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Award

Standalone Non-Imaging Vibration-Controlled Ultrasound System

NHS Supply Chain

F15: Voluntary ex ante transparency notice

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-007019

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04c2b8

Published 21 February 2025, 4:58pm

Section I: Contracting authority/entity

I.1) Name and addresses

NHS Supply Chain

Wellington House, 133-155 Waterloo Road

London

SE1 8UG

Contact

Alexandra Gothard

Email

alexandra.gothard@supplychain.nhs.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKI4 - Inner London – East

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health>

Buyer's address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health/about/procurement>

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

National or federal Agency/Office

I.5) Main activity

Health

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Standalone Non-Imaging Vibration-Controlled Ultrasound System

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 33100000 - Medical equipments

II.1.3) Type of contract

Supplies

II.1.4) Short description

NHS Supply Chain intends to launch a National Framework Agreement for the provision of Ultrasound System to Quantify Liver and or Spleen Stiffness and Measure Liver Steatosis that includes the following.

- The ability to measure liver stiffness to quantify fibrosis and cirrhosis.

- The ability to measure fatty liver to quantify steatosis non-invasively.
- The functionality of Vibration-Controlled Transient Elastography (VCTE) technology.
- The ability to allow any clinical practitioners to use the system rather than a trained sonographer only.

For the avoidance of doubt consumables will only be in scope of the proposed Framework if purchased alongside the types of equipment, as stated in any subsequent specification.

Precise quantities are unknown. It is anticipated that initial expenditure will be in the region of £17,500,000

in the first year of this Framework Agreement, however this is approximate only and the values may vary depending on the requirements of those bodies purchasing under the Framework Agreement. The estimated value over the total Framework Agreement term (including any extension options) is anticipated to be in the region of £35,000,000.

NHS Supply Chain engaged with suppliers that can provide a Standalone Non-Imaging Vibration-Controlled Ultrasound System to Quantify Liver and or Spleen Stiffness and Measure Liver Steatosis. The PIN 2024/S 000-039307 intended to identify such providers with a view to ultimately align this solution within the scope of Endoscopy and Ultrasound Framework which is due for renewal in November 2026. Suppliers capable of delivering such a solution have been invited to submit proposals to provide a route to market that enables access for the NHS during the interim period until the award of the new framework on 2nd November 2026.

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.1.7) Total value of the procurement (excluding VAT)

Value excluding VAT: £35,000,000

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 33100000 - Medical equipments

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

Main site or place of performance

Various Locations in the UK

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

This market exercise will be for the provision of a Standalone Non-Imaging Vibration-Controlled Ultrasound System to Quantify Liver and or Spleen Stiffness and Measure Liver Steatosis that includes the following.

- The ability to measure liver stiffness to quantify fibrosis and cirrhosis.
- The ability to measure fatty liver to quantify steatosis non-invasively.
- The functionality of Vibration-Controlled Transient Elastography (VCTE) technology.
- The ability to allow any clinical practitioners to use the system rather than a trained sonographer only.

II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Cost criterion / Weighting: 100

Price - Weighting: 100

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of options

Option to extend up to a total of 12 months

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Negotiated without a prior call for competition

- The products involved are manufactured purely for the purpose of research, experiment, study or development
- The works, supplies or services can be provided only by a particular economic operator for the following reason:
 - absence of competition for technical reasons

Explanation:

NHS Supply Chain engaged with suppliers that can provide a Standalone Non-Imaging Vibration-Controlled Ultrasound System to Quantify Liver and or Spleen Stiffness and Measure Liver Steatosis. The PIN 2024/S 000-039307 intended to identify such providers, resulting in one Provider responding to the PIN. This is truly disruptive innovation as classified via the Medical Technology Innovation classification framework on the government website.

IV.1.3) Information about a framework agreement

The procurement involves the establishment of a framework agreement

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

IV.2) Administrative information

IV.2.1) Previous publication concerning this procedure

Notice number: [2024/S 000-039307](#)

Section V. Award of contract/concession

A contract/lot is awarded: Yes

V.2) Award of contract/concession

V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract

21 February 2025

V.2.2) Information about tenders

The contract has been awarded to a group of economic operators: No

V.2.3) Name and address of the contractor/concessionaire

Echosens UK Limited

4 Burley House, Caspian Road, Altrincham

Greater Manchester,

WA14 5HH

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UKD3 - Greater Manchester

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

Yes

V.2.4) Information on value of contract/lot/concession (excluding VAT)

Total value of the contract/lot/concession: £35,000,000

V.2.5) Information about subcontracting

The contract/lot/concession is likely to be subcontracted

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

NHS Supply Chain have a mandate from DHSC to drive the availability of innovative products to the NHS. NHS Supply Chain believe the product sourced by this contract (which is not covered by any of its current Framework Agreements) falls within this remit as a “disruptive” innovative product and has been identified to provide enhanced patient benefits. This product will be utilised within the community to allow more people to be accurately diagnosed with liver fibrosis and cirrhosis due to an increase in people either attending a scan at their GP surgery or because the system will be available “on the road” which may reduce health inequalities for people from disadvantaged or high-risk communities. The aim to bring liver scanning into GP settings also decreases the amount of in hospital needed care. This will proactively stop further hospital appointments and ultimately any long-term hospitalisation. There will also be a reduction in initial referrals and assessment appointments with hepatology allowing providers to use resources more efficiently. NHS Supply Chain intends to enter into a Framework Agreement (FAG) with an identified supplier of these products/services alongside the existing framework previously mentioned in ‘II.1.4) short description’ above) following a 10 calendar day publication of this notice should there only be only 1 available supplier using procedure 'Award of a contract without prior publication of a call for competition' as the procurement falls outside the scope of application of the Public Contracts Regulations. The Term of this Framework Agreement is anticipated to be 22 months. As part of its strategy, NHSSC anticipates engaging with suppliers of these products/services with a view to ultimately align this solution within the scope of Endoscopy and Ultrasound framework, which is due for renewal in November 2026.

The Framework Agreement will be between NHS Supply Chain and the Supplier, however 1) NHSSC, 2) any NHS Trust; 3) any other NHS entity; 4) any government department, agency or other statutory body and/or 5) any private sector entity active in the UK healthcare sector will be able to enter into a direct contract with the Supplier for any of the supplies and/or services under the Framework. Electronic ordering will be used and electronic invoicing will be accepted and electronic payment will be used. For the avoidance of doubt and notwithstanding the estimate indicated at II.1.7, NHSSC does not guarantee any level of purchase through the framework. Any agreement entered will be considered a contract made in England according to English law and will be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English Courts.

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

n/a

n/a

Country

United Kingdom

VI.4.3) Review procedure

Precise information on deadline(s) for review procedures

Appeals to be logged in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended)