



# Program Assistance Letter

**DOCUMENT NUMBER:** 2010-10

**DATE:** July 21, 2010

**DOCUMENT TITLE:** Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike Program Implementation of Electronic Information Systems for Submission of Requests for Change in Scope of Project

**TO:** Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alikes  
Primary Care Associations  
Primary Care Organizations  
National Cooperative Agreements

## I. BACKGROUND

[Program Assistance Letter \(PAL\) 2010-02](#), issued on May 19, 2010, describes how the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is enhancing the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Look-Alike Program by streamlining and simplifying application and data reporting processes through integration into the HRSA Electronic Handbooks (EHB). These enhancements will support FQHC Look Alike organizations with improved processes for applying for FQHC Look-Alike designation, recertification and renewal of designation, facilitating submissions for requesting changes in scope of project, and enhancing communications. This important effort will substantially improve HRSA's ability to oversee and provide support and assistance to FQHC Look-Alike organizations.

As a part of this initiative, all FQHC Look-Alikes recently participated in a Baseline Scope Verification (BSV) process to establish an accurate and complete electronic scope of project for sites, services, and other activities approved by HRSA. To accomplish this activity, HRSA transferred data on the most recently approved scope of project from a "paper" application to the EHB. Each FQHC Look-Alike then verified the data on the scope of their project to establish an electronic baseline scope of project. This information will be available for use in all future applications and actions, including recertification and renewal of designation applications and change in scope requests. The next step in the FQHC Look-Alike Program implementation of electronic information systems is the submission of change in scope (CIS) requests using HRSA's EHB.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS FOR CHANGE IN SCOPE

The FQHC Look-Alike Program will replace the former requirement of submitting hardcopy paper CIS requests with a new electronic submission process. The guidelines for requesting

a CIS are described in Policy Information Notice (PIN) 2009-06, “Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike Guidelines and Application,” and PIN 2008-01, “Defining Scope of Project and Policy for Requesting Changes.”

**A. TIMEFRAME**

Starting August 2010, FQHC Look-Alikes will be required to submit CIS requests through a new electronic process using HRSA’s EHB.

**B. CHANGE IN SCOPE APPLICATION PROCESS**

Existing FQHC Look-Alikes that want to add/delete/relocate a site and/or add/delete a service to their currently approved scope of project must submit a request for a CIS. FQHC Look-Alikes must obtain prior approval from HRSA to make any changes (i.e., additions/deletions/relocations) independent of a renewal of designation or annual recertification application. HRSA accepts CIS applications on a rolling basis.

Organizations preparing to submit a CIS request must prepare to submit all required information as identified in PIN 2009-06, “Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike Guidelines and Application,” Section III.3., Application Contents and Format, Column “CS” and Section III.6., Application Submission requirements Change in Scope Application. PIN 2009-06 is available on HRSA’s website at <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/policy/pin0906.htm>. In addition FQHC Look-Alikes should refer to PIN 2008-01, “Defining Scope of Project and Policy for Requesting Changes,” for complete guidance on HRSA’s policy regarding scope of project. PIN 2008-01 is available on HRSA’s website at <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/policy/pin0801/>.

HRSA encourages FQHC Look-Alikes to submit CIS requests at least 90 days in advance of the proposed implementation date. There may be circumstances where submitting a CIS request early may not be possible, however, the goal is to minimize these occurrences through careful planning. Timely submission of a CIS request is important to ensure Medicare and Medicaid FQHC reimbursement and 340B Drug Pricing benefits for the specific site/service, as appropriate.

**C. TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS FOR CHANGE IN SCOPE**

HRSA is committed to providing the following technical assistance (TA) and training to support FQHC Look-Alikes requesting project CIS electronically utilizing EHBs:

- Conduct a TA conference call for FQHC Look-Alikes to provide a general orientation to requesting project CIS electronically through the EHB on August 5, 2010 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM ET. The dial-in telephone number and pass code are 888-790-1803 and 1018389, respectively.
- Post information regarding requesting project CIS electronically and TA materials on the BPHC Web site. TA resource links on the Web site will also include the BPHC Help Line at 301-443-7356.

HRSA is committed to assuring a smooth and successful transition of the FQHC Look-Alike program into HRSA’s EHB. We look forward to working with you on this transition. If you

have systems-related inquiries and/or questions about EHB, please contact the BPHC Help Line at 301-443-7356 from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM ET Monday through Friday. If you have programmatic questions, please contact FQHC Look-Alike staff at 301-594-4300 or submit any questions to the OPPD e-mail box [OPPDGeneral@hrsa.gov](mailto:OPPDGeneral@hrsa.gov).

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