

- (15) Quality of Life
- (16) Uninsured
- (17) Disabled/Disability
- (18) Low Income Populations
- (19) Quality of Care
- (20) EMS (for all populations, with a special interest in children)
- (21) Dual Eligibles

#### Geographic Coverage

Applications are sought for research products that are national in scope or generalizable to the nation. Research covering a single community, multiple communities, a single state, or a single region are not acceptable and will not be reviewed.

#### Criteria and Maximum Points:

Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Principal Investigator and Support Personnel (25 Points) [This criterion includes evaluation of qualifications and achievements of principal investigator and support personnel, as well as multidisciplinary mix of personnel.]
- Organizational, Physical and Institutional Arrangements and Institutional Commitment to Rural Research (10 points) [This criterion includes evaluation of administrative capabilities to manage research activities and accounting capabilities to manage grant funds.]
- Project Proposal (30 points).
- Budget (5 points).
- Demonstrated Commitment and Experience in Rural Health Research, Policy or Service (15 points).
- Research Applicability to National Issues, Policy Relevance and Breadth of Scope (e.g., geographic coverage) (15 points).

**Eligibility Requirements:** Eligibility is open to public, private, and non-profit—including faith-based and community-based—organizations. Institutions that received a Rural Health Research Center Award covering September 1, 2000–August 31, 2004 and those with Fiscal Year 2000–2003 ORHP awards under special congressional initiatives are ineligible for this grant program. Although multiple applications may be submitted, only one award will be made to the same entity. Receipt of a grant will not disqualify the recipient from the Rural Health Research Center competition in 2004.

In addition to the above criteria, applicants must be capable of receiving the grant funds directly and must have the capability to manage the project. Applicants must be able to exercise administrative and program direction over the grant project; must have the administrative and accounting capabilities to manage the grant funds;

and must have some permanent research staff at the time the application is submitted.

**Matching Requirements:** Applicant will not be required to match or share the project cost if an award is made.

**Funding Preferences:** A funding preference will be awarded to any qualified applicant that demonstrates substantial inclusion of the following in the project proposal: The applicant is, or is located within, an institution of higher learning or a department or agency within a State or local government. Institutions of higher learning are preferred because they bring academic knowledge and expertise to the application of new scientific techniques to solve the complex problems of rural communities. It is essential that research conclusions are based on the knowledgeable application of scientific research techniques that an institution of higher learning can provide. Departments or agencies within a State or local government are preferred because of their expertise in assessing the impacts of national policies on state governance and rural communities. This expertise provides their research with a unique policy-oriented perspective about rural communities and their members. Approved applications that receive a funding preference will be ranked ahead of those that receive no preference. Applications recommended for approval that do not receive a preference will be given full and equitable consideration but will not be funded until all applications recommended for approval that do receive the preference and fall within the funding line are funded. The funding line is the threshold score that determines the cut-off point for funding in a given fiscal year as determined by available funds. Applicants who are eligible for a preference and wish to receive it, must request a preference by following the instructions described in the application kit.

**Special considerations:** HRSA wants to fund a variety of research areas in making new awards under this announcement. Therefore, HRSA will consider the variety of research areas when selecting which applications to fund or those recommended for approval. See the list of 21 research areas in the Research Areas section above.

HRSA wants to achieve a geographic balance among awardees in making new awards under this announcement. Therefore, HRSA will consider geographic distribution when selecting which applications to fund of those recommended for approval.

#### Executive Order 12372

This grant program is subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372 concerning intergovernmental review of Federal programs by appropriate health planning agencies as implemented by 45 CFR part 100. Executive Order 12372 allows States the option of setting up a system for reviewing applications from within their States for assistance under certain Federal programs. Applicants (other than Federally-recognized Indian tribal governments) should contact their State Single Point of Contact (SPOC), a list of which will be included in the application kit, as early as possible to alert them to the prospective applications and receive any necessary instructions on the State process. For proposed projects serving more than one State, the applicant is advised to contact the SPOC of each affected State.

The due date for State process recommendations is 60 days after the application deadline for new applications. The granting agency does not guarantee to “accommodate or explain” State process recommendations it receives after that date. (See part 148 of the PHS Grants Administration Manual, Intergovernmental Review of PHS Programs under Executive Order 12372, and 45 CFR part 100 for a description of the review process and requirements).

Dated: May 15, 2003.

**Elizabeth M. Duke,**  
Administrator.

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#### DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

##### Health Resources and Services Administration

##### Title III Early Intervention Services Program, Existing Geographic Areas (EISEGA); CFDA 93.918; HRSA 04–005

**AGENCY:** Health Resources and Services Administration, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of funds.

**SUMMARY:** The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announces the anticipated availability of fiscal year (FY) 2004 funds to be awarded under the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act Title III Early Intervention Services (EIS) Program for existing geographic areas to support outpatient HIV early intervention and primary care services for low-income, medically underserved people in