

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** CDR Steven S. Kerrick, National Naval Medical Center, Department of Ophthalmology, Bethesda, MD 20889-5000 or E-Mail at StevenK966@aol.com.

Dated: May 12, 1999.

**Steven S. Kerrick,**

*Chairperson, Interagency Committee on Medical Records.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Office of Public Health and Science

#### Announcement of Availability of Grants for Adolescent Family Life Demonstration Projects

**AGENCY:** Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs, Office of Population Affairs, OPHS, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This Notice is to inform potential applicants of recent legislation affecting the availability of grant funding for Adolescent Family Life (AFL) demonstration projects under Title XX of the Public Health Service Act. Notices published on May 12, 1999 at 64 FR 25776 and 64 FR 25782 advised that the availability of funding for different types of new AFL demonstration projects was contingent upon the enactment of a proposed amendment to the Fiscal Year (FY) 1999 appropriation for Title XX. In order to continue to fund a larger number of prevention projects than is allowable under the statute, the Department had asked Congress to amend the FY 1999 appropriation for Title XX to include a waiver of the statutory provision which requires that not more than one-third of the funds appropriated for demonstration projects shall be used for prevention demonstration projects. That amendment was recently enacted as part of the 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (Pub. L. 106-31). Thus, FY 1999 funding is now available only for new abstinence education prevention projects, as announced at 64 FR 25782. FY 1999 funds are *not* available for new care, prevention and combination care/prevention projects, as announced at 64 FR 25776. Any applications received under that announcement will be held for review and consideration in the following fiscal year, although the availability of funding for FY 2000 is uncertain.

**DATES:** The 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (Pub. L. 106-31) was enacted on May 21,

1999. Thus funds became available only for new AFL prevention projects, and not for new care, prevention and combination care/prevention projects, as of that date.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The OAPP Program Office at (301) 594-4004.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Title XX of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. 300z *et seq.*, authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants for demonstration projects to provide services to pregnant and non-pregnant adolescents, adolescent parents and their families. (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 93.995). Title XX authorizes grants for three types of demonstration projects: (1) Projects which provide "care services" only; (2) projects which provide "prevention services" only; and (3) projects which provide a combination of "care" and "prevention" services.

The Title XX statute contains a provision limiting the amount of AFL funding which may be used for prevention projects to not more than one-third of the overall monies available for demonstration projects. In the FY 1997 and 1998 appropriations for Title XX, as amended, Congress waived this limitation by enacting legislation which earmarked the majority of AFL demonstration funding for prevention grants, specifically abstinence education projects as defined in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. In order to continue to fund a larger number of prevention projects than is allowable under the statute, the Department asked Congress to amend the FY 1999 appropriation for Title XX to include a waiver of the "not more than one-third for prevention" restriction. On May 21, 1999, Congress enacted the 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (Pub. L. 106-31), which includes that amendment in a provision which states, in pertinent part, that appropriated funds shall be used for abstinence education prevention projects "without application of the [not more than one-third for prevention] limitation of section 2010(c) of said title XX."

Pending final action on the requested amendment, in order to ensure that there were adequate applications which could be funded, two separate notices regarding the availability of grants for AFL demonstration projects were published on May 12, 1999. A Notice at 64 FR 25776 requested applications for new care, prevention and combination care/prevention projects. The announcement advised potential

applicants that funding for these projects would be available only if the requested amendment to the FY 1999 appropriations act did not pass. With the enactment of the amendment to the FY 1999 appropriation for Title XX, funds are not available to support new care, prevention and combination care/prevention projects, as announced at 64 FR 25776. Any applications received under that announcement will be held for review and consideration in the following fiscal year, although the availability of funding in FY 2000 is uncertain. A separate Notice at 64 FR 25782 requested applications for prevention projects. This announcement advised potential applicants that funding for these projects would be available only if the amendment to the FY 1999 appropriations act did pass. With the enactment of the amendment to the FY 1999 appropriation for Title XX, funding is available only for new abstinence education prevention projects, as announced at 64 FR 25782.

Dated: June 7, 1999.

**Samuel Taylor,**

*Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Population Affairs.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Office of the Secretary

#### Notice Inverting Applications for New Award for Fiscal Year 1999 Grants To Determine Trends in Demand for Emergency Services

**AGENCY:** Office of the Secretary, The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), HHS.

**ACTION:** Announcement of the availability of funds and request for applications from State, local, non-profit or for-profit (provided that grant funds may not be paid as profit) research institutions to determine the trends in and status of demand for emergency assistance services during the period of falling welfare caseloads since 1993 and any impact on that demand from implementation of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).

**SUMMARY:** The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) announces the availability of funds and invites applications for research to determine the trends in and status of demand for emergency assistance services (e.g., emergency and transitional shelters, soup kitchens, food pantries) during the period of falling

welfare caseloads and TANF implementation. Grant applicants are expected to conduct empirical analyses using existing provider-level data sources (e.g., homeless and other emergency provider management information systems) in conjunction with socio-economic (e.g., average income, unemployment rates) and caseload data (e.g., number of TANF recipients, number of Food Stamp recipients) to explore trends and relationships in the data associated with the demand for emergency assistance services. Applicants are expected to provide local descriptive data (e.g., labor markets, housing availability) to provide a context for their analyses. Applicants also may propose additional methods for supplementary studies, including surveys, qualitative analyses, or other methods as appropriate to explore particular trends identified in historical data. The funds could either support a newly designed project or could be used to add new data sources and analyses to an existing project.

**CLOSING DATE:** The deadline for submission of applications under this announcement is July 30, 1999.

**MAILING ADDRESS:** Application instructions and forms should be requested from and submitted to: Adrienne Little, Grants Officer, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Human Services, Room 405F, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20201. Telephone: (202) 690-8794. Requests for forms and administrative questions will be accepted and responded to up to ten (10) working days prior to the closing date.

Copies of this program announcement and many of the required forms may also be obtained electronically at the ASPE World Wide Web Page: <http://aspe.hhs.gov> (see section on available grants and contracts.) You may fax your request to the attention of the Grants Officer at (202) 690-6518. Application submissions may not be faxed or submitted electronically.

The printed **Federal Register** notice is the only official program announcement. Although reasonable efforts are taken to assure that the file on the ASPE World Wide Web Page containing electronic copies of this program announcement are accurate and complete, they are provided for information only. The applicant bears sole responsibility to assure that the copy downloaded and/or printed from any other source is accurate and complete.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Administrative questions should be directed to the Grants Officer at the address or phone number listed above. Technical questions should be directed to Davy Norris or Mary Ellen O'Connell, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Human Services, Room 404E, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20201. Telephone: 202-401-6643 (Davy) or 202-260-0391 (Mary Ellen). Questions may be faxed to 202-690-6562 or e-mailed to [dnorris@osaspe.dhhs.gov](mailto:dnorris@osaspe.dhhs.gov) and [moconnel@osaspe.dhhs.gov](mailto:moconnel@osaspe.dhhs.gov).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Legislative Authority**

This grant is authorized by section 1110 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1310) and awards will be made from funds appropriated under Pub. L. 105-277, Department of Health and Human Services Appropriations Act, 1999.

##### **Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants include state or local units of local government, and public or private nonprofit organizations, including universities and other institutions of higher education. Private for-profit organizations may apply, with the recognition that grant funds may not be paid as profit (any amount in excess of allowable direct or indirect costs of the recipient) to any recipient of a grant or subgrant.

##### **Available Funds**

Approximately \$310,000 is available from ASPE, in funds appropriate for fiscal year 1999. ASPE anticipate providing two to four grant awards. If additional funding becomes available in fiscal years 1999 or 2000, further projects may be funded. Applications for funding under this announcement should project that can be completely carried to within fifteen months of funding at the above anticipated level. No federal funds received as a result of this announcement can be used to purchase computer equipment.

##### **Background**

Welfare caseload have declined precipitously in recent years. Since January 1993, the number of people receiving federally funded assistance under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act has fallen from 14.1 million to just under 8 million recipients, a reduction of 44 percent. This decline has occurred partly in response to the strong economy, the Administration's grants of

Federal waivers to 43 States, and the provisions of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-193). In response to the demand from the public and policymakers, many studies have been and are currently being carried out to study the circumstances of the large numbers of people who have left welfare. However, significantly fewer projects are underway to investigate the impact that declining caseloads and welfare reform may have on the demand for and utilization of services from the perspective of community-level emergency assistance providers, and reasons for any changes in the composition of clients using such services. Clients served by these programs are those most likely to be missed by studies which track current or former TANF recipients. This grant announcement contributes to a triangulation approach to the Department's portfolio of welfare research. ASPE-sponsored data-linkage or research efforts in this area include projects involving linking of administrative data, research on state diversion programs, and two rounds of grants to States and large counties to study the outcomes of welfare reform.

Homeless shelters, soup kitchens and food pantries are among the most prevalent emergency assistance providers. Administrators of these programs, local and national coalitions whose members include these providers, and to a lesser extent, researchers, have reported that provisions of the TANF program, and other recent changes to welfare programs, have led to an increase in the number of people requesting services from emergency assistance providers, an increase in the number of people requesting services who report recent loss of benefits, and related signs of hardship. In other cases, providers have identified changes in the case-mix of their clients and have attributed it to changes in TANF policies. For example, Milwaukee has witnessed an increased in the number of women requesting emergency shelter at shelters for single adults. They attribute this increase to loss of benefits and women either having their children taken away or being forced to place them with family or friends. Limited systematic analyses have been conducted, however, to test these hypotheses.

##### **Purpose and Responsibilities**

###### *Purpose*

The purpose of this announcement is to support the efforts of state or local

research organizations to examine the question of whether declining welfare caseloads and TANF implementation have led to a shift in the demand and/or utilization of emergency assistance programs, and to explore some of the reasons this may be occurring. ASPE anticipates that applicants will use an analysis of provider data (# e.g., of service requests, # of people served, demographics of people served) in conjunction with socio-economic (e.g., employment rates, housing data) and caseload (e.g., # of TANF recipients, # of food stamp recipients) data over time to describe and analyze trends in demand for and use of emergency assistance providers. ASPE also expects to support state or local efforts to explore reasons for these trends.

Each Grantee will be expected to use data from multiple emergency assistance programs over time. A proposed study should include data from as many emergency assistance providers in the community as possible. Preference will be given to those applicants who propose to include service request and/or utilization data from a comprehensive number of emergency assistance providers, relative to their local community. However, applications which propose to analyze data from a single type of provider will also be considered. Applications which propose analyses of a single provider will not be considered. Applicants may propose analyses of data from a single community or multiple communities. Applications which include multiple communities will receive a single rating.

In addition to changes in the TANF program, shifts in the utilization of emergency assistance providers may be explained by numerous factors, such as changes in the local economy or job market, the local housing market, or availability of emergency assistance or other services. Applicants will be expected to analyze socio-economic and caseload data in conjunction with provider data to enrich interpretation of data trends and relationships. Socio-economic data might include: employment rates, wage rates, housing costs, and housing availability. The comprehensiveness of the proposed community-level socio-economic data and its relevance to the proposed analysis will be an important criterion under which proposals are evaluated. Applicants also will be expected to provide other descriptive information such as local demographics, local industry and occupational make-up and characteristics of the TANF system to provide a context for and to enhance the analysis.

Applicants are expected to utilize historical provider, socio-economic and caseload data to establish a baseline for the analysis and to propose meaningful and sufficiently frequent intervals (e.g., quarterly) to analyze trends. In addition, applicants are expected to analyze data at these same intervals for one year from the date of grant award.

Applicants for the ASPE grants may propose to supplement their administrative provider, socio-economic and caseload data with client survey data or other data sources to explore reasons for identified trends, or impact on clients. For example, surveys of clients requesting services can provide insights into the reasons they are requesting emergency assistance.

To enable applicants to include up to a year of new data, applicants may submit proposals for studies lasting up to fifteen months from the date the grant is awarded.

ASPE understands that there is substantial variation in the distribution of emergency assistance providers within States and localities, and in the amount and type of data available. Topical areas that applicants may wish to address, with examples of potential policy questions, are listed below. Again, comprehensiveness of data is strongly encouraged and will be an important criterion under which proposals are evaluated. It is not expected that all applicants will propose supplementary studies on the impacts on clients.

#### 1. Trends in Demand for Emergency Assistance Services

Has there been a shift in demand for emergency assistance services during the recent period of welfare caseload decline and TANF implementation? Has there been a shift toward a particular type of emergency assistance? How does the shift relate to changes in the TANF program or state waivers? Has there been an increase in the number of people requesting services who can not be served? Are services provided by emergency assistance providers more or less costly than public benefits? Is there a shift in the demographics of clients requesting or receiving services?

#### 2. Community Socioeconomic Considerations

What local factors are related to shifts in demand for emergency assistance (e.g., changes in the local economy, wage rates, housing availability)? Are TANF caseloads changing in a pattern consistent with changes in demand for or utilization of emergency assistance? Is there a relationship between utilization of emergency assistance and

the availability of these or other services?

#### 3. Impacts on Clients (Supplementary Analyses)

What factors explain shifts in clients demographics? What reasons do first-time users of emergency assistance give for needing this service?

#### Grantee Responsibilities

1. No later than thirty (30) days after the award, the Grantee shall submit a final work plan, including a proposed analysis strategy and dissemination plan. The final work plan will update the work plan submitted in the original application to incorporate suggestions from the ASPE project officers.

2. No later than ninety (90) days after the date of award, the Grantee shall submit an initial progress report. Subsequent progress reports shall be submitted on a quarterly basis.

3. After completing the analysis, the Grantee shall prepare a final report describing the results of the study, including the procedures and methodology used to conduct the analysis, the research questions answered, the knowledge and information gained from the project, and any barriers encountered in completing the project. A draft of this report shall be delivered to the Federal Project Officer no later than thirty (30) days before the completion of the project. After receiving comments on the draft report from the Federal Project Officer, the Grantee shall deliver at least three (3) copies of a final report to the Grants Officer before the completion of the project. One of these copies must be unbound, suitable for photocopying; if only one is the original (has the original signature, is attached to a cover letter, etc.), it should not be this copy. The report also must be submitted on a 3 1/2" disk.

4. The Grantee should budget for one meeting in Washington, DC during the grant period to meet with ASPE project officers.

#### ASPE Responsibilities

1. ASPE shall provide consultation and professional advice in the planning and operation of grant activities, including providing comments on the data analysis plan and other components of the work plan, progress reports, and draft report.

2. ASPE shall assist in information exchange and the dissemination of reports to appropriate Federal, State, and local entities.

3. ASPE shall plan and organize a grantee meeting.

### Application Preparation and Evaluation Criteria

This section contains information on the preparation of applications for submission under this announcement, the forms necessary for submission, and the evaluation criteria under which the applications will be reviewed. Potential grant applications should read this section carefully in conjunction with the information provided above. The application must contain the required Federal forms, title page, table of contents, and sections listed below. All pages of the narrative should be numbered.

The application should include the following elements:

1. *Abstract:* A one page summary of the proposed project.

2. *Goals and Objectives of the Project:*

An overview that describes (1) the project; (2) the specific research questions to be investigated and data sources to be used; and (3) knowledge and information to be gained from the project by the applicant, Federal, State and/or local government, and the research community. The proposed project should demonstrate an understanding of the range of variables that may affect trends in the utilization of emergency assistance services. If the proposal builds on any current project, the application should describe how funding under this announcement will enhance, not substitute for, current efforts.

3. *Methodology and Design:* Provide a description and justification of how the proposed research project will be implemented, including methodologies, chosen approach, specification of emergency assistance providers included, description of provider and socio-economic data, data sources, and a research plan that is consistent with the available data. The proposed research plan should:

(a) Describe the components of the emergency assistance system to be included in the study, the criteria for selection, and provide data to be utilized. Applicants should include one or more of the following: Homeless shelters (emergency and/or transitional) soup kitchens, food pantries, utility and/or rent assistance programs, and clothing banks. Applications should describe the emergency assistance system within the state or locality to be studied, the proportion of that system covered by available data, and any changes in the size or configuration of this system during the period of the study. This will provide reviewers an understanding of the emergency system generally and the comprehensiveness of

the study. Applicants should also describe the format and method by which the data is to be obtained and specify whether permission has already been obtained from providers to utilize the data.

(b) Describe in detail the socio-economic and caseload data to be used as part of the analysis, the criteria for selection, and how the data will be obtained. In this description, identify important issues for which data currently are not available, and strategies for dealing with this lack of data when it pertains to the research questions in the proposal.

(c) Describe the time period to be used as a baseline and the reason this time period was chosen. Specify the data intervals to be used for the analysis.

(d) Describe the descriptive data to be used to frame the analysis and why it is relevant to the proposed analysis.

(e) If survey data collection is planned, identify and describe the methodology used to gather survey data. In particular, identify the sampling plan and the survey mode (e.g., telephone, in-person, mail), provide a description of the questions to be asked (as an alternative, applicants may provide a draft of their proposed survey instrument as a supplement to the application) and the steps that will be taken to address any biases inherent in each. These should include steps planned to ensure a high response rate, such as a mixed mode design, multiple attempts to contact sample members, or incentive payments to respondents, and steps taken to analyze differences between respondents and non-respondents. Because of the importance of a high response rate in ensuring reliability, these procedures will be an important part of the evaluation of proposals. Grant applicants must assure that the collected data will only be used for research purposes, and that all identifying information will be kept completely confidential, and should present the methods that will be used to ensure confidentiality of client-level information.

(f) If qualitative research such as focus groups or a qualitative description of emergency assistance clients' experiences are planned, the application should include a complete plan for data collection procedures and analysis. This plan should include an approach for reviewing written documents, identification of key informants, the composition of any proposed focus groups, planned discussion topics, a plan for summarizing and organizing the results, and the value that this part of the project will add to the final report. The application should

demonstrate a familiarity with the difficulties and potential biases of qualitative research, and include plans to avoid or resolve them.

(g) Identify methodology the Grantee will use to analyze the data and organize the final report. Complex data analysis is not expected. Simple tabular analysis and descriptive statistics are appropriate. The description should include frequency of data periods, report organization and proposed tabulations, including table shells illustrating how the results will be presented. The application should explain how proposed supplementary analyses will be combined with and enhance analyses of provider data.

4. *Experience, capacity, qualifications, and use of staff:* Briefly describe the grant applicant's organization and research capabilities, and experience in conducting pertinent research projects. The description should document the applicant's ability to conduct unbiased, methodologically sound research and detail the applicant's experience utilizing the proposed or similar data sources. If the proposal involves survey work, the proposal should describe the applicant's experience in conducting relevant surveys. Similarly, if the proposal involves qualitative data collection or analysis, the applicant's experience with this type of research and with these populations must be described in detail. If the applicant proposes to utilize subcontractors, the experience of the subcontractor in relation to the work to be performed by the subcontractor must be fully described. If the grant applicant plans to contract for any of the work (e.g., survey design or administration, qualitative analysis), and the contractors have not been retained, the applicant should describe the process by which they will be selected. Identify the key staff who are expected to carry out the project and provide a resume or curriculum vitae for each person. Provide a discussion of how key staff will contribute to the success of the project, including the percentage of each staff member's time that will be devoted to the project. Finally, applicants should demonstrate access to computer hardware and software for storing and analyzing the data necessary to complete this project.

5. *Work plan:* A work plan should be included which lists the start and end dates of the project, a time line which indicates the sequence of tasks necessary for the completion of the project, and the responsibilities of each of the key staff. The plan should identify the time commitments of key staff members in both absolute and

percentage terms, including other projects and teaching or managerial responsibilities. Due to the desirability of including a full year of prospective data, work plans with time lines of up to fifteen months will be accepted. The work plan also should include plans for dissemination of the results of the study (e.g., articles in journals, presentations to state or local officials and at conferences).

6. *Budget:* Grant applicants must submit a request for federal funds using Standard Form 424A and include a detailed breakdown of all Federal line items. A narrative explanation of the budget should be included that states clearly how the funds associated with this announcement will be used and describes the extent to which funds will be used for purposes that would not otherwise be incorporated within the project. Cost sharing-matching is a mandatory requirement under this award. Applicants must demonstrate the amount and details of the cost sharing-matching arrangements. The applicant should also document the level of funding from other sources and describe how these funds will be expended.

#### *Review Process and Funding Information*

A Federal review panel will review and score all applications submitted by the deadline date that meet the screening criteria (all information and documents as required by this announcement.)

The panel will use the evaluation criteria listed below to score each application. The panel results will be the primary element used by the ASPE when making funding decisions. The Department reserves the option to discuss applications with other Federal or State staff, specialists, experts and the general public. Comments from these sources, along with those of the reviewers, will be kept from inappropriate disclosure and may be considered in making an award decision.

As a result of this competition, between two and four grants are expected to be made from funds appropriated for fiscal year 1999. Additional awards may be made depending on the policy relevance of proposals received and the available funding, including funds that may become available in fiscal years 1999 or 2000.

#### *Reports*

As noted in the Grantee Responsibilities, two substantive reports are required under the grant: a final work plan (due no later than thirty (30)

days after the date of award), and a final report containing all results and analysis (draft version due no later than thirty (30) days before the end of the project and final version due at the conclusion of the project). A digital copy of the final report may be submitted on a 3½" disk formatted in the DOS (FAT 16) format to allow APSE to make the report available via the Internet, in addition to the conventional written format.

In addition, Grantees shall provide concise quarterly progress reports. The specific format and content of these reports will be provided in the notification of grant award.

#### *State Single Point of Contact (E.O. No. 12372)*

DHHS has determined that this program is not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Applicants are not required to seek intergovernmental review of their applications within the constraints of E.O. 12372.

#### *Deadline for Submission of Applications*

The closing date for submission of applications under this announcement is July 30, 1999. Hand-delivered applications will be accepted Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays, during the working hours of 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the lobby of the Hubert H. Humphrey building, located at 200 Independence Avenue, SW in Washington, DC. When hand-delivering an application, call (202) 690-8794 from the lobby for pick up. A staff person will be available to receive applications.

An application will be considered as having met the deadline if it is either received at, or hand-delivered to, the mailing address on or before July 30, 1999 or postmarked before midnight three days prior to July 30, 1999 and received in time to be considered during the competitive review process (within one week of the deadline).

When mailing applications, applicants are strongly advised to obtain a legibly dated receipt from the U.S. Postal Service or from a commercial carrier (such as UPS, Federal Express, etc.) as proof of mailing by the deadline date. If there is a question as to when an application was mailed, applicants will be asked to provide proof of mailing by the deadline date. If proof cannot be provided, the application will not be considered for funding. Private metered postmarks will not be accepted as proof of timely mailing. Applications which do not meet the deadline will be considered late applications and will not be considered or reviewed in the

current competition. DHHS will send a letter to this effect to each late applicant.

DHHS reserves the right to extend the deadline for all proposals due to: (1) Natural disasters, such as floods, hurricanes, or earthquakes; (2) a widespread disruption of the mail; or, (3) if DHHS determines a deadline extension to be in the best interest of the Federal government. The Department will not waive or extend the deadline for any applicant unless the deadline is waived or extended for all applicants.

#### *Application Forms*

Application instructions and forms should be requested from and submitted to: Adrienne Little, Grants Officer, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Human Services, Room 405F, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20201. Telephone: (202) 690-8794. Requests for forms and questions (administrative and technical) will be accepted and responded to up to ten (10) working days prior to closing date of receipt of applications.

Copies of this program announcement and many of the required forms may also be obtained electronically at the ASPE World Wide Web Page: <http://aspec.hhs.gov> (see section on available grants and contracts.) You may fax your request to the attention of the Grants Officer at (202) 690-6518. Application submissions may not be faxed or submitted electronically.

The printed **Federal Register** notice is the only official program announcement. Although reasonable efforts are taken to assure that the files on the ASPE World Wide Web Page containing electronic copies of this program announcement are accurate and complete, they are provided for information only. The applicant bears sole responsibility to assure that the copy downloaded and/or printed from any other source is accurate and complete. This notice was printed in the **Federal Register** on July 30, 1999.

Also see section entitled "Components of a Complete Application." All of this documents must accompany the application package.

#### *Length of Application*

In no case shall an application for the ASPE grant (excluding the resumes, appendices and other appropriate attachments) be longer than thirty (30) double-spaced pages. Applications should not be unduly elaborate, but should fully communicate the applicant's proposal to the reviewers.

Only relevant attachments should be included, for example, resumes of key personnel. Videotapes, brochures, and other promotional material, will be discarded and not reviewed. Project narratives should be formatted with 1-inch margins, double-spaced lines, and 12 point type, with consecutively numbered pages.

#### *Selection Process and Evaluation Criteria*

Selection of successful applicants will be based on the technical and financial criteria described in this announcement. Reviewers will determine the strengths and weaknesses of each application in terms of the evaluation criteria listed below, provide comments, and assign numerical scores. The review pane will prepare a summary of all applicant scores, strengths and weaknesses, and recommendations and submit it to the ASPE for final decisions on the award.

The point value following each criterion heading indicates the maximum numerical weight that each section will be given in the review process. An unacceptable rating on any individual criterion may render the application unacceptable. Consequently, grant applicants should take care to ensure that all criteria are fully addressed in the applications. Grant applications will be reviewed as follows:

##### *1. Goals, Objectives, and Potential Usefulness of the Analysis (20 points).*

The potential usefulness of the objectives and how the anticipated results of the proposed project will advance policy knowledge and development. If the proposed project builds on previous work, the application should explain how. Applications will be judged on the quality and policy relevance of the proposed projects.

##### *2. Quality and Soundness of Methodology and Design (25 points).*

The appropriateness, soundness, and cost-effectiveness of the methodology, including the research design, selection of existing data sets, data gathering procedures, statistical techniques, and analytical strategies,

Other design considerations include the level of access the applicant currently has to the data to be included (e.g. already authorized to use the data, already collected the data), plans to obtain data not already collected, and how confidentiality of the records and information will be ensured. If applicants are unable to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of information included in the project, then it is highly unlikely that they will receive funding.

If surveys are planned, reviewers will also evaluate the methodology proposed to gather survey data. In particular, reviewers will evaluate the sampling plan, the survey mode (e.g., telephone, in-person, mail), and the steps that will be taken to address any biases inherent in each. This will include evaluating steps planned to ensure a high response rate, such as a mixed mode design, multiple attempts to contact sample members, or respondent payments, and steps planned to analyze differences between respondents and non-respondents, such as comparison of linked administrative data. Because of the importance of a high response rate in ensuring reliability, these procedures will be an important part of the evaluation of proposals containing surveys. If qualitative research such as focus groups or a qualitative description of the TANF application, enrollment and closure policies and procedures are planned, reviewers will evaluate the plan for data collection procedures and analysis, including the planned approach for reviewing written documents, identification of key informants, the composition of any proposed focus groups, planned discussion topics, a plan for summarizing and organizing the results, and the value that this part of the project is expected to add to the final report. The extent to which the application demonstrates a familiarity with the difficulties and potential biases of this approach, and plans to avoid or resolve them, will also be a scoring factor.

Reviewers also will evaluate the proposed data analysis, including the proposed tabulations and table shells, the planned organization of the final report, and the proposal's discussion of how different data sources (e.g., data from administrative source, survey data collection, other research) will be synthesized to enhance the proposed analyses.

##### *3. Comprehensiveness of Data (15 points).*

The comprehensiveness of the proposed emergency assistance provider data in relation to the local emergency assistance system. The comprehensiveness of socio-economic and caseload data in relation to the proposed project. Reviewers will also consider the ability of the applicant to provide historical data to establish a reasonable baseline and the rationale for the proposed time period to be used as a baseline.

##### *4. Qualifications of Personnel and Organizational Capability. (20 points).*

The qualifications of the project personnel for conducting the proposed research as evidenced by professional

training and experience, and the capacity of the organization to provide the infrastructure and support necessary to support the project and conduct an unbiased analysis. Reviewers will evaluate the principal investigator and staff on research experience and demonstrated research skills, relative to the work proposed. If the applicant plans to contract for any of the work (e.g., survey design or administration, qualitative analysis), and the contractors have not been retained, reviewers will consider the process by which they will be selected.

Reviewers may consider references for work completed on prior research projects. Principal investigator and staff time commitments also will be a factor in the evaluation. Reviewers will rate the applicant's pledge and ability to work in collaboration with other scholars or organizations in search of similar goals.

##### *5. Ability of the Work Plan and Budget to Successfully Achieve the Project's Objectives. (20 points).*

Reviewers will examine if the work plan and budget are reasonable and sufficient to ensure timely implementation and completion of the study and whether the application demonstrates an adequate level of understanding by the applicant of the practical problems of conducting such a project. Adherence to the work plan is necessary in order to produce results in the time frame desired; demonstration of an applicant's ability to meet the schedule will therefore be an important part of this criterion. Reviewers will also examine the use of any additional funding and the role that funds provided under this announcement will play in the overall project. The proposal should also discuss in detail how results will disseminate to state and local officials, researchers, and other interested parties.

#### *Disposition of Application*

1. Approval, disapproval, or deferral. On the basis of the review of the application, the Assistant Secretary will either (a) approve the application as a whole or in part; (b) disapprove the application; or (c) defer action on the application for such reasons as lack of funds or a need for further review.

2. Notification of disposition. The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation will notify the applicants of the disposition of their applications. If approved, a signed notification of the award will be sent to the business office named in the ASPE checklist.

3. The Assistant Secretary's Discretion. Nothing in this announcement should be construed as to obligate the Assistant Secretary for

Planning and Evaluation to make any awards whatsoever. Awards and the distribution of awards among the priority areas are contingent on the needs of the Department at any point in time and the quality of the applications that are received.

*The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number is 93-239*

#### *Components of a Complete Application*

A complete application consists of the following items in this order:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424);
2. Budget Information—Non-construction Programs (Standard Form 424A);
3. Assurances—Non-construction Programs (Standard Form 424B);
4. Table of Contents;
5. Budget Justification for Section B Budget Categories;
6. Proof of Non-profit Status, if appropriate;
7. Copy of the applicant's Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if necessary;
8. Project Narrative Statement, organized in five sections, addressing the following topics (limited to thirty (30) double-spaced pages):
  1. Abstract,
  2. Goals, Objectives and Usefulness of the Project,
  3. Methodology and design,
  4. Background of the Personnel and Organizational Capabilities and
  5. Work plan (timetable);
9. Any appendices of attachments;
10. Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace;
11. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, or other Responsibility Matters;
12. Certification and, if necessary, Disclosure Regarding Lobbying;
13. Supplement to Section II—Key Personnel;
14. Application for Federal Assistance Checklist.

Dated: June 8, 1999.

**Margaret A. Hamburg,**

*Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.*

[FR Doc. 99-15128 Filed 6-14-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4151-04-M

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Agency for Health Care Policy and Research

#### Meeting of the National Advisory Council for Health Care Policy, Research, and Evaluation

**AGENCY:** Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with section 10(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, this notice announces a meeting of the National Advisory Council for Health Care Policy, Research, and Evaluation.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on Friday, July 9, 1999, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m..

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at 6010 Executive Boulevard, Fourth Floor, Rockville, Maryland, 20852.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jackie Eder, Coordinator of the Advisory Council, at the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, 2101 East Jefferson Street, Suite 600, Rockville, Maryland, 20852, (301) 594-6662. For press-related information, please contact Karen Migdail at 301/594-6120.

If sign language interpretation or other reasonable accommodation for a disability is needed, please contact Linda Reeves, Assistant Administrator for Equal Opportunity, AHCPR, on (301) 594-6662 no later than July 6, 1999.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Purpose

Section 921 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 299c) established the National Advisory Council for Health Care Policy, Research, and Evaluation. In accordance with its statutory mandate, the Council provides advice to the Secretary and the Administrator, Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR), on matters related to AHCPR activities to enhance the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of health care services and access to such services through scientific research and the promotion of improvements in clinical practice and in the organization, financing, and delivery of health care services. The Council is composed of members of the public appointed by the Secretary and Federal ex-officio members. Harold S. Luft, Ph.D., the Council chairman, will preside.

##### II. Agenda

On Friday, July 9, 1999, the meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m., with the call to

order by the Council Chairman. The Administrator, AHCPR, will present the status of the Agency's current research, programs and initiatives. Tentative agenda items include issues relating to inclusion of children in research, aging health services research, and building a community of researchers. Agenda items are subject to change as priorities dictate. The official agenda will be available on AHCPR's website at [www.ahcpr.gov](http://www.ahcpr.gov) no later than June 15, 1999. The meeting will adjourn at 3:00 p.m.

Dated: June 7, 1999.

**John M. Eisenberg,**

*Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 99-15038 Filed 6-14-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4160-90-M

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Agency for Health Care Policy and Research

#### Notice of Meetings

In accordance with section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2) announcement is made by the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR) of meetings of scientific peer review groups. The below-listed subcommittees are part of the Agency's Health Services Research Initial Review Group.

The subcommittee meetings will be closed to the public in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, section 10(d) of 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2 and 5 U.S.C., 552b(c)(6). Grant applications are to be reviewed and discussed at the meetings. These discussions are likely to reveal personal information concerning individuals associated with the applications. This information is exempt from mandatory disclosure under the above-cited statutes.

1. *Name of Subcommittee:* Health Systems Research.

*Date:* June 23-24, 1999 (Open from 7:30 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. and closed for remainder of meeting).

*Place:* Ramada Inn, 1775 Rockville Pike, Conference Room TBD Rockville, Maryland 20852.

2. *Name of Subcommittee:* Health Care Research Training.

*Date:* July 29-30, 1999 (open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. and closed for remainder of meeting).

*Place:* AHCPR Executive Office Center, 6010 Executive Boulevard, 4th Floor, Conference Room TBD, Rockville, Maryland 20852.