

Grant Approval Memo



Grantee: Rehabilitative Educational Adaptive Living Solutions Inc
Request Amount: \$24,309.00
Project Title: Building HIPAA-Compliant Telehealth Capacity to Serve Alaskans with Traumatic Brain Injury
Grant Term: 12/1/2026 to 11/30/2027
Trust Staff: Kelda Barstad

Staff Analysis:

- What does this project do?
Trust funds will purchase HIPAA-compliant server modifications and secure data software, a dedicated workstation, telehealth equipment, a compliant printer, assessment materials, and home therapy vision kits that patients use during telehealth sessions that will facilitate REAL Solutions AK to stand up the HIPAA-compliant telehealth infrastructure needed to deliver clinical TBI consultations and treatment to beneficiaries in rural communities.
- Who is receiving the funds?
REAL Solutions AK is a newly established Alaska nonprofit dedicated to treatment, training, and education for people living with brain injury and developmental disabilities, and for the providers who serve them. Its mission is to develop innovative programs and collaborative systems that empower individuals and families facing disability, trauma, or life transition to build meaningful skills, participate in community life, and pursue practical pathways toward independence — while sustaining the caregivers and clinicians who make that work possible.
- Why is staff recommending this project?
Alaska has the highest rate of traumatic brain injury (TBI)-related deaths in the nation — more than double the national average — and rural Alaskans face worse outcomes because specialized assessment and follow-up care are limited in Alaska and if available, centered in Anchorage and are costly or impractical to reach (Traumatic Brain Injury in Alaska Epidemiology Bulletin, 2023; Alaska State Plan for Brain Injury 2025–2030). Alaska Native people are especially affected. Implementing telehealth clinical TBI consultations and treatment to beneficiaries in rural communities will help to fill a gap in care experienced by Trust beneficiaries with a brain injury.
- Will this be a multi-year project?
No, this is a one-time project.

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Trust Five Year Funding History

No previous Trust grants to this organization.

Comp Plan - Area of Focus	Strategic Priority Area
Area of Focus 2: Healthcare	Priority 4: Ongoing Support & Wellbeing

Project Description (from grant application)

REAL Solutions AK is a newly established Alaska nonprofit dedicated to treatment, training, and education for people living with brain injury and developmental disabilities, and for the providers who serve them. Its mission is to develop innovative programs and collaborative systems that empower individuals and families facing disability, trauma, or life transition to build meaningful skills, participate in community life, and pursue practical pathways toward independence — while sustaining the caregivers and clinicians who make that work possible. This project addresses a specific, well-documented gap: Alaska has the highest rate of traumatic brain injury (TBI)-related deaths in the nation — more than double the national average — and rural Alaskans face worse outcomes because specialized assessment and follow-up care are limited in Alaska and if available, centered in Anchorage and are costly or impractical to reach (Traumatic Brain Injury in Alaska Epidemiology Bulletin, 2023; Alaska State Plan for Brain Injury 2025–2030). Alaska Native people are especially affected.

With this grant, REAL Solutions AK will stand up the HIPAA-compliant telehealth infrastructure needed to deliver clinical TBI consultations and treatment to beneficiaries in rural communities. Funding covers HIPAA-compliant server modifications and secure data software, a dedicated workstation, telehealth equipment, a compliant printer, assessment materials, and home therapy vision kits that patients use during telehealth sessions. Services are led by the Executive Director, Dr. Audra Yewchin (OTD, OTR/L, CBIS) — a doctorally-prepared occupational therapist and Certified Brain Injury Specialist — with clinical consultation from Dr. Adam Grove (ND, CBIS). REAL Solutions AK delivers consultations in partnership with the Alaska Brain Bus and under a \$16,000 consultation contract with the Peninsula Independent Living Center, reaching beneficiaries where they are rather than requiring travel to Anchorage.

The project serves adults with traumatic brain injury statewide, with a deliberate focus on building treatment capacity in rural communities. In Year 1, REAL Solutions expects to reach approximately 100 individuals through its Brain Bus partnership — primary TBI beneficiaries, their family members and caregivers, and partner staff — now equipped with secure telehealth and the home vision kits this grant provides. Dr. Yewchin and consulting clinicians contribute substantial clinical time in-kind — valued at approximately \$175/hr — to deliver initial rounds of treatment while reimbursement pathways are established. Provider training and a visiting-speaker lecture circuit — core to the REAL Solutions mission — will be pursued through a separate Rural Health Transformation Program application. This project advances the Trust's priorities of Treatment & Recovery and Ongoing Support & Wellbeing.

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Grantee Proposed Evaluation Measures (from grant application)

1. How much did we do?

Number of TBI consultations delivered; number of rural communities reached; number of home therapy vision kits distributed and in use.

2. How well did we do?

Percentage of scheduled consultations completed; percentage of beneficiaries who received and used a vision kit during sessions; percentage of consultations delivered via the new HIPAA-compliant platform without a privacy/security incident.

3. Is anyone better off?

Number and percentage of beneficiaries showing improved function or quality of life on a brief pre/post measure; number and percentage reporting reduced travel burden to access care; number of beneficiaries continuing in care at a designated post care follow-up (3-6 months).

Data sources: consultation records, kit distribution logs, and a brief pre/post beneficiary measure. REAL Solutions AK will track this data from project start and report it to the Trust as required.

Proposed Project Performance Measures (developed by the Trust)

Provide a narrative describing the timeline, activities, successes, challenges, and lessons learned during the purchase and set up of a HIPAA-compliant telehealth infrastructure, including server modifications, secure data software, workstations, telehealth equipment, a compliant printer, assessment materials, and home therapy vision kits. Be sure to include electronic photographs of the items purchased, as well as a final list of funders for the overall building upgrade project.

Sustainability (from grant application)

This grant is one-time capital that creates a self-sustaining service model. The HIPAA-compliant infrastructure is precisely what's required to bill Medicaid and third-party payers for clinical TBI services; once services are delivered and reimbursement begins, fee-for-service revenue sustains operations. In the near term, REAL Solutions also draws on a \$16,000 consultation contract with the Peninsula Independent Living Center and its partnership with the Alaska Brain Bus. REAL Solutions intends to pursue additional grant funding — including a future Rural Health Transformation Program application — to expand workforce and training capacity, but the project's ongoing operation does not depend on those funds. In short, the equipment funded here converts donated startup effort into a billable, reimbursable, sustainable program.

Who We Serve (from grant application)

The focus beneficiary group for this project is adults with traumatic brain injury — a designated Trust beneficiary population — with the broader REAL Solutions mission also serving people with

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developmental disabilities and families or caregivers who support these populations. TBI carries an exceptional burden in Alaska: the state's TBI-related death rate is the highest in the country and rural residents fare worst, largely because specialized assessment and rehabilitation are limited in Alaska and concentrated in Anchorage (Alaska TBI Epidemiology Bulletin, 2023). Beneficiaries will be better off because REAL Solutions brings assessment, consultation, and follow-up directly to them via secure telehealth — reducing travel burden and delay — and because the home therapy vision kits let them participate actively in treatment from home. Secondary beneficiaries (family members and caregivers) gain practical tools and support to care for a loved one with TBI. This infrastructure is also the foundation for the provider training that will strengthen local capacity in the next phase.

Estimated Numbers of Beneficiaries Served Experiencing (from grant application)

Traumatic Brain Injuries:	60
Secondary Beneficiaries (family members or caregivers providing support to primary beneficiaries):	30
Number of people to be trained	10

Project Budget (from grant application)

Personnel Services Costs	\$0.00
Personnel Services Costs (Other Sources)	\$16,000.00
Personnel Services Narrative	The Trust is not asked to fund personnel. Clinical consults and travel are funded by a \$16,000 secured contract with the Peninsula Independent Living Center. In addition, Dr. Yewchin (OTD, OTR/L, CBIS) and consulting clinicians contribute substantial clinical time in-kind — approximately \$175/hr at market rates — to deliver initial rounds of treatment before reimbursement begins. This in-kind contribution is reported as match and is not counted in the cash "other funds" total.

Supplies Costs	\$2,975.00
Supplies Costs (Other Sources)	\$2,975.00
Supplies Narrative	Assessment materials and scoring tools (\$1,475) for standardized TBI consultations; home therapy vision kits distributed to telehealth patients for use during sessions (20 kits @ \$75 from Bernell, \$1,500). *Not all participants will require a home therapy vision kit, and not all participants will require a complete kit - the budget is a conservative estimate for 20 complete kits directly from Bernell.

Equipment Costs	\$20,334.00
Equipment Costs (Other Sources)	\$0.00

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Equipment Narrative	HIPAA-compliant server modifications for secure hosting/encryption of telehealth sessions and records (\$15,000, per vendor estimate); dedicated laptop workstation (\$1,699); telehealth equipment - external microphone, document camera, lighting, external webcam (\$1,435); HIPAA-compliant printer (\$2,200). This equipment is what enables secure, reimbursable clinical services.
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Other Costs	\$1,000.00
Other Costs (Other Sources)	\$0.00
Other Costs Narrative	One time license fee for data recording software (EMR additional module) allowing for multi-clinician use.

Other Funding Sources (from grant application)

Peninsula Independent Living Center	\$16,000.00
Total Leveraged Funds	\$16,000.00