

Supporting Statement B
Justification for Locality Pay for Nurses and Other Health-Care Personnel
VA Form 10-0132, OMB Number 2900-0519

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Provide a numerical estimate of the potential respondent universe and describe any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., households or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular format for the universe as a whole and for each strata. Indicate expected response rates. If this has been conducted previously include actual response rates achieved.

The potential respondent universe includes all non-VA health care establishments within the United States. Each local labor market area is locally defined and is minimally defined at the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) or Metropolitan Division (if applicable). If the survey universe contains 15 or less establishments, the entire universe will be surveyed. If the universe contains more than 15 establishments, the survey will be based on a sample. The expected response rate ranges from 50% to 75%, depending on the geographic area of a particular VA facility. Data is collected by approximately 50 VA facilities; therefore, the actual response rate will vary by facility.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information, including:

- **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection**
- **Estimation procedure**
- **Degree of accuracy needed**
- **Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures**
- **Any use of less frequent than annual data collection to reduce burden**

a. Procedures for the collection of information include:

(1) Random sampling. Before sampling, one or more establishments may be selected to be surveyed with certainty and are removed from the survey universe before sampling. Establishments will only be included with certainty if they significantly affect VA's ability to recruit or retain employees in the occupation or specialty to be surveyed. To begin the sampling process, the universe is sorted, excluding any certainty establishments, using the following procedures:

(a) Rank by estimated employment, the establishments in the universe from highest to lowest employment.

(b) Determine the total estimated employment for the universe by summing the estimated employment for all establishments.

(c) Divide the universe into 5 groups with the total estimated employment of establishments in each group equal to one fifth of the total universe employment. (For example, if the total estimated employment in the universe is 5,000, create 5 groups of establishments whose estimated employment totals approximately 1,000.)

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(d) If there are 5 or less establishments in a group, all the establishments will be surveyed. If there are more than 5 establishments in a group, 5 establishments will be selected randomly to be surveyed.

Note: This procedure will result in no more than 25 establishments to create the survey sample.

(2) Employment estimates are used for the purpose of generating a survey sample. Facilities will normally base these estimates on their knowledge of a particular survey establishment, past employment figures, or other community data which may be available.

(a) A high degree of accuracy is needed to ensure that VA remains competitive but does not become a community pay leader.

(b) There are no unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures.

(c) Less frequent collection of information could have a detrimental effect on maintaining a competitive pay system for VA's health care personnel. This, in turn, could affect the quality of care provided to veterans.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rate and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Participation in the survey is voluntary. To account for non-responses, survey results are weighted based on the number of participating establishments within each of the 5 groups identified above. (For example, if there are 10 establishments in the group and 5 are surveyed, the data from each of those 5 establishments will be doubled when calculating the survey results) The software program automatically determines the weight of data from participating establishments.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions of 10 or more individuals.

This is a request for re-approval of an existing data collection. No tests are planned at this time.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

The survey methodology was designed by two former employees of Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC, Kenneth H. Quantock and Stephen J. Diensfrey. Data will be collected by data collectors appointed by VA facility Directors. A summary, produced by the software for VA use only, will include for each grade, the range and the average beginning rates of compensation within the local labor market area.

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