

LAL Renewal of Designation/Annual Certification Application Instructions

November 20, 2013

Technical Assistance Call Transcript

Coordinator: Thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in a listen-only mode. After the presentation we will conduct a question-and-answer session. To ask a question, please press the star 1.

Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. I would like to introduce your host for today's conference, Mr. Jim Macrae. You may begin.

Jim Macrae: Thank you and welcome everybody to today's call. This is our technical assistance call on the revised look-alike renewal and designation as well as the annual certification process for FQHC look-alikes. Really pleased that you're able to join us today.

We know there's a lot of activity going on in your world as well as a lot of activity going on in our world with respect to the Affordable Care Act and we can't again thank you enough for all that you do every day to make an impact on many, many communities across this country.

We know many of you are actually engaged right now in significant outreach and enrollment activities. For that I just say thank you. We know it's been a little bit challenging with respect to the Website and some of the challenges that you've experienced related to that but we want to just continue to encourage you to do as much outreach as well as enrollment assistance as possible.

We really do see this as a significant benefit for our patients to be able to get access to insurance and really to get access to the services that not only you provide but also can be provided in specialty care settings as well as in hospitals so again thank you for all that you're doing with respect to that.

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In addition it's been a significant year for us in terms of just some of the stuff that we've done with the look-alike program. We've had several different changes as you all have been aware.

We've actually transitioned the oversight of the look-alike program to our project officers in our primary care divisions, really trying to foster greater collaboration and coordination between both our funded health centers as well as you all as look-alikes and we hope ultimately to provide even more support to you as you move forward.

In addition we asked you as we've done in previous years but we were really excited to be able to publish it this year is the UDS information that you submitted to us. Having that information has been incredibly powerful in terms of documenting the impact that you have made both within your own communities at a state level but to be honest nationally.

The ability to be able to present what you all have been able to do has been tremendous. I've actually had a lot of people be surprised by just how many folks look-alikes are actually serving and I just wanted to highlight a couple of those for you because if you haven't seen it, it really is impressive.

Overall look-alikes in this country provided care to almost a million patients. It was 951,242 people to be exact. Ninety-one percent of the patients that you serve are below 200% of the federal poverty level.

Almost a third of your patients 32% were uninsured, 23% were best served in another language and 54% of your providers are actually receiving meaningful use incentive payments through the use of your EHR system.

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In addition, just being able to document some of the impacts that you've made in terms of both clinical performance has been really helpful and we know that's also been a challenge but again really I think demonstrates the impact of the program. It helps make it easier to us when we need to explain just why what you do is so valuable and the program overall.

As I mentioned at the top of the call, we are committed to supporting your success as a look-alike. We know that you operate differently than our funded programs because you don't actually have the grant but we do hope that the added benefits that you receive as being a look-alike do foster your continuous efforts to improve and really provide access to high-quality care.

For today's call, we're going to focus on our most recent instructions for completing the annual certification and renewal of designation applications and we have a couple of folks here to help you with that and I think at this point I'm going to turn it over to Jennifer Williams Clarke to provide you with more of those details so with that, thanks Jennifer. Thanks, everybody.

Jennifer Williams Clarke: Thank you Jim. I'm Jennifer Williams Clarke, a Public Health Analyst in the Office of Policy and Program Development within the Bureau of Primary Health Care at HRSA. I'll go through the application instructions and point out the major changes from our current Renewal of Designation and Annual Certification Instructions.

Here is a list of the topics I'll touch on during this call: application types, application submission, summary of changes, change in designation period, program oversight timeline, application components, some technical assistance resources and then we'll leave time at the end for Q&A.

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I recognize that we have organizations with a wide range of experience completing these applications and on the call today some of you have been designated for a few months and others have been with the program for several years.

I'll try to keep that in mind as I go through the instructions. For those of you who are new, I'll do my best to clarify any information I think might be helpful to you and hopefully avoid acronyms and things of that nature.

For those who have completed these applications before, my goal is to highlight any significant changes from the last set of instructions but I do ask that you bear with me if I touch on information that you're already well aware of. In either case, we'll leave plenty of time at the end for question.

You may send us questions online during the presentation or if you'd prefer by phone at the end of the presentation. If you have questions that are more specific to your organization, we may need to direct you to contact your project officer for those questions but we'll do our best to give you the information that you need as soon as possible.

So as I mentioned earlier, we'll just go through these instructions and the instructions are the Renewal of Designation and Annual Certification Application Instructions which were released on November 8th and will be effective on January 1, 2014.

Look-alikes submit a Renewal of Designation at the end of their designation period. It's a comprehensive application. Annual Certifications are progress reports that are more streamlined. These updates are due annually between each Renewal of Designation period.

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Renewal of Designation applications are due 90 days before the end of the designation period. The application will be available in EHB 180 days before the end of the designation period. The EHB system will send e-mail reminders to the organization's contacts identified in the EHB system 180 days prior to the end of the designation period.

Applicants have up to 90 days to complete an application once started in EHB so this might be a good time just to remind organizations of the importance of keeping your authorizing officials' contact information updated in the EHB system. Like the Renewal of Designation Application, Annual Certification Applications are due 90 days prior to the end of the certification period.

The EHB system will send e-mail reminders to the organization's contacts identified in the EHB system 150 days prior to the end of the certification period to inform them that the application is acceptable in the EHB system. Organizations will have 60 days to complete an Annual Certification application once it's started in EHB.

Here are some changes for the Renewal of Designation Application Instructions. The maximum designation period for renewal of designation is three years and we'll talk more about these later.

Designees will receive a site visit to assess compliance at least once during each designation period. These revised instructions include more emphasis on the look-alike's primary purpose which is to provide comprehensive primary medical care.

There's a more detail description of contracts and referral arrangements. All applicants are required to report prenatal and perinatal performance measures

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consistent with Program Assistance Letter 2013-07. Some of the forms have been revised and a request for a budget narrative was added as Attachment 16.

Similar to the Renewal of Designation, changes in the Annual Certification instructions include emphasis on primary medical care as the primary purpose, a detailed description of contracts and referral arrangements, the requirements concerning prenatal and perinatal performance measures and the use of the revised forms.

Additionally, Annual Certification applicants will now need to upload three additional attachments, Attachments 7 through 9. As you know, Program Assistance Letter 2013-10 which was released in September communicated changes about the look-alike application review process as well as the designation period.

This slide is a graphic representation of the program oversight timeline. Until a few months ago, look-alikes typically received an initial two-year designation period before their first Renewal of Designation application was due; thereafter, Renewal of Designations were due every five years.

As communicated in Program Assistance Letter 2013-10, look-alikes are now receiving a maximum designation period of three years, and operational site visits will now be part of the initial designation review process for those seeking look-alike designations.

The first arrow or point in time represents initial designation which includes an operational site visit but for you existing designees, it also represents the start of a new designation period. The slide includes an operational site visit midway through the designation period and Annual Certification applications at 12 and 24 months.

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This slide lists the application components. As you can see there are no changes in the required sections of each application although there will be some differences in what is required within each section so both the Renewal of Designation and Annual Certification Applications will continue to comprise of program narrative, forms and attachments as before.

As I mentioned earlier, the Annual Certification is more of a streamlined application so as you go through each criteria of the program narrative, you'll be asked to provide updates since your last application. These updates can be accomplishments or challenges.

The program narrative sections include need, response, collaboration, evaluative measures, impact which is only applicable to annual certification applications, resources and capabilities and governance.

So here we have a list of forms that are included in the Renewal of Designation instructions. The list of forms can be found starting on Page 21 of the application instructions so just so we're clear, for those who might be new to Renewal of Designation and Annual Certification applications, maybe you weren't involved in the completion of your initial designation application. When I refer to Forms, I'm speaking about the Forms that you will complete in the EHB system. There are templates to which you'll be asked to add your organization's information. Later on I'll talk about attachments. The attachments are documents that you will upload in the EHB system.

So for Renewal of Designation Applications, there are no changes to which Forms are required. Some of these required Forms listed in the slide have been revised. Revisions were made to Forms 2, 3, 6A, 9, and 12.

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Form instructions can be found in Appendix A starting on Page 27 of the instructions. The sixth item on the list in this slide is the clinical performance measure. I am bringing this item to your attention because modifications have been made to the measures.

Appendix B of the Renewal of Designation Instructions provides information on those modifications. The modifications are to the immunization and cervical cancer measures as well as a requirement that all applicants report on prenatal and perinatal measures.

Now here we have a list of Forms for the Annual Certification Instructions. Similar to the Renewal of Designation instructions, there are no additional Forms required for annual certification applications.

By the way, you'll notice you will not be able to make changes to some forms on this list like Form 5B, the Service Sites. Others like Form 8 Health Center Agreements are to be completed if applicable.

So this list of forms can be found starting on Page 11 of the Annual Certification Instructions. Instructions for completing the Forms can be found in Appendix A starting on Page 15.

There will also be some additional instructions in EHB and I'll talk about that later on. Revisions to the required forms are similar to those in the previous slide, Forms 2, 3, 6A, 9, and 12. Changes to the clinical performance measures for Annual Certification applications are identical to those previously mentioned for Renewal of Designation applicants.

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That information can be found in Appendix C of the Annual Certification Instructions. Here's a summary of the Form changes that I mentioned earlier. Form 2, the Staffing Plan has been updated to include a column to report staff expenses.

Form 3 Income Analysis has been revised to streamline the reporting of projected income. Form 6A Current Board Member Characteristics will be prepopulated. Form 9 Need for Assistance Worksheet has been revised to include more current indicators. Form 12, Organization Contacts will be prepopulated.

Also, the EHB user interface has been upgraded for 508 compliance. You can hover over information icons for directions while completing the Form. Now I mentioned that the Renewal of Designation and Annual Certification applications you start working on today and they will be completed using the current application instructions.

Just a cautionary note here. The EHB system is being updated to align with revisions to Forms and attachments according to the January 1 application instructions. As a result, if you are using the current application instructions, you will notice that you're being asked for example to upload attachments that are not requested in the actual instructions that you're following.

Don't be alarmed about this. It would be great if you submitted the information being asked for; however, we realize it's not a requirement in the instructions you are responding to so for those of you who start your applications before December 31st, I just want you to be aware of this.

This is something that you can talk with your project officer about and come up with an approach to how you'll address this as you complete your application.

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Renewal of Designation applicants have one additional attachment, Attachment 16, the budget narrative. The budget narrative justification describes each cost element and how each cost will support the achievement of your objectives.

Additional information about the budget narrative is available in Appendix C of the Renewal of Designation Instructions. Annual Certification applicants have three additional attachments, Attachment 7 the financial audit, Attachment 8 the sliding fee scale, and Attachment 9 a budget narrative.

Attachments 7 and 8 you've submitted before in your initial designation or your Renewal of Designation application. Attachment 9 the budget narrative, is a new request for look-alikes. Additional information about the budget narrative is available in Appendix B starting on Page 24 of the Annual Certification instructions.

Here's a list of technical assistance resources and we'll just go quickly to the look-alike technical assistance Webpage. Okay, maybe not so quickly, just a moment. On the Webpage hopefully we'll get there soon. There's a lot of helpful information for those of you who might not have spent much time there. You might want to consider bookmarking it.

There's a section that has application help. The current instructions as well as the revised application instructions are also on the Webpage and okay, here we are so here we have the application instructions and the two at the top are the new instructions and the 2011/2012 instructions are the current instructions that you will use until December 31st.

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Further down on that page we also have information such as the program assistance letters and I mentioned 2013-10. That's here as well as other program assistance letters that are relevant to the health center program.

The TA call information and other technical assistance information for the new application instructions will be added to the Webpage within a week of this call - a week or so of this call - and again there's also technical assistance information there for the previous instructions which are - sorry, I shouldn't have said previous - for the current instructions so just want to make that distinction for you in case you visit the Website.

The user guides are also on the look-alike TA page and the guides will be updated and revised according to the new instructions for January 1st as well so we'll just head back to our technical assistance slide and there you can see the look-alike TA page Web address as well as contact information for our BPHC help line.

And I think very importantly is that if you have questions concerning your organization that you do contact your assigned project officer. So this concludes the presentation and we'll open the lines for questions at this time.

Coordinator: All right, thank you. At this time we are ready to begin the question-and-answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press the star 1 and please record your name. Again press star 1 if you have a question. There are no questions at this time. No, we do have one coming up, one moment. (Suzanne Smith), go ahead.

(Suzanne Smith): Hi, yes, I'm (Suzanne), I'm with the Colorado Community Health Network. I left a question, I typed one in and so I didn't know if you guys were going to answer those

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questions but basically I was asking to verify if the changes to Form 9 are to bring it in line with the changes made to the 2013 Form 9.

And someone just or someone else just wrote something too to make those changes in line with the changes that were made to Form for the NAP and SAC applications so that look-alikes are filling-out the same type of information.

Jennifer Williams Clarke: Yes, the changes to the Form align with the changes to Forms that are in the NAP application and any Forms that the grantees will be using ongoing.

(Suzanne Smith): Okay, and one other question then quickly. Currently on the technical assistance Website, the forms there, it looks like Form 16, etcetera, haven't been added and so when will those be added to the - the example forms - be added to the technical assistance Website?

Jennifer Williams Clarke: Did you say Form 16 or...

(Suzanne Smith): Sorry, I'm like switching back and forth between different windows here so I want to make sure. Oh, okay, I had them backwards, form and attachment, sorry, no question there.

Jennifer Williams Clarke: Okay.

Coordinator: All right, once again if you have a question please press the star 1. There are no other questions on the phone.

Jennifer Williams Clarke: Okay, since there are no questions at this time we'll conclude the call. Thank you all for joining us today. We appreciate the work that you do and hope that

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should you have questions in the future that you'll feel free to contact us, contact your project officer as well as the TA line and thank you again. Enjoy the rest of your day.

Coordinator: Thank you. This completes today's conference. You may disconnect at this time.

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