

helping to ensure that volunteers have appropriate credentials for assignments which they will undertake when the MRC unit is activated. The MRC unit will help facilitate not only coordinated action, but provide a greater predictability in volunteer resource capability when and where such services are needed.

The establishment of sustainable, community-based volunteer MRC units throughout the nation will help meet the goal of enabling communities in the United States to be better prepared to respond to emergencies and urgent public health needs. It is anticipated that these community-based MRC units will grow in number and in quality across the country.

The MRC demonstration project programs will be supported through the cooperative agreement mechanism. This will enable a collaborative relationship between the awardee, the local MRC unit, and the Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The OSG will coordinate, through a private sector contractor, technical assistance needed for the implementation, conduct, and assessment of program activities. The OSG will provide oversight of the program and has a senior program staff member dedicated to the continued development of the MRC initiative. The OSG has established an MRC Web site at <http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov>. This Web site includes a guidance document for local leaders who plan to develop and implement a local MRC initiative. This document is entitled Medical Reserve Corps—A Guide for Local Leaders.

The OSG is supporting the development of MRC units through four strategic approaches. Specifically, the Federal Government's support includes the following:

1. Limited financial support through the CA covered by this and earlier announcements (**Federal Register** Vol. 67, No. 139, page 47550, July 19, 2002).

2. Communication, Information and Education including the following:

- The MRC Web site at: <http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov>.
- The MRC guidance document on how to establish an MRC unit and related considerations. This document is entitled Medical Reserve Corps—A Guide for Local Leaders and is accessible on the MRC Web site.
- Information on the MRC Web site addressing new developments in the MRC, trends and issues, best practices, training opportunities, meetings, and more.
- MRC workshops which will, as appropriate, include MRC unit leaders

and participants; state, county, and local citizen corps leaders and coordinators, health and emergency response system officials.

- Development of an MRC logo for marketing and identification purposes. Note: An award of funds under this RFA does not include any right to use the associated trademarks of the OSG relating to the MRC. Successful applicants must still execute a nonexclusive license under the terms and policies set by the OSG prior to any use of these marks.

3. Technical Assistance (TA) through the OSG's private sector contractor. TA will, as appropriate and available, be provided to eligible MRC units. Examples of TA might include advice on matters such as development of operational plans, evaluation approaches, etc.

4. Policy Analysis and Action. Issues currently being addressed include, but will not be limited to: liability, credentialing, and training standards.

Background

During his January 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush called on all Americans to dedicate at least two years—the equivalent of 4,000 hours of their time—to provide volunteer service to others. To help every American answer the call to service, the President created the USA Freedom Corps, and charged it with strengthening and expanding service opportunities for volunteers to protect our homeland, to support our communities, and to extend American compassion around the World. The USA Freedom Corps is a coordinating council, similar to the National Economic Council or National Security Council, that relies upon the Federal agencies and departments that are a part of the coordinating council to carry out policies and programs.

Simultaneously, the President also created the Citizen Corps initiative to offer Americans new opportunities to get involved in their communities through emergency preparation and response activities. The Citizen Corps initiative includes several new and existing programs that share the common goal of helping communities prevent, prepare for, and respond to crime, natural disasters, and other emergencies. The programs include: Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), under the direction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; Neighborhood Watch and Volunteers in Police Service, under the direction of the Department of Justice (DOJ); and, the MRC, under the broad guidance and support of the Department of Health and Human Services.

DATES: To be considered for review, applications must be received by close of business, 5 PM Eastern Daylight Savings Time, July 18, 2003 at the address indicated in the **ADDRESSES** section of this announcement. The submission deadline date supersedes the postmark date information as stated in the PHS-5161. Applicants that meet this deadline will receive notification that their application was received by the Office of Grants Management. Applications that do not meet the deadline will be considered late and will be returned to the applicant without comment. Applications sent via facsimile or by electronic mail will not be accepted for review.

ADDRESSES: Applications must be prepared using Form PHS 5161-1 (revised July 2000). This form is available in Adobe Acrobat format at the following Web site: <http://www.cdc.gov/od/pgo/forminfo.htm>. Form PHS 5161-1 includes U.S. Government Standard Form (SF) 424, the required face page for CA applications submitted for Federal assistance and SF 424 A, a budget format for non-construction projects.

Complete applications should be submitted to: Ms. Karen Campbell, Director, Office of Grants Management, Office of Public Health and Science, 1101 Wootton Parkway, Suite 550, Rockville, Maryland, 20852. Ms. Campbell can be reached by telephone at: (301) 594-0758.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions regarding programmatic information related to preparation of CA applications should be directed in writing to Ronald Schoenfeld, Ph.D., Acting MRC Project Officer, Office of the Surgeon General, Office of Public Health and Science, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Room 18-66, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857, e-mail:

rschoenfeld@osophs.dhhs.gov.

Information on budget and business aspects of the application may be obtained from Ms. Karen Campbell, Director, Office of Grants Management, Office of Public Health and Science, 1101 Wootton Parkway, Suite 550, Rockville, Maryland, 20852. Ms. Campbell can be reached by telephone at: (301) 594-0758.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Availability of Funds

The total amount of funds for new awards competition will be \$6 million. The OSG anticipates making 120 awards of up to \$50,000 to new applicant communities in fiscal year 2003. Awards will be for up to three years,