



## American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

## Health Professions Programs

### Script: Nursing Workforce Diversity Conference Call

August 3, 2009

Good afternoon and thank you for joining us on the call this afternoon. My name is Barbara Easterling. I am the coordinator and Project Officer for the Nursing Workforce Diversity grant program. The purpose of today's call is to provide you with some basic information about an opportunity to receive NWD funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which we'll refer to as "ARRA" or the "Recovery Act". On Tuesday, July 31, 2009 Secretary Sebelius announced the availability of nearly \$200 million to support grants, loans, loan repayments and scholarships to expand the training of healthcare professionals. These funds are part of that announcement.

To let you know about the format for the call: I will spend approximately 20 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 I'm talking, please write down your questions, as there should be time to go over them when I'm done.

Also on the phone with me today is Lakisha Smith to help answer your questions.

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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. The remaining \$200 million supports grants, loans, loan repayments, and scholarships to expand the training of healthcare 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-backslash-recovery](http://BHPR-dot-HRSA-dot-Gov-backslash-recovery) for more specific information. Let me repeat the website again: [BHPR-dot-HRSA-dot-Gov-backslash-recovery](http://BHPR-dot-HRSA-dot-Gov-backslash-recovery) for more specific information.

Several types of activities will be funded with ARRA dollars, including direct student support, loan repayment, training program infrastructure, and equipment purchases for health professions training programs. The grant programs funded under ARRA will help increase the diversity of students entering health professions programs, support the training of disadvantaged students, provide training in primary care disciplines, and improve training programs by providing better access to equipment.

As you know, the (NWD) Nursing Workforce Diversity program provides Federal funding for projects to increase nursing education opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds (including racial and ethnic minorities underrepresented among registered nurses). The NWD program supports projects that provide educational opportunities for students to

become registered nurses and/or opportunities for practicing nurses to pursue a baccalaureate degree in nursing through the three program components (retention, pre-entry preparation, student scholarships and/or stipends).

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Bureau of Health Professions (BHPr), Division of Nursing received ARRA funds to address health professions workforce shortages. The NWD program is receiving \$3.2 million in ARRA funding in FY 2009.

We are pleased to tell you that your institution has the opportunity to receive ARRA funding under the Nursing Workforce Diversity program this year. You might remember applying for a competitive grant earlier this year under funding opportunity HRSA-09-107. Although your application was reviewed favorably, it remained unfunded because there were insufficient funds available under the regular appropriation. However, we are now in a position to offer ARRA-NWD funding to your institution. These funds will be provided under a new activity code and grant number.

Should you decide to accept ARRA-NWD funding your institution will receive a Notice of Grant Award announcing the funds awarded to your institution. We must, however, be sure that your institution is interested, and will adhere to the additional reporting requirements stipulated by ARRA. Since you applied back in November, we also want to assure that there have been no major changes to your application since then.

#### Reporting

ARRA-NWD 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-NWD 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 ARRA-NWD awards will begin by September 1, and will be awarded for a 3-year budget and project period. These funds should be considered as one-time funding.

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-NWD grantees, during which time we 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 you to ensure that your institution will adhere to the additional reporting requirements stipulated by ARRA. Later this week we will conduct another call with you, during which time the following questions will be discussed:

1. Whether or not your institution accepts ARRA-NWD funding. If the answer is YES, then
2. Are you proposing any changes to your competitive application? If yes, what are they?
3. When do you expect to begin Pre-Entry Preparation activities? Retention activities? Scholarship and/or stipend distribution?
4. How do you think that ARRA-NWD funds might increase your ability to diversify or meet a specific gap in the nursing workforce? Please provide examples.
5. How do you think that ARRA-NWD funds might increase the number of Pre-Entry Preparation participants who are accepted into your academic institution and continue in the grant project as a Retention participant?
6. Will the grant generate/stimulate jobs?

\*\*\*If they do not accept ARRA-NWD funds- why not?

We would also be interested in hearing of any particularly interesting or illustrative “success stories” your institution may have to demonstrate the importance of NWD funding in addressing the nurse shortage.

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 ARRA funds, and inform us by during our follow-up phone call later this week.

That concludes our presentation. Do you have any questions at this time?

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