

Frequently Asked Questions

PRIMARY CARE TRAINING AND ENHANCEMENT: PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT TRAINING IN PRIMARY CARE PROGRAM HRSA 11-162

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CORRECTION: The project period is September 30, 2011- September 29, 2016

Budget period 1 is September 30, 2011-September 29, 2012

Budget period 2 is September 30, 2012-September 29, 2013

Budget period 3 is September 30, 2013-September 29, 2014

Budget period 4 is September 30, 2014-September 29, 2015

Budget period 5 is September 30, 2015-September 29, 2016

The Longitudinal Evaluation Preference is no longer available.

ADDITION: ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARY REQUIRED FROM INSTITUTIONS WHO RECEIVED PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT TRAINING IN PRIMARY CARE FUNDS IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS.

In the past, the Primary Care Training and Enhancement Programs, including Academic Administrative Units, Predoctoral Training, Residency Training, Physician Faculty Development, and Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care, shared one funding announcement. Each program now has its own funding announcement.

Purpose

The purposes of the Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care Program are to

- Plan, develop, and operate a physician assistant education program to train physician assistants in primary care; and
- Plan, develop and operate a program for training individuals who will teach in physician assistant programs to provide such training in primary care.

Content focus areas include Healthy People 2020 objectives, the patient-centered medical home, community and patient-centered care, evidence-based practice, patient safety, quality improvement, new models of primary care delivery, professionalism, health literacy, and cultural competency.

Primary care is associated with more equitable distribution of health in the population and lower mortality, after controlling for socio-demographic and lifestyle factors. The need for high quality, diverse and well distributed primary care clinicians and faculty increases as the nation's population grows and ages. Fewer physician assistants are seeking to practice in primary care and many have left primary care to practice in specialty care.

The PCTE Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care Program can help to improve access to quality health care and provide appropriate preparation, composition and distribution of the health professions workforce. While evidence shows that physician assistants are improving the geographic distribution of the medical workforce, there is also a steady trend towards specialty care in urban settings. These challenges are further complicated by the lack of a sufficient number of educators to train the next generation of physician assistant students. Many programs will need to increase efforts in recruiting and retaining new faculty, minority students, and minority faculty and adding new clinical sites in community based-settings.

Approximately \$5,900,000 will be available in fiscal year 2011 to fund 54 new Physician Faculty Development in Primary Care Program grants. The average award will be \$103,000 per year. The project period is 5 years. The maximum total award for the five year project period is \$650,000.

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible, an applicant or partner organization must be from an organization accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

My department or division holds provisional accreditation. Are we eligible to apply?

Yes. A department or division with any active accreditation status, other than not accredited, may apply. You must provide documentation of your accreditation status in Attachment 1.

We are partnering with a community based clinical setting. Can they be the primary applicant?

A single applicant or an applicant in a collaborative application must hold its own required accreditation. Partnering entities are not required to be accredited. If the community based clinical setting is not accredited, it cannot be the primary applicant, only a partner.

Can I apply if my department or division has a Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care grant that has a budget period that extends beyond September 30, 2011?

No. As a current grantee you are not eligible.

Can I apply if I have a no cost extension that expires after September 30, 2011?

You may apply for a Competing Continuation grant if you have met the objectives and completed the proposed work for the current grant for which you hold a no cost extension prior to September 30, 2011. You must amend the end date of the no cost extension to expire on or before September 29, 2011 by submitting a request through the Electronic Handbooks (EHBs). If you have questions regarding this process you can contact the Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care grants management specialist.

Can I apply if I have left over award money from my current Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care grant that ends before September 30, 2011?

You may apply for a Competing Continuation grant if you have met the current grant's objectives and will have completed the proposed work by September 30, 2011. If you are awarded a Competing Continuation grant, the left over award money may be used to offset the Competing Continuation award.

If a department or division in my academic institution other than my own has a current Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care grant that has a budget period that extends beyond September 30, 2011, may I apply?

No. An academic institution may have only one current Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care grant. However, if the current grant has a no cost extension that ends prior to September 30, 2011, you may apply. HRSA encourages collaborative applications between academic units.

My academic institution or academic administrative unit has multiple, discrete training sites. Who should be the applicant?

Any physician assistant training program that is responsible for primary care education and has a unique accreditation identifier may be the applicant.

Applying and Awards

How do I apply?

Applicants must apply through Grants.gov. Please register on Grants.gov immediately.

What is a Competing Continuation?

A competing continuation is a funding request for new activities that build upon the accomplishments of an expiring grant. For the 2011 competition, the expiring grant's project period will have ended between June 30, 2011 and September 29, 2011. In the past, this type of application was called a "renewal". Competing continuations will have a 5 year project period. They must meet all of the application requirements, including completing an Accomplishment Summary. They will be reviewed by the same standards as all of the other applications; no preference is given to competing continuations.

Do I have to register on the Electronic Handbooks (EHBs)?

Yes. If your grant application is awarded you must be registered with the EHBs.

When will the grants be awarded?

It is anticipated that grants will be awarded on or before the start date of September 30, 2011.

What is the project period?

The grants will have a 5-year project period, from September 30, 2011 through September 29, 2016.

What are the budget periods?

Budget period 1 is September 30, 2011-September 29, 2012
Budget period 2 is September 30, 2012-September 29, 2013
Budget period 3 is September 30, 2013-September 29, 2014
Budget period 4 is September 30, 2014-September 29, 2015
Budget period 5 is September 30, 2015-September 29, 2016

Must applications be for a 5-year project period?

Yes.

How will I know if my application has been received?

Applicants will receive a confirmation email from Grants.gov that gives a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX). Be sure that your application is validated by Grants.gov prior to the application deadline of July 11, 2011.

It is important that applicants pay attention to emails received from Grants.gov. Notification of a "rejected" application from Grants.gov is not verification of receipt; rather, it means you must correct an error and resubmit prior to deadline.

What is the deadline for this funding opportunity?

All applications must be submitted via Grants.gov by July 11, 2011 at 8:00 p.m. EST. Applications received after this time will not be considered.

Can my budget request include costs incurred prior to September 30, 2011?

In general, these grants are intended to support costs incurred after the project start date. This program, however, has authority that allows for reimbursement of grant related costs up to 90 days prior to the beginning of the project period, if awarded.

Will I receive formal notification from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) if my grant is awarded?

Yes. HRSA will electronically transmit a Notice of Grant Award (NGA) to the applicant indicating whether or not the grant will be funded. More information about tracking your application is available online at <http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/resources.jsp>.

By when do grantees have to use their award money?

Grantees should commit the grant funds and complete the proposed objectives by the end of the 5 year project period, September 29, 2016.

If my grant is awarded, when can my institution apply for another Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care Program funding opportunity announcement?

The earliest that your institution could receive new funding for another Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care Program grant would be September 30, 2016.

Application Content

Are there page limits for the applications?

The page limit for each application is 65 pages. This limit does not include standard forms. Forms that are not counted in the page limit are indicated in the SF-424 Research & Related (R&R) Table of Contents, which is included in the funding opportunity announcement. Applications exceeding 65 pages will not be considered.

Please keep in mind that all information presented in the submission is public, and may be used to provide information to the public and Congress.

How should attachments be formatted?

Instructions for formatting are in the Grants.gov Applicant User Guide, available online at <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/userguide.htm> .

Is there a required order for the application documents?

Yes. All applications must follow the order described in the funding opportunity announcement.

Is a planning period acceptable?

Yes.

What is the difference between a Staffing Plan and the Personnel Costs in the Budget Justification?

The Staffing Plan describes the roles and responsibilities of the personnel receiving grant funds to demonstrate that they have the experience to perform their grant responsibilities and that those activities support the proposed objectives. The Personnel Costs in the Budget Justification relate an individual's roles and responsibilities to their percent total effort devoted to grant activities to explain the costs associated with their participation.

What attachments require a Table of Contents?

Include a Table of Contents for attachments that are more than 2 pages long. The Table of Contents page is not counted in the page limit.

What documentation is required to prove accreditation status?

Please follow the instructions in the Eligibility Information section of the funding opportunity announcement that state: The applicant must provide a statement that they are accredited, and must name their accrediting body and date of accreditation for verification purposes. The entire accreditation letter is not required as is stated in the instructions for Attachment 1.

If the application does not request Facilities & Other Resources or Equipment allowances, must these attachments be uploaded?

Yes, these attachments are required in the SF-424 Research & Related (R&R) Form. If you do not submit them, your application will receive an error message and will not be received. If no Facilities & Other Resources or Equipment allowances are requested, please submit a page stating "None Requested" for each of the attachments, as appropriate. The pages containing this statement for these two attachments will not be counted in the page limit.

What is an Accomplishment Summary?

If your academic unit held a Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care Program grant within the last 4 years, you must complete an Accomplishment Summary. For the 2011 competition, this will be all programs that had a project period ending after June 30, 2007 and prior to September 29, 2011.

What should the Accomplishment Summary contain?

Project period covered: From: (dates) To: (dates)

Specific Objectives and Methodology:

Briefly summarize the specific objectives and methods of the funded project.

Number of Trainees per year per discipline: ____/____/____/____/____

Performance Outcomes and Evaluation: Summarize the quantitative and qualitative measures used to evaluate the project in the context of each funded objective. Specify project outcome targets and the degree to which stated objectives were achieved including the number of trainees.

What types of documentation will meet the Institutional Diversity Statement requirement?

The statement must be verifiable, official, and include each of the three elements described in the funding opportunity announcement. An example is an official statement from the applicant institution's Diversity Office or equivalent.

Who is a program completer?

A program completer is an individual that has met the didactic and/or clinical requirements of a structured educational program that does not confer a degree (e.g., continuing education or fellowship) and is designed to improve knowledge or skills.

Who is a graduate?

A graduate is an individual that has met the requirements of a structured educational program that confers a degree.

If my institution previously held a Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care Program grant that focused on a different trainee (ex: physician assistant students) than the current application (ex: faculty), which trainee data should I report when applying for the Medically Underserved Community (MUC) Preference or the Primary Care Priority?

You should report data on the level of trainee that is the focus of the 2011 application.

When reporting MUC Preference data, should all graduates/program completers be included whether or not they are working in a primary care clinical practice?

Yes, the focus of the MUC Preference is on the geographic setting not the clinical practice discipline.

How do I calculate the significant increase in rate for the MUC preference?

See this example: In 2007, Program A had 200 graduates, 20 entered a clinical practice in a medically underserved community. In 2010, Program A had 210 graduates and 30 entered a clinical practice in a medically underserved community. The numerator will be 30 minus 20, which is 10. The denominator will be 200 plus 210 divided by 2, which is 205. In addition to reporting the numerator and denominator calculations, you will also report 10/205 as a percentage, which is 4.9%.

If my institution had a physician assistant training program 10 years ago and would like to apply for funding to create a new physician assistant training program, can we apply for the MUC Preference through the new program pathway?

Yes. You may apply through the new program pathway if your institution meets the other new program requirements because there are no physician assistant graduates for the last three consecutive years (2008, 2009, 2010).

Under Applying for the MUC Preference as a New Program Criteria #6, what type of assistance should be available to the trainees?

Examples of student assistance which is linked to service in MUCs following graduation are: 1) career counseling for trainees that includes options in MUCs and 2) a service that encourages and assists program trainees in selecting a clinical practice in a medically underserved community upon completion of their training.

How do I apply for the Longitudinal Evaluation?

The Longitudinal Evaluation Preference has been removed from the 2011 competition of the Primary Care Training and Enhancement Programs and will not be offered. The longitudinal evaluation capabilities described in section 761(d)(2) and the database described in section 761(b)(2)(E) of the Public Health Service Act have not yet been fully developed. As a result, meaningful distinctions among proposals cannot be made.

Should applicants complete the SF-424 R&R Other Project Information Component?

No, this funding opportunity is not soliciting applications for research grants. This section regarding human subjects protection, therefore, does not apply.

Trainee Support

What are the 2011 recommended stipend levels for full time trainees?

Career Level	Year	Stipend for FY 2011
Predoctoral	All	\$21,600
Postdoctoral	0	\$38,496
	1	\$40,548
	2	\$43,476
	3	\$45,192
	4	\$46,884
	5	\$48,900
	6	\$50,832
	7 or More	\$53,112

Are stipends available for trainees that are participating in grant funded activities less than full time (1.0 FTE)?

Yes. The stipend level must be adjusted by multiplying the appropriate full time stipend level by the trainee's percent full time equivalent (FTE).

What are “reasonable living expenses”?

Reasonable living expenses are those costs incurred by a trainee that is participating in a temporary grant-related learning opportunity that is outside of the standard curriculum and at a remote location.

Application Review

Who will review the applications?

Applications will be reviewed by HRSA personnel for eligibility and completeness and an independent review committee who will assess applications based on review criteria defined in the funding opportunity announcement. The review criteria are designed to enable the reviewers to assess the quality of an application and determine the likelihood of its success. The criteria relate directly to project narrative elements.

What are the relevant qualifications of the reviewers? Will the reviewers have significant experience as it relates to specific program areas?

Although the Division of Independent Review is responsible for managing objective reviews within HRSA, program officers develop a preliminary list of reviewers that are appropriate to review applications for their program based on many criteria. Each reviewer will be screened to avoid conflicts of interest. Review committee members are responsible for providing an objective, unbiased evaluation based on the criteria that have been established for this funding opportunity. HRSA staff oversee the review process to ensure that each application is given an objective review.

Can program directors who apply for funding also apply to serve as peer reviewers?

At this time the HRSA Division of Independent Review does not accept peer reviewers who are program directors applying for funding under that competition, nor does it accept any other individuals who have a financial interest in the application.

Reporting

The Annual Performance Report will have a new format and contain new performance measures beginning in 2012. A technical assistance call will be held to review the changes and answer questions.

Requesting Assistance

Will there be any opportunities for technical assistance prior to the application deadline?

- Technical Assistance Call #1 – June 13, 2011
Play back number: 888-562-2765, Pass code: 2011
- Technical Assistance Call #2 – June 24, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. EST
Call in number: 888-324-8118, Pass code: 5952007
Play back number: 800-937-4854, Pass code: 2011

Will the technical assistance call information be available after the call?

Yes. Each call will be available for play back approximately one hour after each call ends and will be available until the funding opportunity closing date. See above for details.

How will the two technical assistance calls differ?

The first call provided an overview of the funding opportunity announcement and answered initial questions. Much of the content of the first call is captured in this Frequently Asked Questions document. The second call will provide an overview of the questions that HRSA has received since the first call and address any remaining applicant concerns.

What if I still have questions?

The contact information for the program officer for the Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care is:

Sherrillyn Crooks
E-mail: scrooks@hrsa.gov
Telephone: (301) 443-7662

The contact information for the grants management specialist for the Physician Assistant Training in Primary Care is:

Denis Nikiema
Email: dnikiema@hrsa.gov
Telephone: (301) 443-8007