



# COUNTY OF ERIE

**MARK C. POLONCARZ**

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

April 7, 2014

Erie County Legislature  
92 Franklin Street 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Buffalo, New York 14202

**Re: Consultant Contract for Erie County Elderly Nutrition Services Program**

Dear Honorable Members:

The attached resolution requests authorization to enter into a contract with Community Connections of New York, Inc. to develop and implement a Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement process for the Department of Senior Services' Elderly Nutrition Services program. The contract is for the period of May 1, 2014, through December 30, 2014.

Should your Honorable Body require any further information, I encourage you to contact Randy Hoak at the Department of Senior Services. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark C. Poloncarz".

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.  
Erie County Executive

Enclosure  
MCP/mc

cc: Randy Hoak, Commissioner, Department of Senior Services

## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature  
**From:** Department of Senior Services  
**Re:** Consultant Contract for Erie County Elderly Nutrition Services Program  
**Date:** March 28, 2014

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### **SUMMARY**

Approve the attached resolution to allow the Department of Senior Services to contract with Community Connections of NY, Inc. to develop and implement a Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement process for the Erie County Elderly Nutrition Services (ECENS) program. The contract is for the period of May 1, 2014, through December 30, 2014.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

Funding will come from the Department's Title III C-1 grant. Additional County funds are not required.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMENDATION**

Under the Department's 2014 ECENS contracts, contractors are required to have routine quality assurance (QA) processes in place and to work with the County on quality improvement efforts. A continual quality improvement (QI) process must be established for ECENS to facilitate contract compliance. At this time, assistance is needed in creating a uniform process that will apply to all our food contractors.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Effective QA and continual QI processes will create a transparent process allowing the County to meet its monitoring obligations while providing contract agencies with predictability regarding performance expectations, thereby maximizing the ability to provide excellent service to our clients. QA processes need to be reviewed from the perspective of changing regulatory requirements from the State Office for Aging and changing local conditions that impact service delivery; and a process must be established for revising procedures when appropriate.

Implementation of a QI process will establish a mechanism for systematic collection of client feedback, regular opportunity to share feedback with contractors, collaboration around steps to be taken to improve service, and evaluation of the effectiveness of improvement steps.

Setting up an effective process is not something that can be done without expertise. Community Connections of NY (CCNY), Inc. is an experienced local Quality Improvement agency that has established QA/QI processes for the Erie County Department of Mental Health and the Erie County Department of Social Services. They

have also been utilized by local grantors including United Way of Buffalo and Erie County, and the Health Foundation of Western and Central NY.

CCNY will provide objective analysis of current processes and data collection forms, including client satisfaction surveys; identify shortcomings; assist in streamlining current practice; and facilitate a dialogue between the County and its contractors. CCNY will also conduct an initial workshop for all participants to explain what QA and QI is, so that everyone has a common understanding of the goal for this project.

It is possible to establish an effective QA and continual QI process that minimize ad hoc interactions (such as reporting complaints) between the County and subcontractors while maximizing the ability to provide excellent service to our clients. Such processes are increasingly an expectation of funders in the community including other Erie County departments, local foundations and grantors, managed long term care companies, and other buyers of services. While the Department of Senior Services has experience in QA and continual quality improvement processes, the level of change in the ECENS program since 2012—including both new contractors and new roles for existing contractors—warrants the assistance of a professional QI agency.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION**

The Department of Senior Services will be unable to revise current QA processes and implement a new QI process.

### **STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL**

The Department of Senior Services will enter into the contract with Community Connections of NY, Inc. to who will work with the Department and its contractors to develop common QA procedures and implement a QI process.

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:  
DEPARTMENT OF SENIOR SERVICES

RE: Consultant Contract for Erie  
County Elderly Nutrition Services  
Program (ECENS)

WHEREAS, the Department of Senior Services 2014 ECENS contracts with food providers require contractors to observe standard Quality Assurance (QA) protocols and participate in a continual Quality Improvement (QI) process; and

WHEREAS, new QA/QI processes need to be developed for the Department of Senior Services and its food providers; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Senior Services desires to contract with Community Connections of New York Inc. at a cost not to exceed \$9,950 to function as the consultant for the QA/QI development process for the period May 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014; and

WHEREAS, Community Connections of New York, Inc. is an experienced QI agency who has put in similar processes for other Erie County departments; and

WHEREAS, appropriations are available in the 163III-C-12014 grant to pay for these consulting services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the County Executive be and is hereby authorized to enter into a consultant contract, not to exceed 9,950, with Community Connections of NY, Inc. to assist in developing a QA/QI process for the ECENS program during the period May 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014, and be it further

RESOLVED, that available appropriations in the Department's 163III-C-12014 grant's Professional Services Contracts and Fees Account be utilized to pay for these consulting services, and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the County Executive's Office, the Division of Budget and Management, the Comptroller's Office, and the Department of Senior Services.