and staffing plan, QA/QC plan, training plan, and overall monitoring strategy.

12. Final Transition

The contractor shall develop and implement a Final Transition Plan to ensure the orderly, efficient and safe transition of all contract activities and materials. This shall include the following:

- a. Within six (6) months of the expiration date of the contract, develop and submit, for COTR review and approval, a Draft Final Transition Plan delineating the transition activities to be undertaken, timelines for the completion of each transition activity, and the staff to be assigned. The Draft Final Transition Plan shall include a listing of and plans for transferring contract-generated materials, e.g., SOPs, training plan, QA/QC plan, and methods proposed to plan and conduct through briefings on the status of current and future assignments, overall assessment of the performance. Revise the Draft Final Transition Plan to accommodate COTR comments, and submit the Final Transition Plan no later than four (4) months prior to the completion date of the contract.
- b. Implement the approved Final Transition Plan to ensure the completion of all transition activities and the transfer of contract generated materials to the successor contractor by the contract expiration date.
- c. Maintain contract operations at full staffing levels during the Final Transition Period.