

PRIMARY CARE SERVICE CORPS
RFA #1205031010
UPDATES AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 4/22/2013

UPDATES: RFA #1205031010 is hereby revised as follows (see changes in ***bold italics***):

[Page 5] **1.3 Health professional shortage areas**

A HPSA is a geographic region ***or facility*** designated by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in which there is a significant medically underserved population. HPSAs also specify health care workforce shortages and accessibility of health care. PCSC participants are required to serve in a HPSA-designated ***area or facility*** for the duration of their contract. The length of service is described in further detail in the RFA (see section 1.5 Length of Service Obligation).

...

1.4 Target population

c) maintain a patient mix that ***substantially*** consists of Medicaid, CHPlus, Family Health Plus, uninsured, and special needs populations ***and that reflects the demographics of the facility's service area.***

...

1.5 Length of service obligation (See Section 3.5 for detailed information)

The Department will accept applications for the PCSC loan repayment program from eligible health professionals for either full-time or part-time clinical services provided in a ***geographic (area or population)*** HPSA or a site ***designated as a HPSA.***

...

[Page 6] **1.6 Awards**

Full-time clinicians are eligible for an award of up to \$30,000 per year, and they must agree to provide at least two years of full-time clinical practice at one or more eligible service sites located in New York State HPSAs ***or in sites designated as HPSA sites.***

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[Page 17] **4.3 Scoring and awarding criteria**

Table 3. PCSC Scoring Criteria, under Applicant Action

Completed and documented "Name and ID No. of Health Professional Service Area (HPSA)" and site is ***either a HPSA-designated facility or is*** located in a ***designated HPSA area.***

Questions related to –

When to apply:

Q1. Can we send applications by email starting at 12:01AM?

Answer: You can begin submitting applications as of 12:01 a.m. on May 1, 2013.

Q2. Do I have to wait until May 1st to submit my application or can I send it sooner?

Answer: Applications will not be accepted prior to May 1, 2013.

Q3. When is the deadline to apply?

Answer: By 11:59 p.m. on June 28, 2013.

Q4. Is there a specific time on May 1st in which process begins?

Answer: Applications can be submitted as of 12:01 a.m. on May 1, 2013.

Q5. Will all the funds be awarded before the end of the application period?

Answer: No awards will be made until the end of the application period, after which it is anticipated that all funds will be awarded.

Q6. On what date would we be notified if we are going to receive an award?

Answer: Applicants will be notified by e-mail or U.S. Postal mail as soon as possible after June 28, 2013. Applications have to be reviewed, scored, and approved by various State agencies before awards can be announced. We anticipate announcing awards sometime during this summer.

How to apply:

Q7. Do I have to register for this program, or do I complete the application and just submit it?

Answer: You do not have to register for this program; you do have to apply for the program.

Q8. What website can I apply to on May 1?

Answer: Application materials are on the website below; however, you cannot apply via the website. Please see page 16 of the Request for Applications (see web address below) for information on how to submit an application.

<http://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/1205031010/index.htm>

Q9. Can the entire application, including certification and contract be submitted via email?

Answer: Yes. To include documents containing signatures, the entire application should be scanned into a pdf , and the pdf should be submitted via e-mail. Note that if a pdf is greater than 10 megabytes in size, it should be broken up into two separate e-mails. Include in the subject line “Part 1 of 2,” “Part 2 of 2,” and the like.

Q10. Sending an application by U.S. Postal mail puts an applicant at a disadvantage.

Answer: If e-mail is not available to the applicant, an overnight mail service, such as Federal Express or United Parcel Service, is an acceptable alternative.

Q11. Can I apply via email?

Answer: Yes. That is the preferred method of receipt.

Q12. If I decide to send it via mail, do you need a total of three (3) copies of the entire application, attachments included?- one original and two copies?

Answer: Yes. Refer to page 17 of the Request for Applications for details on how to submit an application.

How many applications per site:

Q13. Kindly clarify the number of applications per site.

Answer: An applicant that is a site (versus an individual clinician) can submit a maximum of two applications. A site is considered as having a discrete physical address or, in the case of an employer with a state-issued operating certificate with multiple locations, entities included on that operating certificate are considered the same site.

Q14. Employers with multiple locations, would that be considered as one site?

Answer: Yes, if the locations are included on one operating certificate number, then that is considered one site for the purpose of determining how many clinicians from a site can apply.

However, for “Section II, Proposed Practice Site” in the application, each work location should be listed as a separate site and must be located in a HPSA or be designated a HPSA facility.

Q15. When you say two applicants per site, does that mean only two psychiatric nurse practitioners from Elmira Psychiatric, for example?

Answer: Yes, applications would only be accepted for two eligible employees from Elmira Psychiatric, regardless of discipline. Note that they must be working in an outpatient capacity; inpatient services are not eligible.

Q16. Can HHHN receive (theoretically) two awards for clinicians in each of our 16 health centers or just two awards for all of HHHN?

Answer: If all of the health centers are under one NYS Department of Health operating certificate number, then only two applications can be submitted for all of HHHN. If any of the health centers has its own separate operating certificate number, then that health center can also submit two applications.

Q17. A maximum of two applications will be accepted per program site. Do you mean per health care organization, or if an organization operates multiple health care sites, do you mean two per site?

Answer: A program site is defined by the geographic address or the NYS operating certificate number. For example, if ABC Clinic is located at 123 Main Street in Sometown, NY, and is not affiliated with any other site or health care organization, then two clinicians from that site can apply. However, if it shares a NYS Department of Health operating certificate number with DEF Clinic in Theothertown, NY, and with GHI Clinic in Thenexttown, NY, then only two applications can be submitted for the combined three clinics, not per clinic.

HPSA status and site eligibility:

Q18. If a site is not located in a HPSA, but the site serves residents of a HPSA, are you eligible to apply?

Answer: No. Because the State receives matching funds from the federal government for this program, the site must be in a HPSA or designated as a HPSA facility.

Q19. Our service area covers multiple HPSA areas that have different HPSA scores. Are applications scored based on HPSA scores?

Answer: No. Unlike the National Health Service Corps, the service area is not the determining factor, the site is. If an applicant will be working at more than one site, all sites must be designated HPSAs for the discipline in which the clinician is working. For example, if a primary care physician assistant is working part of each week at three clinics for the same employer, all three clinics must be located in or designated as primary care HPSAs.

Q20. Please verify that unless the practice site is a designated HPSA itself (such as a FQHC), it must be physically located IN a geographic HPSA, not merely SERVE residents of a HPSA from an adjacent location.

Answer: That is correct. Please note, however, that correctional facilities must be designated as HPSA facilities and not merely be located in a HPSA area.

Q21. Where can I look to see if the site meets the criteria... is there a specific listing of qualified sites?

Answer: Section 1.3 "Health professional shortage areas" in the Request for Applications provides information on where to determine if your area or facility is HPSA designated. See also the answer to question 25.

Q22. Are applicants permitted to work in HPSA-designated facilities as part of their PCSC service obligation, or only in facilities located in geographic HPSAs?

Answer: Applicants must work in either a HPSA-designated facility or in a facility that is located in a HPSA.

Q23. Does the provider have to work in a HPSA area or a HPSA site? For instance, an FQHC is a HPSA site, but it may not be in a HPSA area?

Answer: Applicants must work in either a HPSA-designated facility or in a facility that is located in a HPSA.

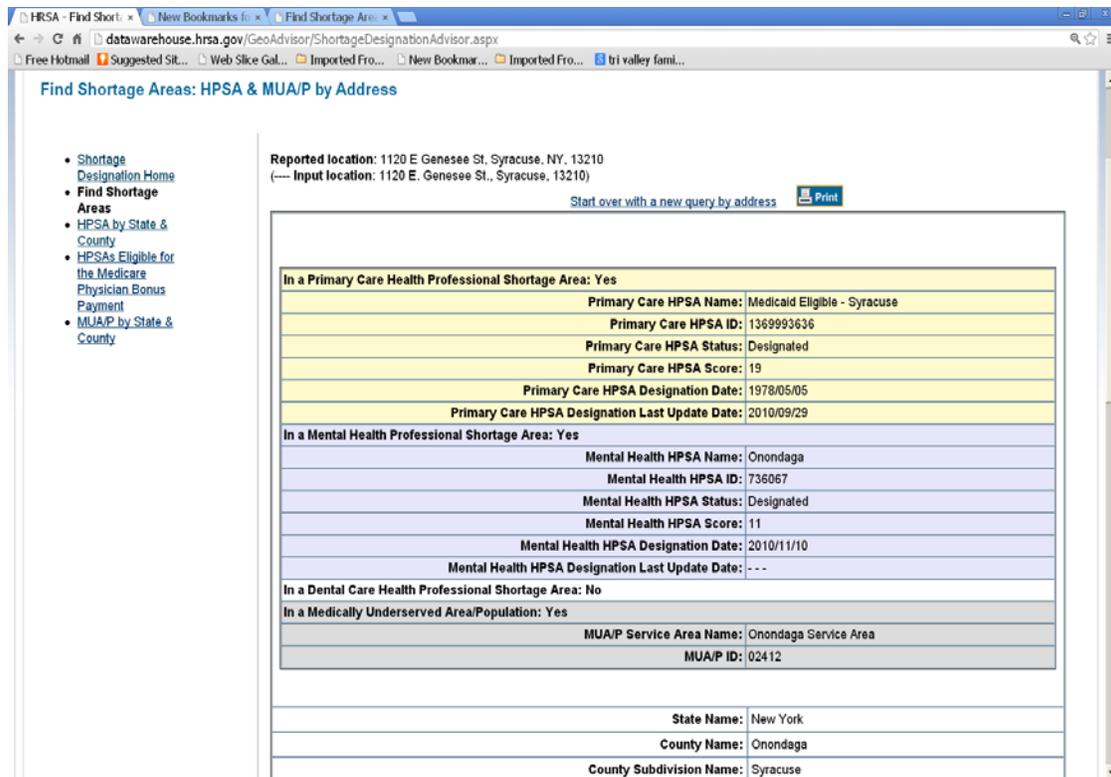
Q24. From pg. 5 of the RFA, it is clear that a facility that is geographically located in a HPSA is eligible to apply. The HRSA website link is specific to a facility address. On p. 15, Site Eligibility, however, you say that an applicant is eligible if the health care delivery site is located in a HPSA or if a facility is designated as a HPSA facility. These two sections of the RFA are somewhat contradictory.

Answer: Page 5 has been corrected (see beginning of this document) to indicate that PCSC participants are required to serve at a site located in a HPSA or at a HPSA-designated facility (which may not necessarily be located in a HPSA). Please note, correctional facilities are NOT automatically designated as HPSA facilities. A correctional facility may be located in a geographic HPSA, however, it is not eligible for the PCSC unless it is designated as a HPSA facility.

Q25. How does my facility qualify as a HPSA site? Do they have to be designated or can it be based on geographical area? My site address is 1120 E. Genesee St. Syracuse New York 13210. I checked the website site check but had a little difficulty in understanding if it qualifies or not.

Answer: Either sites or areas can qualify as HPSAs (see <http://www.hrsa.gov/shortage/> for more information about shortage designations). However, to qualify for PCSC, applicants must work in either a facility that is already HPSA designated or in a facility that is located in an already-designated HPSA area. In the example you provided, the following information results on the website,

<http://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/GeoAdvisor/ShortageDesignationAdvisor.aspx>:



This means that the site you asked about is DESIGNATED for primary care as well as for mental health services, but NOT for dental services.

Q26. Our facility does not have an ‘institutional’ HPSA designation, but does serve an area that has geographic or population-based HPSA designations throughout. The RFA appears to specify that the actual facility has to have the designation – if that is the case then our providers are not eligible?

Answer: PCSC participants are required to serve at a site located in a HPSA or at a HPSA-designated facility (which may not necessarily be located in a HPSA). If the site serves a HPSA, but does not meet the above criteria, then applicants from that site are not eligible.

Q27. What about sites that are not located in a HPSA, but whose facility service area is part of a HPSA? I’m thinking of Access Community Health Center, an FQHC in lower Manhattan. The address for their Manhattan site is 60 Maiden Lane, which is not physically located in a HPSA. Ten of the 14 census tracts in their service area, however, are located in the **Medicaid Eligible – Alphabet City/Lower Eastside** HPSA for Primary Care. In addition, Access Community Health Center (aka AHRC Health Care, Inc.) is a Comprehensive Health Center type HPSA. Is an applicant eligible as a non-geographic HPSA (Population Group and Comprehensive Health Center HPSA)?

Answer: In the example you cite, because your facility is an FQHC, it is automatically designated as a HPSA and is, therefore, eligible for PCSC. However, if your facility is NOT designated as a HPSA facility and is not located in a designated HPSA area, it would not be eligible for PCSC even if the site served residents of a HPSA.

Q28. My current office location is temporary, through the end of the year, subsequent to flooding. The current location and new location are located just a few miles from one another and are both in a HPSA area classified as a 12. How should I address this unique issue on my application?

Answer: Complete section II for the permanent site, but include a sheet that thoroughly explains the temporary location. Include the physical address of the temporary location, when you expect to move back to the permanent location, why there was a need for the temporary location, and provide documentation that both the permanent and temporary sites are located in HPSAs.

Q29. Would you be able to tell me if Bertrand Chaffee Hospital qualifies to be a HPSA or serves a HPSA? We are considered a rural area according to the HRSA website.

Answer: To determine if your site is located in a HPSA area, please input the facility address to: <http://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/GeoAdvisor/ShortageDesignationAdvisor.aspx>.

To determine if you work in a HPSA-designated facility, go to <http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov/>, input the county in which your facility is located, and see if the facility is listed by name. If not, and it is not located in a HPSA area, the facility is not eligible for PCSC.

Q30. In regards to 3.6 Site Eligibility page 15 of 26, would an OMH Article 31 outpatient clinic qualify? They predominately serve uninsured and Medicaid clients.

Answer: If the site is a HPSA-designated facility or is located in a mental health HPSA, then the site would qualify.

Q31. In the application, under Facility Type, it specifies to *[Check only one.]* I work in a School Based Health Center that is also identified as a “Health centers”, as indicated by Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) webpage. Which facility type should I check?

Answer: You should check “school based health clinic.”

Q32. I am a new family physician and have accepted my first position starting 4/15/13 with Hudson River HealthCare, a FQHC organization with multiple FQHC sites. They are taking over a new site for the underserved formerly run by Vassar Brothers Hospital in Poughkeepsie, NY. All of their other sites already have HPSA designation, but this health center will reopen under their direction on approximately 5/13/13. I will be working there 24 hours a week and would like to apply for loan repayment. HRHCare will apply for the HPSA designation as soon as the HRSA opens their site approval process in July 2013.

Can I apply for the NYS loan repayment program for 2013? If I need to wait until their site is approved by the federal program I am concerned I would not be eligible to apply next year since this year's application says “**If the applicant was working in the current site prior to July 1, 2012, the applicant is not eligible to apply.**” Will next year's program make me ineligible since I will have been working at the site since ~5/13/13? Or since it is a new site and will apply as soon as it can for approval after July 1, could I still apply next year? I would of course like to apply to this year's program if possible, but if I cannot I want to be able to apply next year. I am very committed to practicing primary care for the underserved and intend to do so long term. Loan repayment will help this happen.

Answer: Physicians are not eligible to apply for this program. Otherwise, eligible clinicians in this specific situation can apply for this year's program and provide documentation that the Vassar Brothers site is part of Hudson River Health Care's scope and is thus a facility HPSA sharing Hudson River Health Care's automatic FQHC designation.

Q33. Please clarify: page 15 of the Request for Applications, Section 3.6 Site eligibility – “All participants in loan repayment programs must provide primary care services, i.e., health services related to family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, dentistry or mental health at health care delivery sites located in a federally-designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or in a facility designated as a HPSA facility”. On page 17 of the Request for Applications, Table 3. PCSC Scoring Criteria, letter p under applicant action states: “Completed and documented “Name and ID No. of Health Professional Service Area (HPSA)” and site is located in a HPSA.

Answer: Page 17 of the Request for Applications has been revised (see beginning of this document) to read, “Completed and documented ‘Name and ID No. of Health Professional Service Area (HPSA)’ and site is either a HPSA-designated facility or is located in a designated HPSA area.”

Q34. I have a private practice with 15 individuals, which is expanding. I work 20 hours at it. Most of my clients are low income and Medicaid clients in a three-county area, Monroe, Ontario and Seneca Counties. Do I have to be a LLC to qualify as an independent contractor and do I need a HPSA number as well for this to qualify?

Answer: Assuming you have 15 clients and that you serve as a behavioral health provider, the location where you meet with your patients/clients must be in a mental health HPSA. You do not have to be an LLC to qualify, but you do have to be operating a not-for-profit practice. Since you appear to be a sole practitioner, you should include documentation to provide some background about your practice and to demonstrate when you opened for business, that your practice is not for profit, and that you do not turn any clients away based on ability to pay. Also provide evidence of your office hours (e.g., advertising, business cards, etc.).

Q35. Page 15 references state correctional facilities as an eligible site. Does the same apply to county correctional facilities?

Answer: County correctional facilities are not eligible sites.

Q36. Do federal correctional facilities qualify for this program? I currently work for a federal prison in Otisville, NY. I saw that state correctional facilities are specifically listed, but am not sure if federal correctional facilities fall under the "FQHC" and/or "Look-Alikes" category. Please advise.

Answer: Federal correctional facilities do not qualify for this program.

Employment start date:

Q37. Just to clarify, all applicants cannot be employed before July, 2012?

Answer: Generally, applicants must not have been employed at their current site prior to July 1, 2012. However, please see the answer to Q40 for an explanation of a possible exception to this requirement.

Q38. Section 3.5. says, "If the applicant was working in the current site prior to July 1, 2012, the applicant is not eligible to apply."

How does this program help with assuring providers to underserved populations with this restriction? Why punish the young dentist for taking a position before July and reward those employed after?

Answer: The intention of the program is not to punish a dentist already working in an underserved area, but to incentivize new clinicians to commit to newly serving underserved areas to fill the gap in need.

Q39. I started working prior to 7/1/12. Does that mean I am not eligible to apply?

Answer: If you started working as a clinician in one of the eligible titles at the same site that you are applying to the PCSC under, then you are not eligible to apply if you began that employment prior to 7/1/12.

Q40. On page 12 of the RFA, it is stated: "If the applicant was working in the current site prior to July 1, 2012, the applicant is not eligible to apply." Would an individual be eligible to apply if s/he worked at the site **in a different, program not eligible for this grant** prior to 7/1/12, and changed positions on or after 7/1/12 to a position covered by the application?

Answer: If the applicant worked at the same site in a different position prior to 7/1/12, then after 7/1/12 moved to an eligible position covered by the PCSC, then eligibility for an award would be subject to review and approval by the Department of Health. Instances where this might be approved are someone working at the site as an RN who then becomes a nurse practitioner; someone working as a mental health aide who then becomes a licensed mental health counselor; or someone working as a dental assistant who then becomes a dental hygienist. Examples that would not be approved are a certified nurse midwife who then becomes a nurse practitioner or a licensed mental health counselor who then becomes a clinical psychologist.

Q41. In Section 3.5 "Employment Status" it notes an applicant cannot have been in his/her current position prior to July 1, 2012. Is that accurate? I have been in my current position since November 14, 2011. Am I therefore not eligible to apply for the loan?

Answer: Yes, that is accurate. You are not eligible to apply for the loan. The intention of the program is to attract new clinicians to underserved areas.

Q42. Our organization is an FQHC with over 20 sites. As an FQHC, all sites are HPSA facilities, but not all sites are located in a geographic HPSA. If an applicant began working for our organization prior to July 1, 2012, but was working at a site NOT located in a geographic HPSA, can they begin to work at one of our sites IN a geographic HPSA in 2013 and qualify for PCSC?

Answer: No, if all sites are HPSA facilities, a clinician is not eligible to apply if they worked at any of the sites prior to July 1, 2012.

Q43. Do you retro date the date of service contract? For instance, if I started to work full time at the site on July 1, 2012 do I list the start of the term of the contract as July 1 or the current date?

Answer: For item II-m on the application, you should list the date you started working at the site. If you have not yet started working at the site but have a written agreement to do so, you would list the date that you have agreed to start working at the site.

NHSC, PCSC, and award eligibility:

Q44. Can I apply to the NHSC and this program, (I am aware I cannot PARTICIPATE in both) and if I am awarded both, choose one? What if my application is considered to be "in process," and it is not yet submitted on the NHSC website - is that a problem?

Answer: Yes, you can apply to both programs. However, a clinician cannot participate in both. If an applicant applies and receives award offers from both programs, s/he must choose which program to participate in. If the participant has already chosen the NHSC award, they become ineligible for a PCSC award. If an applicant has signed a contract for a PCSC award and then changes his/her mind, there are significant monetary penalties for defaulting (see section 5.5.4 "Default of obligation" in the Request for Applications for more information).

Q45. If an applicant has applied for the NHSC Loan repayment program this year (applications due April 16 for NHSC) will this hurt their chance for award for New York State Primary Care Service Corps award? (Obviously they cannot accept both awards if granted.)

Answer: Applying for both will not impact one's chance of receiving a PCSC award. However, a clinician cannot participate in both. If an applicant applies and receives award offers from both programs, s/he must choose which program to participate in. If the participant has already chosen the NHSC award, they become ineligible for a PCSC award. If an applicant has signed a contract for a PCSC award and then changes his/her mind, there are significant financial penalties for defaulting (see section 5.5.4 "Default of obligation" in the Request for Applications for more information).

Q46. Is there any penalty for being accepted for the state loan repayment and then deciding not to accept the award?

Answer: There is no penalty for receiving an award and then deciding not to accept it up to the time that a contract with New York State is executed. Once a contract between New York State and the applicant has been fully executed, there may be monetary penalties for withdrawing from the program. See section 5.5.4 "Default of obligation" in the Request for Applications for more information.

Q47. I already applied to the NHSC program. Do I have to remove the NHSC program application first?

Answer: No, you do not have to remove the NHSC program application first. However, if you receive an award offer from both the NHSC and the PCSC, you will have to choose one or the other. If you accept either award and have an executed contract for that award and then decide you do not want that award, there are significant monetary default penalties in either case.

Q48. We have been approved as an NHSC site in March 2013 and our NP applied for the NHSC's Loan Repayment Program on 3/14/2013. Are we allowed to apply for PCSC as well?

Answer: Yes, assuming all other eligibility requirements are met, you are allowed to apply for the PCSC. Be aware that if you are applying on behalf of your NP and she receives award offers from both, she will have to choose one award or the other. Also note that a site can submit no more than two applications (details on page 16 of the application).

Employment contracts:

Q49. The contract I have with my health center is not for a certain time period, it is just an ongoing contract. You had mentioned we needed a two year contract. Do I have to have them re-work my contract?

Answer: A formal amendment to the contract can be provided. Alternatively, a statement similar to that below, on the employer's letterhead, signed by the clinician and an administrative/executive representative of the employer, can be submitted with the application:

“It is mutually understood that *clinician name* intends to fulfill a NYS Primary Care Service Corps service obligation with *name of employer* during the period *start date* through *end date*. During that time, *clinician name* will be assigned to *name and address of work site*, for ___ % of his/her time. S/he will work as a *clinical title and specialty* for approximately ___ clinical hours per week for ___ weeks per year during that time and will earn an annual base salary of \$_____.”

Q50. My employment began on 3/11/2013. I have a contract that I signed, but the facility I work for didn't require a time frame for employment so basically employment is at will. Even though a time frame is not required by my contract, I intend to work for this facility greater than two years and would fulfill the service commitment that is a part of the eligibility criteria. What are my options in regards to this or what steps do I need to take to be qualified?

Answer: See response above.

Q51. Where do I find the "employment contract" for my approved site?

Answer: Usually, if there is an employment contract, an employee will have signed it prior to beginning employment. Many employers do not provide employment contracts. If that is your case, please see response above.

Q52. I was hired on October 1, 2012, by New York Presbyterian Hospital. I spoke with Human Resources Personnel in order to get a copy of my contract. She informed me that I am a regular employee and not a “contracted” employee, reason for which she did not have a contract on file for me. Could you please guide me in order for me to get the document I need. What should I specifically ask them for? Job description? Do they need to provide a new contract? If not possible, what options do I have? And if I need a contract, what should it include? What would be the dates required in the contract?

Answer: Usually, if there is an employment contract, an employee will have signed it prior to beginning employment. Many employers do not provide employment contracts. If that is your case, a formal amendment to the contract can be provided. Alternatively, a statement similar to that below, on the employer's letterhead, signed by the clinician and an administrative/executive representative of the employer, can be provided:

“It is mutually understood that *clinician name* intends to fulfill a NYS Primary Care Service Corps service obligation with (*name of employer*) during the period *start date* through *end date*. During that time, *clinician name* will be assigned to *name and address of work site*, for ___ % of his/her time. S/he will work as a *clinical title and specialty* for approximately ___ clinical hours per week for ___ weeks per year during that time and will earn an annual base salary of \$_____.”

Q53. What if your contract started in September 2012 and was for two years - does an amendment still need to be made to correspond with the dates of this?

Answer: Yes, either an amendment or language similar to that provided above must be submitted because the above period of time would not encompass an entire PCSC service obligation.

Q54. I have accepted an eligible job offer and am going through credentialing now. Must an employment contract be signed prior to your application submission on May 1st?

Answer: Yes, an employment contract is part of the application; therefore, an application should not be submitted until it includes either an employment contract or a statement as described above.

Q55. Do you have to have the qualified site secured by the date of the applications submission? I have several sites interested but not yet committed.

Answer: You must include with your application an executed employment contract or the statement provided in Q52 above.

For profit versus not-for-profit:

Q56. Could a for-profit group practice in a HPSA apply?

Answer: No, only not-for-profits can apply.

Q57. How would a solo or group private practice be not-for-profit, which is noted in the site eligibility on page 15 of the grant guidance?

Answer: Generally, solo and group practices cannot apply for or receive 501 (c) (3) or other eligible not-for-profit status. You would need to consult with your tax specialist to see if this is possible in your specific case. You may also want to consult: <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Application-Process> or <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4220.pdf>.

Q58. Regarding Question I in the PCSC Application (Attachment 2), Section II Proposed Practice Site: What does it mean that the facility is a Not For Profit or For Profit? We are considered to be an PC LLC.

Answer: A nonprofit organization is formed for the common good of the public. Nonprofit organizations are usually formed for some specific religious, charitable or educational purpose. A for-profit organization may be formed to conduct any number of lawful business activities. The primary reason to form a for-profit organization is to earn a profit for the owners of the company. Most likely, you are a for-profit organization, but your practice administrator should be able to provide a definitive answer for you.

Clinician eligibility:

Q59. Do the clinical positions requested have to match the type of HPSA, such as dental hygienist and dental HPSA?

Answer: Yes. If a dentist is applying, the site that they will be working in must be in a designated dental HPSA area or facility. If a behavioral health clinician is applying, the site that they will be

working in must be designated as a mental health HPSA area or facility. Likewise, if a primary care clinician is applying, the site that they will be working in must be designated as a primary care HPSA area or facility.

Q60. Is there any certain discipline that increases chances of being funded, i.e. behavioral health, primary care?

Answer: No. The only way to increase the chance of an award is to apply early and receive a high score on the application.

Q61. Can BSNs and RDs be considered for the loan repayment as well?

Answer: No, unless a BSN is also a certified nurse practitioner or certified nurse midwife.

Q62. Are Licensed Mental Health Counselors able to participate in this program?

Answer: Yes, if they meet the requirements of section 3.1.9.

Q63. Is there any time limit as to how many years of practice one should have post LCSW? I've been practicing for about 20 years.

Answer: No, there is no limit to how long a clinician can have practiced. However, the service obligation remains the same regardless of the amount of debt, and the clinician cannot have been practicing at his or her current site prior to July 1, 2012.

Q64. Are gerontologists included in this group?

Answer: Physician gerontologists are not eligible for PCSC. However, physician assistants and nurse practitioners who are appropriately credentialed by New York State to practice geriatrics within the scope of their licensure are included.

Q65. I graduate on May 24, 2013, as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner and have a NYS Office of Mental Health position at an outpatient mental health clinic as a nurse practitioner upon certification from the NYS Education Department. There is a processing time that I am unsure of the specific timeframes. Can I still apply without the certification number known by checking the pending box and without the known start date?

Answer: Yes, as long as employment will begin prior to September 1, 2013. At the time of application, provide the anticipated start date. The exact start date and certification number must be provided prior to execution of a contract with New York State, if any.

Q66. I did not obtain my Ph.D. in Clinical Psych. However, I was grandfathered in as a LCMHC a few years ago. Do I qualify for loan repayment?

Answer: If you qualify as a licensed mental health counselor as described in section 3.1.9 of the Request for Applications, then you are eligible for PCSC.

Loan eligibility:

Q67. Is there a term limit on the age of the loans?

Answer: There is no term limit or limit on the age of the loans, but to be qualified, the debt must be linked to education that enabled the applicant to obtain their current clinical title.

Q68. If my loan is for a PhD degree I obtained in health care administration, although I have a Master degree as a social worker, does my doctor degree loan qualify for payment?

Answer: No. However, loans for education that build toward the ability to provide the clinical services for which the award is requested will generally qualify.

Q69. Is it a problem if we consolidated our loans with all school loans, and if it isn't a problem, do we list the loans as consolidated or each loan separately on the application?

Answer: Consolidating loans is not a problem, but if an award is made, all debt will be verified to ensure it is qualified.

Q70. May loans for an RN/BSN degree prior to an FNP degree also be included? The degree was obtained within a seven-year period.

Answer: Yes, these loans qualify because they are required to obtain FNP certification in New York State.

Q71. If my loan has been garnished by NYS can I still participate?

Answer: If you mean that you have a defaulted student loan that is now subject to wage garnishment; i.e., a percentage of your wages is garnished to repay the defaulted loan, then, no, that loan would not be considered "qualifying educational debt" and would not be eligible for repayment under PCSC. Also, please refer to the Request for Applications, Section 3.4, Evidence of financial responsibility, page 11.

Q72. I just want to make sure that you do not need any statements or loan documents until later on in the application phase?

Answer: That is correct; we do not need any statements or loan documents at the time of application. We will verify debt at the time an award goes to contract.

Inpatient and outpatient settings:

Q73. What if we are required to work both inpatient and outpatient?

Answer: Hours worked in an inpatient setting will not be counted toward service hours. Therefore, the applicant must demonstrate that the number of hours regularly worked in the outpatient setting qualifies for either part-time or full-time status.

Q74. If the site serves both inpatient and outpatient, does that qualify us?

Answer: It is acceptable for the site to serve both inpatients and outpatients. However, hours worked in an inpatient setting will not be counted toward service hours. Therefore, the applicant must

demonstrate that the number of hours regularly worked in the outpatient setting qualifies for either part-time or full-time status.

Q75. So a full-time psychiatric nurse practitioner who works inpatient in a state hospital does not qualify?

Answer: No, s/he would not qualify.

Q76. Is it required that all covered activities (for mental health providers) take place in an outpatient ambulatory care setting? I provide direct service, supervision, and teaching at a non-profit organization. My organization has an outpatient ambulatory care setting, but I work in a different department. Does this affect my eligibility?

Answer: Yes. At least 21 hours per week (11 hours for part-time awards) must be spent providing direct patient care, teaching, precepting or mentoring in the outpatient ambulatory care setting at the approved site.

Q77. It is unusual for nurse midwives to only function in the outpatient setting as most deliveries are performed in a hospital. They often work many more than 40 hours a week due to their call schedule. How will this affect their application? Can they only count the hours they are in the office?

Answer: At least 21 hours per week (11 hours for part-time awards) must be spent providing direct patient care, teaching, precepting or mentoring in an outpatient ambulatory care setting at the approved site. Hours spent on call or in a hospital must be in addition to that.

Q78. Regarding section II m. on the application, teaching in an ambulatory setting, is this teaching to patients or other health care professionals or both?

Answer: Generally, this means hands-on precepting or hands-on teaching of students studying the same discipline.

Languages:

Q79. Can non-bilingual applicants apply?

Answer: Yes.

Q80. Under section II section r, the first check box “the site lists language skills or a bicultural background as a requirement for hiring in job descriptions,” do the supporting documents have to say it is a requirement or can it say preferred?

Answer: Yes, it must say it is a requirement.

Q81. For the “Languages” scoring section, does the individual clinician have to be fluent in additional languages to get the points? Or, are you referring to the languages spoken by all facility staff?

Answer: The applicant must be fluent in additional languages to get the points. This does not pertain to other staff.

Q82. Can you describe more fully the requirements related to the documentation of fluency in foreign languages, as well as acceptable documentation for diversity/work environment (r on the application)?

Answer: To document fluency in a foreign language, submit a letter signed by a supervisor or individual in a higher level position than yours who can attest to your fluency in the language(s) listed on your application.

Examples of acceptable documentation demonstrating that the criteria in r are met might include job postings that states proficiency in a foreign language is required; job postings in a foreign language newspaper; a cover letter or e-mail that demonstrates a job posting was sent to a college or university; a cover letter or e-mail that demonstrates a job posting was shared with local community groups; and a job posting that states the organization's mission.

Payer mix, accepting insurance, and sliding fee scale:

Q83. If the employment site does not accept Medicare, are you ineligible to apply?

Answer: That depends on the applicant's discipline. The health professional must work at a service site that accepts reimbursement for Medicare, Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program, as appropriate for their designated discipline, and that sees all patients regardless of their ability to pay.

Q84. We are a brand new FQHC. If for some reason by the deadline we do not have our contract with Medicare and Medicaid, can we show other forms of proof that we are involved?

Answer: Yes. FQHCs are required to accept Medicare and Medicaid in order to be designated as such. Therefore, we will accept documentation demonstrating that those applications are pending and will require proof of such if an award is made.

Q85. My organization has a community support program for people with a low income, but we do not have a sliding scale fee based on income. Can I still apply?

Answer: In general, if a site is a free clinic and does not charge or bill for any services, you may not need a sliding fee scale. However, in this instance, applicants should include documentation demonstrating that no one is charged or billed for services and documentation of a posted policy stating that no one is denied care. Applicants in this case should also submit detailed information about the program so that eligibility can be fully evaluated.

If patients or insurance companies are being billed, a sliding fee scale must be posted, and no one can be denied services because of ability to pay.

Q86. Would you please define what is meant by "a patient mix that substantially consists of Medicaid, CHPlus, Family Health Plus, uninsured, and special needs populations," which is on page 5 of the grant guidance?

Answer: Section 1.4 of the Request for Applications has been revised to state, ". . . the applicant is required, among other criteria, to . . . maintain a patient mix that consists of Medicaid, CHPlus, Family Health Plus, uninsured, and special needs populations and that reflects the demographics of the facility's service area."

Q87. In reference to page 5, target population: Are practices that don't see any CHPPlus patients disqualified for the grant?

Answer: No, they would not necessarily be disqualified based on that criterion, provided the site posts a sliding fee scale and does not deny services based on ability to pay.

Miscellaneous:

Q88. Will the slides from today's presentation be available on your website?

Answer: The slides from the March 26, 2013, webinar are posted on the Department of Health website at:

http://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/1205031010/pcsc_webinar.pdf

In addition, the webinar with audio is available at:

<http://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/1205031010/index.htm>

Q89. Page 12 of RFA, 3.5 Employment Status: If an employee works 40 hours a week, but takes a half hour lunch break daily, accounting for 2.5 hours per week, and is therefore paid for 37.5 hours weekly, does this count as full time status? For example, 8:30-4:40 pm, with a 30-minute lunch break from 12:30-1:00 pm?

Answer: Yes, this is considered full-time status.

Q90. I wish to make an inquiry on whether Nigerian organizations can apply for this grant.

Answer: The program is limited to eligible work sites located in New York State and to eligible clinicians who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents and are licensed, registered and, if applicable, certified to practice in New York State.