

Attention: Wendy Taylor, Desk Officer, Department of Education, Office of Management and Budget, 725 17th Street, NW., Room 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503. Requests for copies of the proposed information collection requests should be addressed to Patrick J. Sherrill, Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue SW., Room 5624, Regional Office Building 3, Washington, DC 20202-4651.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Patrick J. Sherrill (202) 708-8196.

Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 3506 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) requires that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) provide interested Federal agencies and the public an early opportunity to comment on information collection requests. OMB may amend or waive the requirement for public consultation to the extent that public participation in the approval process would defeat the purpose of the information collection, violate State or Federal law, or substantially interfere with any agency's ability to perform its statutory obligations. The Director of the Information Resources Group publishes this notice containing proposed information collection requests prior to submission of these requests to OMB. Each proposed information collection, grouped by office, contains the following: (1) Type of review requested, e.g., new, revision, extension, existing or reinstatement; (2) Title; (3) Summary of the collection; (4) Description of the need for, and proposed use of, the information; (5) Respondents and frequency of collection; and (6) Reporting and/or Recordkeeping burden. OMB invites public comment at the address specified above. Copies of the requests are available from Patrick J. Sherrill at the address specified above.

Dated: March 19, 1996.

Gloria Parker,

*Director, Information Resources Group.*

Office of the Under Secretary

*Type of Review:* NEW.

*Title:* Case Studies for Direct Loan Evaluation.

*Frequency:* On occasion.

*Affected Public:* Business or other for-profit; Not-for-profit institutions.

*Reporting Burden:*

Responses: 1.

Burden Hours: 363.

**Recordkeeping Burden:**

Recordkeepers: 0.

Burden Hours: 0.

**Abstract:** Contractor will conduct site visits of institutions participating in the Federal Direct Student Loan Program to capture information about successful practices, required resources, and experiences with ED administration of the program.

[FR Doc. 96-7091 Filed 3-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

**National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research**

**AGENCY:** Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Notice of Proposed Funding Priority for Fiscal Years 1996 and 1997 for a Research and Demonstration Project.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary proposes a funding priority for Research and Demonstration (R&D) projects under the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) for fiscal years 1996-1997. The Secretary takes this action to focus research attention on areas of national need consistent with NIDRR's long-range planning process. This priority is intended to assist in the solutions to problems encountered by individuals with disabilities in their daily activities.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before April 24, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** All comments concerning this proposed priority should be addressed to David Esquith, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., Switzer Building, Room 3424, Washington, D.C. 20202-2601.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** David Esquith. Telephone: (202) 205-8801. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the TDD number at (202) 205-8133. Internet: David—Esquith@ed.gov

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice contains a proposed priority on universal design. Authority for the R&D program of NIDRR is contained in section 204(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 760-762).

Under this program the Secretary makes awards to public agencies and private agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations. This program is designed to assist in the development of solutions to the problems encountered by individuals with handicaps in their

daily activities, especially problems related to employment (see 34 CFR 351.1). Under the regulations for this program (see 34 CFR 351.32), the Secretary may establish research priorities by reserving funds to support the research activities listed in 34 CFR 351.10.

This proposed priority supports the National Education Goal that calls for all Americans to possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

The Secretary will announce the final funding priority in a notice in the Federal Register. The final priority will be determined by responses to this notice, available funds, and other considerations of the Department. Funding of particular projects depends on the final priority, the availability of funds, and the quality of the applications received. The publication of this proposed priority does not preclude the Secretary from proposing additional priorities, nor does it limit the Secretary to funding only this priority, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements.

Note: This notice of a proposed priority does not solicit applications. A notice inviting applications under this competition will be published in the Federal Register concurrent with or following publication of the notice of the final priority.

**Priority:**

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) the Secretary proposes to give an absolute preference to applications that meet the following priority. The Secretary proposes to fund under this program only applications that meet this absolute priority:

**Emerging Disability Populations Background**

Demographic and social trends indicate that the prevalence and distribution of various types of disability are changing, and that new populations of individuals are emerging to create unique demands on social policy and service systems. These new populations frequently result from such factors as: (1) Changing etiologies for existing disabilities; (2) growth in segments of the population with higher prevalence rates for certain disabilities, including the aging of the population in general and the population of individuals with disabilities in particular; (3) the unintended consequences of changes in public policy; or (4) the introduction of new disabilities.

The first category includes, for example, mental retardation that results

from high-risk births, (President's Committee on Mental retardation, *The New Morbidity*, 1993) or spinal cord injury resulting from interpersonal violence (Stover, unpublished communique to NIDRR, 1994). The second category is exemplified by higher incidence and prevalence of activity limitations due to impairments typically correlated with increased age. (LaPlante, 1995) Examples include the onset of sensory loss in older persons, or certain strength-limiting musculoskeletal or neuromuscular diseases. A subset of this category is represented by the acquisition of secondary disabilities or new exacerbations of existing disabilities among individuals with disabilities as they age, for example post-polio syndrome or deterioration of stressed joints. The third category of emerging disabilities may have iatrogenic causes or may result from inappropriate societal interventions such as institutionalization or segregation during which the acquisition of social skills and learning opportunities are forfeited. Social policies such as deinstitutionalization into inadequately supportive environments, while not necessarily creating new disabilities, has led to different manifestations of problems associated with long-term mental illness, including homelessness, abuse, involvement in the criminal justice system, and the acquisition of additional disabilities and health problems. Other disabilities, particularly secondary disabilities, may result from policy decisions that result in inadequate preventive services. The final category includes persons with newly emergent disabilities, most clearly illustrated by persons living with HIV disease and AIDS, and by environmental or workplace disabilities such as repetitive motion syndrome, environmental allergies, and various hidden disabilities.

The causes of each of these categories of disabilities are such that emergent disabilities tend to be differentially distributed throughout the population in ways that are not typical of other common disabilities. While there is a strong correlation between disability and poverty generally. (LaPlante, 1995; *The New Morbidity*, 1993; McNeil, 1995; Aday, 1993) these emergent disabilities appear to be inordinately concentrated among the poor, minorities, youth, the aged, the poorly educated, and those who already have other disabilities.

The underlying causes of these emergent disabilities may be socio-behavioral, environmental, or socio-economic, but are most often a combination of these elements. Among

the most important factors creating this "emerging universe of disability" are interpersonal violence, such as shootings, battery, or child abuse; low-birthweight and other high-risk births, often to mothers who are young teenagers, substance abusers, HIV-positive, or with poor prenatal care; aging, with or without prior existing disabilities; high risk behaviors involving substance abuse or sexual activities; and secondary conditions, often resulting from inadequate acute or long-term care.

The nation lacks a clear understanding of the existence of these disabilities, which are closely related to an individual's position in the social structure, and certainly does not comprehend the possible consequences for the disability service systems of a new population of disabled persons from among what one author calls "the vulnerable." (Aday, 1993) There are many gaps in the knowledge base about risk factors associated with the emergence of disability, as there are no comprehensive surveillance systems or epidemiological studies.

#### Priority:

The Secretary proposes to establish a research and demonstration project to: (1) Define and characterize the emerging universe of disability; (2) assess the incidence and prevalence of these "new universe" disabilities; (3) identify etiologies associated with these disabilities; and (4) evaluate the implications of these emerging disabilities for service systems and social policy. In addition to activities proposed by the applicant to carry out these purposes, the proposed R&D project shall carry out the following activities:

- Determine and test methods, using a range of existing databases, to estimate and describe the emerging universe of disability both for the present and in the future, and assess the feasibility of using existing, or establishing new, surveillance systems to predict and characterize future emerging disabilities;

- Assess the particular needs of the emerging universe, both now and for the future, for vocational rehabilitation, special education, medical and psychosocial rehabilitation, independent living services, and assistive technology services, as well as for community-based supports, income supports, and medical assistance;

- Analyze the implications for the selection, preparation, and training of personnel, including professionals and peers, to provide services to the

emerging universe, and for the ways in which services should be delivered;

- Design a practical and prioritized agenda for a future research program to develop interventions and policy approaches to address the disability-related problems of various segments of the emerging universe; and

- Convene a conference of individuals both within and outside of the disability field to discuss the Center's findings and their implications.

#### Invitation To Comment

Interested persons are invited to submit comments and recommendations regarding these proposed priorities.

All comments submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection, during and after the comment period, in Room 3423, Mary Switzer Building, 330 C Street S.W., Washington, D.C., between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday of each week except Federal holidays.

Applicable Program Regulations: 34 CFR Parts 350 and 351.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 760-762.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.133A, Research and Demonstration Projects)

Dated: February 7, 1996.

Judith E. Heumann,

*Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

[FR Doc. 96-7074 Filed 3-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

#### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

**AGENCY:** Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Notice of Proposed Funding Priorities for Fiscal Years 1996-1997 for Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary proposes funding priorities for Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs) under the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) for fiscal years 1996-1997. The Secretary takes this action to focus research attention on areas of national need identified through NIDRR's long-range planning process. These proposed priorities are intended to improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before April 24, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** All comments concerning these proposed priorities should be addressed to David Esquith, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., Switzer