DATE: October 12, 2021

TO: Sharon Block, Acting Administrator
                Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
                Office of Management and Budget

FROM: Diana Espinosa, Acting Administrator

SUBJECT: DECISION - Expedited Review- Reporting Data Elements for Small
                Rural Hospital Improvement Grant Program COVID-19 Testing and
                Mitigation Program recipients

ACTION REQUESTED

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is requesting an expedited review of a request for data collection for the Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP) COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Program. HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) will manage this data collection system to support a requirement to monitor and report on grant funds distributed under the fiscal year 2021 American Rescue Plan Act, Public Law 117-2. Upon receipt of funds, recipients attested to terms and conditions that, among other obligations, required each recipient hospital to submit reports to the Department of Health and Human Services.

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Reporting Portal is time-sensitive to meet federal reporting requirements as outlined in the American Rescue Plan Act legislation. Because of the urgent nature of the COVID-19 pandemic response, combined with the quick disbursement of and the short-term duration of this funding (one time disbursement on July 1, 2021), it is important for HRSA to obtain data as quickly as possible.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The American Rescue Plan Act appropriated $398 million to small rural hospitals to support COVID-19 testing and mitigation related expenses. HRSA issued funding as one-time payments to 46 State Offices of Rural Health for distribution to 1,540 small rural hospitals, providing states with $258,376 per participating hospital. HRSA's FORHP supports a data-reporting module—the SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Reporting Portal—to collect information on SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Program funded activities. The data will allow HRSA to

ensure recipients meet the terms and conditions of their funding and will provide HRSA with information on the impact of funds distributed through this Program.

Notable Timing Factors:

The SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Reporting Portal collects aggregate data from funded organizations. Funded organizations provide basic identifying information, indicate how they used grant funds, and report the total number of COVID-19 tests the hospital provided. The SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Reporting Portal is located on a dedicated website that supports secure data storage, http://www.SHIPcovidreporting.com. HRSA intends to ask for responses to measures (i.e., testing and testing related purposes, mitigation and mitigation related purposes) quarterly, though respondents may update the data should any of that change during the duration of the quarter.

Noteworthy Elements about Equity:

Small rural hospitals are important partners in closing health equity gaps, especially related to COVID-19. SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Program funding helps rural hospitals maintain and expand COVID-19 testing and mitigation services for people in rural America, including those who live in medically underserved communities.

The goal of this data collection is to collect the minimum data necessary to monitor and support the proper and effective use of funds, at a scale commensurate with the amount of funding received per hospital. To assess the burden, we gathered data on the anticipated number of respondents and responses based on internal data. We assessed average burden hours based on input gathered from by the data portal developer and state office of rural health grantees. Recipients sampled reported response times of approximately 15 minutes (.25 hours) per response.

ANTICIPATED REACTION

While the SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation program is new for small rural hospitals, it aligns with the similar Rural Health Clinic Testing and Mitigation Program and will use a similar data collection process. FORHP staff have engaged the 46 grantees in planning discussions and have incorporated their feedback into this final data collection approach.

ROLLOUT

HRSA intends to start requiring data collection as soon as possible, no later than November 1, 2021. HRSA will extract data from SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Reporting Portal quarterly. SHIP COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation Program data collection ends January 31, 2022.

Diana Espinosa

Attachments:
TAB A: PRA Emergency Clearance Package
- *Supporting Statement A* document details this request.
- *Data collection form*
  - FORM – HRSA FORHP SHIP COVID-19 Data Report
- *Documentation with each project:* This attachment is completed for the whole project.
- *Documentation for each form:* This attachment is for this form.