

Health Resources and Services Administration
SUPPORTING STATEMENT
HRSA Bureau of Health Professions (BHPr) Funding Strategy Evaluation - Expansion of
Physician Assistant Training

A. Justification

1. Circumstances of Information Collection

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) currently has approval under the generic clearance, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control No. 0915-0212, to conduct customer satisfaction surveys and focus groups. This collection of information helps fulfill the requirements of:

- a. Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards," which directs Agencies to continually reform their management practices and operations to provide service to the public that matches or exceeds the best service available in the private sector.

This is a request for OMB approval of a qualitative voluntary customer satisfaction survey under HRSA's generic clearance. HRSA's Office of Planning, Analysis and Evaluation (OPAE) will obtain feedback from applicants and non-applicants of a Bureau of Health Profession's (BHPr) Expansion of Physician Assistant Training program that was recently funded through the Public Health and Prevention Fund (P.L. 111-148, Section 4002) of the Affordable Care Act. This program, the Expansion of Physician Assistant Training (EPAT) (Sec. 5301), has explicit requirements to expand primary care training programs, and received \$30 million in funding.

Executive Order 12862 directs 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 objective of surveying the physician assistant training programs is to provide insight regarding organizations' opinions, experiences, and perceptions of the funding opportunities, including any potential barriers or restrictions of applying for these funding opportunities.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information

The expected impact on the need for primary care providers over the next 5 years led the Administration to invest \$30 million from the Public Health and Prevention Fund in the Primary Expansion of Physician Assistant Training program. Most of Bureau of Health Profession's (BHPr) training programs have traditionally focused on overall quality improvement of programs, including curriculum and faculty development. However, the recent Affordable Care Act funding focused on adding new slots in residency training programs and building capacity to expand the primary care workforce.

The primary use for information gathered through the surveys is to identify strengths and weaknesses of the Expansion of Physician Assistant Training program funding strategy, to

determine the level of satisfaction with the funding opportunity and to identify areas for general service improvement. HRSA will only use the information gathered for internal purposes to get a better understanding of this recent funding opportunity.

Survey respondents from the Expansion of Physician Assistant Training program will include grantees of the funding opportunities, eligible applicants who inquired about the funding opportunity and eligible applicants who did not inquire about the funding opportunity. The surveys will include questions regarding availability of the funding opportunity announcement, barriers in the application process, perceptions of the impact of adding new residents on respondents' organizations, and any general feedback of the funding opportunity. Copies of the survey instruments are attached.

OPAE staff will use the survey script and inform each respondent that participation in the survey is voluntary and the information provided will only be shared internally with the evaluation team members. The information provided from the surveys will be important feedback regarding our customers' satisfaction and suggestions for improvement of aspects of BHPPr's Expansion of Physician Assistant Training program and information materials.

3. Use of Improved Information Technology

The surveys will not employ information technology but will be conducted by telephone which is the most appropriate methodology to obtain feedback from respondents. If respondents permit, their responses will be tape recorded to verify notes, taken by OPAE staff, for accuracy. Once notes are verified for accuracy, the tape(s) will be destroyed.

4. Efforts to Avoid Duplication

Each survey is designed to reflect the specifics of the type of primary care provider training program. Surveys have been reviewed carefully to avoid potential duplication. The proposed surveys are unique to this activity and the information is not found elsewhere.

5. Involvement of Small Entities

These surveys will not have a significant impact on small businesses or other small entities.

6. Consequences if Information Collected Less Frequently

These surveys are for a one-time project that will help evaluate delivery of funding of the primary care provider expansion programs.

7. Consistency With the Guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2)

These surveys will be implemented in a manner fully consistent with 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

8. Consultation Outside the Agency

In accordance with 5 CFR 1320.8(d), on April 24, 2009, a 30 day notice was published in the Federal Register for HRSA's generic clearance, OMB Control No. 0915-0212 (Vol. 74, Page 18726). No public comments were received. The surveys for this activity were developed by OPAE staff with close collaboration of BHP staff that implement and provide technical assistance to grantees of the primary care residency programs.

9. Remuneration of Respondents

Not Applicable.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

To date, the HRSA customer satisfaction surveys have not collected personally identifiable information from respondents. This collection of information will involve names of respondents and their organization's phone number to be able to conduct the telephone surveys and will fully comply with all aspects of the Privacy Act. Participation is fully voluntary and responses are anonymous. Tape recordings of the surveys will only be conducted if respondents permit. These recordings will solely be used to verify notes taken for accuracy and then destroyed. Respondents will be assured that neither their participation/non-participation nor any responses to items will have any effect on their participation in HRSA programs.

11. Questions of a Sensitive Nature

The surveys do not contain questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimates of Annualized Hour Burden

Respondents

Respondents will include a sample number of eligible applicants from BHP's Expansion of Physician Assistant Training program. Institutional officials from each applicant site that is randomly selected will be surveyed. Surveys will target 1) eligible applicant organizations who applied and received funding, 2) who did not inquire about the funding opportunities or apply and 3) who inquired about the funding opportunity but did not apply.

Annual burden estimates

The total respondent burden for the telephone-based customer satisfaction surveys is estimated to be 32.5 hours. We expect a total of 110 respondents to participate in the EPAT surveys: 20 respondents from funded organizations, 40 respondents from eligible organizations who inquired but did not apply to the funding announcement and 50 respondents from eligible organizations who did not inquire and did not apply.

Type of Collection	Number of Respondents	Responses per Respondent	Total Responses	Hours per Respondent	Total Burden Hours	Wage Rate	Total Hour Cost
EPAT Survey- Eligible, Funded Applicants	20	1	20	0.50	10	\$44/hr	\$440
EPAT Survey- Eligible Applicants who inquired but did not apply	40	1	40	0.25	10	\$44/hr	\$440
EPAT Survey- Eligible Applicants who did not inquire and did not apply	50	1	50	0.25	12.5	\$44/hr	\$550
Total	110	--	110	--	32.5		\$1430

Planned frequency of information collection

This is a one-time project.

13. Estimates of Annualized Cost Burden to Respondents

The only associated cost to respondents is their time to provide the requested information.

14. Estimates of Annualized Cost to the Government

The telephone surveys will be carried out by a team of OPAE staff. The estimated annual cost to the government is \$21,553 which includes 10% from GS9 (\$51,630), 10% from GS12 (\$74,872), and 10% from GS13 (\$89,033).

15. Change in Burden

Not Applicable. This is a new activity under HRSA’s generic clearance and will be included in the total burden currently approved by OMB under OMB Control No. 0915-0212.

16. Plans for Analysis and Timetable of Key Activities

The telephone surveys will be conducted in a period of 2-3 months. OPAE staff will prepare, organize and consolidate their notes from the surveys. Narrative information from the surveys will be summarized and examined using descriptive analysis. Findings will only be used for internal service improvement and will not be generalized to the public. There are no plans for publication of any survey results.

17. Exemption for Display of Expiration Date

No exemption is being requested. The expiration date will be displayed.

18. Certifications

This information collection activity will comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.