

**Federal Register Notice of
The Establishment of
The Citizens Advisory Panel on Medicare Education
and Requests for Nomination for Members**

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[Notices]

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Health Care Financing Administration

[HCFA-4008-N]

Medicare Program; Establishment of the Citizens Advisory Panel on Medicare Education and Requests for Nominations for Members

AGENCY: Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), HHS.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Public Law 92-463, the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announces the establishment by the Secretary of the Citizens Advisory Panel on Medicare Education (CAP-ME). The Secretary, DHHS, signed the charter establishing the Committee on January 21, 1999. This notice also requests nominations for members for the panel. The Committee shall terminate on January 22, 2001, unless the Secretary, DHHS, formally determines that continuance is in the public interest.

This Committee shall advise and make recommendations to the Secretary, DHHS, and the Administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) on opportunities for HCFA to make more effective use of its National Medicare Education Program and other HCFA programs that help Medicare beneficiaries understand the expanded range of Medicare options available with the passage of the Medicare+Choice program.

DATES: Nominations for members will be considered if we receive them at the appropriate address, as provided below, no later than April 5, 1999.

ADDRESSES: You may mail or deliver nominations for membership to the following address: Linda Levin, Center for Beneficiary Services, Health Care Financing Administration, 7500 Security Boulevard, Room S1-08-07, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850.

A request for a copy of the Secretary's charter for the CAP-ME should be submitted to

Eric Katz, J.D., Center for Beneficiary Services, Health Care Financing Administration, 7500 Security Boulevard, Room S1-08-07, Baltimore, MD 21244-1850, (410) 786-6477, or > by e-mail to ekatz@hcfa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eric Katz, (410) 786-6477.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background and Legislative Authority

The Citizens Advisory Panel on Medicare Education (CAP-ME) is governed by provisions of Public Law 92-463 as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), which sets forth standards for the formulation and use of advisory committees. The Secretary, DHHS, has found that the CAP-ME is necessary and in the public interest.

The CAP-ME will consist of 10 appointed members from among authorities in disability and chronic disease interests, minority populations, health consumer interests, seniors' organizations, health communications and policy, research and philanthropic organizations, health insurers and plans, employer groups, and health providers. The CAP-ME will focus its review on the National Medicare Education Program and our other efforts to help Medicare beneficiaries and those who assist them find accurate and current information about new Medicare options and benefits under the Medicare+Choice program. The committee will also identify best practices in consumer health education that could enhance our efforts to inform and assist Medicare beneficiaries about their health plan options. An annual report to our Administrator will summarize the panel's findings and any recommendations the panel may provide.

We are requesting nominations for voting members to serve on the CAP-ME. We have a special interest in ensuring that women, minority groups, and physically challenged individuals are adequately represented on the advisory committee and, therefore, encourage nominations of qualified candidates from these groups. We also seek to ensure geographic diversity in the composition of the panel.

All nominations and curricula vitae for the CAP-ME should be sent to Linda Levin at the address in the ADDRESSES section of this notice.

II. Criteria for Members

Persons nominated for membership should have expertise in one or more of the following areas: disability and chronic disease interests, minority populations, health consumer interests, seniors' organizations, health communications and policy, research and philanthropic organizations, health insurers and plans, employer groups, and health providers.

Nominations must state that the nominee is willing to serve as a member of the CAP-ME and appears to have no conflict of interest that would preclude membership. Potential candidates will be asked to provide detailed information concerning such matters as financial holdings, consultancies, and research grants or contracts to permit evaluation of possible sources of conflict of interest.

Members shall be appointed to a term of between 1 and 4 years, with 3- and 4-year

appointments contingent on the Secretary deciding it is in the public interest to continue this Committee beyond the initial 2- year term described in the Charter.

Any interested person may nominate one or more qualified persons. Self-nominations will also be accepted.

Authority: Section 1102 and 1871 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1302 and 1395hh).

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 93.773, Medicare--Hospital Insurance Program; and No. 93.774, Medicare-- Supplementary Medical Insurance Program)

Dated: February 5, 1999.

Nancy-Ann Min DeParle,
Administrator, Health Care Financing Administration.
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