

that such grants are equitably distributed among geographical regions of the United States.

(e) APPLICATION.—An entity that desires a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary determines to be reasonable.

(f) REPORT.—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of the Health Care Safety Net Amendments of 2002, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that shall evaluate activities funded with grants under this section.

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2002 and such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2003 through 2006.

SEC. 330L. [254c-18] TELEMEDICINE; INCENTIVE GRANTS REGARDING COORDINATION AMONG STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants to State professional licensing boards to carry out programs under which such licensing boards of various States cooperate to develop and implement State policies that will reduce statutory and regulatory barriers to telemedicine.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out subsection (a), there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2002 through 2006.

Subpart II—National Health Service Corps Program

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS

SEC. 331. [254d] (a)(1) For the purpose of eliminating health manpower¹ shortages in health professional shortage areas, there is established, within the Service, the National Health Service Corps, which shall consist of—

(A) such officers of the Regular and Reserve Corps of the Service as the Secretary may designate,

(B) such civilian employees of the United States as the Secretary may appoint, and

(C) such other individuals who are not employees of the United States.

(2) The Corps shall be utilized by the Secretary to provide primary health services in health professional shortage areas.

(3) For purposes of this subpart and subpart III:

(A) The term “Corps” means the National Health Service Corps.

(B) The term “Corps member” means each of the officers, employees, and individuals of which the Corps consists pursuant to paragraph (1).

(C) The term “health professional shortage area” has the meaning given such term in section 332(a).

¹So in law. Probably should be “health professional shortages”. See section 401 of Public Law 101-597 (104 Stat. 3036).

(D) The term "primary health services" means health services regarding family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, dentistry, or mental health, that are provided by physicians or other health professionals.

(E)(i) The term "behavioral and mental health professionals" means health service psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists, psychiatric nurse specialists, and psychiatrists.

(ii) The term 'graduate program of behavioral and mental health' means a program that trains behavioral and mental health professionals.

(b)(1) The Secretary may conduct at schools of medicine, osteopathic medicine, dentistry, and, as appropriate, nursing and other schools of the health professions, including schools at which graduate programs of behavioral and mental health are offered, and at entities which train allied health personnel, recruiting programs for the Corps, the Scholarship Program, and the Loan Repayment Program. Such recruiting programs shall include efforts to recruit individuals who will serve in the Corps other than pursuant to obligated service under the Scholarship or Loan Repayment Program.

(2) In the case of physicians, dentists, behavioral and mental health professionals, certified nurse midwives, certified nurse practitioners, and physician assistants who have an interest and a commitment to providing primary health care, the Secretary may establish fellowship programs to enable such health professionals to gain exposure to and expertise in the delivery of primary health services in health professional shortage areas. To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall ensure that any such programs are established in conjunction with accredited residency programs, and other training programs, regarding such health professions.

(c)(1) The Secretary may reimburse an applicant for a position in the Corps (including an individual considering entering into a written agreement pursuant to section 338D) for the actual and reasonable expenses incurred in traveling to and from the applicant's place of residence to an eligible site to which the applicant may be assigned under section 333 for the purpose of evaluating such site with regard to being assigned at such site. The Secretary may establish a maximum total amount that may be paid to an individual as reimbursement for such expenses.

(2) The Secretary may also reimburse the applicant for the actual and reasonable expenses incurred for the travel of 1 family member to accompany the applicant to such site. The Secretary may establish a maximum total amount that may be paid to an individual as reimbursement for such expenses.

(3) In the case of an individual who has entered into a contract for obligated service under the Scholarship Program or under the Loan Repayment Program, the Secretary may reimburse such individual for all or part of the actual and reasonable expenses incurred in transporting the individual, the individual's family, and the family's possessions to the site of the individual's assignment under section 333. The Secretary may establish a maximum total amount that may be paid to an individual as reimbursement for such expenses.

(d)(1) The Secretary may, under regulations promulgated by the Secretary, adjust the monthly pay of each member of the Corps (other than a member described in subsection (a)(1)(C)) who is directly engaged in the delivery of health services in a health professional shortage area as follows:

(A) During the first 36 months in which such a member is so engaged in the delivery of health services, his monthly pay may be increased by an amount which when added to the member's monthly pay and allowances will provide a monthly income competitive with the average monthly income from a practice of an individual who is a member of the profession of the Corps member, who has equivalent training, and who has been in practice for a period equivalent to the period during which the Corps member has been in practice.

(B) During the period beginning upon the expiration of the 36 months referred to in subparagraph (A) and ending with the month in which the member's monthly pay and allowances are equal to or exceed the monthly income he received for the last of such 36 months, the member may receive in addition to his monthly pay and allowances an amount which when added to such monthly pay and allowances equals the monthly income he received for such last month.

(C) For each month in which a member is directly engaged in the delivery of health services in a health professional shortage area in accordance with an agreement with the Secretary entered into under section 741(f)(1)(C), under which the Secretary is obligated to make payments in accordance with section 741(f)(2), the amount of any monthly increase under subparagraph (A) or (B) with respect to such member shall be decreased by an amount equal to one-twelfth of the amount which the Secretary is obligated to pay upon the completion of the year of practice in which such month occurs.

For purposes of subparagraphs (A) and (B), the term "monthly pay" includes special pay received under chapter 5 of title 37 of the United States Code.

(2) In the case of a member of the Corps who is directly engaged in the delivery of health services in a health professional shortage area in accordance with a service obligation incurred under the Scholarship Program or the Loan Repayment Program, the adjustment in pay authorized by paragraph (1) may be made for such a member only upon satisfactory completion of such service obligation, and the first 36 months of such member's being so engaged in the delivery of health services shall, for purposes of paragraph (1)(A), be deemed to begin upon such satisfactory completion.

(3) A member of the Corps described in subparagraph (C) of subsection (a)(1) shall when assigned to an entity under section 333 be subject to the personnel system of such entity, except that such member shall receive during the period of assignment the income that the member would receive if the member was a member of the Corps described in subparagraph (B) of such subsection.

(e) Corps members assigned under section 333 to provide health services in health professional shortage areas shall not be counted against any employment ceiling affecting the Department.

(f) Sections 214 and 216 shall not apply to members of the National Health Service Corps during their period of obligated service under the Scholarship Program or the Loan Repayment Program, except when such members are Commissioned Corps officers who entered into a contract with Secretary under section 338A or 338B after December 31, 2006 and when the Secretary determines that exercising the authority provided under section 214 or 216 with respect to any such officer would not cause unreasonable disruption to health care services provided in the community in which such officer is providing health care services.

(g)(1) The Secretary shall, by rule, prescribe conversion provisions applicable to any individual who, within a year after completion of service as a member of the Corps described in subsection (a)(1)(C), becomes a commissioned officer in the Regular or Reserve Corps of the Service.

(2) The rules prescribed under paragraph (1) shall provide that in applying the appropriate provisions of this Act which relate to retirement, any individual who becomes such an officer shall be entitled to have credit for any period of service as a member of the Corps described in subsection (a)(1)(C).

(h) The Secretary shall ensure that adequate staff is provided to the Service with respect to effectively administering the program for the Corps.

(i)(1) In carrying out subpart III, the Secretary may, in accordance with this subsection, issue waivers to individuals who have entered into a contract for obligated service under the Scholarship Program or the Loan Repayment Program under which the individuals are authorized to satisfy the requirement of obligated service through providing clinical practice that is half time.

(2) A waiver described in paragraph (1) may be provided by the Secretary only if—

(A) the entity for which the service is to be performed—

(i) has been approved under section 333A for assignment of a Corps member; and

(ii) has requested in writing assignment of a health professional who would serve half time;

(B) the Secretary has determined that assignment of a health professional who would serve half time would be appropriate for the area where the entity is located;

(C) a Corps member who is required to perform obligated service has agreed in writing to be assigned for half-time service to an entity described in subparagraph (A);

(D) the entity and the Corps member agree in writing that the Corps member will perform half-time clinical practice;

(E) the Corps member agrees in writing to fulfill all of the service obligations under section 338C through half-time clinical practice and either—

(i) double the period of obligated service that would otherwise be required; or

(ii) in the case of contracts entered into under section 338B, accept a minimum service obligation of 2 years with an award amount equal to 50 percent of the amount that would otherwise be payable for full-time service; and

(F) the Corps member agrees in writing that if the Corps member begins providing half-time service but fails to begin or complete the period of obligated service, the method stated in 338E(c) for determining the damages for breach of the individual's written contract will be used after converting periods of obligated service or of service performed into their full-time equivalents.

(3) In evaluating waivers issued under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall examine the effect of multidisciplinary teams.

(j) For the purposes of this subpart and subpart III:

(1) The term "Department" means the Department of Health and Human Services.

(2) The term "Loan Repayment Program" means the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program established under section 338B.

(3) The term "Scholarship Program" means the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program established under section 338A.

(4) The term "State" includes, in addition to the several States, only the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

(5) The terms "full time" and "full-time" mean a minimum of 40 hours per week in a clinical practice, for a minimum of 45 weeks per year.

(6) The terms "half time" and "half-time" mean a minimum of 20 hours per week (not to exceed 39 hours per week) in a clinical practice, for a minimum of 45 weeks per year.

DESIGNATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS

SEC. 332. [254e] (a)(1) For purposes of this subpart the term "health professional shortage area" means (A) an area in an urban or rural area (which need not conform to the geographic boundaries of a political subdivision and which is a rational area for the delivery of health services) which the Secretary determines has a health manpower shortage, (B) a population group which the Secretary determines has such a shortage, or (C) a public or nonprofit private medical facility or other public facility which the Secretary determines has such a shortage. All Federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics, as defined in section 1861(aa) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(aa)), that meet the requirements of section 334 shall be automatically designated as having such a shortage. The Secretary shall not remove an area from the areas determined to be health professional shortage areas under subparagraph (A) of the preceding sentence until the Secretary has afforded interested persons and groups in such area an opportunity to provide data and information in support of the designation as a health professional shortage area or a population group described in subparagraph (B) of such sentence or a facility described in subparagraph (C) of such sentence, and has made a determination on the basis of the data and information submitted by such persons