



**American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)**

**Health Professions Programs**

## **Nurse Faculty Loan Program July 30, 2009 Conference Call Transcript**

Good afternoon, and thank you for joining us on the call this afternoon. My name is Denise Thompson. I am the coordinator for the Nurse Faculty Loan program. The purpose of today's call is to provide you with some basic information about your opportunity to receive additional NFLP funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which we'll refer to as "ARRA" or "Recovery Act." This past Tuesday Secretary Sebelius announced the availability of nearly \$200 million to support grants, loans, loan repayments, and scholarships to expand the training of health care professionals. These funds are part of that announcement.

This call is being recorded, and will be available for replay using a toll-free number until August 30th. I will provide you with that number and pass code at the end of today's call.

To let you know about the format for the call: We will spend approximately 30 minutes providing some basic information about ARRA, including important information on reporting requirements. This will be followed by specific information on next steps – what information we need from you, and when and how we will obtain that information. The remaining time will be open for you to ask questions. While we are talking, please write down your questions, as there should be time to go over them when we are done. The operator will prompt you when you can begin asking questions.

Also on the phone with me today are Nicolette Solan-Pegler and Jim Essel to help answer your questions. I'd now like to turn this call over to Nicolette.

----- PAUSE -----

Thank you, Denise. To begin, I'll start off by describing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The Recovery Act was signed into law on February 17, 2009, and provides \$500 million to address health professions workforce shortages. Of that amount, \$300 million supports the expansion of the National Health Service Corps. As Denise mentioned earlier, the remaining \$200 million supports grants, loans, loan repayments, and scholarships to expand the training of health care professionals. The funds target a variety of health

professions training programs that will strengthen the health workforce. You can refer to our website at *BHPR-dot-HRSA-dot-Gov-slash-recovery* for more specific information.

As you know, the Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP) provides Federal support for the establishment and operation of a loan fund within participating schools of nursing to assist registered nurses in completing their graduate education to become qualified nurse faculty. The inability of schools of nursing to recruit and retain qualified nursing faculty has and will continue to directly impact the nursing shortage in the U.S. The nurse faculty shortage is the main barrier that inhibits nursing schools from educating the number of nurses that are needed to provide quality healthcare.

Approximately 6 million dollars in ARRA funds will be used this fiscal year to address health professions workforce shortages under the Nurse Faculty Loan Program

Since you did not receive your full funding request during the competition earlier this year, we are pleased to tell you that each of your institutions has the opportunity to receive ARRA funding under the NFLP program this year. These funds will be provided under a new activity code and grant number, and must be used to support different students than your non-ARRA funds.

Should you decide to accept ARRA-NFLP funding, your institution will receive a Notice of Grant Award announcing the funds awarded to your institution. We want to be sure, however, that your institution is interested, and will adhere to the additional reporting requirements stipulated by ARRA.

ARRA-NFLP grantees will be required to comply with specific Recovery Act reporting. ARRA tracking and reporting must be separate to meet the reporting requirements of the Recovery Act, and grantees will be required to provide quarterly reports on programmatic progress on these grants. The first report for ARRA-NFLP will be due October 10, and will include reporting on the total amount of Recovery Act funds received and obligated, a detailed list and description of how funds were obligated and expended, and an estimate of the number of jobs created and the number of jobs retained by the project or activity. Additional information will be available on the Federal reporting-dot-gov website. We will provide more specific information after the awards have been made.

Regarding funding, we anticipate that the budget and project periods for the NFLP awards will begin by September 1. These funds should be considered as one-time funding. Both ARRA and non-ARRA funding will be available through competition in FY 2010.

In addition to the standard terms and conditions of award, recipients receiving funds under Division A of ARRA must abide by the terms and conditions set out

in the Act. They can be found on the *HHS-dot-gov-backslash-recovery* website. To summarize, the terms include the requirements to separately identify to sub-recipients that these are ARRA funds, that grantees must maintain records that adequately identify the source and application of Recovery Act funds, that grantees must report quarterly on the use of the funds at *FederalReporting-dot-gov*, and that grantees must maintain a DUNS Number and current registration in the Central Contractor Registry.

Due to the unique nature of this funding opportunity, after award the Bureau of Health Professions will hold a Technical Assistance call for all ARRA-NFLP grantees, during which time we will discuss the segregation of these funds from your non-ARRA funds, and will go into much further detail regarding the Recovery Act reporting requirements.

As we said earlier, if you accept the ARRA funds you must comply with all reporting requirements. Prior to award we will be contacting each of you individually to ensure that your institution will adhere to the additional reporting requirements stipulated by ARRA. We also need to ensure that we have sufficient data to enable us to determine service numbers and how they relate to the nursing/faculty shortages. Early next week we will be following this conference call with individual telephone calls, during which time the following questions will be discussed:

- (1) Whether or not your institution accepts ARRA-NFLP funding. If the answer is YES, then
- (2) When do you expect being able to make awards with these funds?
- (3) How many loans will you be able to make using the ARRA-NFLP funds?
- (4) How do you think that ARRA-NFLP funds might increase your ability to diversify or meet a specific gap in the healthcare workforce? Please provide examples.

At that time, we would also be interested in hearing of any particularly interesting or illustrative “success stories” your institution may have to demonstrate the importance of NFLP funding in addressing the nurse faculty shortage.

Let me review those questions again, to ensure everyone has written them down, and is prepared to discuss them during next weeks’ phone calls:

- (1) Whether or not your institution accepts ARRA-NFLP funding. If the answer is YES, then
- (2) When do you expect being able to make awards with these funds?
- (3) How many loans will you be able to make using the ARRA-NFLP funds?
- (4) How do you think that ARRA-NFLP funds might increase your ability to diversify or meet a specific gap in the healthcare workforce? Please provide examples.

As a reminder, we would also be interested in hearing of any particularly interesting or illustrative “success stories” your institution may have to demonstrate the importance of NFLP funding in addressing the nurse faculty shortage.

----- PAUSE -----

We hope that this call has provided you with sufficient information with which to make a decision on whether or not your institution will accept ARRA funding. As a potential recipient of these additional funds, we are asking that your institution carefully decide whether you are willing to accept these funds, and inform us during next week’s phone call.

That concludes our presentation. Operator, we can now open up the call so that people can ask questions.

----- QUESTIONS and ANSWERS -----

----- UPON CONCLUSION OF QUESTIONS and ANSWERS -----

Thank you. We realize that this may be a lot of information to review in a short period of time. We encourage you to visit the various Web sites we’ve given during this call to obtain more detailed information. We will also have Questions and Answers relating to ARRA-NFLP funding posted on the HRSA website shortly.

As was mentioned at the beginning of this call, this call has been recorded and can be replayed until August 30. To access the recording, please dial 1-800-925-0943.

Thank you for your time today, for your interest in the ARRA funds, and, especially, for the good that you do every day!