

Name: Advanced Nursing Education Review Group (Optional Group).

Date and Time: April 25–28, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Silver Spring, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Open on: April 25, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Closed on: April 25, 2000, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; April 26–28, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Name: Model AHEC Review Group.

Date and Time: April 25–26, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Silver Spring, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Open on: April 25, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Closed on: April 25, 2000, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; April 26, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Name: Basic AHEC Review Group.

Date and Time: April 27–28, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Silver Spring, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Open on: April 27, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Closed on: April 27, 2000, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; April 28, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Name: Advanced Nursing Education Review Group I.

Date and Time: May 1–4, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Silver Spring, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Open on: May 1, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Closed on: May 1, 2000, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; May 2–4, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Name: Advanced Nursing Education Review Group II.

Date and Time: May 8–11, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Silver Spring, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Open on: May 8, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Closed on: May 8, 2000, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; May 9–11, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Name: Basic Nurse Education and Practice Review Group.

Date and Time: May 16–19, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Silver Spring, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Open on: May 16, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Closed on: May 16, 2000, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; May 17–19, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Name: Allied Health Project Grants Review Group.

Date and Time: May 22–25, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Silver Spring, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Open on: May 22, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Closed on: May 22, 2000, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; May 23–25, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Name: Chiropractic/Demonstration Review Group.

Date and Time: May 22–25, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn Silver Spring, 8777 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Open on: May 22, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Closed on: May 22, 2000, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; May 23–25, 2000, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Purpose: The Health Professions and Nurse Education Special Emphasis Panel shall advise the Director of the Bureau of Health Professions on the technical merit of grants to improve the training, distribution, utilization, and quality of personnel required to staff the Nation's health care delivery system.

Agenda: The open portion of each meeting will cover welcome and opening remarks, financial management and legislative implementation updates, and overview of the review process. The meetings will be closed at approximately 10:00 a.m. on the first day of each meeting until adjournment for the review of grant applications. The closing is in accordance with the provision set forth in section 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S. Code, and the Determination by the Associate Administrator for Management and Program Support, Health Resources and Services Administration, pursuant to Public Law 92–463.

Anyone wishing to obtain a roster of members or other relevant information should write or contact Mrs. Sherry Whipple, Program Analyst, Peer Review Branch, Parklawn Building, Room 8C–23, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20857, telephone 301–443–5926.

Dated: September 2, 1999.

Jane M. Harrison,

Director, Division of Policy Review and Coordination.

[FR Doc. 99–23335 Filed 9–7–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4160–15 P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of Inspector General

Solicitation of Information and Recommendations for Developing OIG Compliance Program Guidance for Individual Physicians and Small Group Practices

AGENCY: Office of Inspector General (OIG), HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This **Federal Register** notice seeks the input and recommendations of interested parties as the OIG considers developing a compliance program guidance for individual and small group physician practices, especially those serving Medicare and other Federal

health care program beneficiaries. Many physicians have expressed an interest in better protecting their practices from the potential for fraud and abuse. While the OIG believes that the great majority of physicians are honest and share our goal of protecting the integrity of Medicare and other Federal health care programs, all health care providers have a duty to reasonably ensure that the claims submitted to Medicare and other Federal health care programs are true and accurate. The development of a comprehensive, effective compliance program by individual physicians and small group practices will go a long way toward achieving this goal. Over the past two years, the OIG has developed guidances for hospitals, clinical laboratories, home health agencies, third-party medical billing companies and durable medical equipment companies. While the OIG has previously referred physicians and physician groups to the OIG's compliance guidance for third-party medical billing companies for guidance regarding the risk areas that are most directly relevant to physicians, we have received continued interest from physicians for a specific guidance directed at their individual practices. In order to provide such meaningful guidance to individual and small group physician practices, the OIG is soliciting comments, recommendations and other suggestions from concerned parties and organizations on how best to develop a compliance program guidance to reduce the potential for fraud and abuse in the individual or small group physician practice, as well as feedback as to whether such a guidance would be beneficial to physician practices.

DATES: To assure consideration, comments must be delivered to the address provided below by no later than 5 p.m. on November 8, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Please mail or deliver your written comments, recommendations and suggestions to the following address: Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, Attention: OIG–7–CPG, Room 5246, Cohen Building, 330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201.

We do not accept comments by facsimile (FAX) transmission. In commenting, please refer to the file code OIG–7–CPG. Comments received timely will be available for public inspection as they are received, generally beginning approximately 3 weeks after publication of a document, in Room 5541 of the Office of Inspector General at 330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201 on Monday

through Friday of each week from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kimberly Brandt, Office of Counsel to the Inspector General, (202) 619-2078.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The development of compliance program guidances has become a major initiative of the OIG in its effort to engage the private health care community in addressing and combating fraud and abuse. Recently, the OIG has developed and issued compliance program guidance directed at various segments of the health care industry.¹ New OIG guidance under consideration will be designed to provide clear direction and assistance to physicians providing services to Medicare and other Federal health care program beneficiaries who are interested in reducing and eliminating the potential for fraud and abuse within their practice.

The guidances represent the culmination of the OIG's suggestions on how providers can most effectively establish internal controls and implement monitoring procedures to identify, correct and prevent fraudulent and wasteful activities. As stated in previous guidances, these guidelines are not mandatory for providers, nor do they represent an exclusive document of advisable elements of a compliance program.

In an effort to formalize the process by which the OIG receives public comments in connection with compliance program guidances, the OIG is seeking, through this **Federal Register** notice, formal input from interested parties as the OIG considers developing a compliance program guidance directed at individual and small group physician practices. The OIG will give consideration to all comments, recommendations and suggestions submitted and received by the time frame indicated above.

We anticipate that the physician guidance will contain seven elements that the OIG considers necessary for a comprehensive compliance program. These seven elements have been discussed in our previous guidances and include:

- The development of written policies and procedures.
- The designation of a compliance officer and other appropriate bodies.

- The development and implementation of effective training and education programs.

- The development and maintenance of effective lines of communication.
- The enforcement of standards through well-publicized disciplinary guidelines.

- The use of audits and other evaluation techniques to monitor compliance.

- The development of procedures to respond to detected offenses and to initiate corrective action.

The OIG would appreciate specific comments, recommendations and suggestions on (1) risk areas for the individual or small group physician practice, and (2) aspects of the seven elements contained in previous guidances that may need to be modified to reflect the unique characteristics of the individual or small group physician practice. Detailed justifications and empirical data supporting suggestions would be appreciated.

We also request that any comments, recommendations and input be submitted in a format that addresses the above topics in a concise manner, rather than in the form of a comprehensive draft guidance that mirrors previous guidances.

Dated: August 31, 1999.

June Gibbs Brown,

Inspector General.

[FR Doc. 99-23294 Filed 9-7-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4150-04-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Geological Survey

Application Notice Describing an Opportunity of Federal Funding of Proposals Submitted Under the State Partnership Program (SPP) for Fiscal Year 2000

AGENCY: Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pre-proposal Applications are invited for projects under the FY2000 State Partnership Program (SPP).

The purpose of the SPP is to provide support through grants and cooperative agreements to states and tribal agencies whose primary focus is on gathering, analyzing, and distributing biological science information needed for natural resource management decision-making. This program requires complementary study participation and interaction between State/Tribal institutions and Science Centers or Cooperative Research Units of the USGS, Eastern Region. For

contact information relating to potential study cooperation and participation by scientists from the USGS Biological Resources Division, Eastern Region, Science Centers (6 Centers) and Cooperative Research Units (16 Units) access the following web sites:

For Centers, http://biology.usgs.gov/nbs/nbshp2_2.htm [http](http://biology.usgs.gov/nbs/nbshp2_2.htm)

and
For Units, <http://biology.usgs.gov/coop/list.html>

Proposals involving the support and cooperation of multiple State parties as well as multiple Federal, private, or other entities are strongly favored. Respondents are encouraged to show linkages to other resource agencies, in addition to USGS, that have jurisdiction over public lands or public trust biotic resources and to the science information needs for other Department of the Interior bureaus and other Federal agencies. Proposals must demonstrate a commitment to information exchange and technology transfer.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicant Eligibility: State, Tribal, and/or U.S. Territories and Possessions that conduct natural resources studies and associated information management. No Federal or private agencies may apply.

Application and Award Process

Pre-proposal Submission: Eligible institutions may request a Pre-proposal Solicitation Package, including instructions on the SPP and how to submit an application, from the USGS, Eastern Regional Office (see address below). *Pre-proposals must be submitted to USGS by State/Tribe institutions only, but must include information on participating USGS Science Center or Cooperative Research Unit.*

Full-proposal Evaluation and Award: *Full proposals will be requested in writing by the USGS from institutions that have submitted pre-proposals of high merit and who have met all of the pre-proposal requirements as detailed in the Pre-proposal Solicitation Package.* Detailed specifications will be provided when the written request for full proposals is made. After meeting all submission requirements, full proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a technical review team. Projects will be individually scored and prioritized, and award recommendations forwarded to the USGS contracting office for award.

Dates: Completed pre-proposals must be submitted to the USGS, Eastern Regional Office and be postmarked no later than October 6, 1999. Full

¹ See 62 FR 9435 (March 3, 1997) for clinical laboratories, as amended in 63 FR 45076 (August 24, 1998); 63 FR 8987 (February 23, 1998) for hospitals; 63 FR 42410 (August 7, 1998) for home health agencies, and 63 FR 70138 (December 18, 1998) for third party medical billing companies. The guidances can also be found on the OIG web site at <http://www.hhs.gov/oig>.