

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Health Resources and Services Administration**

*Bureau of Health Professions*

*Division of Nursing*

**AFFORDABLE CARE ACT**

**NURSING ASSISTANT AND HOME HEALTH  
AIDE (NAHHA) PROGRAM**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**July 8, 2010**

## **NURSING ASSISTANT AND HOME HEALTH AIDE (NAHHA) PROGRAM**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

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## Purpose

### **What is the purpose of the Nursing Assistant and Home Health Aide (NAHHA) funding opportunity?**

The Nursing Assistant and Home Health Aide (NAHHA) program supports the development, demonstration, and evaluation of a competency based uniform-curriculum to train qualified nursing assistants and home health aides. The NAHHA program will strengthen the direct care workforce by providing nursing assistants and home health care aides with the necessary skills that can be transportable to any job market in the Nation.

## Summary of Funding

### **How much funding is available?**

Approximately \$2.5 million is expected to be available annually to fund 10 new grantees. Applicants may request funding of up to \$250,000 per year. Funding beyond the first year is dependent on the availability of appropriated funds in subsequent fiscal years, satisfactory grantee performance, and a decision that continued funding is in the best interest of the Federal government.

NAHHA program applications shall be submitted for three (3) years of support. The period of support for approved and funded new projects begins September 30, 2010 and ends September 29, 2013.

### **How do eligible entities apply for NAHHA funds?**

Funding opportunity announcement HRSA-10-273 is currently open, and will close in both Grants.gov and HRSA's Electronic Handbooks on July 22.

### **When will the grant be awarded?**

NAHHA funds will be awarded in September 2010.

### **Is there any formal notification of an NAHHA award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)?**

Yes. HRSA will electronically transmit a formal notification in the form of a Notice of Grant Award (NGA) that will be provided to the NAHHA applicant organization/institution.

## Eligibility

### Who are eligible entities for this funding opportunity?

Grants may be made to colleges or community-based training programs for the development, evaluation and demonstration of training programs on-campus, at alternative sites, and through telehealth methodologies.

All applicants must provide written assurance stating that projects will be operational with nursing assistant and/or home health aide students engaged in a training program by no later than March 1, 2011.

### Are colleges eligible to apply or is eligibility limited to community colleges?

Colleges and universities are eligible to apply. Eligible entities under this authority include colleges (public or private), universities, public or private non-profit entities, and community-based training programs -that are capable of carrying out the legislative purpose of preparing individuals to become nursing assistants and home health aides. "For-profits" are also eligible to apply for this grant opportunity.

### Are Universities eligible to apply for these funds?

Eligible entities under this authority include colleges (public or private), universities, public or private non-profit entities, and community-based training programs -that are capable of carrying out the legislative purpose of preparing individuals to become nursing assistants and home health aides.

### Are "for-profits" eligible to submit an application for NAHHA funding?

Yes, "for-profit" agencies are eligible to apply for this grant opportunity. However, they may not take any profit from the grant.

### In regards to eligibility to apply: Does it have to be the institution that is offering the CNA/HHA course that applies, or can a non-profit organization apply but collaborate with the training institution that will actually offer the courses?

Eligible applicants can be institutions that offer the CNA/HHA course directly to students or partnerships between a non-profit organization and training institution that will offer the courses. If a partnership is involved, the applicant will have to describe the partnership and exactly how this partnership meets or will meet the intent of the program, to what extent, as well as provide the needed documentation of the partnership. The applicant decides who will assist them in reaching the goals stated in the program. There can only be one applicant, and the other entity involved in the partnership may be a sub-contractor under the grant.

### Is this funding opportunity only open to proposed new programs or can an existing NA and HHA program expand the program through more advanced equipment – are we eligible to apply?

Any existing NA and HHA program can expand their program, as long as the program can meet the intent specified in the guidance. The applicant will have to provide the justification in their application for the improvement or enhancement of their existing program through the use of more advanced equipment in their application. The extent of the funded grant programs is to establish evidence based programs to enhance the overall training of nursing assistants and home health aides. This grant should not be utilized to solely purchase equipment for a pre-existing training program.

**Although we are not a community college, we have an extensive network of community-based training programs in our State. Would we be eligible to apply?**

Eligible entities under this authority include colleges (public or private), universities, public or private non-profit entities, and community-based training programs -that are capable of carrying out the legislative purpose of preparing individuals to become nursing assistants and home health aides. "For-profits" are not excluded from applying. In your application, you will have to state explicitly how you can or propose to meet the intent of the NAHHA program as authorized, just as other applicants will have to do.

**We are a non-profit that trains caregivers; are we eligible to apply?**

Non-profits are eligible to apply for this grant opportunity. In the application, you will have to state explicitly how you can or propose to meet the intent of the NAHHA program as authorized, just as other applicants will have to do.

**If we are a technical college within a state, does the college have to be accredited by a nursing program, agency, or association in order to be eligible to apply?**

Nursing assistant and home health aide training programs should be approved by their individual State. Accreditation is not required. Applicants are to complete Appendix A in the guidance with the appropriate information on State approval of their program. If your program requires approval from the State, then that documentation needs to be provided.

**Can entities with NA and/or home health aide programs in place apply?**

This program is to enhance the training of nursing and home health aides and establishing best-practices, training improvement, and career advancement. An applicant may identify through their own analysis, areas in their program for improvement or enhancement in whatever capacity. The applicant decides where the room of improvement is, if any, and states their case in the application still meeting the intent of what's required in the guidance.

## Eligible Use of Funds

### **Are there any program-specific requirements?**

The NAHHA program assists individuals in obtaining education and training required to become nursing assistants and home health aides. The application must describe the proposed core competencies including classroom, clinical, and continuing education components as illustrated below. These specific competencies are described on pages 17-20 of the funding opportunity announcement.

### **Who are eligible participants?**

Project participants must be U.S. Citizens, non-citizen nationals, or foreign nationals who possess visas permitting permanent residence in the United States. Individuals on temporary student visas are not eligible.

### **Is the training for new nursing assistants and home health aides, or can it be used to upgrade the skills of incumbent workers?**

Existing NA and HHA programs can expand their program as long as the program can meet the intent specified in the guidance. The applicant will have to identify the cohort of focus, decide what competencies are appropriate for that level of worker and develop their competencies accordingly. It is important to keep in mind during your application development how best to improve the training of nursing assistants and home health aides.

### **On the guidance it states that the “Project Director for NAHHA grant projects must be credentialed minimally as a Registered Nurse (RN) with a specialty in Geriatrics. Each proposed project may have only one (1) Project Director.” What exactly is a “specialty” in Geriatrics means? Is it a specific certification that a person needs or just a course they’ve taken?**

A registered nurse with a specialty in Geriatrics means that the RN should have experience in the long term care and/or home care industries, and is familiar with the scope of practice for nursing assistants and/or home health aides.

### **Do instructors/trainers have to be RNs?**

The applicant will have to state/list the qualifications of the instructors/trainers of the proposed program in their application and exactly how an instructor(s) with these qualifications is needed and appropriate for the success of their program. The applicant will have to make that argument in their application.

### **Under the required core application documentation on Page 18 of the guidance, are you asking for specific curriculum for the cohort or will we just answer the required information?**

The guidance provided you with proposed components of training as an example and a means to make sure applicants have a comprehensive competency plan. The listed competencies in the guidance should be looked at for inclusion in your (the applicant's) competency development at a minimum. The competencies should be developed according to what's appropriate for the cohort identified by the applicant. The application should include a timeline for the development of the curriculum. The grant project should have participants engaged in training in the first year of the project.

### **Is it preferred or mandatory that the project director have long term care experience?**

It is preferred that the Project Director (RN) have knowledge and experience in long term care and/or home health, and is familiar with the scope of practice for nursing assistants and/or home health aides.

**Do you have to submit the biographical sketches on the required form or can the applicant submit the sketches in their own format?**

The biographical sketches have to be submitted on the form as required by guidance.

**Regarding the in-service weekly listed under the “Proposed Continuing Education Competencies” on pages 19 – 20 of the guidance, is that to be held by the applicant program or whoever the applicant collaborates with?**

The applicant is responsible for determining how the continuing education plan will be implemented. This includes any partnerships or collaborations the applicant enters into agreement with in order to meet the intent of the NAHHA program.

**Does HRSA have any set quality outcome measures in place for this program? For example, if 80% of the people who enroll in the training program are then placed in jobs, is there a number that HRSA is looking for?**

The applicant should set realistic outcome measures for the grant project which are focused on the effectiveness of training program. This could include the successes of their participants completing the program, retention rates, pass rates on competency test, participant and employer satisfaction rates and number of aides obtaining employment after the training program. The applicant should also include the activities to be put in place to help retain the students, how you would track, what barriers exist and what support services are available to help them stay.

**Is there a minimum size of cohort that HRSA is looking at or is that again up to a program to determine?**

The applicant is required to determine the most appropriate number of participants that they can train in relation to their proposed project budget. It is expected that the grant project have multiple cohorts within each project period. The applicant must describe in the application the recruitment method, participant pool and how that was reached. The applicant will need to draw a picture explaining the conditions and factors that show why there is a class of a particular size, for example.

**Our program involves training professionals to care for people with disabilities and these individuals often have long term healthcare needs. Is that outside the scope of this program?**

As long as the grant project focuses on the training of nursing and home health aides there is no limitation on the population that they were serve or the settings that they practice in.

**Is the Continuing Education only to be focused on students that have completed the training through this grant or can the Continuing Education be focused on students that have completed training in some other way before or during this grant, but that need the Continuing Education to continue to improve their skills?**

The Continuing Education is for not only training program completers, but for current nursing assistants and/or home health aides as well. Pages 19 – 20 of the guidance under “Proposed Continuing Education Competencies” state “For purposes of this grant, it is required that the funded applicants have a means for nursing assistants and home health aides to obtain continuing education after initial training. Effective post secondary education and on the job

training of long-term care workers is essential if they are to have appropriate and high levels of skills.”.

Note: In the guidance, it states “personal and home care aides” in the above reference but should instead say “nursing assistant and home health aides” as it is reflected above.

**Regarding expanding of an existing program, could a part of that expansion, enhancement, or improvement of a program include training of clinical instructors?**

The legislative intent of the program is for the training of qualified nursing assistants and/or home health aides through the development, demonstration and evaluation of a competency based uniform curriculum.

**Can some of the NAHHA funding or the program be designed to develop a cohort based contextualized learning class for students to get the basic skills in, for example, English and math that would enable them (if they were to go on after they received their CNA or home health aide certificate) to perhaps take an English 1 class, etc. to advance their skills? Could this be built into the proposed competency development of the applicant?**

The applicant must describe in the application the activities that are required to ensure that the participants are successful in the training program. Applicants should conduct academic needs assessments on each of the participants.

**Are there any preferences?**

A funding preference shall be granted to applicants with projects that will (1) substantially benefit rural or (2) underserved populations, or (3) help meet public health nursing needs in State or local health departments. To be considered for a statutory funding preference, the applicant must specifically request the preference and meet the preference criteria in the needs section of the program narrative.

**On page 28 of the guidance under “Funding Preferences” it discusses the “substantial benefits rural or underserved populations”. Is this referring to the benefit of the actual aid by increasing the opportunity through the nursing assistant or home health aide? Or are we talking about the end product, the benefits to the client, the geriatric population?**

The benefit is to the client that the aides will provide care to. Page 28 of the guidance states more specific information on those different preferences, whether it is 1) rural or 2) underserved, or 3) help meet public health nursing needs in State or local health departments. Applicants should read the “Funding Preferences” section very carefully on how to be considered for and specifically request a statutory funding preference for this announcement.

**How will NAHHA funding be delivered to grantees?**

Grantees will receive NAHHA funds much in the same way schools get their current HRSA funding via the PMS; a NGA will be issued under a different grant number. For information regarding the drawdown of your awarded funds, contact your account representative at 1-877-614-5533 or <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Grantees should drawdown funds based on the needs of the ARRA-NAHHA project.

## Reporting

### **Are there any special reporting requirements for these funds?**

All Bureau of Health Professions grantees are required to submit an annual two-part progress report. The first part demonstrates grantee progress on program-specific goals. The second part collects core performance measurement data to measure the Bureau's progress through its grantees in: (1) improving the distribution, diversity, and quality of the healthcare workforce, (2) improving the educational environment infrastructure, and (3) increasing students' selection of primary care education. Awarded projects will receive further information on data submission.

All BHPgrantees are also required to submit a final report at the end of the grant. Grantees must submit the final report on-line in the Electronic Handbook's system at <https://grants.hrsa.gov/webexternal/home.asp>. The final report must include program-specific goals, core performance measurement data, grantee objectives and accomplishments, barriers encountered, and responses to summary questions regarding the grantee's overall experiences over the entire project period.

BHPgr is also committed to support the development of an evaluation framework to help assess the impact of Nursing Assistant and Home Health Aide Programs. This framework will provide the platform for a series of program evaluations, enabling each program to measure its performance and also see individual program contribution to the Nursing Assistant and Home Health Aide Program as a whole.

### **Are there any websites available with useful information?**

- The Direct Care Alliance. This website provides a wealth of useful and valuable information on the direct care workforce. You may access their website at <http://directcarealliance.org/index.cfm?pagelid=495>
- The United State Department of Labor. You may access their website at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)
- The United States Department of Education. You may access their website at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)
- The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. You may access their website at [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)
- The Health Workforce Information Center. You may access their website at [www.healthworkforceinfo.org](http://www.healthworkforceinfo.org)
- The Bureau of Health Professions at HRSA. You may access our website at <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/>
- PHI Government Affairs. You may access their website at [www.PHInational.org](http://www.PHInational.org)
- The FAQs document will be made available through our website: <http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/index.html>
- To view the Institute of Medicine's Report titled, "Retooling for an Aging America: Building the Health Care Workforce" please go to <http://www.nap.edu> to download this report as well as many others for free.