

Performing Provider Name: Starr County Memorial Hospital
IGT Entity Name Supporting Request Funds : Starr County Hospital District

Estimated Valuation by Waiver Year: Total Project Value Federal Share

DY7 (2017-2018)	\$825,000	\$470,250
DY8 (2018-2019)	\$825,000	\$470,250
Total Request	\$1,650,000	\$940,500

Proposed System Definition: Starr County Hospital District dba Starr County Memorial Hospital is a 48 bed general acute care hospital located in Rio Grande City, Texas within Starr County, Texas. Our hospital meets the requirement of being a sole community provider, since the closest similar facility is Mission Regional Medical Center, which is located 38 miles East in Hidalgo County. Starr County Memorial Hospital is located in a Rural and medically underserved area. According to the 2010 US Census, the population in Starr County totaled 60,968. Median household income in our county was only \$26,172 and 36.6% of our total population lived below poverty level. The population in Starr County is estimated to be 64,122 as of July 1, 2016; according to the US Census Bureau Quick Facts. A total of 30.9% of the population are living in poverty. During the past ten years, Starr County Memorial Hospital has provided health care services to a significant number of indigent and uninsured persons through our hospital, rural health clinics, imaging center, and our four land ambulance EMS sub-stations.

For this specific project, the system definition will include inpatient services, outpatient observation services, and obstetrical care provided within our hospital plus access to some specialty care via telemedicine.

Medicaid and Low Income Uninsured Patient Population by Provider Estimate: 40.23%

Identified Community Needs to be undertaken with Requested DSRIP Funds:

Starr County is a rural community classified as a medically underserved area. Several local doctors with hospital admitting privileges have reached their retirement age. Also, some of our local physicians have decided to limit their workload. Unfortunately, we have not had an influx of new physician providers to our community in order to replace them. This has affected Starr County Memorial Hospital directly in that we have seen a steady decrease of inpatient admissions and deliveries. This problem of limited medical doctors in our county, along with the lack of specialty services has reduced our number of inpatient admissions for the past five years. According to Starr county Memorial Hospital’s patient statistics, we have seen an average decrease of 9% in our patient admissions to our facility for the past five years. Because we have limited access to physician primary care and specialty care for the hospital inpatient setting, we are left with no other option but to transfer patients needing to be admitted to other hospitals located in the McAllen Area.

Many of our patients who are transferred out would like to receive their medical services locally. When a patient is sent to another hospital, it places a large amount of financial strain to both patients and their families. As we mentioned before, many of our patients and their families live below poverty level. Implementing a Hospitalist Program with primary care physicians willing to provide acute inpatient, observation, and obstetrics services along with access to specialist services via telemedicine would

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help us provide much needed services to our population. This will enable us to provide better and more diversified comprehensive health care to more of our indigent population. Furthermore, this will help alleviate some of the financial burden faced by patient families associated with traveling expenses. This proposed increase access to primary care and specialty care will also allow us to better manage our patient population with acute and chronic illnesses such as hypertension and diabetes. With proper care planning and discharge planning we should be able to achieve better and improved quality outcomes for our patients.

Outcome Measure(s) Expected to Address Identified Community Needs:

The measure bundle which best correlates with our proposed project is measure bundle B1: Care Transition & Hospital Readmissions. This will allow us to formulate processes and develop comprehensive discharge planning methodology to better correlate the transition of care from our inpatient setting to a continuation of care setting.

Anticipated Core Activities Expected to Impact Identified Outcome Measure(s):

The selected core activity that best helps impact identified outcome measures is “Access to Primary Care” in which we will utilize telemedicine/ telehealth to deliver specialty services. We would be developing more access to primary care via a “Physician Hospitalist Program” that will include both medical and obstetrical services in conjunction with specialty services via telemedicine.

Sustainability Efforts:

During the past year, hospital Administration has been actively discussing the possibility of contracting with a Hospitalist Group. This shows collaboration between hospital management and our local physicians by keeping their patients at the local hospital. The main focus is to enhance and improve upon medical services being provided to our inpatients. We have approached a hospital in neighboring Hidalgo County to discuss the proposal of a contract to provide hospitalist/obstetrical services.

Starr County Memorial Hospital will be able to sustain this project since the hospital will be able to Provide enhanced and more diversified services to our community. Since several of our local physicians on the active medical staff have retired, the number of physicians with admitting privileges to our facility has decreased. If our project gets approved and we are able to invest and contract with a Hospitalist Group to take care of our inpatient admissions, we believe that the number of patient transfers to other hospitals will be reduced, thereby increasing our patient services provided locally.

Negotiations are currently underway with several different MCO’s in order to address improved services and quality outcomes for our patients. We will continue to participate with Managed Care Organizations by being fully credentialed providers and meeting their on-going requirements.