

- Maintain and disseminate data and information to public entities and the rural healthcare community;

- Design and apply a logic model to evaluate the effectiveness of State grantees in using Federal funds to improve rural healthcare in their State, achieve program objectives and perform Statewide planning and evaluation processes;

- Measure changes in quality, network development, EMS, utilization and community participation resulting from the Flex program;

- Collaborate with other entities in the evaluation process for discrete components and projects;

- Assess the impact of Flex upon the access to care and health status of rural populations served through Flex supported provider systems;

- Document the impact on clinical quality, financial performance and leadership of rural providers served through Flex.

This cooperative agreement involves substantial ORHP policy expertise and programmatic involvement with the awardee. Under the terms of this cooperative agreement in addition to the required monitoring and technical assistance, Federal responsibilities will include:

- (1) Participation in annual project meetings conducted during the period of the agreement;

- (2) Ongoing review of evaluation activities and procedures;

- (3) Review of project information prior to public dissemination;

- (4) Participation in design of evaluation process;

- (5) Shared decision-making on collaborators and their projects;

- (6) Assistance with the establishment of contacts with Federal and State agencies, grant projects and other contacts that may be relevant to the project's mission.

Eligibility: Any public or private entity is eligible to apply. Under the President's initiative, community-based and faith based organizations that are otherwise eligible and believe they can contribute to HRSA's program objectives are encouraged to consider this initiative. There is no requirement for matching funds with this program.

Review criteria: Applications that are complete and responsive to the guidance will be evaluated by an objective review panel specifically convened for this solicitation in accordance with HRSA grants management policies and procedures. Preference will be given to applicants who have participated in the first four years of the evaluation project. This means that applications carrying the

preference and recommended for approval by the panel will be considered ahead of applications without the preference.

Applications will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- *Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of relevant issues* (30%) including the Medicare rural hospital flexibility program, rural healthcare networking, rural health care quality, performance of rural healthcare organizations, and rural organized systems of care.

- *Merits of the proposal* (20%) including: (1) Degree to which the application responds to grant guidance and project vision, 6%; (2) quality and feasibility of the design and implementation proposal, 5%; (3) understanding of collaborative relationships between the project officer and the grantee, 3%; and (4) clear and comprehensible presentation of budget with tight connection to project objectives, activities and required resources, 6%.

- *Applicant capability, capacity and relevant experience* (40%) including prior experience with and relevant knowledge of the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility program, prior experience in program evaluation, established working relationships with potential collaborators with relevant experience and strong capabilities, adequacy of staff, facilities and technology, and commitment and demonstrated ability to manage projects and adhere to agreed timelines and delivery schedules.

- *Appropriateness of budget* (10%) including maximization of the proportion of funds devoted to program objectives, the extent to which the proposed budget is realistic, adequately justified and consistent with the proposed project plan, and the degree to which the costs of the proposed project are economical in relation to the proposed activities.

Additional criteria may be used in the review of applications for this competition. Any such criteria will be identified in the program guidance included in the application kit. Applicants should pay strict attention to addressing these criteria in addition to those referenced above.

Program Contact Person: Forrest Calico, M.D., M.P.H., Office of Rural Health Policy, HRSA, Rm. 9A-55, Parklawn Bldg., 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857. Phone (301) 443-0835, Fax (301) 443-2803, e-mail fcalice@hrsa.gov.

Paperwork Reduction Act: OMB approval for any data collection in connection with this corporate

agreement will be sought, as required under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

This program is subject to the provisions of executive order 12372 concerning intergovernmental review of Federal programs by appropriate health planning agencies, as implemented by 45 CFR part 100. Executive Order 12372 allows States the option of setting up a system for reviewing applications from within their States for assistance under certain Federal programs. Please visit the Web site <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html> for a listing of these States. The application packages to be made available under this notice will contain a listing of States which have chosen to set up such a review system and will provide a single point of contact (SPOC) in the States for review. Applicants (other than federally-recognized Indian tribal governments) should contact their State SPOCs as early as possible to alert them to the prospective applications and receive any necessary instructions on the State process. For proposed projects serving more than one State, the applicant is advised to contact the SPOC of each affected State. The due date for State process recommendations is 60 days after the application deadline for new and competing awards. The granting agency does not guarantee to "accommodate or explain" for State process recommendations it receives after that date. (See part 148, Intergovernmental Review of PHS Programs under Executive Order 12372 and 45 CFR part 100 for a description of the review process and requirements). This program is not subject to the public health systems reporting requirements.

Dated: May 8, 2003.

Elizabeth M. Duke,
Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Effectiveness of the National Institute on Drug Abuse's Publications Project

Summary: In compliance with section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 concerning opportunity for public comment on proposed collections of information, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will publish periodic summaries

of proposed projects to be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval.

Proposed Collection

Title: The Effectiveness of NIDA's Publications Project. **Type of Information Collection Request:** NEW. **Need and Use of Information Collection:** This is a request for a three-year generic clearance to study the level of customer satisfaction in relation to public health information publications produced by the Institute. This effort is made according to Executive Order 12862, which directs Federal agencies that provide significant services directly to the public to survey customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services. The primary purpose of the Project is to assess NIDA's effectiveness in developing and disseminating selected

public health information publications designed to promote the use of science-based evidence to improve drug abuse and addiction prevention, treatment, and policy. A multi-method approach (survey, in-person interviews, focus groups) will be used to determine the use and usefulness of selected NIDA public health information publications for several of NIDA's key audiences. Measures will include outcomes associated with the following variables: knowledge/awareness of the publications, receipt of the publications, reading of the publications, use of the publications, perceived utility of the publications, and the impact of the publications on the use of science-based evidence to improve drug abuse and addiction prevention, treatment, and policy. **Frequency of Response:** This project will be conducted annually or biennially. **Affected Public:** Individuals

or households; state or local governments; organizations; businesses or educational institutions. **Type of Respondents:** Community coalition leaders, drug abuse treatment and prevention service providers, drug abuse researchers, Native Americans, middle school science and health educators, public health policy makers and public health officials, and the general public. The annual reporting burden is as follows: **Estimated Number of Respondents:** 22,326; **Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:** one for six of the seven key audiences and two for one audience. **Average Burden Hours Per Response:** .4357. **Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours Requested:** 9,727. There are no Capital Costs to report. There are no Operating or Maintenance Costs to report. The estimated annualized burden is summarized below.

Type of respondents	Estimated number of respondents	Estimated number of responses per respondent	Average burden hours per response	Estimated total burden hours
1. Community Coalition Leaders	1782	2	0.26	909
2. Drug Abuse Treatment and Prevention Service Providers	6042	1	0.42	2532
3. Drug Abuse Researchers	6020	1	0.42	2504
4. Native Americans and Native American Intermediaries	50	1	1.14	57
5. Middle School Science and Health Educators	3532	1	0.51	1784
6. Public Health Policy Makers and Public Health Officials	1800	1	0.36	645
7. The General Public	3100	1	0.42	1296
Total				9727

Request for Comments: Written comments and/or suggestions from the public and affected agencies are invited on one or more of the following points: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) The accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

For Further Information Contact: To request more information on the proposed project, contact Denise Pintello, Project Officer, Office of Science Policy and Communications, NIDA/NIH/DHHS, 6001 Executive Boulevard, MSC 9591, Bethesda, MD 20892; or call non-toll-free number (301) 443-6071; fax (301) 443-6277; or e-mail

your request, including your address to: dp276v@nih.gov.

Comments Due Date: Comments regarding this information collection are best assured of having their full effect if received within 60 days of the date of this publication.

Dated: May 23, 2003.

Laura Rosenthal,

Executive Officer, National Institute for Drug Abuse.

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities; Notice of Closed Meeting

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), notice is hereby given of the following meeting.

The meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with the provisions set forth in sections 552b(c)(4) and 552b(c)(6), Title 5 U.S.C., as amended. The grant applications and the discussions could disclose confidential trade secrets or commercial property such as patentable material, and personal information concerning individuals associated with the grant applications, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Name of Committee: National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities Special Emphasis Panel.

Date: June 16, 2003.

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: Bethesda Marriott, 5151 Pooks Hill Road, Bethesda, MD 20814.

Contact Person: Tommy L. Broadwater, PhD, Senior Advisor to the Director, National Center on Minority Health, and Health Disparities, 6707 Democracy Plaza, Room 800, Bethesda, MD 20892, 301-402-1366.