

an opportunity for those who are unable to attend the listening sessions in person to submit written comments to one of the addresses listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice by July 30, 2004. We will not be able to respond personally to the written comments received. However, summaries of each listening session and written comments received will be posted on the CMS website at (<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/quality/hospital>).

III. Registration Instructions

The New York State Quality Improvement Organization, IPRO, is coordinating registration for all listening sessions. There is no registration fee to attend any of the sessions. You may register online by visiting the IPRO website at (<http://www.ipro.org>), or you may call 1-800-852-3685, ext. 258. You will receive a registration confirmation.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.773, Medicare—Hospital Insurance; and Program No. 93.774, Medicare—Supplementary Medical Insurance Program)

Dated: April 15, 2004.

Mark B. McClellan,

Administrator, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

[FR Doc. 04-8994 Filed 4-22-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

[CMS-1363-N]

Medicare Program; May 17, 2004, Meeting of the Practicing Physicians Advisory Council

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

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with section 10(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, this notice announces a meeting of the Practicing Physicians Advisory Council (the Council). The Council will be meeting to discuss certain proposed changes in regulations and carrier manual instructions related to physicians' services, as identified by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary). This meeting is open to the public.

DATES: The meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2004, from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. e.s.t.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in Room 705A, 7th floor, at the Hubert H.

Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20201.

Meeting Registration: Persons wishing to attend this meeting must contact John Lanigan, Council Coordinator, by e-mail at Jlanigan@cms.hhs.gov or by telephone at (410) 786-2312, at least 72 hours in advance to register. Persons not registered in advance will not be permitted into the Humphrey Building and will not be permitted to attend the meeting. Persons attending the meeting will be required to show a photographic identification, preferably a valid driver's license, before entering the building.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth Simon, M.D., Executive Director, Practicing Physicians Advisory Council, 7500 Security Blvd., Mail Stop C4-11-27, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850, telephone (410) 786-2312, or e-mail Ksimon@cms.hhs.gov. News media representatives must contact the CMS Press Office, (202) 690-6145. Please refer to the CMS Advisory Committees Information Line (1-877-449-5659 toll free)/(410-786-9379 local) or the Internet at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/faca/ppac/default.asp> for additional information and updates on committee activities.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary) is mandated by section 1868 of the Social Security Act (the Act) to appoint a Practicing Physicians Advisory Council (the Council) based on nominations submitted by medical organizations representing physicians. The Council meets quarterly to discuss certain proposed changes in regulations and carrier manual instructions related to physicians' services, as identified by the Secretary. To the extent feasible and consistent with statutory deadlines, the consultation must occur before publication of the proposed changes. The Council submits an annual report on its recommendations to the Secretary and the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services not later than December 31 of each year.

The Council consists of 15 physicians, each of whom must have submitted at least 250 claims for physicians' services under Medicare in the previous year. Members of the Council include both participating and nonparticipating physicians, and physicians practicing in rural and underserved urban areas. At least 11 members of the Council must be physicians as described in section 1861(r)(1) of the Act; that is, State-licensed doctors of medicine or osteopathy. The remaining 4 members may include dentists, podiatrists, optometrists and chiropractors.

Members serve for overlapping 4-year terms; terms of more than 2 years are contingent upon the renewal of the Council by appropriate action prior to its termination. Section 1868(a) of the Act provides that nominations to the Secretary for Council membership must be made by medical organizations representing physicians.

The Council held its first meeting on May 11, 1992. The current members are: James Bergeron, M.D.; Ronald Castellanos, M.D.; Rebecca Gaughan, M.D.; Carlos R. Hamilton, M.D.; Dennis K. Iglar, M.D.; Joe Johnson, D.C.; Christopher Leggett, M.D.; Barbara McAneny, M.D.; Laura B. Powers, M.D.; Michael T. Rapp, M.D.; Robert L. Urata, M.D. Four new Council members will be sworn-in on May 17, 2004. The new nominees to be sworn-in are Jose Azocar, M.D.; Peter Grimm, D.O.; Geraldine O'Shea, D.O.; and Anthony Senagore, M.D.

The meeting will commence with a status report and discussion on prior meeting recommendations. Additionally, updates will be provided on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, Physicians Regulatory Issues Team, and Competitive Bidding. Council updates will be followed by discussion and comment on the following agenda topics:

- Enrollment and PECOS.
- Medical Care for Undocumented Aliens.
- SNF Consolidated Billing.
- Medicare Graduate Medical Education Payment.

For additional information and clarification on these topics, contact the Executive Director, listed under the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this notice. Individual physicians or medical organizations that represent physicians wishing to make a 5-minute oral presentation on agenda issues must contact the Executive Director by 12 noon, May 7, 2004, to be scheduled. Testimony is limited to agenda topics only. The number of oral presentations may be limited by the time available. A written copy of the presenter's oral remarks must be submitted to John Lanigan, Council Coordinator, no later than 12 noon, May 7, 2004, for distribution to Council members for review prior to the meeting. Physicians and medical organizations not scheduled to speak may also submit written comments to the Administrative Officer for distribution. The meeting is open to the public, but attendance is limited to the space available.

Special Accommodations: Individuals requiring sign language interpretation or other special accommodation must

contact John Lanigan by e-mail at Jlanigan@cms.hhs.gov or by telephone at (410) 786-2312 at least 10 days before the meeting.

Authority: (Section 1868 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ee) and section 10(a) of Pub. L. 92-463 (5 U.S.C. App. 2, section 10(a).)

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.773, Medicare—Hospital Insurance; and Program No. 93.774, Medicare—Supplementary Medical Insurance Program.)

Dated: April 9, 2004.

Mark B. McClellan,

Administrator, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

[FR Doc. 04-8831 Filed 4-22-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

[USCG-2004-17580]

Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of committee renewal.

SUMMARY: The Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security has determined that the renewal of the Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC) is necessary and in the public interest in connection with the performance of the duties of the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. This determination follows consultation with the Committee Management Secretariat, General Services Administration. Accordingly, the Secretary has renewed the MERPAC charter.

DATES: The MERPAC charter was renewed on March 22, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Mark Gould, Assistant Executive Director of MERPAC at (202) 267-6890.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: *Name of Committee:* The Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC).

Purpose and Objectives: MERPAC is an advisory committee operating under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2 (Pub. L. 92-463, 86 Stat. 770, as amended). The Committee advises the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and the Commandant of the Coast Guard on matters relating to the training, qualification, licensing, certification, and fitness of seamen serving in the U.S. merchant marine. This notice and the

charter are available on the Internet by going to <http://dms.dot.gov/search/searchFormSimple.cfm> and inserting "17580."

Balanced Membership Plans: The Committee consists of not more than 19 members as follows: nine active U.S. merchant mariners—including three deck officers, three engineering officers, two unlicensed seamen, and one pilot; six marine educators—including three from maritime academies and three from other maritime training institutions; two from shipping companies; and two from the general public.

Duration: Continuing.

Responsible DHS Official: Rear Admiral Thomas H. Gilmour, Commandant (G-M), U.S. Coast Guard, 2100 Second St., SW., Washington, DC 20593-0001. His telephone number is 202-267-2200.

Dated: April 16, 2004.

Joseph J. Angelo,

Director of Standards, Marine Safety, Security & Environmental Protection.

[FR Doc. 04-9201 Filed 4-22-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

[USCG-2004-17495]

Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of meetings.

SUMMARY: The Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC) and its working groups will meet to discuss various issues relating to the training and fitness of merchant marine personnel. MERPAC advises the Secretary of Homeland Security on matters relating to the training, qualifications, licensing, and certification of seamen serving in the U.S. merchant marine. All meetings will be open to the public.

DATES: MERPAC will meet on Wednesday, June 2, 2004, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Thursday, June 3, 2004, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. These meetings may adjourn early if all business is finished. Requests to make oral presentations should reach the Coast Guard on or before May 19, 2004. Written material and requests to have a copy of your material distributed to each member of the committee or subcommittee should reach the Coast Guard on or before May 19, 2004.

ADDRESSES: MERPAC will meet on both days in Room 2415 of the Coast Guard Headquarters Building, 2100 Second St., SW., Washington, DC 20593. Further directions regarding the location of Coast Guard Headquarters may be obtained by contacting Mr. Mark Gould (202) 267-6890. Send written material and requests to make oral presentations to Commander Brian J. Peter, Commandant (G-MSO-1), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 Second Street, SW., Washington, DC 20593-0001. This notice is available on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov/search/searchFormSimple.cfm>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For questions on this notice, contact Commander Brian J. Peter, Executive Director of MERPAC, or Mr. Mark C. Gould, Assistant to the Executive Director, telephone 202-267-6890, fax 202-267-4570, or e-mail mgould@comdt.uscg.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice of these meetings is given under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2 (Pub. L. 92-463, 86 Stat. 770, as amended).

Agenda of Meeting on June 2, 2004

The full committee will meet to discuss the objectives for the meeting. The committee will then break up into the following working groups as necessary: Task statement 30, concerning utilizing military sea service for STCW certifications; Task statement 36, concerning recommendations on a training program for officers in charge of an engineering watch coming up through the hawsepipe; Task statement 37, concerning credit for sea service on vessels with no, or limited, underway time; Task statement 38, concerning improvements to STCW certificates; Task statement 40, concerning methods to determine the date at which a mariner established competency in Basic Safety Training in light of National Maritime Policy Letter 12-01; Task statement 42, concerning recommendations on actual demonstrations of skills for masters and chief mates on ships of between 500 and 3,000 gross tonnage (ITC) on international and near-coastal voyages; Task statement 43, concerning recommendations on a training and assessment for able-bodied seamen on sea-going vessels in preparation for discussions of this issue at the Subcommittee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping at the International Maritime Organization; and Task statement 44, concerning security training and certification for vessel personnel, vessel security officer, and