

March 23, 2011

**Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Center for Medicaid, CHIP and Survey & Certification**

MEDICAID PROGRAM AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM GRANTS

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT (CHIPRA)

**OUTREACH AND ENROLLMENT GRANTS – CYCLE II
HHS-2011-CMS-CHIPRA-0008 UPDATE**

Project Number 2082 (For CMS Purposes only)

Electronic Grant Application Due: April 18, 2011

CFDA 93.767

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Below is a continuation of the answers that respond to questions submitted to CMS that have been raised about the solicitation for the CHIPRA Outreach Grants – Cycle II.

The third applicant's teleconference for the CHIPRA Cycle II Outreach Grants is scheduled for Thursday, March 24, from 4 to 5 p.m. Eastern Time. This teleconference is to address issues and questions from applicants interested in the CHIPRA Cycle II Grants – Area of **Focus #1: "Using Technology to Facilitate Enrollment and Renewal."** The grant announcement will not be reviewed on the call so please be familiar with the solicitation. Experts will be available to help answer your questions regarding IT proposals and the appropriate use of these grant funds.

Call-in Number is (877) 267-1577; Meeting ID: 8693

Answers to previous questions posted in this mailbox can be found on the CMS Homepage: <http://www.cms.gov>. The upper-right corner of this page is entitled, "Highlights." You will find Questions and Answers posted there. Once we have resolved some technical issues with the InsureKidsNow Web Site, we will also post the Questions and Answers on that site. We encourage you to submit your questions to this mailbox if you are unsure of information provided on those calls. Although we have taped the calls, due to technical difficulties they will not be posted. The sound quality is too poor to permit a transcript.

Questions and Answers (Third Set – Questions 42-61)

Question 42: Is an original signature required in addition to the forms within Grants.gov that states signature and date, "Completed on submission to Grants.gov?"

Answer: No. The submission of the form satisfies the requirement for the signature.

Question 43: If we apply under the “partnering with schools” category, can we also budget to develop a web site for the schools to use for technical assistance? Or would web site development only be allowable under the technology category?

Answer: A proposal for a web site could be included as part of any area of focus. The question to ask yourself regarding which area of focus you should choose is related to the main thrust of your effort. To include some technology to support your main focus does not change your main focus area.

Question 44: We are part of a coalition that received funding under the CHIPRA Cycle I and we are allowed to propose an alternative plan to report enrollment/retention data because our State Medicaid Agency refused to enter into an MOU with us. We are applying for Cycle 2 and would like to know if we may propose an alternative plan if we are unable to enter into an MOU with our State Medicaid Agency.

Answer: Official data must be reported. Grantees will be expected to report data that is verified by an official source. It may be that a local or county agency can provide that data to the grantee, but it will most likely be the State. Family self-reporting is not acceptable for Cycle II grants.

Question 45: Does the evaluation count towards the 20-page limit?

Answer: No. The evaluation does not count toward the 20-page limit.

Question 46: Is a City Department of Health required to submit a Letter of Commitment and MOA because the guidance indicates “States?”

Answer: The question is not clear. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is only required if you have coalition partners. If the City Department of Health is one of those coalition partners then a MOA is required. However, if the City Department of Health is the applicant, then it *would* be required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with their respective State, or secure another appropriate formal statement of commitment with an official reporting agency in order to ensure that it will have the capability to meet the data and reporting requirements for this grant. CMS will work with grantees and States to help them understand the reporting requirements and provide guidance on producing the required data.

Question 47: We are considering applying for a grant to re-engineer our eligibility notices to make them more user-friendly and understandable to parents and families. We operate a consolidated system that includes Medicaid, SNAP and TANF eligibility rules. Would CMS consider an application from a State that included enrollment and renewal IT improvement activities other than Medicaid and CHIP?

Answer: Congress specifically directed these funds to be used to increase enrollment and retention of eligible children in Medicaid and CHIP and your proposal should clearly serve that purpose. If such enhancements also improve customer service for other programs (at no additional cost to CHIPRA grant funds) the proposal would be considered appropriate for the intended purpose.

Question 48: Our organization is considering applying for the CHIPRA outreach grants. Is it possible to obtain zip-code level CHIP enrollment data from States (without obtaining consent from the enrollees or is the only data available from a State (via the MOU required) the aggregate total enrollment count for the entire State?

Answer: Your State will have to let you know how it is willing to break-out its information. It may be that some States will be willing to break-out information by county or by congressional district. Some may have it available by zip code. Only your State will be able to tell you what it is willing and able to provide.

Question 49: Were the CHIPRA II technical assistance calls recorded; and, if so, will they be available for playback?

Answer: Yes, they were recorded. However, due to technical difficulties they will not be posted. The sound quality is too poor to permit a transcript.

Question 50: In setting the goal for the number of children enrolled and retained, are you looking for the specific number attributed to the direct activities of the grantee, especially if they are actually enrolling children? Or do you also want to know the number of children enrolled or retained that can be associated with the organization's outreach and marketing efforts, but not necessarily enrolled by this organization?

Answer: We are interested in the specific number attributed to the direct activities of the grantee.

Question 51: For "Type of Application," is the Cycle II applications considered new or a continuation?

Answer: They are considered "new" for all applicants, including those who were previously funded under Cycle I.

Question 52: We are considering applying for round-two funding. We plan to enter into a business agreement with one of our local CHIP providers to receive the names of all children at risk of losing coverage due to a failure to return necessary paperwork. Currently the insurer sends out a reminder notice 6 months prior to the date of renewal and again at 3 months. If the parent fails to return the renewal after the second letter, they attempt to make two phone calls. If there is still no response, they stop trying. They have approximately 200 children each month who are not renewed after the four attempts and they ultimately lose coverage. The business agreement would state that upon completion of the final phone call they would pass along the names to our organization for additional follow-up to ensure renewal. Is this okay?

Answer: We are not able to determine in advance, the acceptability or relative value of a grant concept. However, there is nothing in this grant concept as stated that appears to be unacceptable.

Question 53: This solicitation asks for retention of enrolled children in a number of places. Does retention mean enrollment for at least one additional coverage period beyond the initial enrollment period or does it mean additional coverage beyond that? How much coverage beyond the original enrollment must be shown to satisfy the requirement that the child retained coverage?

Answer: Generally, enrollment periods are about 1-year. The goal is to encourage children to stay insured as long as they are eligible so that there are no gaps in coverage. Therefore, any successful efforts at retaining children on the insurance roles are considered successful retention efforts.

Question 54: I am concerned about the meaning of this prohibited use of grant funds: to be used for data processing software or hardware in excess of the software and personal computers required for staff devoted to the grant. My agency is proposing a web-based platform that will cost approximately \$500,000. Would the costs of the platform be covered from grant funds?

Answer: The statement on prohibitive use of funds you refer to is intended to prevent grant funds from being used to provide IT equipment or software not directly related to the outreach and enrollment activities of the proposal. If technology is necessary to support the work of the proposal, it would be considered an appropriate use of grant funds.

Question 55: Are you going to do anything to ensure that there are a representative number of awardees in each of the five focus areas? For example, are grants that focus on engaging schools only compared with other grants focused on schools?

Answer: Each application will be judged on its own merits by a panel of experts. The top selectees will then be considered for awards. While the primary factor will be the merit of the proposal, CMS reserves the right to consider other factors in making the final selection such as geographic distribution and among the focus areas. Further, as stated in the solicitation, "CMS may redistribute grant funds (as detailed in the "Award Information" section of this solicitation) based upon the number and quality of applications received. CMS will not fund activities that are duplicative of efforts funded through its grant programs or other Federal resources, including the increased federal Medicaid matching that will be available for eligibility systems improvements."

Question 56: In applying for these grants are letters of support from congressional representatives and/or other community organizations allowed (I do understand that letters of agreement are required for grant partners.) If yes, are letters of support included in the 20-page limit.

Answer: Letters of Support from non-participating entities are not prohibited. They are also not required or requested. Such letters are not part of the 20-page narrative length.

Question 57: How many days is the HHS National Outreach and Enrollment Conference that must be included in the first-year budget? Also what is the time frame for this conference—approximate time it will be scheduled?

Answer: The conference may last as long as 2-½ days and is likely to be scheduled in mid- to late-Autumn.

Question 58: Please re-confirm that the Evaluation Plan is not included in the 20-page narrative limit and the Workplan Timeline is included in the 20-page narrative limit.

Answer: While the Evaluation Plan is not included in the 20-page narrative limit, the Workplan Timeline is included in the 20-page narrative criteria.

Question 59: Can small amounts of grant funds be used on food for a celebration of school personnel who help with identifying and enrolling eligible children in CHIP and Medicaid?

Answer: It is allowable to set aside a small amount of funding for incentives to help with enrolling eligible children in CHIP and Medicaid. The effectiveness of considering a celebration with food as such an incentive is left to the discretion of the applicants and the reviewers.

Question 60: The RFP notes that grantees must participate in a summative evaluation offered through the grantor. We would therefore hire an external evaluator to oversee a formative evaluation, correct?

Answer: There are two evaluations that will be conducted. CMS will be awarding an evaluation contract to an organization to assess how successful the Cycle II CHIPRA grants were in accomplishing the goal of enrolling and retaining eligible children and documenting lesson learned and best practices identified through this nationwide initiative. Successful applicants are agreeing to cooperate with this outside entity so that this evaluation can be conducted. It is not required nor expected that the grantee hire an additional evaluator to participate in this national level evaluation. It is required and expected that those awarded grants will: (1) provide requested data regarding their activities, and (2) be responsive to questions of the evaluators when they are in contact. The other evaluation required by the grant is to be performed by the grantee. This is intended to help the grantee monitor their progress and make mid-course corrections as necessary. They are also required to produce an end of project report to be shared with CMS. The applicant may (or may not) wish to hire an evaluator to conduct the required project evaluation and prepare the final project report.

Question 61: Due to State budget restraints, our school district does not have any school social workers hired at the elementary level. Can a portion of funds be used to hire a school social worker as his or her duties would align with the grant's requirements?

Answer: The purpose of these grants is to enroll and retain eligible children in one of two health insurance programs—Medicaid or CHIP. The purpose is not to make up for positions lost due to State Budget restraints. If you have an intrinsic need for new personnel for the success of your proposed project, you should include a request and justification for this in your application. Please bear in mind that all applications will be judged by independent panels of experts on the relative effectiveness of the plan suggested in the application and the appropriate distribution of funds in their proposed budget to achieve the ultimate purpose of increasing the numbers of children enrolled in either Medicaid or CHIP.