

programs, depending upon the legislative intent of the program, programmatic purpose of the low income level, as well as the age and circumstances of the average participant, will use the student's family as long as he or she is not listed as a dependent upon the parents' tax form. Each program will announce the rationale and choice of methodology for determining low income levels in their program guidance. The Department's poverty guidelines are based on poverty thresholds published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, adjusted annually for changes in the Consumer Price Index.

The Secretary annually adjusts the low-income levels based on the Department's poverty guidelines and makes them available to persons responsible for administering the applicable programs. The income figures below have been updated to reflect increases in the Consumer Price Index through December 31, 2008.

Size of parents' family *	Income level **
1	\$21,660
2	29,140
3	36,620
4	44,100
5	51,580
6	59,060
7	66,540
8	74,020

* Includes only dependents listed on Federal income tax forms. Some programs will use the student's family rather than his or her parents' family.

** Adjusted gross income for calendar year 2008.

Dated: April 17, 2009.

Marcia K. Brand,

Deputy Administrator.

[FR Doc. E9-9381 Filed 4-23-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4165-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[CMS-2299-PN]

Medicare and Medicaid Programs; Application of the American Osteopathic Association for Continued Deeming Authority for Hospitals

AGENCY: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), HHS.

ACTION: Proposed notice.

SUMMARY: This proposed notice with comment period acknowledges the receipt of a deeming application from the American Osteopathic Association

for continued recognition as a national accrediting organization for hospitals that wish to participate in the Medicare or Medicaid programs.

Section 1865(a)(3)(A) of the Social Security Act requires that within 60 days of receipt of an organization's complete application, we publish a notice that identifies the national accrediting body making the request, describes the nature of the request, and provides at least a 30-day public comment period.

DATES: To be assured consideration, comments must be received at one of the addresses provided below, no later than 5 p.m. May 26, 2009.

ADDRESSES: In commenting, please refer to file code CMS-2299-PN. Because of staff and resource limitations, we cannot accept comments by facsimile (FAX) transmission.

You may submit comments in one of four ways (please choose only one of the ways listed):

1. *Electronically.* You may submit electronic comments on this regulation to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions under the "More Search Options" tab.

2. *By regular mail.* You may mail written comments to the following address ONLY: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Attention: CMS-2299-PN, P.O. Box 8016, Baltimore, MD 21244-8016.

Please allow sufficient time for mailed comments to be received before the close of the comment period.

3. *By express or overnight mail.* You may send written comments to the following address ONLY: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Attention: CMS-2299-PN, Mail Stop C4-26-05, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850.

4. *By hand or courier.* If you prefer, you may deliver (by hand or courier) your written comments before the close of the comment period to either of the following addresses:

a. For delivery in Washington, DC—Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Room 445-G, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20201.

(Because access to the interior of the Hubert H. Humphrey Building is not readily available to persons without Federal government identification, commenters are encouraged to leave their comments in the CMS drop slots located in the main lobby of the building. A stamp-in clock is available

for persons wishing to retain a proof of filing by stamping in and retaining an extra copy of the comments being filed.)

b. For delivery in Baltimore, MD—Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850.

If you intend to deliver your comments to the Baltimore address, please call telephone number (410) 786-7195 in advance to schedule your arrival with one of our staff members.

Comments mailed to the addresses indicated as appropriate for hand or courier delivery may be delayed and received after the comment period.

For information on viewing public comments, see the beginning of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Lillian Williams, (410) 786-8636.

Patricia Chmielewski, (410) 786-6899.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Inspection of Public Comments:

All comments received before the close of the comment period are available for viewing by the public, including any personally identifiable or confidential business information that is included in a comment. We post all comments received before the close of the comment period on the following Web site as soon as possible after they have been received: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the search instructions on that Web site to view public comments.

Comments received timely will also be available for public inspection as they are received, generally beginning approximately 3 weeks after publication of a document, at the headquarters of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, Maryland 21244, Monday through Friday of each week from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. To schedule an appointment to view public comments, phone 1-800-743-3951.

I. Background

Under the Medicare program, eligible beneficiaries may receive covered services from a hospital provided certain requirements are met. Sections 1861(e) of the Social Security Act (the Act) establish distinct criteria for facilities seeking designation as a hospital. Regulations concerning provider agreements are located at 42 CFR part 489 and those pertaining to activities relating to the survey and certification of facilities are located at 42 CFR part 488. The regulations at 42 CFR part 482, specify the conditions that a hospital must meet in order to participate in the Medicare program, the

scope of covered services and the conditions for Medicare payment for Hospitals.

Generally, in order to enter into a provider agreement with the Medicare program, a hospital must first be certified by a State survey agency as complying with the conditions or requirements set forth in part 482 of CMS regulations. Thereafter, the hospital is subject to regular surveys by a State survey agency to determine whether it continues to meet these requirements. There is an alternative, however, to surveys by State agencies.

Section 1865(a)(1) of the Act (as redesignated under section 125 of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (MIPPA) (Pub. L. 110–275) provides that, if a provider entity demonstrates through accreditation by an approved national accrediting organization that all applicable Medicare conditions are met or exceeded, we will deem those provider entities as having met the requirements. (We note that section 125 of MIPPA redesignated paragraphs (b) through (e) of section 1865 of the Act as paragraphs (a) through (d) respectively). Accreditation by an accrediting organization is voluntary and is not required for Medicare participation.

If an accrediting organization is recognized by the Secretary as having standards for accreditation that meet or exceed Medicare requirements, any provider entity accredited by the national accrediting body's approved program would be deemed to meet the Medicare conditions. A national accrediting organization applying for deeming authority under part 488, subpart A must provide us with reasonable assurance that the accrediting organization requires the accredited provider entities to meet requirements that are at least as stringent as the Medicare conditions. Our regulations concerning the reapproval of accrediting organizations are set forth at § 488.4 and § 488.8(d)(3). The regulations at § 488.8(d)(3) require accrediting organizations to reapply for continued deeming authority every 6 years or sooner as determined by CMS.

The American Osteopathic Association's (AOA) term of approval as a recognized accreditation program for hospitals expires September 25, 2009.

II. Approval of Deeming Organizations

Section 1865(a)(2) of the Act and our regulations at § 488.8(a) require that our findings concerning review and reapproval of a national accrediting organization's requirements consider, among other factors, the applying accrediting organization's: requirements

for accreditation; survey procedures; resources for conducting required surveys; capacity to furnish information for use in enforcement activities; monitoring procedures for provider entities found not in compliance with the conditions or requirements; and ability to provide us with the necessary data for validation.

Section 1865(a)(3)(A) of the Act further requires that we publish, within 60 days of receipt of an organization's complete application, a notice identifying the national accrediting body making the request, describing the nature of the request, and providing at least a 30-day public comment period. We have 210 days from the receipt of a complete application to publish notice of approval or denial of the application.

The purpose of this proposed notice is to inform the public of AOA's request for continued deeming authority for hospitals. This notice also solicits public comment on whether AOA's requirements meet or exceed the Medicare conditions for participation for hospitals.

Evaluation of Deeming Authority Request

AOA submitted all the necessary materials to enable us to determine its application to be complete on February 20, 2009. Under section 1865(a)(2) of the Act and our regulations at § 488.8 (Federal review of accreditation organizations), our review and evaluation of AOA will be conducted in accordance with, but not necessarily limited to, the following factors:

- The equivalency of AOA's standards for a hospital as compared with CMS' hospital conditions of participation.
- AOA's survey process to determine the following:
 - + The composition of the survey team, surveyor qualifications, and the ability of the organization to provide continuing surveyor training.
 - + The comparability of AOA's processes to those of State agencies, including survey frequency, and the ability to investigate and respond appropriately to complaints against accredited facilities.

+ AOA's processes and procedures for monitoring hospitals found out of compliance with AOA's program requirements. These monitoring procedures are used only when AOA identifies noncompliance. If noncompliance is identified through validation reviews, the State survey agency monitors corrections as specified at § 488.7(d).

+ AOA's capacity to report deficiencies to the surveyed facilities

and respond to the facility's plan of correction in a timely manner.

+ AOA's capacity to provide us with electronic data and reports necessary for effective validation and assessment of the organization's survey process.

+ The adequacy of AOA's staff and other resources, and its financial viability.

+ AOA's capacity to adequately fund required surveys.

+ AOA's policies with respect to whether surveys are announced or unannounced, to assure that surveys are unannounced.

+ AOA's agreement to provide us with a copy of the most current accreditation survey together with any other information related to the survey as we may require (including corrective action plans).

Response to Comments

Because of the large number of public comments we normally receive on **Federal Register** documents, we are not able to acknowledge or respond to them individually. We will consider all comments we receive by the date and time specified in the "DATES" section of this preamble, and, when we proceed with a subsequent document, we will respond to the comments in the preamble to that document.

V. Collection of Information Requirements

This document does not impose information collection and recordkeeping requirements. Consequently, it need not be reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget under the authority of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 35).

VI. Regulatory Impact Statement

In accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 12866, this regulation was not reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget.

In accordance with Executive Order 13132, we have determined that this proposed notice would not have significant effect on the rights of State, local, or tribal governments.

Authority: Section 1865 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395bb) (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.778, Medical Assistance Program) (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.773, Medicare—Hospital Insurance; and Program No. 93.774, Medicare—Supplementary Medical Insurance Program)

Dated: April 8, 2009.

Charlene Frizzera,

Acting Administrator, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

[FR Doc. E9-8782 Filed 4-23-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4120-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders; Notice of Closed Meetings

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

The meetings 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 Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Special Emphasis Panel. Investigator-Initiated Clinical Trials.

Date: May 12, 2009.

Time: 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: National Institutes of Health, 6120 Executive Blvd., Rockville, MD 20852. (Telephone Conference Call).

Contact Person: Christine A. Livingston, PhD, Scientific Review Officer, Division of Extramural Activities, National Institutes of Health/NIDCD, 6120 Executive Blvd.—MSC 7180, Bethesda, MD 20892. (301) 496-8683. livingsc@mail.nih.gov.

Reviewers confirmed late.

Name of Committee: National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Special Emphasis Panel. Chemical Senses Clinical Research.

Date: May 19, 2009.

Time: 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: National Institutes of Health, 6120 Executive Blvd., Rockville, MD 20852. (Telephone Conference Call).

Contact Person: Sheo Singh, PhD, Scientific Review Officer, Scientific Review Branch, Division of Extramural Activities, Executive Plaza South, Room 400C, 6120 Executive Blvd., Bethesda, MD 20892. 301-496-8683. singhs@nidcd.nih.gov. (Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.173, Biological Research Related to Deafness and Communicative Disorders, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: April 16, 2009.

Jennifer Spaeth,

Director, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. E9-9251 Filed 4-23-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

Center for Scientific Review; Amended Notice of Meeting

Notice is hereby given of a change in the meeting of the Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel, April 30, 2009, 9 a.m. to May 1, 2009, 5 p.m., National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892, which was published in the **Federal Register** on April 10, 2009, 74 FR 16407-16408.

The meeting will be held May 12, 2009 to May 13, 2009. The meeting time and location remain the same. The meeting is closed to the public.

Dated: April 16, 2009.

Jennifer Spaeth,

Director, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. E9-9253 Filed 4-23-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders; Notice of Meeting

Pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.), notice is hereby given of a meeting of the National Deafness and Other Communication Disorders Advisory Council.

The meeting will be open to the public as indicated below, with attendance limited to space available. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance, such as sign language interpretation or other reasonable accommodations, should notify the Contact Person listed below in advance of the 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 Deafness and Other Communication Disorders. Advisory Council.

Date: June 5, 2009.

Closed: 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: National Institutes of Health, Building 31, 31 Center Drive, Conference Room 10, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Open: 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Agenda: Staff reports on divisional, programmatic, and special activities.

Place: National Institutes of Health, Building 31, 31 Center Drive, Conference Room 10, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Contact Person: Craig A. Jordan, PhD, Director, Division of Extramural Activities, NIDCD, NIH, Executive Plaza South, Room 400C, 6120 Executive Blvd., Bethesda, MD 20892-7180. 301-496-8693.

jordanc@nidcd.nih.gov.

Any interested person may file written comments with the committee by forwarding the statement to the Contact Person listed on this notice. The statement should include the name, address, telephone number and when applicable, the business or professional affiliation of the interested person.

In the interest of security, NIH has instituted stringent procedures for entrance onto the NIH campus. All visitor vehicles, including taxicabs, hotel, and airport shuttles will be inspected before being allowed on campus. Visitors will be asked to show one form of identification (for example, a government-issued photo ID, driver's license, or passport) and to state the purpose of their visit.

Information is also available on the Institute's/Center's home page: <http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/about/groups/ndcdac/>, where an agenda and any additional information for the meeting will be posted when available.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.173, Biological Research Related to Deafness and Communicative Disorders, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: April 16, 2009.

Jennifer Spaeth,

Director, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. E9-9254 Filed 4-23-09; 8:45 am]

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