

bachelor's degree, a master's degree, a doctoral degree, or post baccalaureate training, in a science relating to health care. Allied health professionals may include, but are not limited to, speech pathologists, physical therapists, physical therapy assistants, nutritionists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, medical technologists, cytotechnologists, laboratory assistants, medical informaticians, respiratory therapists, occupational therapists, ultrasound technicians, sonographers, nuclear medicine technicians, radiography technicians, clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors. Although these primary care and allied health care providers may have the same title as primary care and allied health care providers in the United States, their skill levels and the roles they perform can be quite different from their U.S. counterparts. This Cooperative Agreement program will support a wide range of objectives to meet the needs of the primary care and allied health care providers in the Pacific Basin.

Eligible entities are required to use funds in collaboration with two or more disciplines. Activities conducted under this cooperative should include: (a) The recruitment of representatives from all six jurisdictions that will comprise an Advisory Committee responsible for providing appropriate input to all key aspects of the project and to facilitate conducting the clinical education courses; (b) a needs assessment for all six jurisdictions in the Pacific Basin to identify their specific educational needs; (c) the recruitment of faculty and the development of curricula that will meet the needs of all six jurisdictions; (d) the development, implementation and operation of on-site and distance learning continuing clinical education programs for the primary care and allied health care providers in all six jurisdictions of the Pacific Basin; and (e) cultural competency training that emphasizes sensitivity to cultural differences, socioeconomic factors and geographic issues that impact the population in the Pacific Basin.

Authorizing Legislation

This Cooperative Agreement is solicited under the following authority of Title VII of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act, Sections 747 and 755. Section 747, as amended, that authorizes grants to plan, develop and operate, or participate in an approved professional training program (including an approved residency or internship program) in the field of family medicine, internal medicine, or pediatrics for medical (M.D. and D.O.)

students, interns (including interns in internships in osteopathic medicine), residents, or practicing physicians that emphasizes training for the practice of family medicine, general internal medicine, or general pediatrics. Section 755, as amended, authorizes grants to assist allied health programs in meeting the costs associated with expanding or establishing programs that will increase the number of individuals trained in allied health professions, which may include those that provide career advancement training for practicing allied health professionals.

Federal Involvement

The Federal role in the conduct of this cooperative agreement is substantial and will be maintained by HRSA's Bureau of Health Professions (BHPr), Division of Medicine and Dentistry (DMD) staff through technical assistance and guidance to the grantee beyond the normal stewardship responsibilities in the administration of grant awards. The Federal Government will provide technical assistance and advice with respect to the following activities:

1. Planning, development, administration, and evaluation of all phases of the program, including all curricula developed for the program, the content and staffing of faculty training, and the review of the evaluation plan for the project initiated at its inception;
2. Reviewing and approving the plans at the end of the curriculum development phase of the project to assure appropriate direction and redirection of activities, if necessary;
3. Participation in all appropriate meetings, committees, conference calls, and working groups related to the Cooperative Agreement and its projects;
4. Reviewing and approving the curricula vitae documenting the credentials and experience for selection to the Advisory Committee and proposed members; and
5. Reviewing and approving the curriculum development phase to the implementation phase of this work.

Availability of Funds

Up to \$400,000 will be available in FY 2003 to fund one award made under this Cooperative Agreement. It is expected that funding will be continued to complete a 4-year total project period. It is expected that awards will be made on or before September 1, 2003. Continuation awards beyond the first year of the project period will be based on the achievement of satisfactory progress and the availability of funds.

Background

HRSA's mission is to improve the Nation's health by assuring equitable access to comprehensive, quality health care for all. In addressing this goal, HRSA's Bureau of Health Professions has responsibility for the education of health professionals.

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) was commissioned by HRSA in the late 1990s to examine the health needs of the populations in the U.S.-Associated Pacific Islands. The IOM made recommendations for improvement of jurisdictional health needs in their report, "Pacific Partnerships for Health: Charting a Course for the 21st Century," January 1998. The four key recommendations were (1) adopt and support a viable system of community-based primary and preventive health care; (2) improve coordination within and between the jurisdictions and the U.S.; (3) increase community involvement and investment in health care; and (4) promote the education and training of the health care workforce.

One of the main focuses for BHPr is to promote continuing clinical education for primary care and allied health care providers. This is consistent with IOM recommendation number four. The goal is to maintain and improve the clinical capacity of primary care and allied health care providers in the Pacific Basin, especially for the Medical Officers trained in the HRSA-supported Pacific Basin Medical Officer Training Program (whose operations terminated on December 31, 1996). BHPr's focus will help improve the health status of Pacific Basin residents and support a viable system of community-based primary care. Furthermore, this will improve the overall system of primary, preventive, and allied health care in the Pacific Basin and lead to overall sustainability of program efforts.

Applicants to this Cooperative Agreement must focus on planning, developing, implementing and operating a continuing clinical education program that will meet the specific needs of all six jurisdictions in the Pacific Basin.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are public or nonprofit private hospitals, accredited schools of medicine or osteopathic medicine, health professions schools, academic health centers, State or local governments, or public or private nonprofit entities, including faith-based and community-based organizations. Eligible entities are required to use