

Date: June 2016

Subject: Rural Health Clinic Automatic Facility HPSA Application

The Public Health Service Act, as amended, instructs the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to use data from national, state, and local sources and regulations based upon established criteria, to annually prepare listings of currently designated Health Professional(s) Shortage Areas (HPSA). The DHHS may designate a HPSA for an urban or rural area that is a rational service area (i.e. geographic area); a population group; or a facility.

Medicare-certified Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) are eligible for Automatic Facility HPSA designation as having a shortage of health professionals to provide primary, dental, and mental health care services. In order to be eligible for the automatic HPSA designation, these clinics must demonstrate that they meet the requirements of *Section 334 of the PHS Act, Charges for Services by Entities Using Corps Members*.

A Rural Health Clinic must meet the following requirements:

- Entity cannot deny requested health care services, and shall not discriminate in the provision of services to an individual whose services are paid by Medicare, Medicaid, or the State Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).
- Entity shall prepare a schedule of fees or payments consistent with locally prevailing rates or charges.
- Entity shall prepare a corresponding schedule of discounts (including waivers) to be applied to such fee or payments, with adjustments made on the basis of the patient's ability to pay.
- Entity shall make a reasonable effort to secure from patients fees and payments for services, and fees should be sufficiently discounted in accordance with the schedule described.
- Entity shall accept assignment for Medicare beneficiaries, shall enter into agreements with state agencies that administer Medicaid and SCHIP to assure coverage of beneficiaries of these programs.
- Entity shall take reasonable and appropriate steps to collect all payments due for services.

The Health Resources and Services Administration's Bureau of Health Workforce (HRSA-BHW) is responsible for the evaluation and processing of automatic HPSA designations. RHCs can request the HRSA-BHW to complete an automatic HPSA designation by completing the following steps:

1. Download and complete all fields of the *Certificate of Eligibility* form found at: <http://hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/policy/confcall/certificateofeligibility.pdf>
2. Gather the following items/documents:
 - RHC Certification Letter from the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services(CMS). (Clinics should have received this notification after completing CMS-855A Medicare Enrollment Application to become a certified Medicare provider.)
 - Clinic's financial assistance or charitable care policy, with sliding/discount fee schedule
3. Email completed *Certificate of Eligibility* form and supporting documents to SDB@hrsa.gov. Our Office recommends using the subject line "Requesting Rural Health Clinic Automatic HPSA - <RHC Name>".

When submitting, please copy the Kansas Office of Primary Care and Rural Health at primarycare@kdheks.gov in order for our Office to assist with tracking the progress of the designation.

Once the Certificate of Eligibility is reviewed and approved, sites that meet all requirements will be considered a HPSA facility and added to the HPSA database. The HPSA facilities will also be scored using data available at the national level.