

## INVITATION TO TENDER



The Centre for Cross Border Studies, in partnership with the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, invites tenders from suitably qualified researchers for the

### **development of a prototype modelling tool for hospital planning on a border region and all-island basis.**

#### **Rationale**

The state of the health services in general, and hospital services in particular, is a burning issue in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This study will complement other work in progress between the two jurisdictions exploring the possibilities of improved health care in the border region through greater cross-border co-operation.<sup>1</sup>

A recent report from the Centre for Cross Border Studies, *Removing the Barriers: an Initial Report on the Potential for Cross-Border Co-operation in Hospital Services in Ireland*,<sup>2</sup> concludes that there is a clear case for joint hospital planning and rationalisation in the border region. This 2007 study examined the explicit or implicit criteria adopted within Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland for hospital reconfiguration and concluded that there was clear scope for joint hospital planning and rationalisation exercises in the Irish border region. The *Removing the Barriers* report documented differences in strategic policy between the two jurisdictions: for example, there appears to be a greater premium on accessibility in Northern Ireland than in the Republic. In particular, the 2007 study recommended revisiting an influential report on hospital services in the North East of the Republic that had ignored the availability of services in Northern Ireland. It suggested that consideration should be given to facilitating access by people in adjacent Northern border areas to any new hospital located in the north-eastern region of the Republic. Similarly, in April 2008 an OECD report<sup>3</sup> took issue with a

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Co-Operation and Working Together (CAWT) has been awarded total of £24 million (circa €30 million) for Health and Social Care Services under the Interreg IVA Programme. Under the auspices of the North South Ministerial Council, there is ongoing work on a range of issues including planning for major emergencies, pandemic flu planning, technology, cancer research, and health promotion. A joint feasibility study by the Departments of Health, North and South, is also currently under way to identify the potential for a more strategic approach to co-operation in health and social well-being in view of the recent reorganisation and reform programmes for health and social services in both jurisdictions.

<sup>2</sup> Jamison, Dr Jim and Dr Michelle Butler, *Removing the Barriers: an Initial Report on the Potential for Cross-Border Co-operation in Hospital Services in Ireland*. The Centre for Cross Border Studies, Armagh, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> *Ireland: Towards an Integrated Public Service*, OECD Public Management Reviews, OECD, June 2008.

recommendation from the Health Partnership Consultancy Group that the north-east region's principal hospital should be situated in Navan, 70-80 minutes drive from the border, and suggested that the Irish Government should look at the option of two major hospitals in the north-east.

In March 2008, the Centre for Cross Border Studies published a further paper – *Surveying the Sickbeds: initial steps towards modelling all-island hospital accessibility*<sup>4</sup> – in which it examined the possibilities of spatially exploring the accessibility of present and future hospital provision, with particular attention paid to the cross-border region.

## **Aim and Objectives**

The overall aim of the present project is to *'identify how cross-border hospital services can provide mutual benefits for the people of the border region'*. The key focus is to support strategic cross-border co-operation for a more prosperous and sustainable region by exploring the potential for cross-border hospital services in the Irish border region.

Building on the two CCBS reports referenced above, this new study will focus specifically on the Irish border region but draw on comparable practice elsewhere in the EU and strive to make a real contribution to a renewed emphasis on developing cross-border health co-operation.

Specifically, the consultants will deliver interim and final reports that:

- examine the number, size, composition and possible locations of the hospitals that would be required in the future if the planning of acute services in the border region was on the basis of population needs rather than jurisdictional frontiers;
- develop a prototype modelling tool for hospital planning on a border region and all-island basis that could make possible accessibility to hospital services based on geographical distribution of patients (potential need and demand); taking into account the potential supply based on bed numbers and specialisms, and the transport network (modelling of accessibility based on travel time); and
- make recommendations on the future configuration of hospitals North and South that would be required if planning of acute services in the border region was on the basis of population needs rather than jurisdictional frontiers.

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<sup>4</sup> Ronan Foley, Martin Charlton and Patricia Clarke, "Surveying the Sickbeds: Initial Steps Towards Modelling All-Island Hospital Accessibility", in *The Journal of Cross Border Studies in Ireland*, The Centre for Cross Border Studies, Armagh, Spring 2008.

## Key Audiences & Dissemination of the Key Findings

While the primary audiences for this research report are health care professionals and policy makers, the Centre for Cross Border Studies places considerable value on ensuring that its research is available and accessible to a wider audience across the island of Ireland and further afield. CCBS therefore welcomes proposals for supplementary report formats in addition to the required outputs detailed below. In any case, the final report **must** include an Executive Summary that is appropriate for a general readership.

The consultants must also include a Dissemination Plan as part of their tender proposal. This could include articles for academic journals or conference presentations; however, the primary focus should be on how the key findings can be used to influence policy and decision-making processes. Recognising that the Centre for Cross Border Studies will have the main responsibility for dissemination, an integral element of the Dissemination Plan will be an 'emerging findings' conference, organised by the Centre for Cross Border Studies in January 2011; at which the consultants will present the key findings (including scenarios and draft modeling tool) emerging from the study. It is expected that the consultants will draw upon the discussion at this conference and any additional inputs from stakeholders in preparing the final research report.

## Required Outputs

<b>Interim Report</b> (including draft prototype modelling tool and modelling scenarios)	<b>June 2010</b>
<b>Presentation of emerging findings at Stakeholders' Conference</b>	<b>Jan 2011</b>
<b>Final Report</b> (including prototype modelling tool and modelling scenarios; overall conclusions and recommendations)	<b>April 2011</b>

**The Interim and Final Reports will be delivered in both hard copy and electronic format.**

## Outcomes

It is anticipated that the research will contribute to more effective cooperation between the two jurisdictions in planning future health and other public services by:

- a) demonstrating the value of quantitative modelling to measure the impact of policy decisions across borders; and
- b) providing a form of data audit to help identify the barriers that currently hinder such a process.

## Tender Format

All tenders must include:

- Detailed costings and timetable;
- Details of research approach and methodology;

- CVs of all members of the research team, highlighting relevant experience and expertise;
- Breakdown of the respective roles and responsibilities of the team members;
- Two examples of previous research relevant to the proposed study.

### **Timescale and costs**

This project will commence in October 2009 and must be completed no later than end April 2011.

A **maximum of £60,000** will be available for this research, inclusive of VAT and all expenses. While it is expected that tenders will represent value for money, the Centre for Cross Border Studies is not obliged to accept the lowest or any bid. The Centre will not pay any extra fees for secretarial or handling charges, and will not be liable for any costs incurred in drawing up tenders.

### **Closing date**

Closing date for the receipt of tenders is not later than **4.00pm on Thursday 24 September 2009**. Under no circumstances will late tenders be considered.

**One hard copy plus an electronic copy of all tender documents**, including supporting documentation, should be sent to:

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