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Award

Portable Low-Field MRI System

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

F15: Voluntary ex ante transparency notice

Notice identifier: 2023/S 000-036285

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0422f1

Published 8 December 2023, 4:45pm

Section I: Contracting authority/entity

I.1) Name and addresses

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

Unit D, New Hythe Business Park, Magnitude House, New Hythe Lane

Aylesford

ME20 6WT

Contact

Jo Newton-Smith

Email

jo.newton-smith@nhs.net

Telephone

+44 1622926745

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKJ44 - East Kent

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.kmpt.nhs.uk>

Buyer's address

<https://www.kmpt.nhs.uk>

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Body governed by public law

I.5) Main activity

Health

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Portable Low-Field MRI System

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 33113000 - Magnetic resonance imaging equipment

II.1.3) Type of contract

Supplies

II.1.4) Short description

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (the "Trust") is expressing its intention to award a contract via a negotiated procedure without prior publication for the provision of a portable low-field (0.064 Tesla) magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system. The contract will also include associated peripherals, training, support and maintenance services for a period of five (5) years.

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: £280,000

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 33113100 - Magnetic resonance scanners

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKJ4 - Kent

Main site or place of performance

Kent and Medway

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (the "Trust") is expressing its intention to award a contract via a negotiated procedure without prior publication for the provision of a portable low-field (0.064 Tesla) magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system. The contract will also include associated peripherals, training, support and maintenance services for a period of five (5) years.

The MRI scanner will be used for the purpose of accelerating and developing local place-based neuroimaging research into the process of assessment and diagnosis of dementia, in which timely access to neuroimaging is frequently a rate-limiting step. The scanner will also be available for researchers addressing other mental health disorders, such as research aligned to the new Kent Complex Psychosis Service and investigation of non-dementia mental illness in older and younger adults.

A key focus will be to aid the development of new AI algorithms in the assessment of structural change in dementia and cognitive decline – to decrease the need for high field MRI brain assessment in specialist centres and avoid the associated restrictive environment.

In order to support the Trust's research objectives, the Trust's requires a system which fulfils the following requirements:

- Approved for commercial sale in the UK (UKCA marked);
- Small and highly portable design in order to fit through doorways and elevators, and to provide ease of manoeuvrability;
- Magnetic configuration to enable researchers to work safely with participants during testing;
- Ability to be powered through standard electrical outlets;
- Low power consumption to reduce running costs;
- Open design to reduce participant anxiety; and
- Controlled through portable user-friendly wireless device (e.g. tablet).

II.2.5) Award criteria

Cost criterion - Name: Value for Money / Weighting: N/A

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

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

II.2.14) Additional information

The Trust considers that the award of the contract without prior publication of a contract notice to be permitted by Part 2 of the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

The Trust is publishing this voluntary transparency notice to express its intention to enter into the contract.

The Trust shall not enter into the contract before the end of a period of at least 10 days beginning with the day after the date on which this notice was published.

The Trust expressly reserves the right not to award any contract as a result of the publication of this notice.

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:

It is considered that the award of the contract following a negotiated procedure without prior publication is lawful in accordance with regulation(s) 32(5)(a) of the Public Contract Regulations 2015, whereby the portable low-field MRI system will be "manufactured purely for the purpose of research, experimentation, study or development, and shall not include quantity production to establish commercial viability or to recover research and development costs".

The portable low-field MRI scanner will be used for the purpose of accelerating and developing local place-based neuroimaging research into the process of assessment and diagnosis of dementia, in which timely access to neuroimaging is frequently a rate-limiting step. The scanner will also be available for researchers addressing other mental health disorders, such as research aligned to the new Kent Complex Psychosis Service and investigation of non-dementia mental illness in older and younger adults.

A key focus will be to aid the development of new AI algorithms in the assessment of structural change in dementia and cognitive decline – to decrease the need for high field MRI brain assessment in specialist centres and avoid the associated restrictive environment.

The portable low field scanner will therefore be used in clinical research in alignment with current NHS England priorities, including reducing time to diagnosis and increasing dementia diagnosis rates, and to the priorities of clinical services both nationwide and internationally.

The portable low field MRI scanner has previously been used for Clinical Research in the

NHS, gaining Health Research Authority (HRA) and UK Ethics approvals:

- 12/LO/1247 – West London & GTAC Research Ethics Committee,
- 19/LO/1384 – City & East Research Ethics Committee.

It is also considered that the award of the contract following a negotiated procedure without prior publication is lawful in accordance with regulation(s) 32(2)(a)(ii) of the Public Contract Regulations 2015, whereby "competition is absent for technical reasons".

Following market research, the Trust is confident the required product and associated services are only capable of being provided by a single supplier. The Trust's guiding principles being the requirement for a portable low field MRI system most suitable for the acceleration and development of local place-based neuroimaging clinical research. This includes:

- Approved for commercial sale in the UK (UKCA marked);
- Small and highly portable design in order to fit through doorways and elevators, and to provide ease of manoeuvrability;
- Magnetic configuration to enable researchers to work safely with participants during testing;
- Ability to be powered through standard electrical outlets;
- Low power consumption to reduce running costs;
- Open design to reduce participant anxiety; and
- Controlled through portable user-friendly wireless device (e.g. tablet).

It is the Trust's belief that Hypefine Ltd is the only economic operator capable of supplying an existing product within the Trust's timescales, and which fulfils these requirements in order to support the Trust's objectives for undertaking local place-based neuroimaging clinical research.

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

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

8 December 2023

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

Hyperfine Operations, Inc.

351 New Whitfield Street

Guilford

CT 06437

Email

info@hyperfine.io

Telephone

+1 8667966767

Country

United States

NUTS code

- US - United States

Internet address

<https://hyperfine.io/>

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

Yes

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

Initial estimated total value of the contract/lot/concession: £280,000

Total value of the contract/lot/concession: £280,000

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Royal Courts of Justice

Strand

London

WC2A 2LL

Email

royalcourtsofjustice.jc@gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Internet address

<https://www.gov.uk/>