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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Program Announcement 03118]

Cooperative Agreement for the Development and Evaluation of Medical Laboratory Quality Indicators and the Monitoring of Voluntary Practice Guidelines as a Model; Notice of Availability of Funds

Application Deadline: August 8, 2003.

A. Authority and Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number

This program is authorized under section 317(k)(2) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. 247b(k)(2), as amended. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number is 93.283.

B. Purpose

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announces the availability of fiscal year (FY) 2003 funds for a cooperative agreement for a program to develop and evaluate appropriate medical laboratory quality indicators and to evaluate the implementation of voluntary laboratory practice guidelines. This program addresses the "Healthy People 2010" focus area of Access to Quality Health Services.

The purpose of the program is twofold:

(1) Collaborate with a broad spectrum of laboratories (e.g., hospital, public health, doctor's office, and local clinic), care providers and payers, and public health to develop and evaluate appropriate laboratory quality indicators and to develop a plan for collection and monitoring of the indicators.

(2) Recently collected data show that a significant number of laboratories do not follow professional practice guidelines in the areas of antimicrobial susceptibility testing and coagulation. The cooperative agreement recipient will further evaluate implementation of voluntary practice guidelines and assess the barriers to their implementation. This activity may be considered a subcomponent of the first activity and serve as a model for some of the quality indicators.

Measurable outcomes of the program will be in alignment with the following performance goal for the Public Health Practice Program Office: Increase the number of frontline public health workers at the state and local level that are competent and prepared to respond to bioterrorism, other infectious disease outbreaks, and other public health threats and emergencies, and prepare frontline state and local health departments and laboratories to respond to current and emerging public health threats.

C. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by:

- Public nonprofit organizations.
- Private nonprofit organizations.
- Faith-based organizations.
- State and local governments or their

bona fide agents (this includes the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau).

Applications from the above entities are being solicited because they represent organizations that have sufficient background, experience, and current knowledge of laboratory testing. These entities include institutions or organizations with knowledge and experience in public health and medical laboratory testing who are also knowledgeable about current regulatory and voluntary laboratory standards, quality assurance, the use of quality indicators to measure performance and to identify areas in laboratory testing that are error-prone, and who can evaluate these findings in the broader context of the impact on patient health and safety. In addition, these entities will be able to collaborate and work with existing laboratory and health care networks, professional organizations, and others in the field of laboratory medicine to collect data and information on laboratory quality issues and implementation of laboratory standards.

Note: Title 2 of the United States Code section 1611 states that an organization described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to receive Federal funds constituting an award, grant or loan.

D. Funding

Availability of Funds: Approximately \$125,000 is available in FY 2003 to fund one award ranging from \$100,000 to \$150,000. It is expected that the award will begin on or about September 15,

2003 and the project period will consist of one 12-month budget period. Funding estimates may change.

Recipient Financial Participation: No matching funds are required for this program.

Funding Preferences: Preference may be given to a State health department clinical laboratory quality assurance or evaluation program or other organization with existing laboratory networks (data collection networks comprised of clinical and public health laboratories that periodically monitor and report on issues related to the delivery of laboratory medicine and quality assurance programs associated with them).

E. Program Requirements

In conducting activities to achieve the purpose of this program, the recipient will be responsible for the activities listed in 1. Recipient Activities, and CDC will be responsible for the activities listed in 2. CDC Activities.

1. Recipient Activities:

a. Provide leadership in developing and evaluating laboratory quality indicators in collaboration with representatives from laboratories, care providers, payers, and public health.

b. Provide leadership in the development of an implementation plan for the use of quality indicators to collect and monitor data from a broad spectrum of laboratories (e.g., hospitals, public health sites, doctors' offices and local clinics).

c. Test the plan developed in (b) above by collecting indicator measurement data from laboratories.

d. Evaluate the implementation of selected voluntary laboratory practice guidelines and identify and assess barriers to guideline implementation in various types of laboratories.

e. Collect, enter, analyze, and summarize the data in a manner that is statistically valid and, whenever necessary, ensures participant confidentiality.

f. Distribute reports to participants for self-evaluation and improvement, and make information available to other laboratories nationwide, as appropriate.

g. Develop recommendations for potential mechanisms to overcome barriers and improve the implementation of quality indicators and voluntary laboratory practice guidelines.

h. Prepare manuscripts for peer-review publications.

2. CDC Activities:

a. Assist in identifying quality indicators and voluntary laboratory practice guidelines for evaluation.

b. Facilitate collaboration with external partners who volunteer to work