

## HRSA Program Requirements

### *Examining Requirement 1: Needs Assessment*

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*Community health centers, or Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), are non-profit private or public entities that serve designated medically underserved populations/areas or special medically underserved populations comprised of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, the homeless or residents of public housing. Awarded funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), these health centers must operate within 19 HRSA Program Requirements.*

Since the demand placed on grantees for meeting these requirements will only become more stringent as health centers face Meaningful Use and changes in Health Care Reform, a summary of these 19 health center program requirements will be examined in upcoming issues of *IPHCA HealthSource™*. Each article will provide an in-depth look at one requirement to assist health center leaders in understanding these program requirements and preparing for compliance in future HRSA site visits.

The 19 program requirements fall into one of four categories: Need, Services, Management and Finance, and Governance. HRSA Program Requirement 1 falls into the Need category.

### **Program Requirement 1: Needs Assessment**

According to the *HRSA Health Center Program Requirements*, program requirement 1 states: “Health center demonstrates and documents the needs of its target population, updating its service area, when appropriate. (Section 330(k)(2) and Section 330(k)(3)(J) of the PHS Act)”

For health center grantees, it is important to verify that your organization has a written needs assessment and a clearly defined service area. The Needs Assessment should show that the “health center demonstrates and documents the needs of its target population, updating its services area, when appropriate.”

### *Performance Improvement*

With performance improvement initiatives within the broader health care community, the Health Center Program incorporates quality-related performance measures that place emphasis on health outcomes and demonstrate the value of care delivered by health centers. Some questions to consider when examining Program Requirement 1 include:

1. Is the needs assessment comprehensive in terms of encompassing the entire service area and/or target population(s)? If not, should it be modified or expanded?
2. When was the last needs assessment completed or updated?
3. Has the grantee updated their service area based on recent data (e.g., annual patient origin data)? If not, is this recommended?
4. If updated, was the assessment reviewed and approved by the Board? If yes, when?
5. What priority needs were identified?
6. What action(s) was taken to address them?
7. Does the grantee's defined service area take into account geographic, demographic and/or other relevant factors?
8. Are there any concerns or issues around service area overlap?

The *Health Center Site Visit Guide* is a review instrument used by HRSA to assess an organization's compliance with key section 330 Health Center Program requirements as well as a resource to assist grantees in identifying areas for performance improvement. Health centers may also use this Guide as a self-assessment resource as it provides a series of prompting questions to assess both program requirements and performance improvement areas. For more information on HRSA program requirements, visit <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/about/requirements/>.

Check next month's newsletter for an examination of **Program Requirement 2: Required and Additional Services**.

#### **References**

"Program Requirements." Health Resources and Services Administration website. Retrieved January 29, 2013, from <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/about/requirements/index.html>.

*Health Center Site Visit Guide*. Health Resources and Services Administration website. Retrieved January 28, 2013, from <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/policiesregulations/centerguide.html>.